



CHALLENGES FACED BY MALE PAROLEES IN LAMONTVILLE ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY, KWAZULU NATAL.

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of
Management Science: Public Management (Peacebuilding) in the Faculty of
Management Sciences at the Durban University of Technology

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis herewith submitted for the Master's in Public Administration – Peace Studies at the Durban University of Technology (DUT) is my original work and has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other university.

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APPROVED FOR FINAL SUBMISSION

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ABSTRACT

The South African Department of Correctional Services has a strategic outcome-oriented goal of ensuring that parolees (and probationers) are successfully reintegrated into society as law-abiding citizens through the provision of rehabilitation and social reintegration programs. However, the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board (CSPB) is experiencing, and continuously has to deal with, what is referred to as 'Parole Violators' - those that have violated their Parole conditions and/or absconded. This study sought to evaluate the experiences and challenges faced by the male parolees of Lamontville in eThekweni Municipality, South Africa, and to improve educational programs to bring about more effective policies. The study focused on male parolees in the Lamontville Community, Durban, South Africa. However, the study sample included both parolees and community members who have a role to play in the reintegration process of the parolees.

A qualitative research design, and a Participatory Action Research approach, was employed to provide a comprehensive perspective on the challenges and experiences of male parolees in the Lamontville community. In-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation, with 10 parolees and 7 community members were used to collect data during the exploratory phase of the study. Further, the Lamontville community building workshop was organized among 10 parolees and 6 community members as part of the action research design. Thematic analysis was used in this study to analyse data collected from participants. While interpreting what was being said and giving evidence to support these interpretations, the researcher was able to identify new patterns, code them and generate themes.

The study discovered that the primary challenges faced by parolees in the Lamontville community include unemployment, a broken relationship with family and community members, marginalization, and adjusting to a changing environment outside the correctional service centre. The research then suggests that to address these challenges, there is a need for community awareness and participation in the parolee rehabilitation process, and support groups for the parolees are necessary. Lastly, during the community building workshop, it was suggested that a committee will, going forward, assist the parolees with more harmonious and productive reintegration into the community.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God (Proverbs 16 V 3) and all my participants whose willingness to be involved made this project possible. My late parents Baba Siphiwe Shezi taught me to finish whatever I have started and Mama Jabu Mngoma -I will always love you, mama.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AR	Action Research
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
CC	Correctional Centre
CSPB	Correctional Supervision and Parole Board.
PAR	Participatory Action Research

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and Context of the Research

According to Ntuli (2000: 13), a parolee is an offender who is freed conditionally by the parole board and placed under community corrections supervision prior to the completion of his or her sentence. Thus, parole is a time during which an offender who has completed a minimum incarceration period in a correctional facility is released to serve the remaining years of his or her sentence in the community under the supervision of the Department of Correctional Services. The placement of a parolee is subject to certain requirements (Curlewis 2016: 1), for example, the parolee is expected to have a confirmed monitorable support system that can be contacted by the Department of Correctional Services. In South Africa, prisoners have been released before their sentences have been completed in certain circumstances since 1910.

However, upon release from prison in South Africa, criminals face countless challenges that contribute to reoffending in the reintegration process (Leigey and Ryder 2015: 736). The majority of criminals' lack education and have few employment skills and little experience. Most people in rural communities who commit crimes are illiterate, and when they return to the community, they face stigma and humiliation even though, in most cases, they return to society with the belief that their right to dignity and equality will be preserved such that they will not be subjected to unfair discrimination and a lack of community respect (Houser, McCord and Nicholson 2018: 263). However, this is not the case in most instances. Ex-offenders are unfairly discriminated against, and there is a lack of employment opportunities and respect from community members and family. Although the fight against the above challenges is what the White paper on Corrections in South Africa of 2005 attempted to accomplish with the department, the protection of the public, promotion of social responsibility, and the enhancing of human development in order to prevent reoffending or the return to crime have not been properly explored (National Research Council 2007: para. 4, line 5).

The aim of the Department of Correctional Services is not merely to keep individuals out of circulation in society or to merely enforce a punishment given by the court, but it is also to protect the community, raise public duty, and enhance the demographics in order to stop offenders from returning to crime (White Paper on Corrections 2005: 74). Furthermore, in the early 1990s, the responsibility of the Department of Correctional Services was designed and presented first and foremost to correct offending behavior in a secure, safe, and humane environment in which offenders are encouraged to discard negative and unhelpful morals and replace them with positive and helpful morals. This is the main purpose of the Department of Correctional Services. The Department's responsibility is also to confirm the locations of and trace parolees after reintegration into the community and to investigate what they are doing with their lives after release (Allen, Latessa and Ponder 2013: 243). According to Houser, McCord and Nicholson (2018: 264), reintegration is a crucial element in endorsing fairness. According to The White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (2005: 21) there are four standards of restorative justice namely; reintegration, encounter, compensation, and enclosure. In addition, The White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (2005: 21) has clearly shown that public rehabilitation is observed as the greatest challenging feature of reintegration, as real rehabilitation is vital in fighting reoffending.

1.2 Context of the Research

The South African Department of Correctional Services has a strategic outcome-oriented goal of ensuring that parolees (and probationers) are successfully reintegrated into society as law-abiding citizens through the provision of rehabilitation and social reintegration programs (Department of Correctional Services 2017a: 32). South Africa, on the other hand, does not use scientific methods to estimate parolee re-conviction rates nor does it have a history of determining whether prisoner rehabilitation programs contribute to successful parole and community reintegration (Cilliers and Smit 2007: 99; McLaughlin and Muncie 2003: 341). This weakness leads to a lack of comprehension of the elements that contribute to parole violations. The chairpersons of the South African Correctional Supervision and Parole Board stated that parole placement is a risk element since parolees may re-offend (Louw 2008: 152-153).

According to Travis, Solomon and Waul (2001: 20), recidivism is reduced when supervision measures using surveillance techniques are linked with a level of therapy or rehabilitation. The fundamental goal of parole should be to prevent recidivism (Petersilia 1998). Recidivism rates in South Africa are estimated to be between 85 and 94%, according to Muntingh (2001) (cited in Dissel and Ellis 2002). However, effective rehabilitation programs are required for parole to be successful. The Department of Correctional Services is responsible for supporting the correction of offending behavior in a secure, safe, and humane environment in order to achieve rehabilitation and avoid recidivism. This is in accordance with the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (Department of Correctional Services 2005b).

Thus, the South African constitution stipulates that it is the state's duty to support and fund the social reintegration of ex-prisoners (Ndiye 2016: 36). The Department of Correctional Services in South Africa provides for correction and development programs that seek to prepare the inmates such that they fit into the communities into which they will re-enter after their sentences.

The Department of Correctional Services in South Africa focuses on improving the life skills of the inmates such that they may reach their full potential. This implies that the South African reintegration process provides education, gender training, poverty alleviation projects, and productive work, which allows the inmates to be employable. It also allows participation in community service (Vandala 2019: 5). However, this has not been effectively implemented as there are parolees who are faced with poverty and a lack of employment opportunities. Therefore, this research decided to explore the challenges faced by the male parolees of Lamontville in eThekweni Municipality. The study aims to support the empowerment and transformation of these men as well as to promote the reconciliation of male parolees with, and their acceptance by, their families and the community after being released from imprisonment. In addition, it aims to benefit the community by lowering the crime rate and advancing social cohesion within the community.

1.3 Research Problem and Aims

Guerino, Harrison and Sabol (2011: 341) stated that rehabilitation and reintegration into the public after being imprisoned for a long time is particularly difficult because it requires the parolees to change their way of living in the community as opposed to how they lived in prison. Societies are often unwilling to receive offenders back into the community. Consequently, after having remained imprisoned, these people, branded as criminals, face a variety of challenges. Finding a job is a problem, and, in some cases, the family will have departed to another area such that the process of being accepted by their families back into the community becomes difficult. This contradicts what was postulated by Allen, Latessa and Ponder (2013: 245), that the community should be responsible for providing support, care, and inclusion for the individual who is to be rehabilitated back into the community. Thus, this research seeks to explore the challenges encountered by male parolees in the Lamontville community in order to better provide a useful intervention. Insufficient research has been previously conducted on the challenges facing reintegration of parolees in the Lamontville community, which needs to be addressed because it is home to many parolees. Furthermore, parolees in the Lamontville area have very little opportunity to take ownership of their problems or the issues they face. This study addresses this, as an Action Research Approach centres parolees as leaders of the research process and also provides them the chance to be a key part of the decision making activities. It also provides a much needed opportunity for key community stakeholders and parolees to engage usefully.

1.3.1 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to evaluate the challenges faced by the male parolees of Lamontville in eThekweni Municipality, South Africa, and to improve educational programs to bring about more effective policies and improvements in the environment. The study aims to play a crucial role in the empowerment and transformation of male parolees in order to be accepted by their families and community after being released from imprisonment. It also aims to benefit the community by lowering the crime rate.

1.3.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify parolees' perceptions and expectations after they are reintegrated into the community
- To identify the challenges faced by the male parolees of Lamontville
- To investigate the attitudes and experiences of community members concerning parolees' reintegration
- To develop an integrated model for the community to support and sustain reconciliation and restoration for the parolees

1.4 Research Methodology

1.4.1 Research Design

This qualitative study utilized semi-structured interviews to explore the experiences of the parolees in Lamontville community and Lamontville community members in order to fully understand the current issues with the reintegration process. The adopted action research approach contributed to making the research design suitable and adequate for a comprehensive analysis of the perspectives of the participants in order to provide an in-depth account of their experiences. Action research is the most suitable approach for this research since the study aims to bring about and assess changes in relationships amongst parolees, families, and people in the community. McNiff (2016: 5) highlighted that action research is “traditionally concerned with improvements of the study context, for example, solving a given problem. It is a common feature of educational research since it includes research intervention for implementation, rather than simply a data collection process”. The action research inquiry process is recurring. In addition to collecting and analyzing data, it also includes communicating outcomes, capturing stakeholder views and “taking action in response to those views in order to improve or restore the issue that is addressed” (Chevalier and Buckles 2019: 13).

1.4.2 Sampling

This study sampled 17 participants. The first sample drawn was 10 male parolees of the Lamontville community area who were released on parole upon completion of their minimum detention period in the correctional center. These 10 participants were recruited using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that is used both in qualitative and quantitative research, particularly when the population of interest is unusual or difficult to access (Mannee and MacCabe 2018: 21). This technique was relevant and useful for this study as it allowed the researcher to identify and access a very particular set of individuals (male parolees in Lamontville and relevant community members) able to provide detailed information relevant to the research questions. The researcher was able to access relevant participants because she works in the correctional service center in Westville. This made it possible for her to meet and speak with possible participants, and those who were interested and willing to take part in the research were recruited.

In addition, seven Lamontville community members were also selected as part of the sample. This was because it was important to also hear the perspectives of the community members on the reintegration of parolees into the community in order to address challenges in this process more fully. As the research is focused predominantly on male parolees, the parolees interviewed had the option of suggesting relevant community members whom they would have liked the researcher to interview. This suggested sample included a church minister in the community, a businessman who employs parolees, an elderly ex-offender who lives in the community, a young person who lives in the community, a family member of one of the parolees, a female community member who was once a victim of crime, and finally, the secretary of the Council Chamber in Lamontville. This led the researcher to adopt both the purposive sampling, as the participants needed were specific, and snowball sampling techniques, as these participants were suggested by the previous participants (the parolees).

1.4.3 Data Collection

For the purpose of this study, the data collection included the use of focus group discussions and in-depth interviews to obtain detailed information about the experiences

of reintegration of male parolees into the Lamontville community. Semi-structured in-depth one-on-one interviews were used with 10 male Lamontville parolees, and focus groups were carried out with the seven Lamontville community members. Data was collected in phases. In April and June 2021, data was collected amongst parolees and in September 2021 data was collected amongst community members. The questions used were open-ended and were formulated by the researcher and the supervisor. The questions were designed to encourage participants' responses around perceptions, feelings, attitudes, experiences, and views related to the research aim and questions. The open-ended questions on the interview and focus group guides allowed the researcher to facilitate a process whereby the participants were free to relate their personal experiences and views whilst still directing the discussion toward areas that were relevant to the research questions. Clarification of the questions was done where necessary. Thus, the data used in this research is as a result of empirical interviews and focus group discussions supported by published books, articles in academic journals, published reports, and thesis materials. With the data from the abovementioned sources, the study was able to draw reasonable conclusions and make suggestions based on the research problems and questions.

1.4.4 Data Analysis

The research drew on the thematic content analysis technique to analyze the data. Thematic content analysis is apt for a descriptive presentation of qualitative data (Anderson 1997), an approach that this study used. Anderson (1997) also suggested that thematic content analysis be used when the study involves identifying, examining, and reporting patterns or themes within data. This study involved identifying, examining, and reporting the experiences of male parolees as they reintegrated into the community. Thus, thematic content analysis was a suitable approach for the data analysis. The interviews and focus group discussions were coded prospectively to see if new themes emerged from the data. This approach contributed to developing and modifying the coding system to examine if more data was needed or if saturation had been reached. The predetermined categories informed by the study's aim and literature review guided the initial coding process. The coding was done in several steps, as suggested by Harding (2018: 6). Initially, reading the complete transcript allowed for a general understanding of the data. In order to critically describe, interpret, and analyze the data,

the text is summarized with code, and a code report is provided in the results section of the research. After the initial coding of the long text of the data, by classifying and integrating the information from the data, expressions with similar meanings and the direct part of the context and references are compiled into categories (Saldaña 2016). The qualitative categories were further analyzed to identify repetitions and possible relationships or patterns in the data, which were compiled to form a set of themes.

1.4.5 Scope of the Study

A potential limitation of this research is that due to the time frame and resources, the study could only look at one small community in KwaZulu-Natal. It is possible that a similar study in a larger city in the same region could yield a different result. For the study, the decision was to not study all the local community areas available in KwaZulu-Natal because the research would then become too broad and demand too many resources. Since the study was limited to the male parolees in the community area of Lamontville, there was no attempt to generalize the study to a greater population.

1.5 Structure of the Dissertation

1.5.1 Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the study. The goal and objectives of the study are outlined. The structure of the dissertation is also discussed in this chapter. The chapter includes the following subsections: introduction, research problem and aim, research objectives, summary of the research methodology, and the structure of the research.

1.5.2 Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides a literature review relative to the study and establishes a theoretical foundation for the study. It then considers restorative justice, rehabilitation, and reintegration in the context of parole. Furthermore, the chapter considers what is expected from parolees and the challenges that they face. Finally, recidivism is explored in this chapter.

1.5.3 Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 3 focuses on the research methodology. This chapter considers the research design, the research aims and questions, where the study was conducted, the target population, and the participants sampled in the study as well as the sampling techniques. This chapter further looks at how the data was collected, and the thematic techniques that were adopted in the research study to analyze the data are also highlighted. Finally, the chapter considers the limitations of the research, the measures that were taken to maintain the trustworthiness and reliability of the research, and the ethical considerations that were implemented in the research study.

1.5.4 Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Discussion of Results

This chapter presents the results of the study using thematic analysis. It presents the analysis and discussion of the findings from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions that were carried out with 10 parolees and seven Lamontville community members who were selected for the research study. This chapter presents the data from the parolees and uses the data from community members to support where necessary. This covers the two major themes that were generated from the data collected, namely, the challenges faced by male parolees and the proposed intervention. Finally, this chapter presents the process and the outcome of the intervention exercise organized by the researcher.

1.5.5 Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Chapter 5 provides a synthesis of the previous chapter with recommendations based on the findings of the study. This chapter further summarizes the data on the challenges faced by male parolees in Lamontville community and the proposed intervention. It also presents an integrated model for the community to support and sustain reconciliation and a harmonized reintegration process for the parolees. This is from the result obtained from the intervention exercise, which engaged both the parolees and the Lamontville community members. Finally, this chapter presents recommendations that, if implemented, will further enhance a harmonized reintegration process for the parolees. Future research recommendations are also highlighted.

CHAPTER 2

MALE PAROLEES AND THE REINTEGRATION PROCESS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Fitz (2013: 35) postulated that prison gives a person time to introspect and reconnect with oneself. Being isolated from society leads to the loss of one's freedom since one is always confined to the prison walls for the duration of the sentence. The freedom of movement and association provided for within the constitution is restricted when one is serving his or her sentence. As a result, parole is a period for which many incarcerated people wish. According to the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2015: 3), approximately 23,921 offenders in South Africa were eligible for parole in 2015 and approximately 2,023 victims participated in restorative justice, which is part of the reintegration process. Such parolees who have the victims participating in restorative justice have the opinion that when they achieve parole, their problems will be resolved. This is because they believe that meeting their victims will give them the opportunity to apologize and that they can find the way forward together. Davis, Bahr and Ward (2012: 447), however, argued that parolees face a plethora of challenges that may lead them into recidivism.

This chapter focuses on the reintegration process for ex-offenders and includes detailed discussions of both its purpose and structure. The prison setting is very different from free society in that individuals do not have to worry about basic necessities as they are all provided for. Thus, the former incarcerated individuals have to be equipped for independent life through the reintegration process. Furthermore, this chapter aims to review the challenges faced by male parolees and their lived experiences, ideas, and expectations after they become reintegrated into the community (Singh 2016: 8). The focus is on the parolees' observations and expectations after being reintegrated into the community. The challenges experienced by male parolees, such as unemployment, stigma, substance abuse, and mental illness, after their release into a community are discussed. The structure and form of support offered by the community to sustain reconciliation is also reviewed.

2.2 Parolees

A parolee is an offender who is released conditionally by the parole board and correctional supervision prior to the end of his or her sentence and who is placed under the supervision of the community corrections (Ntuli 2000: 13).

2.2.1 Parole

Parole is a period in which an offender, who has served a minimum detention period in a correctional center, is released to serve the remaining years in the community while being supervised by the Department of Correctional Services. There are conditions for parole placement (Curlewis 2016: 1). The release of offenders before they finish their sentence in certain conditions has been carried out in South Africa since 1910.

For parole to occur, a release process has to be considered. This includes a report to be submitted by the institutional committee of the prison to the Central Release Board. The report needs to contain information on the behavior, training, adaptation, and treatment programs in which the offender has been involved. The Central Release Board then makes a recommendation to the minister or the person in charge of releasing the offenders (Department of Correctional Services 2004: 3).

South African parole consists of two processes: the first process is applicable to those who are sentenced under the new Correctional Services Act, and the other process is applicable to those who have been sentenced prior to the enactment of the new legislation. These processes differ in that the latter category is dealt with in accordance with the release policy applicable in the former Act 8 of 1959 (Louw and Luyt 2009: 65). Both processes of parole are controlled by three elements, which are the preparation of offenders for parole placement, the selection and granting of parole, and, lastly, the supervision of parolees in the community. The process of parole begins with the Case Management Committee's recommendation and a preparation of the offender's profile report. The report is then submitted to the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board, which then decides if the offender is suitable for parole. Once approved, the offender is

conditionally released under the supervision and control of the Community Corrections Office, depending on the available information. The offenders are supervised until their parole period expires (Louw and Luyt 2009: 12).

Parole is used to place offenders under community supervision. The community plays a significant role in assisting the offenders as they re-adjust within their community (Louw 2008: 31). Parole can be used to successfully reintegrate offenders into the community. It is a vital mechanism that is used to return offenders to the community with the hope that they will not revert to criminal behavior (Louw and Luty 2009: 3). It is important that community members sitting on the Correctional Supervision and Parole Boards have the appropriate skills and training to make the correct decisions. This is because incorrect decisions on parole can lead to challenges within communities (West-Smith, Pogrebin and Poole 2003).

2.3 Background History

According to the White paper on Correctional Services (2005: 11), there is a new approach used by correctional services that moved from the retributive approach, which focused on punishing offenders, to the rehabilitative approach. Chikadzi (2016: 289) stated that a retributive focus is centered on punishment as the sole response to offenders whereas the rehabilitative model seeks to use punishment as a means to an end. This implies that rehabilitation is used as a way to change the behavior of the offender to become a person who follows the laws of the country. The rehabilitation model involves the society by teaching it ways of accommodating the ex-prisoners in society. The rehabilitative approach has its focus on rebuilding the offender such that they follow the laws of the land when they are released from prison.

Albertus (2010: 15) stated that the rehabilitative approach places the reintegration of ex-offenders at the center such that they can fit back into society. Reintegration incorporates all the programs offered in support of the ex-offenders before and after they are released back into the community. Support is offered by many members of society, including family, friends, and supervisors from correctional facilities for people on parole, as well as voluntary organizations. Thus, reintegration is there to help create an atmosphere

that is not conducive to criminal activities. Hence, society is essential in the reintegration as it is part of the solution to accommodate the ex-offenders back into society.

Male parolees need the society, their close family, and friends to adapt to life after incarceration. Many male parolees look forward to looking after their families and hope to revive the bond that they had with their family before prison, and the rehabilitation process is crucial in restoring this. Zondi (2012: 767) suggested that rehabilitation, together with reintegration, allows the ex-offenders and their families and friends to rebuild their relations, and this allows the family to heal if they have suffered from the gap or hurt that has been caused by the sentencing of their family member.

2.4 Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is the response to the need to change South Africa's retributive criminal justice system. With restorative justice, the offender is called to take responsibility for the harm he or she has caused, and the offender is also asked to take corrective action, such as seeking forgiveness from the offended party (van Wyk 2015: 4). In addition, restorative justice concerns addressing the needs and hurts of the victim and offenders in a way that allows all parties, including the community, to be healed (Batley 2005: 22).

Restorative justice includes three principles. First, crime is seen as something that injures the victim, community, and offenders. The criminal justice system should look for the healing and restoration of broken relationships. The second principle is that not only the government but also the victims and the community should be actively involved in criminal justice. Lastly, in promoting justice, the government's responsibility is to preserve order whilst the community establishes peace (Maepa *et al.* 2005: 156).

In South Africa, restorative justice provides a practical, coherent, and sound response to the moral challenge caused by crime. It gives a feasible way to apply the five R's (Crocker 2015: 48). The five R's comprise:

- Facing reality: this is when the offender realizes that a crime was committed and that they are facing consequences of the crime.

- Accepting responsibility: this is the acknowledgement that they themselves committed the crime and that they are going to be held accountable for the crime committed.
- Expressing repentance: this is when the offender accepts that what they have done was wrong and when they regret committing the crime. This also includes asking for forgiveness from all the people who were affected by the criminal act.
- Knowing reconciliation: this is when the offender does not make excuses for committing their crime and uses the opportunity to reconcile with the offended people.
- Making restitution: this is when the offender expresses gratitude for reconciliation.

Furthermore, restorative justice gives a practical way for families and the community to become involved in dealing with crime and to heal from the impact caused (van Wyk 2015: 5). According to Skelton and Batley (2008: 47), restorative justice is both backward and forward looking. It focuses on the past by dealing with the aftermath of the offence while also looking forward because it looks at the implications for the future. The standard criminal justice system does not look forward at the incidents that might happen – it only focuses on developing the offender to avoid future crimes.

In South Africa, restorative justice is appropriate, especially when the reintegration of the offenders is concerned. Restorative justice is important because it seeks to mend relations between the offender and the victims. In addition, restorative justice gives the offender a chance to communicate with the victims and apologize, if possible. Legislative and policy framework emphasizes victim–offender dialogues where victims and offenders are brought together with an aim of reconciliation and the healing of both parties (Maimane 2017: 24). The restorative justice process is beneficial to both victims and offenders, by encouraging the recovery of the victim through coming together with an aim to restore relationships. Using the South African spirit of *ubuntu*, the reintegration of offenders into the community is regarded as a display of love and forgiveness.

2.5 Rehabilitation

According to the South African Department of Correctional Services White Paper (2005: 4), rehabilitation is a process that is a combination of the correction of the behavior of an offender, developing a person, and improving social responsibility and values. On the other hand, Singh (2016: 1) defined *rehabilitation* as a process that aids in making offenders move away from conditions or factors that have led them to offend. Thus, rehabilitation deals with every aspect that has led to the offender committing the crime such that when the sentence ends, one can live a crime-free life. Rehabilitation aims at meeting the government goals of improving the behavior of offenders and also creating good social values and morals for the offenders. Thus, rehabilitation not only targets the prevention of crime but also aims to incorporate the ex-offenders back into the society and also encourage them to change their behavior. However, Laub and Sampson (2003: 123) pointed out that the success of rehabilitation is highly dependent on each offender's personal will to refrain from criminal activities.

Balfour (2003) pointed out that rehabilitation is a way of making offenders aware of the criminal offences that they have committed, and, ultimately, they can be responsible and deviate from such behavior. Through rehabilitation, the offenders are equipped with educational qualifications as well as work skills that will help them with their reintegration into society. Thus, rehabilitation aims to eradicate all the conditions and thoughts that have resulted in the offender committing a crime. The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) finds that rehabilitation is the key process to reduce recidivism.

According to the DCS (2005), social workers help in providing services such as support, informing, developing, and intervening when there is a crisis as well as assessing. Social workers help offenders with problem-solving skills that will help with reintegration into society. Social workers help the offenders deal with problems such as substance abuse and reconnecting with family and friends.

Healthcare services provide the offenders with healthcare. The offenders with problems are identified and given the proper care that they deserve, and this treatment is given free of charge. Finally, skills development involves the improvement of the offenders' skills such that they become employable and enhance their social functioning (Singh

2016: 4). Religious workers also have a role to play in rehabilitation as they offer support to the offenders through their moral and spiritual development lessons. Religious workers, in some instances, can provide counselling services. Thus, the rehabilitation process in South Africa aims at reducing the potential of offenders committing the same crimes again.

According to Singh (2016: 4), the rehabilitation process in South Africa is supposed to involve a number of aspects, which include psychological services, social work services, healthcare services, skills development, and spiritual care. The offenders are given psychological services to promote their emotional and mental welfare when incarcerated and afterwards. Thus, as soon as offenders are imprisoned, they are diagnosed and, thus, helped according to their needs (DCS 2005). The different forms of therapy, such as individual or group therapy, are provided to the offenders in order to strengthen their rehabilitation. Singh went further to point out that the psychological services offered in prisons promote the mental health of the offenders, thereby countering the negative effects of incarceration, which improves rehabilitation.

2.6 Reintegration

2.6.1 International Guidelines

The reintegration programs tend to fall into one of two principal categories (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2018: 50), namely:

- i. Programs and interventions provided within the institution itself when the offender is about to be released: these assist with resolving issues such as seeking forgiveness from one's family, addressing dangerous aspects related to their criminal behavior, and obtaining the essential skills to carry on with their lives as law-abiding and self-sufficient citizens.
- ii. Programs and interventions carried out in the community setting itself: these enable the re-integration of the ex-offender into society when they finish their sentence or when they are out on parole. Such programs depend on some form

of community supervision in conjunction with several forms of support or assistance to the ex-offenders and, from time to time, their family.

2.6.2 General Reintegration Process

The reintegration process can be conducted in various forms, and it is not confined to one way of carrying out matters. The reintegration process is conducted by the DCS, hence they are the ones who decide how the process works. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018: 51), there are certain elements that have to be followed to ensure that the reintegration process has a good structure.

The reintegration process begins with the identification of crucial stakeholders, and they are identified by the government and DCS. The stakeholders include police officers, judges, probation officers, parole officers, correctional officers, lawyers, court personnel, and other individuals. The key stakeholders would work together to find effective ways of social integration. In addition, some are those who are responsible for enforcing the law and the interpretation of the law. This would assist them in understanding re-entry issues, resources, and social contexts into which offenders will be returning (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime 2018: 11). When the stakeholders find the challenges, they collectively find ways of tackling them. The challenges can be addressed by reviewing and amending current laws and policies. The key stakeholders would mobilize resources to ensure that the new policies and strategies are successful, thereby leading to success in social integration. Finally, the learning stage exists where the new policies and strategies are monitored to check for their progress. The results of the new strategies would then be assessed so as to gauge the real impact of the strategies (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime 2018: 11).

Generally, a country's reintegration process is governed by the resources that it possesses, how the communities receive the former inmates, and the prevailing laws of the given country. Resources can be in monetary form or even human resources. A lack of resources restricts the country from conducting reintegration because there would be scarce human capital for the process or limited funds for the parole officers to monitor the parolees. In addition, society plays a role also in reintegration because society is the

entity that has to help the parolee to reintegrate on a day-to-day basis. The acceptance or non-acceptance of the parolee by the society has different effects on the reintegration process. The reintegration process has to involve the community because every human being is capable of living a crime-free life, and, with the help of the community, the ex-offender can live life without crime.

2.6.3 South African Reintegration Process

According to the South African constitution, it is the responsibility of the state to support and subsidize the social reintegration of ex-prisoners. In South Africa, the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) oversees correctional and development programs aimed at preparing offenders to reintegrate into the society to which they would return after serving their terms (Ndiye 2016: 36).

In South Africa, the DCS focuses on strengthening offenders' life skills so that they can attain their full potential. This means that the reintegration process in South Africa includes education, gender training, poverty alleviation projects, and productive employment, all of which help inmates become employed. It also allows participation in community service (Vandala 2019: 5). In addition, the department is mandated to educate the society in an attempt to encourage them to embrace the individuals who return to the society from prison. In addition, Travis (2016) found out that there is a need for peer mentoring or coaching. Peer mentoring is a relationship between people who are of the same age, in which one person has more experience than the other and can provide support as well as knowledge and skills transfer. Peer mentoring helps the parolees accept that it is possible to succeed in life, and this allows the person to reintegrate into society without many problems. This is because the ex-offenders will be motivated by the successful people within their age groups, and this will push them to take charge of their lives and improve their lives using legal means. With the presence of the peer mentor, society is also more likely to accept the parolee as they too are given an example that it is possible for a person to change (Travis 2016: 4).

2.7 Parolee Expectations

Marlow *et al.* (2012: 17) contended that the parolees will have been used to living in the confinement of prison cells. This implies that when they are given parole, they are already used to the dependent life behind bars, thus they expect their lives to continue being dependent on someone, either family members or friends, for their upkeep. The parolees usually have the prospects of being supported by society since they would have spent a considerable time behind bars. Marlow *et al.* (2015) went further to reveal that the parolees look to their families and friends for updates about the changes in society such that they can fit back into the society that they have left behind before being sentenced. A study by Naser and La Vigne (2006: 98) stated that ex-offenders were expectant of family support after release. Thus, this raised the expectations of gaining more support from family and friends upon release. Naser and La Vigne went further to point out that over two-thirds of the respondents were expectant that the family's support would allow them to regain control of their lives through financial support or assistance in seeking employment.

In addition, Chikadzi (2017: 297) highlighted that the parolees would be expecting to gain after-care services when they are back in society. This is because the parolees would have been used to getting visits from organizations – both profit-making and non-profit-making organizations – when they were in prison. The parolees would have been given more support when they were about to be released, and they would be expecting that the support would remain after release. Chikadzi went further to reveal that the parolees would expect to be monitored regarding how they are adjusting to society, as well as being attended to by professionals, for example, psychologists, such that they will not become depressed.

According to Davis, Bahr and Ward (2017: 448), the parolees will be expecting motivation to continue such that they live a crime-free life by being offered jobs that sustain their upkeep. When behind prison bars, the offenders are encouraged to study such that they become relevant on their release. However, after their release, they can find it difficult to obtain a job because of the criminal record that is attached to their curricula vitae (CVs), which is contrary to their expectations of leading a crime-free life. Lambie, Seymour and Russell (2013: 63) pointed out that sex offenders in New Zealand

hoped to have a new way of living upon release from prison. The offenders had a new mindset that they would have prospects of living a life that would be completely different from the life they were living before they were incarcerated. This implies that the former offenders would be expecting to develop a “replacement self” that is changed from their old way of life and build a new identity (Adams, Chen and Chapman 2017: 39).

Ndike (2014: 40) postulated that offenders also have the expectation that they will live a life free of judgements. Society, if not educated, has a tendency to label the ex-offenders and judge them based on their behavior before they were incarcerated. The reintegration process gives the offenders the hope of living a normal life. They perceive that society will be welcoming, and they should understand that they have changed. The offenders would expect that the reintegration process would have dealt with all the stigma in the communities where they will be living.

2.8 Challenges Faced by Male Parolees

There are numerous challenges faced by male parolees upon returning to their communities. The offender reintegration process requires that communities, family members, and professionals be supportive to assist offenders to avoid reverting to a life of crime. Challenges range from family acceptance, acceptance by members of the community, employment opportunities, housing opportunities, medical treatment, and financial difficulties.

2.8.1 Employment Opportunities

Employment is a key factor that affects reintegration. When a person is released from prison, they have to start paying for their own expenses. Thus, they need some form of employment such that they can earn an income. Finding employment may help them associate with upright citizens and also refrain from criminal activities. This is because they will not have any idle time since they would be busy with work. In addition, work relations would help them with forgetting about crime. Hence, work is important in the process of reintegration (Doherty and Ensminger 2013: 67).

A criminal conviction has the effect of limiting prospects of employment, social services, and public housing assistance (Coates 2015: 12). According to Haymond (2014: 2), “even having a minor criminal record creates substantial barriers and far-reaching collateral consequences”. Ray and Grommon (2016: 350) supported the view that the greatest challenge faced by ex-offenders globally is unemployment. They pointed out that ex-offenders are often labeled and that this often leads to unemployment as the recruiters are also part of the society that labels them. The “ex-con” label has a negative impact on the employers’ willingness to hire, and this often results in most ex-offenders staying unemployed for long periods of time. This is because of high competition in the job market. There would be more experienced and educated people without criminal records also wanting the same position, and the employer would rather hire the one with a clean record. Once the employer finds out that the person has a criminal record, they no longer want to hire them.

Chamberlain, Bogges and Powers (2014: 4) pointed out that male parolees in the United States of America have difficulties in finding well-paying jobs. The most commonly available form of employment involves jobs needing manual labor, maintenance, and food service jobs where the hourly wage rate is low. This was the main challenge causing male parolees to return to crime in order to raise more funds for survival. Finally, Chamberlain, Bogges and Powers (2014: 5) also highlighted the location of the well-paying jobs as a problem for parolees. Transport costs, the difficulty for the parolees to gain a valid driver’s license, and a lack of access to a motor vehicle prevent parolees from getting such jobs that are often situated far away from their living locations.

In their study on Pakistan, Ahmed, Ashraf and Ahmed (2017: 29) also pointed out that the greatest stumbling block for ex-offenders is the issue of unemployment. The ex-offenders find difficulty in gaining employment that pays well and that can sustain them. The need for sustenance would, in turn, lead to the ex-offenders seeking other ways of looking after themselves, and this often leads them back to criminal activities. Therefore, unemployment is a common problem for parolees in numerous countries, and there seems to be no viable solution to address this challenge even though they have many policies to address it. This is because there is stiff competition in terms of gaining employment. There are few employment opportunities compared to the demand for

employment. Employers would rather hire someone with a clean past rather than one with a criminal record even though they have the same educational qualifications and experience.

Locally, the employment opportunities for the low-skills jobs in societies often arise due to the connections that one has in the community in which one lives (Magadze, Roelofse and Oliver 2017: 126). This is a norm in African society because people in the same society usually converse with every member of the society. For instance, in the townships, such as Umlazi in Durban, people staying in the streets close together in the community know each other, and they usually communicate regularly with each other. The male parolees will have spent a substantial length of time serving their sentences, and, thus, they will have tenuous ties with the community they re-join, and this leads to them being overlooked for such jobs. Therefore, the male parolees in South Africa also encounter the same unemployment problems as experienced internationally. Mujuzi and Tsweledi (2014: 28) supported this notion by pointing out that the expungement of the ex-offender's criminal record is done only 10 years after the year of conviction.

A previous study by Chikadzi (2017: 22) conducted in the Gauteng region showed that the few parolees or ex-offenders who got jobs would later be fired when the employers found out that they had a criminal record. South African employers are skeptical about offering employment to people with criminal records. One of the major challenges facing parolees in South Africa is a lack of employment opportunities due to the stigma of being a parolee. Albertus (2010) and Uggen and Staff (2001) stated that the creation of job opportunities for parolees may be an active approach to ensure that they do not reoffend. Research by Hunter (2015: 826) reported that it took over a year for most parolees to become re-employed; a year later into re-entry, 37% of parolees became employed full-time and another 11% part-time. In KwaZulu-Natal, only 39% of released prisoners were employed in the same year that they were released (Hunter 2015: 826). This implies that less than half of the male parolees are able to find employment. Hence, this shows that although the government is putting policies in place to allow for successful reintegration, the ex-offenders continue to have a difficult time securing employment and becoming stable. There is a need for governments to encourage employers to overlook the criminal records of people and help reintegrate the parolees into society. When an ex-offender is

employed, they can more easily fit into society as they will be seen to be more acceptable to people within the community.

The lack of employment leads to a number of other challenges for the male parolees, which include them taking drugs and becoming homeless.

2.8.2 Substance Abuse

Petersilia (2005: 45) pointed out that approximately 73% of the people in prison in the United States of America were involved in substance use prior to them being sentenced. This notion was supported by Karberg and James (2005: 242) who revealed that approximately 50% of the inmates in their study had committed their offences while under the influence of either alcohol or drugs. Thus, there is generally a substantial number of people who have once been drug users in prisons on probation or on parole. According to Adorjan and Chui (2014: 110), stress related to being unemployed together with the availability of drugs and alcohol leads to male parolees in South Africa seeking peer groups who are already involved in substance abuse and joining them. According to Statistics South Africa (2020), approximately 30% of the youth are unemployed in South Africa. When parolees find themselves experiencing this pressure of the difficulties in life, they can easily return to drug abuse as a form of comfort. This pattern of male parolees facing severe challenges such as unemployment, resorting to substance abuse, and ending up being imprisoned again is very common. In prison, there are strict rules preventing drug use, but when back in society, the availability of illegal substances from sellers on the black market is rife, and relapse into heavy drug use becomes more likely.

Similarly, Ahmed, Ashraf and Ahmed (2017: 30) discussed how numerous ex-offenders in Pakistan are drug addicts. This implies that they are always at risk of returning to taking drugs after their release due to different pressures of life. Therefore, a substantial number of the ex-offenders go back to prison because of a violation of their parole or because of committing a new crime under the influence of drugs. Thus, recidivism due to substance abuse is a major challenge faced by ex-offenders in Pakistan.

2.8.3 Acceptance by Family and Friends

Connected to substance abuse is another key challenge that parolees face: limited acceptance back into their families. According to Nchabeleng (2018: 46), South African male parolees are not being warmly received by their families. Their families might be angry with them for committing crime, and they also might resent them because of the nature of the crime that they have committed. This is because the crimes might have been committed against a family member, for example, involving physical abuse. On the other hand, the crime committed could have given the family a bad reputation in society. In addition, the time that parolees have spent serving their sentences would have created a gap between them and their families (Chikadzi 2017: 294). All these factors make it difficult for parolees to mend their relationships with their immediate or even extended families. This situation is aggravated when the male parolee has not been in touch with his family whilst serving his sentence. Thus, the male parolees face the difficulty of reconnecting with their families. The longer the period of disconnection, the more likely it is that the parolee will fall into recidivism because they may feel unwanted or unsupported by their close family. This would, in turn, lead them to the abuse of substances as a way of dealing with their problems, which makes them more likely to commit crime again (Nchabeleng 2018: 46).

Chikadzi (2017: 294) went further to indicate that a poor relationship between the offenders and their family members is one of the major challenges faced by offenders upon release and often leads to unsuccessful rehabilitation and reintegration processes. One of the offender's greatest challenges is to mend broken relations with their families and the community at large (Zondi 2012: 778). The community often does not want to be associated with ex-offenders of gruesome crimes. For instance, a long time may be needed for family members and the community to accept someone back who has once raped a minor or one who has once robbed people in the streets.

Most offenders return to their families for basic needs after being released from the correctional center. Parolees need family support in many ways, for example, to be accommodated in a house and be supported economically. Family is the closest to the male parolee, and it is the first point of call for the parolees. Thus, the family has to open its doors for the parolees and make them feel welcome and loved which, in turn, would

motivate the parolee to actively work on developing themselves and not relapsing. Families need to be educated such that they can warmly welcome parolees back into their houses. It has been proven that offenders who have a good relationship with their family members and friends whilst they are still in correctional centers are less likely to recidivate. This is because they are shown their worth by their families, and they would want to stay with families and friends while enjoying their freedom.

In most cases, offenders depend on parents, siblings, spouses, and intimate partners during and after incarceration for emotional and financial support (Naser and Visser 2006). Substantial evidence shows that members of the offenders' family and friends are a critical source of resettlement support. Several studies revealed that between 40 and 80% of newly released parolees depend on their family members for their reintegration back into community in the face of unemployment and homelessness challenges (Berg and Huebner 2010; Naser and Visser 2006; Nelson, Dees and Allen 1999; Visser *et al.* 2004).

The parolees' relationship with their children is affected because some children would still be angry because of the parent's crime, and some would be angry because of the life they have had to live without the parent. In other cases, children may be confused because they do not know how to behave or act around the once absent parent. People most affected are the children as they have to adjust to the demands of the father who has been absent for a substantial time in their lives (Marlow *et al.* 2012: 13). Upon return, rebuilding damaged bonds can be difficult, if not impossible. This is often aggravated by many factors that prolong the effect of their incarceration, such as difficulties in obtaining a job to cater to the children's needs. Bonds are difficult to mend if the parent cannot perform the duties that they once did before incarceration. Most children would show respect to the parent if they are being financially supported, but, due to imprisonment, it takes time for a parolee to obtain a proper job. Therefore, earning respect and rebuilding the bonds might take time with the children without financially supporting them. According to Rocha (2014: 31), there would have been a gap created between the parent and the child, and the latter would now be dependent on other people besides the once absent parent. Davies (2013: 65) supported the idea that the children usually bond with people supporting them financially and emotionally because they are always present in

their lives. Thus, it is difficult for the parolee to mend the relations and build the bonds, especially when they are unemployed.

2.8.4 Stigma

Magaze, Oliver and Roelofse (2017: 128) stated that male parolees in South Africa also face the challenge of social stigma. The parolees are often called names and are negatively labeled by society. The parolee might behave in a good manner, but the community always looks at them with a negative perspective, and no matter how diligently the parolee tries to act in a responsible manner, their actions are regarded as criminal or deviant. This leads to the parolees isolating themselves and usually leads to recidivism or even suicide. The labeling by society narrows the parolee's chance of reintegrating successfully into society. Appiah (2007: 62) concurred that society is crucial because they can create deviance by making verbal and non-verbal rules, which create a gap between the male parolees and society, and these rules refer to parolees as outsiders.

According to Chikadzi (2017: 293), the offenders' victims (including their friends, family, relatives, and the general populace within society) tend to find it difficult to change their perceptions about the ex-offenders. This, in turn, would lead to the family and the society at large having negative feelings toward the parolees. This becomes the source of the stigma within society against the parolees. Nchabeleng (2018: 19) also supported suggesting that society would be very angry with the ex-offender such that they would not be willing to reconcile with the person and that most of the members of the community might wish for the offenders to be locked in jail for the rest of their lives.

The adaptation to society can be permanently impaired due to the type of offense committed by a community member, for example, if it is a sexual one, especially if the victim was a family member or from the society. Families that choose to unite with these convicted sex offenders again carry a substantial load. Released prisoners depend mostly on their families for support in all areas of their lives if a proper re-entry is to occur (Blasko *et al.* 2015: 342).

2.8.5 Mental Health

According to Lurigio (2013: 71), mental health problems are a further factor that make the reintegration of male parolees difficult. Apart from drug dependence, male parolees also often suffer from depression, mood disorders, low self-esteem, impulsiveness, and failure to manage their anger. Most male parolees tend to not be willing to disclose to their families that they are having problems, especially in cases that have to do with anger management as well as depression. They feel as though it would degrade their masculinity. It would make one less of a man since the majority of them have grown up in places where, as a man, one has to be strong and keep one's emotions within oneself. The challenge of mental disorders is also exacerbated by the abuse of substances, as this makes it difficult (Lurigio 2013: 71).

2.8.6 HIV and AIDS

There is much evidence that criminals and ex-offenders in the community are at a high risk of spreading or contracting HIV (Taylor 2015: 38), and they experience substantial barriers to healthcare access. The types of engagements in which they partake while incarcerated are the ones that expose them to a high risk of HIV infection. New jail entrants are often required to carry out risky actions to survive, including engaging in unprotected sex, transactional sex, and sex with multiple partners (Brown 2014: 20). Parolees tend to continue with this behavior once they leave prison as it is considered an easier way to make money and they would have already become accustomed to it. In a study examining the dissolution of primary intimate relationships during incarceration, Hipp, Petersilia and Turner (2010: 951) found that ending a stable committed relationship while incarcerated was associated with the common practice of having three or more partners once they came out of prison. Excessive drug use is also a common association with high HIV risk within the corrections population (Farkas and Miller 2017: 90). Reintegration is a struggle to the extent that released convicts find it difficult to enroll into health facilities for HIV medication supplies. This is because they find it difficult to open up. According to studies, inmates who are being treated for HIV are at a high risk of viral suppression once released as health gains are not maintained after release (Mitchell *et al.* 2016: 132).

A qualitative study by Marlow *et al.* (2015: 98) investigated ex-convicts and their behavior after release. Participants acknowledged the challenges of community re-entry and reported engaging in drug use and sex for survival and as a coping mechanism. However, this is more common with female parolees as compared to males (Marlow *et al.* 2015: 98).

Therefore, all the above-mentioned challenges are a hindrance to the restorative justice approach by the DCS as all these push the ex-offender toward recidivism. However, the department is working diligently to ensure that the restorative approach is effective so as to allow the reintegration of offenders into society. The inclusion of society in this process would allow them to understand the ex-offenders, thereby dealing with stigma. The society is crucial for the effectiveness of the reintegration process.

2.9 Recidivism

Breetzke and Polaschek (2018: 2995) mentioned the act of reoffending and that these prisoners or parolees are detained again once caught. When these prisoners who were previously released are rearrested, they are judged on parole violations instead of the committing of new crimes. Recidivism is the most common measure of the effectiveness of correctional programs. Recidivism can be measured by rearrests, reconviction, and resentencing. Research has shown that many offenders recidivate if the rearrest is measured within 3 years after prison release.

Furthermore, research has shown that of the more than 400,000 offenders who were released from different states in 2005, 68% were rearrested within 3 years and 77% within 5 years. Recidivism rates are higher among men, younger offenders, and those who have longer criminal histories (Durose, Cooper and Snyder 2014). Programs are in place where offenders are educated on dealing with issues that cause recidivism. For example, offenders are offered programs on how to obtain substance abuse treatment, thus reducing the chances of recidivism (Duwe 2017). Reintegration's main purpose is to reduce the chances of recidivism and ensuring that ex-offenders live a crime-free life.

2.10 Conclusion

The literature review focused on restorative justice and the various challenges faced by male parolees. The correctional services moved away from the criminal justice system and seeks to incorporate the ex-convicts back into society. This is enabled through the use of numerous stakeholders, which includes the government; non-governmental organizations, such as churches; private companies; and also, government workers, such as the police and parole officers, to work with the parolees.

Male parolees typically experience challenges, and this study differs in that it focuses on the challenges being faced by male parolees only. Male parolees have more responsibilities to deal with when released, and they have more bridges to mend on their release, which increases their burden. This is because of African culture, which makes men the head of their families, hence they have to lead. The challenges faced by the male parolees in South Africa are essentially the same as the ones being faced worldwide, and these include the lack of employment as well as stigmatization of the ex-offenders.

This study also differs with regard to the lack of solutions for the challenges being raised throughout the literature. The DCS implemented a rehabilitative approach, but there is little or no evidence to show that it has given substantial results with regard to helping parolees fit back into the community. This has been aggravated by the strict budget given to the department by the finance ministry. Therefore, the effectiveness of the rehabilitative approach, which includes reintegration, is yet to be established. However, the white paper by the DCS aims at removing the challenges faced by ex-offenders when serving their sentences as well as when they are released from prison. Thus, the literature reveals the challenges being faced by male parolees in societies as well as with their close families and relatives regardless of the policy framework and legislation that requires a smooth reintegration of the offenders into the community. Once people have a greater understanding of the challenges, it will be possible to design an intervention. The following chapter focuses on the interventions that can be used to curb the challenges being faced by male parolees and the impact of the ways used to reduce challenges.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter's main focus is to provide a detailed description of the approach and methods that were applied in this study. A research methodology is a framework of procedures, practices, and rules that are employed by researchers in order to solve research problems (Queiros, Faria and Almeida 2017: 26). It outlines how and why the research can be undertaken. It focuses on the research design, sampling techniques, and data collection methods as well as data analysis (Queirós, Faria and Almeida 2017: 26). This chapter looks at how this study was conducted in general and, in particular, focuses on how the data was collected and analyzed. The choice of research methods depends mainly upon the research methodology adopted, which is also informed by the research questions to be addressed (Sun *et al.* 2018: 128). Methodology extends beyond the techniques utilized to gather data, and, therefore, the chapter also explores the theories that underlie the methods applied in the study.

3.2 Research Design

The core intention of the research design is to give a clear plan of action and how to obtain answers to the key research questions of a study (Cooper and Schindler 2018: 377). This relates to the techniques used to sample participants and access and analyze data. According to Leavy (2017: 4), a research design is a clearly defined structure for implementing research methodology, and the three commonly used research methods are the qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the parolees' experiences, this study adopted a qualitative methodology. Qualitative research involves a smaller number of participants who are addressed in depth. Creswell (2015: 324) stated that a qualitative approach seeks to tell the story of a particular group's experiences in their own words. This qualitative study utilized semi-structured interviews to explore the experiences of the parolees in Lamontville community and Lamontville community members in order to more fully

understand the current issues with the reintegration process. The adopted action research approach contributed to making the research design suitable and adequate for a comprehensive analysis of the perspectives of the participants in order to provide an in-depth account of their experiences.

3.2.1 Action Research

Action research refers to a variety of evaluative, investigative, and analytical research methods that aim to diagnose problems or weaknesses, whether organizational, academic, or instructional, and help in developing practical solutions to address them quickly and efficiently. Action research can also be applied to educational programs or techniques that do not necessarily pose problems but that educators simply want to learn more about and improve upon (McNiff 2016). The overall goal is to create a simple, practical, and repeatable process of iterative learning, assessment, and improvement that leads to increasingly better results for schools, teachers, or programs (McNiff 2016).

Action research can also be called an action cycle or inquiry cycle because it usually follows a predefined process that repeats itself over time. This process was also adopted in this research (Chevalier and Buckles 2019: 13):

- Identify a problem to investigate
- Collect data about the problem
- Organize, analyze, and interpret the data
- Develop a plan to solve the problem
- Implement the plan
- Evaluate the results of the actions taken
- Identify a new problem
- Repetition of the process

Less prescriptive or theory-driven research methods are typically used in conducting action research, as the goal is to address practical problems in a particular organization or school rather than to produce independently validated and reproducible results. Action research generally focuses on solving a specific problem (e.g., increasing knowledge

and understanding in the field of education or any other field) especially within a relatively closed system such as a school, a district, or a network of affiliated organizations.

Action research is the most suitable approach for this research since the study aims to bring about and assess changes in relationships amongst parolees, families, and people in the community. McNiff (2016: 5) highlighted that action research is “traditionally concerned with improvements of the study context for example solving a given problem. It is a common feature of educational research since it includes research intervention for implementation, rather than simply a data collection process”. The action research inquiry process is recurring. In addition to collecting and analyzing data, it also includes communicating outcomes, capturing stakeholder views, and “taking action in response to those views in order to improve or restore the issue that is addressed” (Chevalier and Buckles 2019: 13). For this study, the following steps formed the key action research process:

1. An initial phase of data collection occurred to establish the findings for the first three research questions, which focus on the parolees’ experiences.
2. For interventions to be suggested, data was collected from the parolees through a process of individual and group interviews.
3. After the interview session with the parolees, the next stage of the research was to talk to community members through focus group discussions. This gave the researcher diverse perspectives to be able to collectively develop interventions.
4. The findings then informed an intervention. This was designed to address some of the challenges based on the understandings developed in the initial phase.
5. A process of data analysis of the data collected from the parolees and the community members was undertaken to determine the final themes.
6. The final stage of the research was to reflect on the evaluation of the intervention and suggest further steps that could be taken in future research. This would conclude the study.

3.3 Aim and Research Question

The aim of the study is to explore the challenges faced by male parolees of Lamontville in eThekweni Municipality. The study aims to support the empowerment and transformation of these men as well as to promote reconciliation and the acceptance of male parolees by their families and the community after being released from prison. In addition, it aims to benefit the community by lowering the crime rate and also advancing social cohesion within the community. The study is guided by the following main research questions:

1. What are the parolees' expectations and experiences of reintegration into the community?
2. What are the challenges faced by male parolees of Lamontville and how can these challenges be addressed?
3. What is the attitude and experience of Lamontville community members with regard to the Lamontville male parolees?
4. In what ways can reconciliation and restoration between parolees and community members be supported and sustained?

3.4 Study Sites

The study recruited participants from the Lamontville community, Durban, South Africa. This is a small community of 32,421 people who are mostly Black Africans and Zulu-language speakers (Stat SA 2011). The community is in eThekweni metropolitan municipality in the KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa. The participants recruited included 10 male parolees and seven Lamontville community members.

3.5 Target Population

According to Kumar (2019: 23), a *population* refers to all the possible individuals or institutions relevant to the research question under investigation. Mohajan (2018: 30) described a research population as the total set of units in which the research is interested. Humphries (2017: 24) defined a *population* as the term used to describe the

main group of people from which a sample is drawn. The research targeted Lamontville male parolees and Lamontville community members. More specifically, 10 Lamontville parolees and 10 Lamontville community members were invited to take part in the research, but three community members were not able to take part in the research due to personal reasons. This reduced the sample size of the research to 17 (10 parolees and seven community members).

3.6 Sample and Sampling Method

It is often impractical to study an entire population due to time and resource constraints. Instead, the researcher looked at a portion or sample of the population that is representative of the entire population. According to Humphries (2017: 26), a sample is a representative cross-section of people drawn from a population such that their responses may be studied. Another useful definition of a sample is a “representative part of the object to be analyzed” (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim 2016: 18). Mohajan (2018: 31) stated that sample selection has a profound effect on the ultimate quality of the research.

3.6.1 Sampling Method

This study sampled 17 participants. The first sample drawn were ten male parolees of the Lamontville community area who were released on parole upon completion of their minimum detention period in the correctional center. These 10 participants were recruited using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that is used both in qualitative and quantitative research, particularly when the population of interest is unusual or difficult to access (Mannee and MacCabe 2018: 21). This technique was relevant and useful for this study as it allowed the researcher to identify and access a very particular set of individuals (male parolees in Lamontville and relevant community members) able to provide detailed information relevant to the research questions. Male parolees of any age were sampled. The participants were selected on the grounds that they lived in Lamontville, were encountering challenges reintegrating into the community, and were willing to share their experiences. Female parolees were excluded as there were not enough female parolees in Lamontville available to form an adequate sample. The researcher was able to access relevant

participants because she works in the correctional service center in Westville. This made it possible for her to meet and speak with possible participants, and those who were interested and willing to take part in the research were recruited.

In addition, seven Lamontville community members were also selected as part of the sample. This is because it was important to also hear the perspective of the community members on the reintegration of parolees in the community in order to address challenges in this process more fully. As the research is focused predominantly on male parolees, the parolees interviewed had the option of suggesting relevant community members that they would have liked the researcher to interview. This suggested sample included a church minister in the community, a businessman who employs parolees, an elderly ex-offender who lives in the community, a young person who lives in the community, a family member of one of the parolees, a female community member who was once a victim of crime, and, lastly, the secretary of the Council Chamber in Lamontville. This led the researcher to adopt both the purposive sampling, as the participants needed were specific, and snowball sampling techniques, as these participants were suggested by the previous participants (the parolees).

Snowball sampling is a type of purposive sampling. One subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who, in turn, provides the name of a third, and so forth (Vogt *et al.* 2012). Snowball sampling can be placed within a wider set of link-tracing methodologies (Parker, Scott and Geddes 2019) which seek to take advantage of the social networks of identified respondents to provide a researcher with an ever-expanding set of potential contacts (Vogt *et al.* 2012). This process is based on the assumption that a “bond” or “link” exists between the initial sample and others in the same target population, allowing a series of referrals to be made within a circle of acquaintance (Vogt *et al.* 2012). Snowball sampling can be applied for two primary purposes. Firstly, and most easily, it can be applied as an “informal” method to reach a target population. If the aim of a study is primarily explorative, qualitative, and descriptive, then snowball sampling offers practical advantages (Parker, Scott and Geddes 2019). This sampling technique was also useful for the research as the aim of the research is to explore the experience of male parolees as they reintegrate into the community. As a result, participant referrals provided a useful way of connecting with other relevant participants.

3.6.2 Sample Presentation of the Participants

The participants in this research were 10 male parolees of the Lamontville community area who were released on parole upon completion of their minimum detention period in the correctional center and seven community members who were suggested by the parolees. The 10 parolees who were interviewed were all males between the ages of 35 to 55 years. Most of the participants were married with primary educational qualifications. The majority of the participants were not employed. One participant highlighted that he was not fully employed but was employed on a freelance basis. Two participants stated that they had managed to find employment and that they were able to support their families. Table 3.1 presents the summarized demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the parolees who were interviewed for the research.

Table 3.1: Demographic characteristics of parolees ($n=10$)

S/N	Age	Race	Gender	Marital Status	Education	Employment /relationship	Religion
1	55	Black	Male	Married	Primary	Unemployed	African traditional religion
2	50	Black	Male	Married	Degree	Part-time Employed	Christian
3	46	Black	Male	Single	Primary	Unemployed	Christian, African
4	45	Black	Male	Married	Primary	Unemployed	African Ancestral beliefs
5	45	Black	Male	Single	Primary	Unemployed	Christian, African
6	44	Black	Male	Single	Primary	Employed	Christian, African
7	43	Black	Male	Single	Diploma	Unemployed	Christian, African
8	43	Black	Male	Single	Primary	Unemployed	African Ancestral beliefs
9	41	Black	Male	Single	Primary	Unemployed	African traditional religion
10	35	Black	Male	Single	Matric	Employed	Christian African

For the community, the parolees, in their interviews, suggested that community members must include the following people: a church minister, a businessman who sometimes employs parolees (he obtains tenders from the government and owns taxis), an old ex-offender who lives in the community, a young male person who is not working but exposed to this location life, a family member of the offender, a community member who was once a victim of crime, and the secretary of the Council Chamber in Lamontville. Seven participants were recruited from the community in total. Table 3.2 presents the details of the community members who took part in the research.

Table 3.2: Demographic characteristics of the community members ($n=7$)

S/N	Age	Race	Gender	Education	Employment/relationship	Religion
1	63	Black	Male	No education	Self-Employed	African traditional religion
2	60	Black	Male	Diploma	Pastor	Christian
3	57	Black	Male	Grade-12	Businessman (self-employed)	Christian, African
4	26	Black	Male	Grade-12	Unemployed	African Ancestral beliefs
5	49	Black	Female	Matric	Unemployed	Christian, African
6	37	Black	Female	Grade-8	Unemployed	Christian, African
7	29	Black	Female	Grade-10	Employed (Council chambers)	Christian, African

All the participants spoke isiZulu as their home language.

3.7 Data Collection

According to Paradis *et al.* (2016: 263), data collection refers to the process of finding information from different sources to gain a clear idea of the answer to the questions under study. For the purpose of this study, the data collection included the use of focus group discussions and in-depth interviews to obtain detailed information about the experience of reintegration of male parolees into the Lamontville community. Semi-

structured in-depth one-on-one interviews were used with ten male Lamontville parolees, and focus groups were carried out with the seven Lamontville community members. Thus, the data used in this research is as a result of empirical interviews and focus group discussions supported by published books, articles in academic journals, published reports, and thesis materials. With the data from the abovementioned sources, the study was able to draw reasonable conclusions and make suggestions based on the research problems and questions.

3.7.1 Interviews

Interviews are valuable in qualitative research as they provide the opportunity for understanding the story behind an interviewee's experiences, and the interviewer is provided with in-depth ideas about the subject (Mohajan 2018). The in-depth interviews in this study were guided by the use of an interview schedule. The interview schedule used is attached as Annexure 1, and the questions are open-ended, as evidenced in the guide. The use of semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions allowed the participants to offer information about their perceptions, attitudes, and feelings freely. The interviews took place in Lamontville (the researcher's home) at a prearranged location and time that was convenient for both the participants and the researcher. The interviews lasted between 30 to 40 minutes and were conducted in isiZulu. The interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed verbatim and translated into English before analysis.

3.7.2 Focus Group Discussions

In addition to the one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the parolees, focus group discussions were conducted with Lamontville community members. Two focus group discussions were conducted in June 2021 (one for the older participants and one for the younger participants) to allow free communication between the participants and to reduce the number of people gathering at the same time due to COVID-19 regulations. The intention was to have different perspectives on the reintegration process of male parolees and to gain an overall view of how the community members viewed the parolees. This is because the perspective of the community members has much to

contribute to the experiences of parolees as they reintegrate into the community. Seven community members were recruited for the focus group discussion – four took part in the first group discussion and three in the second. The snowball and purposive sampling techniques were used to recruit the participants, as mentioned above. The focus group discussions lasted 3 hours, and they took place at a prearranged place (Lamontville community – researcher's home) at a time that was convenient for both the participants and the researcher.

3.7.3 Data Collection Instrument

The interview and focus group discussion guides are attached as Annexures 1 and 2. The questions used are open-ended and were formulated by the researcher and the supervisor. The questions were designed to encourage the participants' responses around perceptions, feelings, attitudes, experiences, and views related to the research aim and questions. The open-ended questions on the interview and focus group guides allowed the researcher to facilitate a process where the participants were free to relate their personal experiences and views whilst still directing the discussion toward areas that were relevant to the research questions. Clarification of the questions was made where it was necessary.

3.7.4 Research Procedures

The data collection process started with the identification of the participants and ensuring that these participants were willing to take part in the study. After recruiting the participants, the researcher organized a meeting where she introduced the research and gave out the consent forms to all the participants. The one-on-one interviews and focus group session with the parolees took place in April and June of 2021, respectively. The researcher introduced the research at the beginning of the interview and asked if the participant was willing to take part, and if they agreed, she would give them the consent form to sign before conducting the interviews.

During the interview and focus group process, the following interviewing techniques by Powney and Watts (2018: 18) were adopted to ensure effective interviewing. Most of the

talking was done by the participants; the questions were clear and brief. Sensitive and leading questions were avoided as much as possible, but because the research was dealing with a sensitive subject matter, there were some questions that might be considered sensitive and that were unavoidable. However, none of the participants reported or pointed out that they had issues with the questions in the interview guide. Furthermore, the following communication techniques were utilized during the interview and focus group discussion processes:

- Paraphrasing: The researcher was actively involved in the process, and, to show the participants that she was listening, she would identify what they had stated and rephrase it in such a way that the meaning of what the participant had stated was fully represented in the paraphrased version from the researcher. Whenever this was done, the participant would affirm what the researcher stated and add more to the explanation.
- Encouragement: In cases where the researcher noticed that the participant was reserved, the researcher would encourage the participant to speak, and when they did, the researcher would affirm that what the participant was stating was useful. This was a good strategy to get the reserved, timid, and shy participants to share their thoughts on the research topic.
- Probing: This technique was very useful in getting the participants to give more information and to show the participants that the researcher was listening. The researcher used different methods of probing in the research. The first was challenging. For this method, the researcher used questions such as when, where, what, why, and how to obtain more information about views on which the researcher needed more explanation. The second method used was showing understanding and allowing time for elaboration. For this method, the researcher ensured that the participants knew that she was listening and that their comments were understood. This was done through affirmative comments and gestures by the researcher.

All the interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in the Lamontville community (the home of the researcher), and the researcher was the interviewer and

the facilitator. The interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in the Zulu language but later transcribed verbatim and translated for analysis.

3.8 Data Analysis

The analysis of the information gathered during the data collection requires the application of an effective approach. Vogt *et al.* (2012) argued that the content analysis approach is effective in analyzing the captured perspectives, feelings, attitudes, and thoughts of participants. The research drew on the thematic content analysis technique to analyze the data. Thematic content analysis is apt for a descriptive presentation of qualitative data (Anderson 1997), an approach that this study used. Anderson (1997) also suggested that thematic content analysis is used when the study involves identifying, examining, and reporting patterns or themes within data. This study involved identifying, examining, and reporting the experience of male parolees as they reintegrated into the community. Thus, thematic content analysis was a suitable approach for the data analysis. The interviews and focus group discussions were coded prospectively to see if there would be new themes from the data. This approach contributed to developing and modifying the coding system to examine if more data was needed or if saturation had been reached. The predetermined categories, informed by the study's aim and literature review, guided the initial coding process. The coding was done in several steps, as suggested by Harding (2018: 6). Initially, reading the complete transcript allowed for a general understanding of the data. In order to critically describe, interpret, and analyze the data, the text is summarized with code, and a code report is provided in the results section of the research. After initial coding of the long text of the data, by classifying and integrating the information from the data, expressions with similar meanings and the direct part of the context and references are compiled into categories (Saldaña 2016). The qualitative categories were further analyzed to identify repetitions and possible relationships or patterns in the data, which are compiled to form a set of themes.

The conclusions of the analysis are recorded in the final descriptive summary, which shows the themes and main points of the code report and quotes the participants verbatim to illustrate the main points discussed.

3.9 Delimitations/Scope

A potential limitation of this research is that due to the time frame and resources, the study could only look at one small community in KwaZulu-Natal. It is possible that a similar study in a larger city in the same region could yield a different result. For the study, the decision was to not study all the local community areas available in KwaZulu-Natal because the research would then become too broad and demand too many resources. Since the study was limited to the male parolees in the community area of Lamontville, there was no attempt to generalize to a greater population.

3.10 Quality: Trustworthiness (Qualitative Research)

Reliability and validity are issues that have been described in great detail by advocates of qualitative research. Harding (2018: 7) mentioned that perfect reliability and validity are virtually impossible to achieve. Research is only as good as the investigator; it is the researcher's creativity, sensitivity, flexibility, and skill in using the verification strategies that determine the reliability and validity of the evolving study (Zohrabi 2018: 262). Then, validity and reliability (or terms often used in their place within qualitative research) are crucial. To maximize the credibility of this study, validity and reliability were considered, as addressed next.

3.10.1.1 Validity

The validity of the study, in simple terms, means that the researcher has followed the necessary criteria to ensure that the findings are not biased or that they do not favor the ideas of the researcher (Podesva and Sharma 2018: 265). The validity of this study was determined by using qualitative research methods to acquire accurate and unbiased data. To reduce bias and increase the validity of the study, the data was gathered through both focus groups and interviews. Care was taken in designing and posing questions such that there was openness to the actual experiences of participants and there was no attempt to steer the nature of the responses. The analysis followed a systematic and critical approach that was open to unexpected findings, as detailed in the data analysis and interpretation section. Confidentiality assists in gaining valid results; Miller (2010) highlighted that ensuring anonymity and confidentiality with

respondents helps to establish greater content of any validity study, and this is discussed in the following subsection.

3.10.2 Reliability

The reliability of a study refers to the ability of the findings of the study to be used in other studies. The reliability of this study was verified by the approved methods used to collect and analyze data until the reporting of the results (Harding 2018: 9). To ensure reliability in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is crucial, and, if the validity or trustworthiness can be maximized, then more credible and defensible results are likely. One way of improving both reliability and validity for this study was to ensure that participants checked the accuracy of what was reported and the conclusions reached.

3.10.2.1 Trustworthiness

Validity can be tested using the trustworthiness approach in qualitative research. Qualitative researchers establish the trustworthiness of their findings by using “four principles, which are credibility, transferability, dependability and conformity” (Harding (2018: 8). Trustworthiness infers that the study was carried out ethically and objectively, with rigor in the analysis procedure. It is essential that there is total trust between the researcher and the participants involved in the study. Should the participants feel that they cannot trust the researcher, it could compromise the information that is received. They may involve them being selective in what they state rather than being comfortable enough to give all their ideas freely, which would undermine the quality of the data collected:

1. Credibility: According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness in a research. The following provisions were made to promote credibility in this study:
 - The researcher obtained adequate and proper permission from the institute (Durban University of Technology) and the participants. The researcher also established a communication process with the participants with the aim of

sensitizing them about the research and what they would be expected to contribute to the research.

- There were strategies to help ensure the honesty of the informants. The study created an environment that gave the participants the ability to decide to take part in the study and offer data freely.
 - There were frequent briefings of the progress of the research with the researcher's supervisor.
 - There was also a high degree of reflective commentary in the research. This allowed the researcher to objectively collect and present the research data.
2. Transferability: The research provided background data to establish the context of the study and a detailed description of the phenomenon in question to allow comparisons to be made.
 3. Dependability: the research further adopted "overlapping methods" and in-depth methodological descriptions to allow the study to be repeated where necessary.
 4. Confirmability: To show confirmability, the research employed the following:
 - Admission of researcher's beliefs and assumptions – the researcher is aware of her beliefs and assumptions; however, she was open to new findings from the research.
 - Recognition of shortcomings in the study's methods and their potential effects – the study methodology was further developed during the data collection phase. For instance, the researcher initially established that she would use the purposive sampling technique for recruiting participants for the research, but as the research developed, she discovered that it would be more effective to use both the snowball and purposive sampling techniques to recruit participants for the focus group discussions.
 - In-depth methodological descriptions to allow the integrity of the research results to be scrutinized.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Since the study made use of interviews, ethical principles were essential and needed to be carefully upheld. The Durban University of Technology ethical protocol was followed closely. The researcher took appropriate steps to ensure that ethical clearance was obtained from the Durban University of Technology and that the rules and regulations were observed. More specifically, the researcher provided the participants with information about the project, the purpose of the study, the selection criteria, and the researcher's identity. Informed consent was sought after clearly highlighting the appropriate information about the study under investigation, that is, its aims and objectives, as indicated by Munhall (2018). The participants' consent was sought for interviews after highlighting to them what involvement in the study entailed, the benefits envisioned to be realized from the study, and the confidentiality of the participants' identities. Participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential in that they would not be shared with neighbors, friends, or people from any other sector. In this respect, the participants' anonymity was assured. In addition, in line with informed consent, the participants were made aware of their right to withdraw their participation from the study at any time. The study involved the collection of delicate data from individuals whose rights were upheld at all times. All data acquired in the course of this research was considered confidential material and, thus, was not divulged in any manner that would identify any individual or organization without their consent.

The wellbeing of respondents in the course of the research was also an important consideration. The researcher treated the respondents with dignity in that they were honored and respected during the interviews. This was done through upholding the principles of voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality. All that the participants needed to keep them safe and comfortable, such as protective equipment due to COVID-19, was provided for the participants. The findings of the study were structured in a manner that protected the human dignity, integrity, rights, and confidentiality of the respondents and avoided any reporting that stigmatizes, demeans, harms, or disintegrates the community under investigation. The data gathered was not falsified, and the information gathered from secondary sources was referenced properly.

3.12 Conclusion

The research methodology is an essential part of research as it provides the base upon which the research is conducted. The chapter provided an in-depth discussion on the research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analysis methods. The chapter highlighted the validity and reliability of adopting qualitative methodology in such a study. The following chapter presents a discussion of the study findings.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF EXPLORATORY FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings gathered from the exploratory data collection stage of the research process. The focus of this chapter is to explore the challenges male parolees encounter in the Lamontville community so as to better develop and provide a useful intervention aimed at creating a harmonized relationship between community members and male parolees. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were carried out with 10 parolees who were selected for the study, and 7 Lamontville community members. The participants presented various challenges faced by male parolees when reintegrating into the community. This was seen from both the community members' and parolees' perspectives. The data collected from these interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed using thematic content analysis, and the results are presented below in two sections. The first section will discuss the interview and focus group discussion data on the challenges faced by male parolees, and the second section will present the proposed intervention strategies discussed by the participants.

4.2 Analysis of Findings

The research sampled 17 participants ($n = 17$). Of these 17 participants, 10 were male parolees, and the remaining 7 were community members. Of the community members, 3 were women, and 4 were men. Participants ranged in age from 26 to 63 years. All the participants are based in the Lamontville community in Durban, South Africa. This section will present the data from the parolees and, where necessary, data from the community members will be referred to support the parolees' accounts. The themes generated from the data are presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Themes generated from the data

Section	Research Question	Themes
One	Challenges Faced by Male Parolees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unemployment 2. Broken Relationships with Family Members 3. Broken Relationships with Community Members 4. Marginalization <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Ostracization 4.2. Stigmatization 5. Adjusting to a Changing Environment
Two	Possible Intervention Strategies from the Study	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Awareness and Participation 2. Support Groups 3. Dealing with Unemployment

4.3 Section One - Challenges Faced by Male Parolees

This section presents the challenges faced by male parolees as they reintegrate into the community. These were pointed out by both parolees and community members who took part in the research. These challenges ranged from unemployment and broken relationships, both with family and community members, to marginalization and adjusting to a changing environment.

4.3.1 Unemployment

This study discovered that one of the main challenges facing the parolees, regardless of whether or not they have any basic skills, is finding stable employment. According to Maruna (2011), educational failure and unemployment are a hindrance to legitimate opportunities for the reconstruction of life by those released from prison. Most of the participants highlighted that their criminal history and imprisonment have negatively impacted their prospects of getting employment. Eighty percent of the interviewed participants were unemployed. Of the participants that indicated that they were unemployed, some emphasized that in some instances, they had managed to find short-

term freelance work, but the moment their employers got to know about their criminal past they were fired. As **Parolee – 01** explains:

I hoped I was going to get a job. I hoped I was going to work and make it up to my kids. I hoped I was going to make it up to them because I was not there for them when they were growing up.

This quote also stresses how stable employment serves multiple needs of parolees, both financially and relationally. It points out how employment would have helped them make amends with their family by allowing them to make a financial contribution and support the family. The parolees believed that employment, and thus being able to contribute financially, was a key way they could ‘fix’ the time they were not able to spend with the family and, most importantly, bring back respect as a male in the family.

Parolee-02: *Mama, the Bible states clearly in Genesis Chapter 3 verses 16 – 19 that a man will work hard and provide for his family. Mama indoda yindoda ngezithukuthuku zayo. A real man must be able to Parent, Provide and Protect. If you are a man and you cannot Parent, Provide and Protect you are not man enough. Qha? means the only thing I need is employment to prove myself and I can be respected as a man in my family and my community.*

The above quote portrays a common perception of males in most rural African communities where a ‘real’ man is equated to the ability to provide (Meyer 2017). This notion of masculinity and the socially accepted idea that a man’s role is to provide for his family and contribute financially to the community has affected the way male parolees are treated when they return to their communities after prison. They are not able to secure stable employment and thus cannot provide financially for their family. However, the parolees who participated in this study also discussed how failure to secure employment had led to fractious relationships with those that they are living with. They describe being treated like they are not part of the family, and feel ‘looked down upon’, because they cannot provide for the family since they are not employed. This is portrayed in the quote below from one of the parolees:

Parolee – 03: *My niece said she does not want me at home anymore because I do not want to work, and I have come back home from the correctional center*

with my restrictions, and yet I am not working. I do not contribute fokol, meaning nothing at home.

The above quote portrays how parolees' experiences in their families, particularly regarding discussions of employment, have made them feel disrespected and unaccepted in the community. It further implies that due to the broken and conflicting relationship between the family and the parolee, the family has the feeling that the parolee does not want to work. At the same time, there are no job offers for the parolee. This feeling adds to the desperation to make money and contribute to the family or community. As a result, some parolees end up committing crimes to ensure they can contribute financially at home, thereby violating their parole. Albertus (2010) and Uggen and Staff (2001) explored this when they stated that the creation of job opportunities for parolees might be an active approach to ensure that they do not re-offend. Furthermore, Shinkfield and Graffam (2009) expressed the idea that employment provides an opportunity for a parolee to associate with law-abiding people and rebuild their identities post-release (Shinkfield and Graffam 2009). However, the unfortunate situation that this research also discovered is that once an individual carries a criminal 'tag', it is difficult to get employed (Hagan, 2013).

Based on the participants' accounts, getting employment after being incarcerated is a significant challenge. Prospective employers tend to view employing parolees as a 'risk that it is not worth taking'. This is similarly expressed by Coates (2015) and Haymond (2014), who suggested that even having a minor criminal record can create substantial barriers and far-reaching collateral consequences, and this includes difficulties in getting employment. An important reason for this appears to be that it is difficult for employers to trust that parolees are 'changed people'.

Parolee – 02: *My employer told me '99', meaning straight [to] my face, that he is taking a risk by employing me. He said employers do not want to take a risk and employ ex-offenders because we are full of surprises.*

Parolee – 04: *I waar¹ moder², Potential employers and government themselves are not willing and not prepared to employ us. Look, look moder. Government*

¹ I am telling the truth

² mother

employment forms, they ask about criminal history. Once you tell the truth and reveal your criminal status, you are not shortlisted. If you do not reveal your criminal status, they take you for sithupas³. Once they pick up that you have a criminal record, hawu! Hawu! You are kicked out quickly and fast. I am telling you mama, no potential employer is willing to take a risk and employ us. Even the one who rehabilitated us, does not want to make use of us, ask me why – I do not know?

This quote highlights the construction of parolees as 'high risk'. In other words, employers seem to worry that the parolees will continue to commit crimes, and perhaps, that the employers themselves will fall victim to these crimes. This is where the phrase 'full of surprises' comes from as the employers do not believe that the parolee is a changed person. Thus, they worry that the parolee can go back to their old ways of committing crimes at any time. This brings to light the lack of trust from possible employers and the government and highlights the structural discrimination that parolees continue to experience post-rehabilitation. This has led to them not being able to find employment as they are not trusted.

Furthermore, the low level of resources in the community as a whole also appeared to be a contributing factor. One young community member had a pessimistic view of parolees' chances of being employed in a community with a high unemployment rate for its members.

Community Member – 01: *I do not think the community will ever do enough to assist parolees. The community does not have anything. High unemployment rate. How are you expected to assist if you do not have? Heeh? How, how?*

The above quote highlights how challenging living conditions are in the Lamontville community. This is because the community is considered one of the rural communities in South Africa with most limited resources and opportunities. Thus, they do not have much to offer in terms of employment to the parolees. For instance, in a place like Cape Town, there are more resources and thus more support. For example, there are non-governmental organizations like The National Institute of Crime Prevention and the

³ Fingerprint check or vetting

Reintegration of Offenders who offer programs to assist with parolees' reintegration and provide assistance in solving the complex problems they experience when returning and resettling in society (UNODC 2018). Parolees choose to form a contract with the institute, which requires full commitment to completing the parole program. The institute also works with parolees to get them employment and offers them a chance to study with the support of a bursary. Bursaries can be awarded to the children of offenders too (UNODC 2018). With this type of structure and these resources, there will be a more harmonious reintegration process for the parolees in Cape Town compared to those in the Lamontville community. The parole program has a greater chance of being successful.

In addition to low levels of employment, the study also discovered that in the few cases where parolees had been offered jobs, these positions were poorly paid and often undervalued. The discussions with the participants suggested that this was because parolees tended to have low levels of education: most of the parolees are not educated to a tertiary level and do not have the necessary years of experience that most higher-paying jobs require. In addition, it was suggested that parolees were actively excluded from higher-paying jobs: participants stressed that there is discrimination and a lack of trust. Thus, an employer prefers to employ someone without a criminal record rather than employing a parolee who has a criminal record. Moreover, some of the community members also expressed a feeling that parolees should be grateful for any opportunity they are given and should accept whatever they are offered. This is supported by an elderly community member who stated that:

Community Member – 02: *A parolee must not choose. Awukwazi ukuba umadakeni ozishaya inkinsela⁴, beggars cannot be choosers. They can take any kind of job that will help them to earn a living.*

The above quote from an elderly community member further touches on the lack of opportunities in the community and the idea that parolees should not choose, but take whatever can help them earn a living. The above quote also gives the perspective of how parolees are not seen as humans who have the right to be fussy and want a decent job. It implies that parolees have lost the right to choose; thus, they must accept anything

⁴ Meaning – 'You can't be in the mud and pretend to be rich'. It also means 'beggars cannot be choosers'.

they have been offered. Secondly, it also implies that with limited opportunities, there will be no endless openings to choose from; and therefore, one has to take whatever is available. In line with the opinion of an elderly community member, a young community member also stated that:

Community Member – 04: *Any job as long as it can pay the parolee. Money is money; it does not matter what kind of a job as long as it is not a crime.*

The two quotes above present a different view. The parolees reported that there are no opportunities, while the community members are presenting a perspective that the parolees are selective about the type of job they want. The above quote presents a view from community members that parolees should not be selective, but take whatever job is offered to them. This creates a controversial perspective as the parolees are of the view that there are no jobs, and the community members are saying that they should not be selective. Stating that the parolees should not be selective denotes that there are jobs, but the parolees do not want to take them. This could be a result of the existing broken relationship between the parolees and family/community members which will be explored in the sections below.

4.3.2 Broken Relationships with Family Members

Families play an important role in the reintegration of offenders and the offender's ability to desist from crime (Lynch and Pridemore 2011). The participants were asked about the state of their family relationships after being released on parole. They noted that one of the main challenges they faced was trying to mend family relationships that had been broken by the time apart, and the idea that they are now seen as criminals both by their families and the community. Most of the interviewed participants stated that after their release from prison they struggled to feel accepted by their families and the community as a whole. This experienced lack of support made it difficult for them to reintegrate into the family. One of the participants discusses their struggles below.

Parolee – 05: *I had challenges interacting with my family members after release. They do not expect me to say a word because I am isiboshwa⁵. If I call them to order they quickly remember and remind me that I am unemployed and am*

⁵ A prisoner

isiboshwa. *According to them, isiboshwa cannot have a say in the community or our family matters.*

The above quote portrays how many parolees often experience a loss of respect and authority in the family after incarceration. The label of 'prisoner' they carry on release and their unemployed social status often undermine their position in their families and communities. There is a low status associated with being a criminal and, as pointed out by the above quote, once you have been incarcerated you will always be considered a prisoner. Again, as pointed out above, parolees are seen by the family and community as people that are less than other human beings in terms of rights and privileges. This creates resentment and conflict between the parolee and the family members, as no one likes to associate themselves with a parolee (Lee, Porter, and Comfort 2014). This means that they are still considered criminals, and no one wants to associate with them. This is because in most African communities there is a stigma associated with crime, as crime is seen as a disgraceful act. Furthermore, as mentioned above, there is a lack of trust between the parolee, the family and the community. Thus, they do not believe that the criminal who was incarcerated is no longer a criminal post-rehabilitation. In addition, parolees are often seen to be capable of influencing the younger children of the family to participate in criminal activities, and as a result, they are not warmly accepted back home. This can lead to parolees feeling excluded and unwelcome. This can further cut them off from family love and support when they need it most.

Two participants also highlighted that their families did not welcome them at home. The switch in roles, with the parolees needing to be provided for and cared for, rather than them providing for their families, appeared to have difficult implications for parolees. Parolees often described feeling as though they had no authority in their households and were prevented from having permission to make family decisions.

Parolee – 06: *Yes, I did experience challenges in interacting with my family members. I did not have a say over my family members. I had no voice because I was not earning a living. Umshana akazwile⁶- meaning my niece does not allow me to say anything because angisebenzi⁷.*

⁶ Nephew? did not hear or listen

⁷ I do not work

This response shows that the majority of the parolees are not respected and supported by their families. They describe that they do not feel heard or listened to in their families. Zondi (2012) argues that complicated family dynamics could lead to unsuccessful rehabilitation and reintegration processes as the parolee may feel unwanted and thus fall into recidivism and substance abuse. Many studies (Langa and Masuku 2015; Zondi 2012), including this one, have shown that parolees believe that support from their families will enable them to reintegrate easily and that if they are offered the opportunity (like skilled development, education, inclusive and equal job opportunities) to do something and provide for their family with the right resources, they can transform their lives. A community member provides a useful alternative perspective about why parolees are often not fully accepted by their families on return from prison.

Community member – 01: Families who are difficult with parolees are the families who are struggling financially, and who find it difficult to provide for themselves and the parolees. It is clear that it is not that they do not love the parolee. It is because they do not have themselves. They are struggling as a family they cannot make ends meet. You must please remember that in South Africa there is a high rate of unemployment. In most families, no one is working. Families survive through government grant support. Tell me: how am I expected to take care of the parolee with my child support grant, a lousy R480? Ningazodlala la⁸!

The quote above shows that family members are willing in some cases to support the parolee, but they do not have the resources to do so. With the high unemployment rate in South Africa (Geyer et al 2018), most people depend on child grants to survive. Thus, more opportunities need to be created for the unemployed population, especially those who have dependents. Furthermore, structures that will facilitate economic development for ex-offenders need to be established to help them through the rehabilitation process and contribute to a successful and smooth reintegration into the community.

In contrast to their experiences of exclusion, some parolees also pointed out how they would like to be treated by their family members:

⁸ You must be joking

Parolee – 05: *I expect my family to take me as I am. They must not compare me with other parolees. I expect them to give me support and trust. They must not take all stories they hear from the media and think I am a bad person. Hay, Hay mama. I hate that. The only thing I need from my family is a second chance; please, that is all I wish to say.*

Parolee – 09: *I want my family to know that I have been through rehabilitation programs to prepare me for reintegration with my family. My family members must not make it difficult for me to reintegrate with them. I expect them to give me respect as the man in the family, even though I am from MaWesterna [meaning Westville Correctional Centre]. I need their moral support to please my family. Do not make it difficult for me to be part of you again.*

The above quotes imply that parolees want to be understood; however, there is a lack of knowledge about prison and the rehabilitation process. Thus, there is a need for the community and the family to be educated about the prison and rehabilitation process for parolees. This will help them to understand the parolees better. Secondly, parolees feel they are disrespected in the family and community. This is a result of the fact that they are being seen as people who are less than other human beings. More details on how this can be prevented or addressed are presented in the next chapter, which is on intervention.

In agreement with the above discussion, one elderly community member stressed that families are responsible for supporting parolees: “*as a family, we love them obaba bezingane zethu⁹, they are fathers to our kids*”. This quote reemphasizes the fact that although relationships between the family and the parolee might be challenging, they are still part of the family, and it is the responsibility of both parties to work on how to amend this relationship. According to Gideon (2010), children and marital bonds are unions that are most affected when a family member is arrested. For instance, this implies that when a father is incarcerated, the disgraceful act of being termed a criminal, and the time apart, affects the relationship between him, his wife and his children. Thus,

⁹ they are fathers to our kids

when someone who is married or has a family commits a crime, they are at high risk of losing the good relationship they have with their family (Gideon, 2010).

This study emphasizes the complex nature of family relations as a significant barrier to the reintegration of parolees into the community (see also Bahr et al, 2010). The lack of support by family members, as highlighted by the participants, attests to the existence of re-integrative shaming. Re-integrative shaming is the communication of wrongdoing in a manner that is disrespectful (Bahr et al, 2010). This is the reason parolees are seen as people who are less than other human beings in terms of rights and privileges. The assertions by the participants affirm that parolees are subjected to disrespect and stigmatization after release. This important issue will be returned to later.

Although most of the participants stated that they face immense challenges as they attempt to fix fractured family relationships, two participants mentioned that they have managed to mend their family relationships and highlighted these social connections as a useful resource.

Parolee – 07: *It was difficult at first for some of my family members to welcome me back; however, they understood that when I committed the crime I was still young. During the time I was in prison I managed to change my life around and I even managed to get my education. That was a major plus on my side because the family saw that I was focused on turning my life around; hence the transition has been smooth, and all has been forgiven.*

This shows that parolees are people capable of change, and are often committed to creating a better life for themselves. This parolee was accepted and forgiven because he used his time in prison to educate himself. He showed the family and community that he can make the best out of the situation and advance himself for a better opportunity in the job market. The above quote also suggests that some family members may need some indication/commitment of change and development from the parolees and that some advancement toward a changed way of life significantly addresses the break in trust that often occurs when a crime is committed. Mending of family relationships is a key factor in making the integration process of the parolees easy, because the relationship helps with the psychological health of parolees, their motivation to desist from crime and future offending, and prospects of finding accommodation and

employment, as the family pillar is a source of comfort. Another participant also discussed his smooth reconnection with the family:

Parolee – 04: *My family has been welcoming, they have gone an extra mile to make me feel comfortable. They gave me a second chance to change my life; hence I don't have to disappoint them again.*

The quote above shows that not all the participants who took part in this study were excluded or rejected by their families. This is good, because most of the offenders return to their families for basic needs after being released from the correctional center. Parolees need family support in many ways: for example, to be accommodated in a house and to be supported economically. Family is the closest relationship for the male parolee and it is the first point of call by the parolees (Naser and Visser 2006). Thus, the family needs to be involved in the rehabilitation process of the parolee. They need to know what the parolee has gone through during his incarceration. This will engender shared understanding and empathy, where everyone can feel seen and valued, creating an environment where the family and parolee can co-exist peacefully. This will further motivate the parolee to actively work on developing himself and not relapsing if he is offered the opportunity. At the same time, the parolees need to also look at how they can work on their self-improvement, and they need to be committed to developing themselves and their families to mend these relationships. It has been proven that offenders who have a good relationship with their family members and friends whilst they are still in the Correctional Centers are less likely to experience recidivism (Singh 2016). This is because they have shown their worth to their families and they would want to stay with families and friends while enjoying their freedom. This highlights the need for interventions that focus on developing these social support relationships.

Another key area of social support needed is that of the community. This study discovered that challenging or strained relationships existed not only within the family but also in the community. This further challenge is presented below.

4.3.3 Broken Relationships with the Community

The research further discovered that another challenge faced by male parolees in the Lamontville community is having to deal with broken relationships with community members. The path towards the rehabilitation of an offender also spreads to the community outside the correctional center. The community has a vital role to play in the rehabilitation of the offender, because the offender comes from the community and, after incarceration, has to return to that community. Research suggests that a strong relationship between the offender and the community reinforces the chances for effective reintegration into society (Griffiths et al 2007). If the community does not accept that the offender has been rehabilitated, the offender might resort to actions that will lead him back to the correctional center (Department of Correctional Services 2005b:178). But if the community receives the offender, the offender might have a smooth reintegration. It is important to allow the offender to have consistent contact with the community. Offenders will also need to dedicate themselves to rehabilitation programs that will prepare them for parole so that the community does not reject them. The Department of Correctional Services must encourage not only the family but also the community to have regular connections with the offender. The White Paper on Corrections (Department of Correctional Services 2005b:178) stresses the role of the community by stating, "The relationships between the Department of Correctional Services and the Community, Community-based organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and religious-based organizations are inherent to the achievement of the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders".

In this study, many parolees discussed how they had positive expectations upon release and that they had the belief that their communities were going to accept them and allow them to make contributions to the development of their communities. This idea is highlighted by one of the participants below.

Parolee – 03: *I wanted to engage myself in community activities such as community meetings and projects that were running in the community.*

This comment, and the feeling displayed by other parolees, showed that they were happy to be released and were ready to fully engage in and with the community. The

parolees, in most cases, however, found this process much more challenging in reality, and described difficulties when engaging with their community.

Community Member - 07: *The community does not trust parolees; we are scared to commit and work with them. What if they go back to the old ways? You always have that feeling of 'what if they let you down and rob or steal at work?'*

Furthermore, community members in this sample also discussed a reluctance to work with parolees.

Parolee – 03: *The community ayizwile;¹⁰ the community does not trust us. The community calls us zibuyile izigebengu¹¹. The only option you are left with is to go back to crime. Crime is ever ready. Community rejects us crime accepts us.*

The above statements show that there is no trust between the community members and the parolees and that this has contributed to the existing broken relationship. This leads to avoidance, disrespect and lack of opportunities. Previous studies have shown that respect and trust are very important and lay the foundation for successful parole, because they allow the parolee to heal fully, with the knowledge that they are worthy of forgiveness, love and respect (Still, Broderick and Raphael 2016). However, this study highlights the difficulties in this process and suggests that communities are still struggling to accept parolees after release.

Community Member – 04: *The community must be clever and watch out. If they go back to their old ways the community must report them to SAPS or DCS. Only if they commit crimes.*

The lack of trust portrayed in the above statement by a young community member clearly highlighted that the community was not yet ready to receive the parolees back into the community. To further emphasize the lack of trust, an elderly community member stated:

Community Member – 06: *Mina I do not mind when they are back, but they must be good and stop their nonsense, okay. It is difficult to trust them 100%. You must*

¹⁰ Do not understand

¹¹ Criminals are back

not close both eyes to them. You need to be a careful: close one and keep one open to monitor their movements.

This lack of trust creates a situation where the parolee does not feel they are completely free. They feel they are placed under surveillance where everyone is waiting for them to make another mistake. This further adds to the tense relationship between the community and parolees. This is similar to the findings of Guerino, Harrison and Sabol (2011: 341) who discovered that, in most cases, the communities are unwilling to receive the parolees back into the community and this leads to the marginalization of parolees, which will be discussed below.

4.3.4 Marginalization

One of the most prevalent themes in the data was the parolees' ongoing experiences of marginalization during reintegration. Here marginalization is understood as parolees being treated as insignificant. It highlights the low status associated with parolees and how they are not considered to be legitimate or recognized members of the community after incarceration. All parolee participants discussed feeling like outsiders in their communities and wishing they were more valued. Two key ways in which this marginalization was discussed were through the ideas of ostracization and stigmatization. The following sections below will present data on ostracization and stigmatization, respectively.

4.3.4.1 Ostracization

Ostracization in the context of this research is considered as the exclusion of parolees from being active members of the community. This section presents the data on how parolees were excluded from engaging fully in the community and within their family structures. The parolees were asked to discuss the relationships they had with the community and to highlight if they felt welcome in the community. Some of the participants reported that the community environment was not favorable as they were ridiculed and ostracized by some of the community members. In this study, parolees discuss how reintegrating into their community has been difficult for them because the community still views them as convicts who will always return to the criminal world, even

if they have been institutionalized. This study will later present possible interventions which could help to develop a more harmonious relationship between the community and the parolees, as suggested by the study participants and as noticed from the participatory action research exercise.

Parolee – 02: *Trouble, trouble, trouble all the way. People do not care about you. Especially those who have not been to the correctional center. They think a parolee only belongs to the correctional center, not to the community. The community does not want to give us a second chance.*

The above quote further portrays the level of exclusion and the lack of understanding from the community. It shows how parolees are ostracized because they are ex-offenders; they are not given the chance to prove themselves in the family and community. This was similarly postulated by Magaze, Oliver and Roelofse (2017) who argue that male parolees in South Africa face the challenge of social exclusion and stigma, despite the fact that community support is important for the parolees to fully rehabilitate and reintegrate (Lynch and Pridemore 2011). This is because, with care and support, they are shown their worth by their families and they would want to stay with families and friends while enjoying their freedom. However, this is not the case for this cohort of parolees, who feel that the community has not been welcoming since they were released from prison. They believe that the community will always view them as convicts who belong in a correctional center and must not be brought back to live within the community. The views of the parolees were also reinforced and confirmed by accounts from the community members.

Parolee – 02: *The community only knows that once a sgebengu always a sgebengu. Meaning once a criminal always a criminal.*

Community Member – 04: *Yaah isigebengu¹² will always be isigebengu; you need to be careful of them.*

The responses by the participants support the assertions of Kaplan and Nussio (2018), who noted that parolees face the challenges of being unwanted and unwelcomed by the community. This has created a conflict in the relationship between parolees and

¹² Criminal

community members, and without support from community members, parolees can find themselves led to recidivism or may experience psychological problems such as depression. The community is important in the reintegration process of a parolee. The proponents of the reintegration theory argue that societies provide crime havens and as such should take responsibility for the process of reintegration of parolees (Muntingh 2005). This means that the community creates an environment in which crime is possible, as support, resources and good security reduce crime in a community. Thus, the community is responsible for supporting parolees as they also contributed to the prevalence of crime.

These views are in line with assertions made by Kuschminder (2017) who claims that the reintegration of parolees into the community after being in prison can lead to a crisis regarding the direction the individual intends to take in changing their way of life. This is because the reaction of the community and how the parolee is perceived and treated in the community will contribute to how the parolee turns out. The ostracization of parolees will not reduce crime, but might increase it, as the parolees will feel unworthy of acceptance and forgiveness and will go back to their old ways. Therefore, the rejection of parolees by the community contradicts the reintegration theory, where the community should take a critical role in the reintegration process.

Despite the clear challenges experienced by most participants, a small minority (20%) of the parolees did say that they have been welcomed by their community. These participants also felt that they had not faced any discrimination or ostracization in their communities.

Parolee – 05: *The community has not discriminated against me, but they have welcomed me with open arms and they have noted that I have served my punishment and I have reformed from criminal ways. Although, this is because I have never committed a crime here in the community. I was incarcerated because I committed a crime in another place.*

This participant was received and welcomed into the community because he did not commit a crime in the community of Lamontville before incarceration; he was viewed as a good, reliable Lamontville community member. Thus, when he was arrested and sentenced, the Lamontville community members did not believe that he had committed

a crime. On his reintegration, the community felt sorry for him, and they did not associate him with the criminality he was sentenced for.

The second parolee that discussed being accepted by community members also appears not to have been troublesome in the community before imprisonment. He was a known *sgebengu* (criminal), but he respected his Lamontville community by making sure that all the criminal activities that he was part of did not affect the community. To protect the community, he would go to other places to perform his criminal activities. In addition, upon release he showed his commitment to the community by trying to be helpful to others. For example, he once contributed financially to the burial of another parolee who died and whose family did not have money for the burial. By his so doing, the community accepted him. These ideas are expressed in the two quotes below.

Parolee -06: *When I was released I was afraid that the community members were going to view me differently; however, upon my release they welcomed me back into the community and they have gone to lengths to make me feel comfortable and welcome so that I don't have to be depressed and turn back to my criminal past.*

Community Member – 07: *He has a good sense of humor even though he is sgebengu (criminal), but he is helpful in times of trouble.*

The first quote highlights how certain displays of goodwill from parolees can prove beneficial as they try to be reintegrated into the community. This is similar to a case in the UK, where prisoners volunteered in various ways in order to acquire skills and earn the trust of others (Edgar, Jacobson and Biggar 2011). In this study, one parolee showed his commitment by contributing financially to the community and by protecting the community in times of trouble. The second accepted parolee completed his education during the time he was incarcerated, indicating to the community that he is committed to developing himself and becoming a trustworthy or dependable person. This relates to the European report that education and training for prisoners help reduce the social costs of crime and support the rehabilitation of prisoners and their reintegration into society (Hawley, Murphy and Sout-Otero 2013). Hawley, Murphy, and Sout-Otero (2013) went on to state that social reintegration is more difficult for offenders with poor basic

education and skill levels. This explains why most of the parolees in this study had difficulty reintegrating into the community.

Although the reintegration process might be difficult for both parties, some of the community members pointed out that the reality is that the parolees need to come back home as they belong at home and not in prison.

Community Member -01: *It is not difficult, but it is difficult at the same time. The reason I say it is not difficult is that they must be back home, they do not belong in prison.*

Community Member – 02: *It is helpful to have them back in the community because they belong to the community. Some are always willing to teach the children about the dangers of being a criminal.*

These quotes further emphasize that although reintegration is complex, parolees belong in the community and should be accepted, as that is their home. Ostracizing them makes them homeless and this will add to the crime in the community instead of reducing it. This is because the rejection and sense of hopelessness and homelessness can further limit parolees' options and increase their chances of recidivism. Furthermore, these remarks made by the participants and elderly community members showed that the parolee can be accepted. This indicates the potential for parolees to serve as a resource to the community, as it resonates with the fact that parolees have value, despite feeling severely undervalued. This also allows us to see more clearly what could make this process more cohesive— this will be discussed in the second section of the research.

4.3.4.2 Stigmatization

Another major challenge that affects parolees is the feeling of stigmatization. The participants noted that being in prison for a long time has led to them being stigmatized. In this study, stigmatization is seen to be the disrespectful shaming of parolees and includes the treatment of parolees as 'bad persons' (Bahr et al 2012). The participants highlighted that when they left prison, they missed out on several opportunities compared to their peers and when they returned their peers tended to stigmatize them

because they were 'behind', and they now carry the criminal tag. Their peers see them as criminals and therefore do not want to associate with them. As it is difficult to get employment as a parolee, their peers are now also placed on a higher social and economic level in the community, and this too contributes to parolees' stigmatization. They stated that this led to regret and high levels of stress, which are difficult to deal with. This psychological burden was described by many parolee participants.

Parolee -04: *Stigma is the parolee's daily bread. The community does not call you by your name. Your new name is isiboshwa¹³. That feels bad but you need to live with it your whole life no matter how much you try to be good. You will always be isiboshwa.*

This participant is stressing that they feel dehumanized— they no longer feel like they are people worthy of being seen or acknowledged. This feeling is in line with the idea that they are criminals and are considered individuals who have not changed their criminal ways and thus do not deserve to be part of the community. Being stigmatized by their community has seen the parolees being called derogatory names, rather than being welcomed in the community. Another participant also stressed that the moment you leave prison and re-join the community, the stigma will always follow you.

Parolee – 10: *The offender must know that there is nothing like freedom when you are outside. Stigma is after you. Commuters will give you names and call you names. If you are convicted of rape, they will refer to you as a rapist. If you kill you are called a murderer. If you break into people's houses you are called mgqekezi¹⁴. You must learn to live with such names. In most cases, they call us iziboshwa. It is not easy to convince members of the community that you are a change[d] person.*

The above quote continues to show how experiences of stigmatization prevent the parolees from fully enjoying their freedom from incarceration. As discussed earlier, this ongoing stigmatization of parolees is also closely linked to reduced employment opportunities, as the community does not want to offer work with 'criminals'. This puts

¹³ Meaning a prisoner

¹⁴ Meaning burglar

them in a bondage of poverty, and they are not accepted and respected in their community. According to Maruna (2011), the community is a critical institution in which stigmatization and negative connotations against parolees are propagated and cultivated (Maruna, 2011). Similarly, an elderly community member noted that the community is unforgiving and responsible for breeding stigmatization of parolees:

Community Member -01: The community lacks trust. The community is judgmental. The community does not want to give a second chance.

The above quote shows that there is a lack of trust, and that the community judges and stigmatizes parolees. This act denies the parolees the second chance that they have been given by the legal system of the country, as this second chance depends on communities creating a space into which parolees can reintegrate and develop. This lack of respect, trust and acceptance is not good for the rehabilitation process of the parolee as they need support and assistance through the process. According to Hedderman et al (2011), stigmatization results in more crime in the community as it leads to the formation of a criminal subculture. Criminal subcultures provide a learning opportunity and career structure for aspiring young criminals, as an alternative to the legitimate job market and as a means of achieving financial rewards. Criminal subcultures are normally found among lower-class young males from large urban areas (Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Croall 1998). It is argued that due to stigmatization and rejection, parolees seek to align themselves with an identity which allows them to be proud of the shame attached to stigmatization. Stigmatization may be a possible and valid explanation as to why crime is still rife in South African communities. This is because ex-offenders are not accepted and respected by the community and family and there are no opportunities for them. This will create a feeling that parolees are not worthy of forgiveness, and they are not wanted in the family and community. When this happens, they will have to look for means of survival and they will go back to old ways, as they are already being viewed and treated in these negative ways. This highlights the need to address issues of stigmatization in the communities by focusing on how to facilitate better understanding between the community and the parolees.

Despite the overwhelmingly common experience of discrimination amongst parolees, one participant noted that not everyone was stigmatized:

Parolee – 10: *It's not everyone who is discriminatory, I have heard of others who have faced a lot of stigma from their community but for me, I was very lucky, my family and the community members have been my strongest supporters. They have made my re-entry into the community easy.*

Sentiments from these participants show that even though there is a lot of stigmatization that surrounds the parolees, there are other members of the community who accept them back into the community and provide them with the necessary support to enable them to integrate back into society. This raises the question of what is needed to make this type of experience more common. An elderly community member provides some useful insight on this below.

Community Member -01: *I think the community needs to be taught and be equipped once they have the equipment to assist the parolees, I am sure they can assist.*

The above quote points out that the community must be trained on how to live or work with and treat parolees. They need to be educated on the rehabilitation process. According to Rugh and Massey (2011), training the community on how to deal with parolees is an integral part of the re-integration process. This is important, as it will contribute to a smooth and harmonious re-integration process for the parolee. This will further help in achieving a successful rehabilitation process for the entire community.

4.3.5 Adjusting to a change in environment

The final key challenge that parolees identified was what was described as a significant change in environment. Many of the parolees discussed how they had grown accustomed to the prison environment and that they were used to the dominant culture or 'ways of living' experienced while incarcerated. Thus, when they are released from prison, parolees are required to try and readjust to 'normal' life, which is experienced as very different from prison life. Some of the key differences include the loss of family members or loved ones, getting employment, and having to think of ways of providing for themselves and family members instead of being provided for. This theme is linked to previous themes, which explored unemployment and stigmatization from the

members of the community and family, as these factors, in particular, pose major challenges to their readjustment to this 'new' environment. One of the key ways in which this theme was experienced was through a shift in responsibility. This is because in prison all the basic needs are provided, but in the outside world parolees are themselves responsible for meeting these basic needs. For example, they are required to work and provide for both themselves and their family. Thus, all the participants stated that the transition from life in prison to mainstream society brought with it a lot of psychological stress because of these changes, and this led them to feel that prison life was, in many ways, better and easier. They further highlighted that their struggles were exacerbated by the lack of resources, such as financial and material means, available to aid them with these changes.

Parolee – 03: *I respond in different ways. There was a time when I couldn't take the difficulty of trying to get a job and being able to provide for my family anymore. I wanted to go back to the correctional center because I could not cope with the living conditions at home. Things were no longer the same as they used to be before incarceration. I had lost my parents and now I have to provide for myself and my siblings.*

Community member – 01: *As an ex-offender when I came back my family was happy. The problem starts when you need money to take care of yourself. You cannot keep on asking people to give you money.*

The parolees noted that when they leave the prison and re-enter society, they find many changes have occurred in the community while they have been incarcerated, and coping with these changes was experienced as very difficult. For example, the first participant above had lost his parents during his imprisonment, and when released he was immediately required to get a job and provide for himself and his family. This was difficult, because while in prison and the correctional center, everything was provided but now he needed to find a way to provide for himself and the family. As presented above, getting a decent job as a parolee is difficult in South Africa. Thus, the transition from prison life to free life is a sensitive period for parolees, when they face the realities of the world after time in confinement (Rugh and Massey 2011). Parolees who receive sufficient family support and obtain jobs tend to adjust more easily to this change in the

environment (Steen and Opsal 2017), whereas those who do not will struggle with the reintegration process and some might resort to criminal behavior as a result.

4.4 Section Two: Possible Intervention Strategies from the Study

As mentioned above, through the exploratory stage of the research, it was discovered that parolees face different challenges when they reintegrate into the community after being released from prison. Although some of the parolees were accepted and the integration process was easy, most of the parolees had difficulties reintegrating into society that stemmed from a lack of trust and respect, ostracization and discrimination, and limited opportunities. This has a strong impact, not only on the emotional well-being of the parolees but also on their consistent ability to fully disassociate themselves from the life that took them to prison. This section presents some suggested areas for intervention. It outlines the aspects that need to be considered and implemented to facilitate easier and more harmonious reintegration of male parolees. Three key ideas are discussed here: community awareness and participation; support groups; and dealing with unemployment.

4.4.1 Community Awareness and Participation

Hawkins et al (2018) postulate that strong communities are a significant resource for the effective reintegration of parolees. Most of the participants acknowledge that it is necessary to organize training for community members. This will enable the community members to develop a more complex understanding of the parolee and their experiences, particularly raising awareness about parolees' rehabilitation. Creating this understanding could allow the community to more readily give parolees a second chance and encourage them to play a more active role in meeting their needs and providing support.

Community Member – 05: *I think the community needs to be taught and be equipped; once they have the equipment to assist the parolees, I am sure they can assist.*

This quote reiterates the point above that community and family members need to be trained on how to work and live with and relate to the parolees. This means that they need to be involved in the rehabilitation process of the parolees and a pre-parolee release workshop should be organized for the community and family members to tell them what has been done with the parolees. This will give the community and family members an idea of who the parolee is (post-rehabilitation) and why support from the family is necessary. It would also help to foster trust when parolees are released back into the community. Training the community on how to deal with parolees is an integral part of the re-integration process (Rugh and Massey 2011). In addition, more resources need to be provided to community members to allow them to develop projects that will engage the parolees. This is because some community members would like to help the parolees, but do not have the resources.

Furthermore, the research has also discovered that there are other resources, such as the existing support groups, that require exploration. The research expects that these resources should contribute to a comprehensive model that will support and sustain restoration and reconciliation between parolees and the community. These programs will enable the community to reconcile with these parolees so that they will not go back to their criminal ways.

4.4.2 Support Groups

The majority of the participants highlighted that they have attended support groups that have helped them to re-join the community and assisted them. These support groups must be in a position to address real-life issues that the parolees face, and the Lamontville support group for parolees has been doing its best to address such issues, as presented by the participant below.

Parolee – 03: *Parolees' support group make sure that you do something positive while waiting for a job. They assisted me in getting an ID book for myself.*

The quote above highlights the role support groups have played in applying for identity documents for the parolees and making sure that the parolees succeed in whatever they want to do. Other participants also discussed how the support groups have assisted the

parolees to gain employment, as noted by one of the participants who stated, *“Lamontville support group. They have managed to get me a piece job.”* The participants’ responses show that the support groups have addressed real-life issues that affect their reintegration. The support groups also facilitate the development of life goals and help the parolees to create an environment that allows them to reintegrate as law-abiding citizens. According to Edgar, Jacobson, and Biggar (2011), these life goals involve (a) schemes in which parolees help and support their fellow parolees; (b) community support schemes involving work with or on behalf of people outside the prison; (c) restorative justice programs, where parolees or prisoners are encouraged to acknowledge the harm they have caused and to make amends; (d) democratic participation in prison life, for example involving membership of prisoner councils or other forums; and (e) arts and media projects, such as prison-based radio stations, newspapers or performing arts programs. Most of these are part of the program organized by the Lamontville parolees support group.

Parolee – 07: *Lamontville parolees’ support group mama is number one. I so wish other parolees in other townships copy from us. Thina, we give each other support we make our reintegration process work for us. Although we are not yet up to the top we are slowly getting there.*

This assertion corroborates the views of Maruna, Immarigeon, and LeBel (2013) that support groups are designed to enable the parolees to return to the community as law-abiding citizens. However, some are of the view that the support groups are not effective, or insufficient. While they may provide some basic support, they do not help them to facilitate a harmonious transition from the correctional center to life outside the correctional center.

Parolee – 06: *Mina mah, I have been in and out of the correctional center. The correctional programs did not help me outside.*

This participant is of the view the correctional programs did not help him to smoothly reintegrate into the community. According to Chikadzi (2017) some of the possible reasons that these support groups may be ineffective include: the lack of resources available to make follow-ups on how the ex-prisoners are doing, lack of community support, and the parolee’s lack of readiness to be part of the program. In many countries,

such as South Africa, governments face fiscal constraints and few organizations are willing to be associated with convicts (Mylvaganam 2009). An elderly community member also pointed out the lack of resources, in particular the absence of social workers, in rehabilitating the ex-offenders.

Community Member -01: *Mina, I am an old prisoner – when the prison was a prison. Mina, I know nothing about rehabilitation. I rehabilitated myself. In our times it was prison, not rehabilitation center. In our time there was no parole we used to finish the whole sentence. In our time there was no social worker. We survived.*

The above quote points out the previous system that existed in South Africa as a comparison to the recent structure. Previously, there was no parole system; thus, when you were sentenced you served your time. The participant added that there were no social workers to assist offenders. Thus, things were worse then, but they survived. He highlighted structures that have been introduced to improve and make the rehabilitation process for ex-offenders better. This includes the creation of programs like correctional services, a support group for parolees, and other structures. However, the action programs for the parolees are not effective, because in most cases they do not involve community-specific institutions like the church. The absence of focus on community members and the existing institutions in the community is highlighted by a community member below.

Community Member – 08: *I think the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) must also involve us, the church. When they release them, the church must be aware so we can take over for the internal spiritual care. In most cases, parolees leave correctional centers saved/born again. Once they are outside, they forget about that. I do not judge them. We as the church also do not trust them. We do not allow them to partake in church activities like other church members. I feel if we can be involved from the beginning and have an ongoing relationship, we as the church can make a difference.*

The above comment from a community member is very useful and necessary. It points out the need to involve the local church in the rehabilitation process. The church could serve as a continual support system if they are involved from the beginning and the lack

of trust is effectively addressed. The problem here, however, is that most active groups within the rehabilitation process do not focus on all the various stakeholders involved (such as the community and businesses) but instead are directed towards offenders alone. Without this multifaceted approach, the perceptions of and actions towards parolees remain the same (Mylvaganam 2009). This means that businesses and communities need to be involved in the rehabilitation process of the parolees. They need to be educated on how to live and work with a parolee. They need to understand that a parolee is given a second chance by the country, and they need resources to fully support and assist parolees to be fully rehabilitated.

4.4.3 Dealing with Unemployment

The data presented above has indicated that unemployment is one (and possibly the most significant) key challenge that parolees face during reintegration. This part of the research went deeper, to explore with participants what is necessary to deal with the challenges of unemployment. The research discovered that the first key way of dealing with unemployment among male parolees is education. Education is one of the most significant ways to build the productive capacity and capabilities of an individual (Weiss et al 2014). Two participants stated that they had managed to study whilst they were incarcerated, and they obtained degrees. They highlighted that through the parolee support groups they had managed to find employment.

Parolee – 06: *I was lucky to have completed my studies whilst I was in prison. My uncle who has a logistics company gave me a job, hence I can say I am one of the lucky ones who did not have a criminal record excluding them from the job market.*

This participant above became employed because he was able to complete his studies, and his family connection afforded him an opportunity. Thus, even though it is evident that securing employment with a criminal record is difficult for these parolees, there are some who have found employment.

Parolee – 04: *It wasn't easy to get employment, but through the positive relationship I had cultivated with the community, one of the members took a risk and gave me a job and he has been impressed with my work ethic.*

The above parolee became employed by actively working on building connections in the community. Through these connections, he was able to find a community member who was ready to give him the platform to prove himself, and he did well. This provides a useful example of how companies or employers, with the correct support, may be able to break the labor market discrimination by offering successful employment to parolees (Hagan, 2013).

Structured and regulatory stigmatization was the second issue that contributes to unemployment among male parolees. Structured or regulatory stigmatization is a barrier which prevents parolees from getting employment. Regulatory stigmatization refers to the rigidities that are put in place which seal off a legitimate opportunity for employment or wealth accumulation (Lather and Smithies 2017). One example of regulatory stigmatization is the need to produce a police clearance certificate. In South Africa, government departments require vetting of prospective employees for a criminal record before recruitment (Zondi 2012). These structures need to be changed for parolees to have better opportunities and the possibility of becoming employed.

Regular stigmatization is highlighted by an elderly community member who is also an ex-offender:

Community Member – 01: *Mina I have not gotten an employment offer because of my criminal record. They will say to me isgebengu esidala saseLamontville ipantas: Department of Correctional Services and the government must employ us. You see they say we must come back but they do not want to employ us with criminal records. I have tried many times to apply in eThekweni Municipality; they did not consider me because of my criminal record.*

Another community member emphasized the presence of regulatory discrimination in our society:

Community Member– 04: *The role must be for the government to remove criminal records so we can be employable. Government must give us a second chance. We want to change; they must employ us. The community cannot do anything if the government is not working with the community.*

Therefore, regulatory discrimination makes it difficult for parolees to get employment. According to Lather and Smithies (2017), regulatory stigmatization negates the process of reintegration and forces parolees back into crime. Regulatory stigmatization fosters a sub-culture of crime for parolees in the event of their failing to find employment opportunities. There is a need for this regulatory discrimination to be addressed for parolees to be able to be employed.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings from the exploratory phase of the research. Firstly, it has presented the challenges faced by male parolees as they reintegrate into the community. In most cases, it was discovered that the reintegration process is difficult, as parolees are not respected and trusted by their families and the community and, as a result, they are ostracized, stigmatized, and discriminated against. There are no or limited employment opportunities for them, and they struggle with broken relationships with their families and community. As a result, the research has suggested that to create a more harmonized reintegration process, community and family members need to be more actively involved in the reintegration process. Specific training with community members would allow them to be better prepared to receive parolees and also provide them with critical information which would help to challenge problematic prejudices and work towards mending trust. Secondly, more resources need to be provided to community members to enable them to help and engage the parolees. Support groups for parolees need to be funded and maintained so that they can effectively assist the parolees sustainably. Lastly, employment opportunities need to be created for the parolees. These will help the parolees in the rehabilitation process and will facilitate an easier and more cohesive reintegration process for the parolees. In the next chapter, I will present the report from the participatory intervention/workshop run with participants, and evaluate its effectiveness.

CHAPTER FIVE

Participatory Action Research Intervention and Evaluation

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the interpretation and analysis of data gathered from the exploratory stage of the study. Findings were consistent with the objectives and research questions that the research intended to address and the key research literature in the area. This chapter delves into the participatory action exercise drawn from discussions with the Parolees and Community Members. This exercise aimed to explore ways that parolees can successfully, peacefully, and harmoniously reintegrate into the community. It was also a platform to allow parolees and community members to interact and get to know and understand each other with the hope of building trust, respect, and acceptance. The community building workshop was done in Lamontville Community. This chapter will outline how the workshop was developed, implemented and evaluated.

5.2 Motivation for the Community Building Workshop

After consolidating the findings from the parolees and the community members, the researcher facilitated a community building workshop that took place in the Lamontville Community in September 2021. Lamontville is a town in eThekweni Municipality, KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. It is a small township community near Chatsworth and Umlazi. As the oldest township near Durban, Lamontville has a rich cultural, political, artistic, and athletic history. Established in the early 1930s with a population of 19000. The population number has increased. It was a challenge for me to access the population statistics of Lamontville Community members. Lamontville was intended for the rising African middle class of the time, many of the older homes have large families (grandparents, adult children and grandchildren) all living together. These families from rural areas and other communities living in mjondols are seen as outsiders. Many of these newer residents are in the process of moving to transit camps with the hope of permanent government RDP houses. Lamontville is known for being a politically-inclined location, its soccer team, Lamontville Golden Arrows, and its criminal elements.

Lamontville had two known gangster groups, they were known as Pantas and Kwaitos. Their criminal activities tended to include pickpocketing people in town, at the bus terminus, on buses and trains. Lamontville is also known as Asinamali Township. It acquired this name after the Lamontville Community members refused to pay rent. They also boycotted municipal buses because of the bus fare increase. Lamontville has produced different kinds of people. There are educated people. Some people who managed to complete matric were unable to continue their studies due to financial constraints. Lamontville has people who are highly educated and successful. It also has people who are living in poverty. Understanding this community context was an essential first step in formulating the design of the community building workshop.

The road towards the rehabilitation of an offender also encompasses the community outside the correctional center. The community has a vital role in the rehabilitation of offenders because they both come from the community and return to that community after incarceration. A strong connection between the offender and the community strengthens the opportunity for successful reintegration into society. If the offender does not feel accepted back into their community after rehabilitation, they might resort to actions that will lead them back to the correctional center. But if the community accepts the offender, the offender might have a smooth reintegration. It is important to allow the offender to have regular contact with the community, and this should be encouraged and facilitated by The Department of Correctional Services. This will encourage offenders to dedicate themselves to rehabilitation programs that will prepare them for positive community engagement (such as work after release) so that the community is more likely to accept them.

The White Paper on Corrections (Department of Correctional Services 2005b:178) stresses the role of the community in reintegration by stating that “The relationships between the Department of Correctional Services and the Community, Community-based Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and religious –based organizations are inherent to the achievement of the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders”.

5.3 Community Building Workshop

The findings from the exploratory stage of the research study were used, along with the input of participants themselves, to develop a community building workshop as the intervention for this action research project. Ten parolees and six community members were present to attend the workshop. The community members included Roman Catholic and Methodist religious leaders, councilors, the Lamontville SAPS station commander, and members of the Department of Correctional Services. These groups of individuals attended the program and also helped in the development of the program. The aim of the workshop was to allow a space where the parolees and the community could have a chance to interact and share their experiences and build a positive relationship. It also provided a space where community members could learn more about the parolees and the rehabilitation process, and the changes Parolees had made in their lives. Through the sharing of experience, positive interaction, and deepened understanding, it was hoped that Parolees would be more readily accepted back into the community and provided with social support from key community leaders.

Parolees were happy to take part in the action research exercise. They requested the inclusion of the prominent people in the community, discussed above, to take part in the Workshop with them. Parolees believed that if these key Community Members knew their stories and accepted them back into the community, their reintegration would be more successful. Parolees, through their own initiative and responsibility, invited the stakeholders so as to ensure their full participation in the program. The Parolees went and invited the community members and together they fixed a date and invited the researcher to come and facilitate a pre-workshop meeting.

A meeting was finally scheduled between ten Parolees and eight Community Members. However, when the date came, six out of eight community members that were invited came. Two of the family members did not come and the councilors sent representatives. The parolees pointed out that it was difficult to get stakeholders who were ready to be part of a workshop. However, the community members who did attend, having been well informed about the importance of the Parolees' reintegration into the community, participated actively in the process. In the meeting, we briefly discussed the reason they were invited to participate, highlighting the important role they, as principals in their

departments, play in the community. It was emphasized that they have power to influence and make sure that the parolees have a smoother, less challenging reintegration into the community. A peaceful and interactive ambience was created between the Parolees and the key stakeholders during the meeting which allowed concerns and questions to be raised and addressed openly. Finally, a date was set for the community building workshop, and all agreed to participate in this process. This workshop aimed to bring the parolees and community members together to meet in a dialogue and learn more about each other to effect positive change in the relationship between parolees and community members.

5.4 Implementing the Community Building Workshop

This section covers the outline of the workshop program. The Community Building Workshop was designed in order to develop a framework to shape how parolees can peacefully reintegrate into the Community. The session began by asking all the participants to fill out a questionnaire. This information allowed the researcher to use creative methods to group participants, ensuring the parolees and the community members worked in mixed groups throughout the workshop. Each group had 2 community members and 3 parolees while the last group had 2 community members and 4 parolees. They introduced themselves to each other, and provided a brief background about themselves.

The workshop program was designed to bring out the best in the parolees and maximize positive interaction between the two groups. The program consisted of three different sections, each aimed at facilitating greater understanding between the Parolees and the community members, and collaboration towards positive change.

5.4.1 Exercise One – Stage play: “Who we are, Where we are, and Where we are going”

The Parolees staged a play depicting the experiences they had while in prison. They called the play: “Who we are, Where we are, and Where we are going”. The performance

provided insight into the lives of the parolees. The play was developed as a means of exploring and sharing the parolees' life stories. Parolees found this to be a useful way in which they could show others what they have experienced and overcome, and also express the remorse they feel and the changes they have made. More specifically, this was to give the community members a brief idea of how the parolees see themselves.

Five parolees took the initiative to design, rehearse and stage this play for the community members. The other Parolees, who were not assigned lead acting roles, were also indirectly involved in the play by providing the props, while also acting as chorus during the play. The title emphasizes three phases that the role play spoke to: their background, challenges they have overcome, and the future lives they are trying to build. Each of these phases will be explored below, highlighting some common and overlapping themes discussed by the parolees in this role play.

The first phase, "who we are", gave an insight into the lives of the parolees from the introduction of themselves and their childhood experiences. Here most of the parolees discussed their criminal pasts and shared their length and experiences of incarceration. For example, one parolee indicated that he is a "Lamontville guy" - he has no other place to stay except in Lamontville. He shared that he has been incarcerated for car hijacking and was sentenced to 15 years. Another Parolee said that he was born and raised in Lamontville Kasi lami Laxavillee. He spoke strongly about his love for Kasi lami. He said he committed the crime of armed robbery with aggravating circumstances. He was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. He served 10 years of his sentence whilst he was in the Correctional Centre, he has undergone a rehabilitation path to address his offending behavior.

The second phase of the role play, "where we are" chronicled their life experiences and the travails they have faced to arrive at their current stage of life as a parolee. More specifically, parolees highlighted the challenges they have faced during rehabilitation and reintegration, emphasizing their poor treatment by the community as a key hurdle inhibiting their progress. For example, one parolee expressed:

As a parolee, I am subjected to stereotyping because the general population just see/ hears the word "criminal" or "offender" and makes generalized judgements based on very few facts. The movies/media/TV,

etc. all create a one-sided viewpoint of all offenders, without taking the actual person or circumstances into account.

This quote highlights that there is stigmatization and discrimination against parolees. Once the community knows that a person is an offender, it is very difficult for the offender to prove otherwise in terms of who they are as a person. The label outshines the person. The parolee further adds that the community does not call him by his name. They call him “*lgitsa*” meaning a person who steals cars, they also call him “*isigebengu*”.

Rehabilitation demands that the offender be integrated back into society as smoothly as possible so that the offender can rebuild a life and be able to make something of himself. However, there are too many stumbling blocks, very often caused by the labelling and stigmatizing of the individual. As a result, the entire parole process becomes a vicious circle because of the labels and ostracization of parolees by the community members. Another parolee stressed that he cannot come back home anymore because every time he does, he finds himself back at the Correctional Centre. He feels it is safer for him there.

Another parolee also emphasized the negative impact labelling has had on him, stressing he had been declared a “Habitual Criminal” by the court of law:

I have been in and out of prison because of my community people. They do not want to give me a chance to prove that I am a changed person. I decided to be what they believe I am. The community's prospective employers do not understand (or are ignorant of) what has taken place in the life of the offender while being incarcerated. Programs and rehabilitation courses are designed to correct the wrongs and I participated in these programs.

This quote highlights that due to their incarceration in a correctional center, parolees suffer from the stigma of being labelled ‘ex-cons’ or from the general belief that once a person becomes a criminal, they will always remain so. The community responds negatively to such labels by rejecting and distrusting people who have been incarcerated. This negative labelling thus makes it more difficult for parolees to reintegrate and or re-adjust to the society successfully. The quote

also highlights the need for greater community awareness of the rehabilitation process and how it allows the offenders to develop.

Another parolee also discussed how he has undergone a rehabilitation path to address his offending behavior, and he has restored relationships with his victims and their family, yet was still not accepted by the community. In his words, he said:

My problem is with Lamontville Community members at large. The Lamontville residents do not love me. They do not want to accept me as one of the community members.

These quotes point out that because of how parolees are seen and treated in the community, they often fall into recidivism. The community generally believes that the person that went into a Correctional Centre is the same person that comes out. This is often not the case. Most people do “learn their lesson” and want to start afresh, but the community tends to not view it this way. There is a saying “condemn the behavior and not the person” but this is something that most communities do not understand. Parolees stress that “*they condemn and reject us*”. This highlights a key area for change.

The last phase, “where we are going”, focused on the new goals and vision set by the parolees for themselves and the steps they are taking to achieve them. The parolees desire to be educated and employed. They believe that these are two significant factors in their successful reintegration into society. Hence, they share having embraced the various programs aimed at enlightening them and have worked toward conducting themselves appropriately within the community. Moreover, the parolees strive to maintain a healthy and respectful relationship with their family and friends. During this last part of the role play, many of the parolees pleaded with the community members to be actively involved in their reintegration process. They asked for the opportunity to be supported and accepted back into their community.

Please baphathibamisamkeleni¹⁵ Welcome us back to the community of Lamontville. They call me sgebengu. Please stop calling me names. Give me a chance to show up that I am a changed person.

¹⁵ my lords, welcome us

This quote highlights desperation that parolees feel, and their desire for forgiveness and acceptance.

Conclusively, another Parolee spoke so strongly saying:

I am a repeat offender not that I like, but it is because of what society has molded me to be. This is the same way COVID -19. There are many fictional stories about COVID -19, more importantly, vaccines causing a stumbling block in society at the moment which is preventing us from becoming a fully vaccinated society, so too is the perception of offenders causing a stumbling block in us reaching a “new way forward”. Sometimes the enlightening of the community from which they come from is as important as the rehabilitation of the offender.

This quote highlights that parolees feel unseen and unloved by their community even after being rehabilitation. It stresses the parolees' concern that community members see them as unchanged and unaccepted. By implication, the Parolees advocate a paradigm shift on the part of the community regarding their identity, since this perception will go a long way in helping them become useful members of the community.

Based on the presentation from the Parolees above, it is pertinent to indicate that most of the Parolees have been stereotyped, labelled negatively or stigmatized based on their past before being convicted. This implies that the Parolees suffer from the stigma of being labelled ‘ex-offenders’. The community responds negatively to such labels by rejecting and distrusting offenders who have been released from correctional centers, thus affecting their freedom to go about their activities as normal human beings. This also makes it difficult for them to see themselves as acceptable members of society.

A close study of the Parolees' presentation highlights the need for a ‘safe space’ among the Parolees. The concept of the safe space implies that the Parolees can be confident that their utterances will not be used against them, and that they will not suffer any disadvantages if they express critical or dissenting opinions. This does not imply a conflict-free space, but rather emphasizes ensuring that the conflicts that are revealed can be jointly discussed; that they can either be solved or, at least, accepted as different positions; and that a certain level of conflict tolerance is achieved. This requires a great willingness on the part of the Parolees to disclose their personal views of the situation,

and share their own opinions and experiences. In everyday life, such openness is displayed towards good and trusted friends within the community. The fear of being attacked for saying something wrong prevents the Parolees from expressing their views and opinions, especially when they appear to contradict what the other members of the community think. In addition, parolees need an environment and opportunities where they can express their anxiety. This is important in the sense that the parolees would begin to see themselves as useful members of the community, when fully reintegrated.

5.4.2 Exercise Two – Building Trust – The Blindfold Game

Building trust among parolees and community members seems to be an essential, and very trying, aspect of this work. As a result, the second exercise focused on addressing this issue. A game was introduced to help in the trust-building process. The exercise started by recategorizing all participants according to their birth month. By this method, the segregation between “community member” and parolee” or “criminal” and “law abiding citizen” was taken out entirely which forced participants from different groups to work together as a team. The game designed required a significant level of trust between the parolees and the community members. It asked participants to take turns being blindfolded and led on a course by the other team members who were not blindfolded. This proved to be a challenging activity, especially when any member of the community was blindfolded, and being led by a parolee. This game was also a way of encouraging teamwork among the parolees and the community members. It forced participants to draw on their senses, other than sight, when blindfolded. This is especially useful when trying to focus on the participants’ listening skills. Another significant aspect of the game has to do with control. It is usually more difficult to exert personal control over a situation that involves some mechanical action if you cannot see. The use of a blindfold can help reduce the community members’ control over the parolees. The game enabled the parolees to feel more confident about themselves and have the opportunity to experience leadership roles.

Community members stated clearly that they were not comfortable being led by the parolees and were worried they could be harmed by them. One community member said that to be led by the parolee was like they were being led by faith and believed that only by God’s grace would they be safe. The exercise, despite the community members’ agitation, went ahead. The display of discomfort by the community members reflects

how ordinary citizens tend to feel about parolees. This highlights that people feel that relating freely with individuals or groups of individuals that have been negatively labelled is difficult and sometimes not even possible. The parolees have been convicted of certain crimes, and as such; members of the community believe that parolees are still criminals, despite being rehabilitated. The community members did, however, see the need to push that away and participate in the exercise. Although the parolees felt hurt by these interactions initially, they noted that this is sadly the common treatment they get, which also helped them to continue with the activity. At the end of the game, community members were asked what they learnt from the game and participants expressed mixed feelings, as indicated below:

I gave them the benefit of a doubt, I am not comfortable being led by the parolee, but I gave them a chance and see if they can be trusted.

We do not trust them, we are human we fear them. They must do well and be good for us to believe them.

The above quotes indicate some willingness to confront their own prejudices but also highlight the need for more engaged work in this area.

5.4.3 Exercise 3 - What needs to be done?

For the third exercise, participants were divided into four groups according to their shoe sizes. The groups, once again, had a mix of parolees and community members. Participants were asked to discuss, in these small groups, what needs to be done to create a better relationship between parolees and community members. This exercise was facilitated through the use of discussion questions on this topic. Some of the key suggestions that were identified from this discussion are presented below.

Firstly, it was suggested that parolees should be encouraged to not withdraw from community services as this would further their sense of ostracization. Secondly, all the community members identified the need to learn more about parolees and the rehabilitation process as they acknowledged that they have limited knowledge of what the parolees go through before they are released on parole. They all concluded that they need to be taught. Both Community members and parolees recommended that there is a need to form a committee that will spearhead the training of the community members

about the rehabilitation process. The participants collectively established some possible guiding responsibilities for this committee. It was suggested that the committee consist of seven community members and three parolees. The roles assigned to this committee were to:

- ensure that all parolees are taken care of when they reintegrate back into the community;
- ensure that job opportunities are available to the parolees;
- organize meetings to check on the status of the parolees; and
- assist any parolee who is having a difficult reintegration process with the family by both speaking with the family and guiding the parolee on how to make amends.

After the third exercise was complete, the workshop moved to the evaluation phase.

5.5 Evaluation of the Workshop- Reflections from Community Members

This section gives an insight into the reflections of community members. After the workshop participants were asked to provide feedback on the session and discuss the impact it had on them. The reflections from members of the community and the parolees have been grouped into sub-themes. These include the need for a safe space, useful knowledge, a vehicle for change, control and empowerment, trust, and challenging the negative stereotype. It is hopeful to note that the workshop was viewed positively and participants found it to be useful.

5.5.1 The need to challenge the negative stereotype

The community members discussed feeling enlightened during the workshop, specifically highlighting increased awareness that they have a key role to play in the successful reintegration of the parolees. The workshop was helpful to the participants because its goals and objectives towards the successful reintegration of the parolees were clearly communicated. Initially, participants thought that the workshop was of no importance or value to them because of the negative stereotype they held about parolees, however, this shifted throughout the process. For example, one community member expressed the following:

After all that has happened, I am happy. I have learned a lot. At first, I thought it was a waste of time. I am grateful I took part in this exercise. What a way to spend a day, now I know that parolees have paid for their crimes, and in the process, they were rehabilitated, and with this, they need to be treated fairly. I mean to be treated as human beings. I am the one who is responsible for them when they do community service at Lamontville Police Station. I must tell the truth. I do not take notice of them. I treat them as criminals. I am a stereotyped person. I do not believe that they are changed people. I must confess that sometimes when something disappears in the police station, the first suspects will be parolees. They will remember one incident where phones were missing in the police station, we SAPS members were in one voice saying we are opening a charge for the parolees because they stole cell phones, up until one SAPS member revealed the phones and told us to look after our phones more, especially if there are parolees who are doing community service. We need peace and trust as Department of Correctional Services, SAPS and Lamontville Community Members.

The above quote highlights how interacting with the parolees in this session allowed them to challenge their own preconceived ideas, and form more positive attitudes towards the parolees.

5.5.2 The need for a 'Safe Space'

The role plays provided an opportunity where participants disclosed their personal views, opinions and experiences. The fear of being attacked for saying something wrong prevents the participants (both parolees and members of the community) from expressing their views and opinions especially when these views are contrary to the opinions of others. This highlights the need for safe spaces where all community members can share their ideas without the threat of being unheard or punished for their opinions. These personal or dissenting views among participants tended to increase their level of knowledge and awareness of the parolees' need to be accepted as members of the community. This theme is evident in the following participants' response:

What a day well spent; I thank the councilor who gave me this opportunity to come and represent her. I have learnt a lot about parolees. From now onwards I do not look at them as parolees; I look at them as human beings. This allowed me to do introspection and check how I would feel if I were to be treated as we treat parolees as community members. It is easy to say anything if you lack knowledge. After the paroles' stage play ... I have learned a lot about them. I have seen that they do not get justice from us as community members at a different community level, starting from family to the community at large. I can say thank you to the person who came up with this whole idea. It has taught me a lot about parolees. I am positive and willing to change and bring peace between the parolees and the councilor's office.

The quote above highlights the effectiveness of open and honest sharing in this workshop, and creates opportunities for further safe dialogue.

5.5.3 A vehicle for change

The workshop was important because it emphasizes the importance of collectives of individuals in understanding and transforming the social lives of the parolees. This process of collective discovery and decision-making enables the participants to accept change more readily, and be actively involved in creating change themselves. This theme is highlighted by one of the participants below:

I have learned a lot. Summary of the lesson learnt more especially for me as a child of God and leader in the good news of the Kingdom of God. Do not judge; only God can judge. I have been a bad leader. I did not listen to God's calling at first when He said in Matthew 25 verse 36 I was in prison and you came to visit me. I had failed God even when the parolees were out on parole. I remember that I do not encourage them to participate in church activities. I am involved in many community projects. Let me confess and say some of the parolees here approached me many times, wanting to be part of community projects. Little did I know or take into consideration that they are human beings as well they need to be given a chance to show that they are rehabilitated. It has been the other way

around. We, the Church, rejected them; we pushed them far away from the work of God. I did not do as Father of the prodigal son did. He opened both hands and welcomed his son back home. This is what we ought to do as the church and the Community of Lamontville to our parolees.

The quote above stresses a strong desire to make amends for past wrongs, and for the Church, and its people, to be actively involved in supporting the parolees in the future.

5.5.4 Trust, control and empowerment

The workshop gave the participant the opportunity to develop and build the much-needed trust for the parolees and vice versa. Though developing and building trust for one another is a gradual process, the role-play by participants created an avenue for developing the ability to participate, negotiate and influence the nature of relationships and decisions made among members of the community and the parolees. This was further challenged and developed through The Blindfold Game. This is illustrated below:

I resisted being led by the parolee, and I was not comfortable. I had in my mind that I could not be led by isiboshwa. I think it is because I lead people in my church, and they follow me. I find it difficult to be led by a parolee; I did not trust they could lead me the correct way. As the leader of the church, I have had a bad experience with parolees. On a few occasions, I had parolees who came to my church and pretended to be saved, meaning born-again Christians joined my church. They want to get married to my church virgin girls. I was not happy with that. They must first work hard and prove to themselves to the church and family members of the girl that they are changed, people. My being here has opened my eyes and taught me who parolees are. I have learned that every parolee is unique. I must not treat them the same. My being here has opened my eyes. I have concluded that as the man of God, I need to treat them fairly. Their role-play has taught me a lot about who they are and how we treat them.

The above quote, again emphasized the negative labels assigned to parolees and how this is closely tied to broken trust. It highlighted the focus on trust in the workshop as a strength and suggested the possibility of extending this impact in the future.

Furthermore, parolees ongoing engagement at every stage of the research process allowed them to learn new skills and experience themselves as valuable. When people in the community are given the opportunity to participate in determining their own future, they become empowered. The workshop was important because it enabled the community members to recount their personal experiences with the parolees, while the parolees were able to learn about the expectations of the community members as they go through the process of reintegration.

5.5.5 Useful knowledge

The knowledge gained through the workshop enabled the community members to become more aware of the need to be engaged in the reintegration process of the parolees. The workshop was important because it created a positive impact on the minds of the participants, both parolees and community members alike. This has resulted in their changed mindset about the parolees in the community. The workshop was positively received by the participants through the re-enactment of their past experiences during incarceration. The role played by participants helps to challenge the negative stereotype held against parolees by members of the community. It also serves as a tool to enlighten the community members on the need to be part of the growth process towards the successful reintegration of the parolees in the Lamontville Community. This is highlighted by another participant's response below:

I think this is an excellent platform to look at the problem amongst us. I mean Lamontville parolees, Lamontville Community members and the Department of Correctional Services. I must say straight I fear parolees, and I do not trust them. I do not believe that a criminal can change his behavior and live a crime-free life without committing another crime. Attending this workshop has taught me a lot: that parolees must be given a chance to prove that they are good people. I know not all parolees violate

parolee conditions by going back to the old criminal way. Parolees must remember that they were once isigebengu and, it is not easy to rely on them. I still insist that all my coming here has helped me understand that every case is treated on its own merits. I am in touch with all the concerns of the parolees, but I am not at home.

The workshop helped the participants to see themselves not only as individuals existing in isolation but as members of a team, working to achieve a common goal. Similarly, the new discoveries made about themselves during the workshop helps them to coexist peacefully in the community without resorting to stereotyping and labelling. In addition, most of the participants said they have learnt new things from the Parolees, especially when the parolees recounted their experiences of who they are, where they are going, and how they want to be seen.

This being said, some members of the community still struggled with accepting the parolees as being fully changed human beings, with whom they can relate without fear. To overcome this fear, the community members will need to have continued support in this area. Similarly, the parolees are still struggling with the issues of labelling and marginalization. The community members still see the Parolees as being a shadow of their old selves. This is a major impediment towards the successful reintegration of the Parolees, and peace in the community more broadly.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented and discussed the Community Building Workshop. Ten parolees and six Community Members were present. This program was designed to find ways that parolees could successfully, peacefully and harmoniously reintegrate into the community. The workshop also aimed to help Community Members have a greater understanding of parolees and the rehabilitation process. The workshop consisted of three exercises; the role plays by parolees, a trust building exercise, and a discussion on what needs to be done in the future. The workshop was discussed in a positive light and there were productive engagements and feedback from both the Community Members and Parolees. The community members came to understand the plight of the

parolees, and the parolees reported feeling uplifted through the process. Community Members and parolees agreed that a committee should be formed to train Community Members on the rehabilitation process going forward. Seven Community Members and three Parolees will form the committee and collectively they will strive to continue to develop the ongoing reintegration process.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and discussed the Community Building Workshop. This chapter gives a comprehensive conclusion and presents the recommendations for future. It gives a summary of the challenges faced by male parolees in Lamontville and provides the framework for developing acceptance of parolees in the community.

6.2 Overview of the research

The study aimed to explore the challenges of male parolees in the Lamontville community, as well as benefit the community by lowering the crime rate. In carrying out this research, four objectives were identified:

1. To identify parolees' perceptions and expectations after they are reintegrated into the community.
2. To identify the challenges faced by the male parolees of Lamontville.
3. To investigate the attitudes and experiences of community members concerning parolees' reintegration.
4. To develop an integrated model for the community to support and sustain rehabilitation and restoration for the parolees.

Chapter one focused on the context of the research. Chapter two provided a review of related literature. This chapter reviewed works of different research similar to the study. It focused on the reintegration process for the parolees. Chapter three focused on the research methods. It focuses on the research design, sampling techniques, data collection methods and analysis.

Chapter four focused on the data analysis and discussion of the results of the exploratory phase of the research process. It concluded that in order to create a more harmonized reintegration process, community and family members need to be trained on how to work, live and relate to the parolees. Chapter five focused on The Community Building

Workshop run with the parolees and key community stakeholders, and evaluated this process.

6.3 Summary of key findings

6.3.1 Perception of parolees on reintegrating into the community

The great majority of participants highlighted that it has been hard for them to reintegrate into the community. They also stated that the community they live in, including their family members, have also contributed to these challenges. Guerino, Harrison and Sabol (2011:341) asserted that many societies are unwilling to receive offenders back into the community. The community members, especially the youth, highlighted that it is difficult to integrate the parolees into the community as it is difficult to trust them and they feel they need constant monitoring.

From the responses provided by the participants and Community Members, it is evident that parolees face rejection from their communities and family members. This prevents rehabilitation in several ways because the only space parolees appear to find belonging and acceptance is in the criminal world. It is important to state that successful community reintegration depends strongly on whether released offenders can find stable employment. However, the stigma attached to incarceration makes it difficult for parolees to be hired. This was a recurring theme during the community building workshop as well.

Communities and families are key to the rehabilitation and reintegration of parolees. If the community and the family fail to accommodate them, many of the parolees end up returning to criminal patterns of behavior. Accommodating the parolees implies that a non-threatening environment is created for them in order to reinvigorate their confidence and support them through the rehabilitation process. This could be done by maintaining a cordial relationship between the parolees and the community and family members. Furthermore, the community and family members could accommodate the parolees by helping to provide job-related skills and training program to the parolees. Singh (2016) states that the prevention of repeated offenders is best achieved if the parolees develop their new lives in society and are accepted by community members.

Without a positive and strong support system provided by the community and the family members, reintegration of the parolees into the community is difficult and most of them

end up being destitute. Without the support of the family, access to basic needs, for example, clothes, food, shelter, and accommodation becomes difficult for them. Failure to access these necessities can often lead them to backslide to the criminal path that had them initially incarcerated. It is clear that without many of these necessities, life outside for these parolees is challenging, and pursuing a life which is free from any criminal activities is overwhelming. It can be noted that there is a need for the community and family members to also play a key role in emotionally supporting parolees when they are released on parole. In South Africa, the criminal justice system views reintegration and rehabilitation of offenders as a mutual responsibility for the parolees and the community. Families and the community need to be sensitized to the significance of accepting offenders and assisting them with their reintegration process. The community of Lamontville has a major role to play in the success of the reintegration process of parolees, however, there is a need to come up with strategies that mobilize and sustain the interest of community involvement in this process. Lack of knowledge relating to the reintegration process and lack of support services where the families can get both financial and emotional assistance are major obstacles to the successful reintegration of parolees.

6.3.2 Challenges faced by male parolees in Lamontville

Parolees face huge challenges when they reintegrate into the community after being released from prison. One of the key challenges that parolees face is unemployment. They highlighted that prospective employers feel it is a risk to employ parolees. Furthermore, the community is unforgiving when it comes to giving parolees a second chance. The community members (both old and young), and the parolees themselves, all highlighted the ongoing experiences of stigmatization of parolees. This stigmatization results in parolees not gaining employment because of the need to produce a clean criminal record before being deemed employable. Kaplan and Nussio (2018) further assert that this struggle to find employment also results in them being marginalized by their families and community. Opportunities of employment for parolees with a means of support and access to employment, is an integral strategy in crime fighting.

The participants and the community members also highlighted that parolees struggled with the change in environment. Zondi (2012) states that the reintegration process of parolees is the initial step of them adjusting to a world outside of prison, to ensure they

live a crime-free life. The study showed that the participants had difficulty gaining acceptance from their families and community. The adjustment from prison life to normal life is stressful for them because of this rejection. Another challenge that was highlighted by the participants was ostracization. The community members, particularly the young community members, highlighted that the ostracization of parolees is due to their lack of trust in them. There is a need for parolees to be treated like any other member of the community. By ostracizing them the community does them a great disservice.

These challenges faced by parolees have devastating outcomes. They result in stress, self-doubt, low self-esteem, and depression. Hence, if the barriers to reintegration are not removed for the parolees, the outcomes for them and their community will be severe. It is, therefore, vital to address the above-stated challenges, which include but are not limited to providing employment opportunities and a safe environment to parolees. The facilitation of reintegration and rehabilitation of parolees back into the Lamontville community must be at the core of the community's responsibility, and this research served to support this.

6.3.3 An integrated model of community support

The outcomes of the study highlighted that the participants have joined support groups that help them to reintegrate back into the community. Support groups can be viewed as activities that prepare the parolees for their community without risk (Maruna, Immarigeon and LeBel 2013). The study showed that these support groups have helped the participants to find part-time work which ensures that they can cater for their families and find a place to fit into the community. However, there are community members, particularly those who were once convicted themselves, who highlighted that these groups do not provide enough help in the reintegration of the parolees. Furthermore, the study highlighted that the removal of barriers to employment for the parolees would also enable them to reintegrate into the community. Finding gainful employment enables the parolees to desist from criminal activities, whilst ensuring that they have a means of contributing to the welfare of their families. This also enables the parolees and their families to have more positive relationships because they are not reliant on them for survival.

There is a need for after-care programs which check on the parolees to determine if they are adjusting to the environment outside and further assist them with any challenges associated with the transition. These after-care programs must encompass the provision of temporary housing, food parcels, counselling, and ensuring that part of their financial needs are met. Van Ness and Strong (2014) highlight that restorative justice is based on the restoration of human relationships, thus by providing after-care programs, the government could enable the parolees to have dignity and somewhere to start during the reintegration process. Many of the challenges highlighted in the study can only be mitigated if there are comprehensive post-prison programs that are provided to the parolees.

In addition to a focus on post-prison programs, this study also highlights the need for educational programs for community members. The Community Building Workshop run as part of this study highlighted the need for programs that develop trust and promote understanding between parolees and community members. Although this workshop made good progress in connecting the parolees and key Community Members, and allowed community members the opportunity to challenge their prejudices and change their minds about the way they view parolees, this was seen to be only the first step in a long, ongoing process of building community.

6.4 Recommendations

Many of the challenges highlighted by the study could be mitigated if post-prison services were offered to the parolees. Thus, there is a need to ensure there are resources which target parolee reintegration and these must be channeled through the Department of Correctional Services.

There is a need for the Department of Correctional Services to provide correctional programs that allow the parolees to develop new skills, trades, or values that will help them to more easily reintegrate into the larger society.

The marginalization of parolees could be stopped through the provision of services that facilitate the social acceptance and effective reintegration of parolees into communities. Moreover, another important aspect of stopping parolees' marginalization is by empowering them to have skills to function effectively in society. Parolees should be

offered productive activity while they serve their sentences and encouraged to contribute to their self-care.

Members of the family need to be involved in the parolee reintegration process. For them to have an understanding of the interventions the parolees have gone through, the families must be guided by counselling and support groups that will prepare them for the parolees' release.

There is a need for a memorandum of understanding between the Department of Correctional Services and businesses for the provision of employment opportunities for parolees.

Finally, there is a need to build trust, and challenge prejudice against parolees, among the community and family members.

6.5 Limitations

The qualitative research methodology utilized, aimed to produce a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by parolees in Lamontville, in particular, and as a result, it cannot be utilized to provide a general perspective of parolees in other contexts.

A lack of family involvement in the research process is a key limitation of this study. This is because much attention was focused on the support of the Parolees while neglecting the financial, psychological and emotional support needed by families of the parolees.

Furthermore, this research only focused on adult male parolees from the selected area in South Africa. Woman parolees were excluded from the scope of the study as they form a minority within the parolee group.

Child offenders were also excluded from the study as they were a difficult sample to access. These constitute areas for future research in this field of study.

6.6 Personal reflection

The overall experience of conducting this research had both positive and challenging elements. There were times when I was happy during the fieldwork and there were times when I was crying. There were times when I was angry. There were times when I was

amazed and could not believe things that I was coming across, and there were times where I had fun with my participants.

What was challenging

It was unfortunate that I conducted my study during COVID-19. All my interviews were conducted under COVID-19 restrictions and regulations. I had to make sure that I treated my participants with care. I had to provide masks, sanitizers and running water. All the interviews were conducted outside in an open space so we could have enough ventilation and ensure social distancing was always possible. I struggled to find an appropriate venue for the interviews as it was during the lockdown period. Initially interviews were supposed to be conducted in the Community Corrections Offices, but these plans needed to be changed to be in line with COVID regulations. My alternate plan was to use my home as a venue for the study to progress, but this posed some real challenges. I struggled with the money to buy participants COVID-19 equipment and refreshments. I also struggled to maintain discipline as participants did not always maintain appropriate boundaries. Finally, this was challenging because I felt afraid to invite the parolees into my home. I have worked with the parolees for 12 years and thus, I had an idea of what to expect due to my previous experiences with them. I had a preconceived notion that it is risky to bring a male parolee to my home especially, as a woman. This highlights my own embedded prejudices and lack of trust towards the parolees. This, however, was challenged during the research process as the data collection went smoothly and safely.

Another challenging aspect of this research was the sampling process. It was not easy to recruit parolees because all of them had the same mentality that participating in this project was going to directly benefit them and provide a positive impact on their lives. For example, parolees were expecting that involvement in this study would lead them to employment opportunities, relaxation of parole conditions or access to food parcels. At times it was difficult to manage the parolee's expectations. It required me to continually remind them of the aims, goals and expectations of the research study, and to emphasize that participation was voluntary. It was also difficult to see, first hand, the struggles of the parolees and feel unable to fully assist. For example, during the lockdown community members were regularly getting food parcels but the parolees did not receive any. It was painful for me to hear that they were excluded from getting food

parcels. Parolees' interpreted this to be because they are parolees. However, I made clear the expectations of the study but parolees still seemed to hope that the study would give them more access to tangible benefits as mentioned above (which were clearly not promised). As I continued to interact with them, I noticed that this consistent hope in a tangible benefit was a result of their desperate need for financial, emotional and physical support and employment opportunity.

In my experience, the interviews with the community members were far more challenging. Community Members' beliefs and mindsets were challenged during the fieldwork. This is because the community members' belief was that parolees are criminals and will not change. Thus, they were not open to being part of a study that aimed to find ways for parolees to have a smooth and peaceful reintegration into the community. It was a challenge to recruit community members. They did not take my research seriously because it had to do with parolees which they consider izigebengu (criminals). As a result, I ended up interviewing only 7 community members instead of 10.

What was fulfilling

I was happy to see the first interview happening. The participants were all on time. They were all disciplined, clean and focused. They all actively participated. I was happy that all my participants really engaged fully and shared freely. "Bageqa amagula" meaning they "left no stone unturned". They said it all, even what was not asked. I enjoyed hearing them share their experiences and coming up with their own solutions to their challenges. I enjoyed seeing that parolees have their own community and that they understand one another. They provided each other with the support that they each needed. I enjoyed seeing that they know each other's strengths and weaknesses.

At the same time, the interviews were also challenging to conduct and, at times, I felt as if the parolees overpowered me, and keeping the interviews "on track" was difficult. They were like birds in a cage for a long time. They had not been given a chance or a platform to say anything and everything. It was their very first time to have such an opportunity. I cried when I realized that there are people who need an opportunity to say something but no one in their community, and even in their immediate family, is prepared to give them a chance. There were times where I was amazed by the parolees' strength and

vulnerability but listening to these experiences was also very difficult. They shared their experiences fully. They would also counsel me and say *Haah mama ubala lolo* (which translates to “Huh Mom, it is not a big deal”) and they would go on and on with their painful experiences that made me sad. There were times where we all cried. For example, when one parolee shared how he was treated by the SAPS and his family members. Something I really learnt from, and admired about, the parolees from these discussions was that they had the solution for whatever challenge they were sharing. For example, after we were all crying they asked for a smoking break and they took time to debrief and share a cigarette. This time spent with the parolees, listening to them, created a bond and gave me another perspective of them. It strongly emphasized the key finding of this research: that parolees should be given an opportunity to prove themselves after rehabilitation and it is the community’s responsibility to work on not judging and distrusting them.

6.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study presented the complex set of challenges faced by parolees when reintegrating into the Lamontville community. The study found that a majority of the parolees are sincerely remorseful and they repeatedly discussed wanting to be accepted back into the community and offered employment opportunities. The study also found that there is a high risk of recidivism for the parolees due to their experience of lack of support from family and community members and this needs to be a key area of focus going forward. The study emphasized that the effective reintegration of parolees is dependent on sustainable partnerships between the community, families, businesses, non-governmental and community-based organizations, and the criminal justice system.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A



Cell: 0722679502 / 0765598696

Email: lungilemngoma91@gmail.com

2835 Kaula Road

Lamontville 4027

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: CHALLENGES FACED BY MALE PAROLEES IN LAMONTVILLE ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY, KWAZULU NATAL

Principal Investigator/researcher: Lungile Goodness Mngoma, Masters

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Dr Simone Plug

Dear Participant

Thank you for taking an interest in my research. My name is Lungile G. Mngoma, I am currently studying for a Master of Management Science in Peacebuilding at the Durban University of Technology. I wish to provide you with further information about my research study so that you have a clear understanding of what it is about.

There is a high number of Parole Violators. Challenges faced by parolees have been ignored. There is little or no research been done to address these challenges. This study aims to focus on the challenges faced by male parolees. On choosing to become part of this research you will:

- Voluntarily become an active participant in ethnographic observations.
- Voluntarily become an active participant in discussions, and interviews as advised by the researcher.
- Be kindly requested that all information discussed in these meetings is confidential.

Please be advised your participation is voluntary and you may freely withdraw from participating in the discussions and interviews. You will not be paid for participating in the study and you will not be expected to pay anything to take part in the study. The individual interview session will be held at a time convenient to you. Your names will not be used when reporting on the focus group or individual interviews. Your answers will be kept confidential and mainly for this research. However, by participating in this research you can express your views and comments without fear or favour of being victimised.

Many thanks and kind regards. Sincerely,

Mngoma, Lungile

APPENDIX B



CONSENT

Statement of Agreement to Participant in the Research Study

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher. Lungile G. Mngoma, about the nature, conduct benefits and risks of this study -Research Ethics Clearances Number.
- I have also received, read and understood the above-written information (Participant Letter of information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, and age. date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- Given the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage. Without prejudice. Withdraw my consent to participate in the study.
- I have had a sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of the Participant

Date

Time

Signature

I Lungile Goodness Mngoma herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, and conduct of the above study.

Full Name of the Researcher

Date

Signature

APPENDIX C



To The Head
Community Corrections
Durban
Date: 2019.04.29

Dear Sir,

My name is Mngoma, Lungile Goodness. I am currently registered for an MTech in Peacebuilding at Durban University of Technology. Negative attitudes towards parolees is a major concern within our community, and I want to address challenges faced by male parolees. For this reason, I wish to conduct a study of parolee reintegration into the Lamontville community.

For me to undertake this study, I wish to work with ten male Lamontville parolees who are under your supervision, in my study that am conducting. Together with ten community members, the parolees will implement a programme to build a better relationship with the community at large. Participation is voluntary and no harm will befall participants during and after the study has been carried out. For this study, I am guided by the code of ethics of Durban University of Technology to ensure confidentiality of information provided to me by the participants.

I do hope I will be granted access to work with your parolees. In any case, should you have any problem or queries then please contact me or my supervisor.

Yours faithfully

Lungile Goodness Mngoma

Masters student Peacebuilding

Email: lungilemngoma91@gmail.com

Contact number: 0722679502

Dr Simone Plug, Supervisor, Email: SimoneP@dut.ac.za

APPENDIX D



INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE KEY INFORMANTS

Title of the Research Study: Challenges Faced by Male Parolees in Lamontville Ethekwini Municipality KwaZulu Natal

Student/researcher: Lungile Goodness Mngoma

Date:

Time:

Thank you for agreeing to participate. We are very much interested to hear about the challenges you face when you reintegrate back into the Community.

The study aims to evaluate the Challenges faced by male parolees of Lamontville.

- The information you give us is completely confidential, and we will not associate your name.
- We would like to record the interview so that we can make sure to capture the thoughts, opinions, and ideas. No names will be attached and the tapes will be destroyed as soon as they are transcribed.
- You may refuse to answer any question.
- We understand how important it is that this information is kept private and confidential if you have any questions now or after, you can always contact a study team member like me, or you can call the persons whose names and phones numbers are on this form
- Please sign to show you agree to participate in this interview.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PAROLEES

SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How old are you?
2. What is your marital status?
3. What is your highest level of education?
4. What is your employment status and your current occupation?
5. How long have you been residing in Lamontville Community?
6. What type of housing do you have?
7. How many people are living in that?

SECTION B INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. How long were you serving?
2. What were you imprisoned for?
3. How long have you been on parole?

4. When you left prison, what were your hopes and feelings about re-joining the Lamontville Community?
5. Tell me about the few days after release?
6. How many times have you been to prison?
7. Have you ever been sent back to the correctional centre for violating your parole conditions? Why do you think this happened?
8. Share with me the feelings/experiences you had when you were sent back to prison as a parole violator what do you think is the most important thing for an offender to know when he is released from prison?
9. How would you describe your relationship with Lamontville community members before and after imprisonment?
10. How do you respond to these difficulties?
11. What has made the reintegration process easier/difficult?
12. Has anyone/any group done anything specifically useful and supportive to assist you? Who? What? How? Are there any spaces/groups in which you feel most/ least like you belong? Tell me what that is like and why you feel that way.
13. Were you using drugs before incarceration? Yes/No
14. Do you find yourself tempted by "old habits" like using drugs?
15. If so in what situations does this happen?

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What year were you imprisoned?
4. When were you released?
5. Before you were imprisoned, how would you describe your relationship with your family members?
6. How would you describe your relationship with the community members before you were imprisoned?
7. How many people live at your home?
8. How are they related to you?
9. When you left prison, what were your hopes and feeling on your reintegration to your community?
10. What did you first do in Lamontville community on your return from imprisonment?
11. Have you experienced any challenges from interacting with your family after your release? If so, what?
12. Share with me challenges you encounter from your community members.
13. How do you overcome these challenges?
14. Tell me about attempts you have made to find work. What has that been like?
15. Do you ever find yourself tempted to try alcohol or drugs?
16. If so, in what situations do that happen?

17. How do you overcome those temptations?
18. What is it that the community must know about the parolees?
19. What are now your hopes for the future?

COMMUNITY MEMBERS FOCUS GROUP

1. How many parolees are you aware of in your community/family/friends circle?
What is their relation to you or how do you know them?
2. What is the general reaction from the community members to parolees when they return from incarceration? What is difficult about having parolees back in the community? What is helpful about having parolees back in the community?
3. What contributions to the community would you expect parolees to make? Is it easy for parolees to find work and make contributions to the community? Please explain why you said yes/no to that question.
4. Who do you think, should be mainly responsible for parolees during their reintegration? The family or the community or the DCS? Why do you believe that?
5. In what ways do community members assist/work with helping a parolee in your family/community?
6. What do you think the community's role should be to make the process of reintegration smoother? What can be improved about the reintegration process?
7. What jobs can parolees get (if any)? How can the system of re-employment be improved to assist parolees to earn a living?
8. If we as community members are not doing enough, what can be done to assist parolees?
9. Where are the gaps/shortcomings in the DCS process and what can be improved/changed to facilitate offenders' reintegration?
10. What else would you like to say about the reintegration of the parolees into the community?



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24 March 2021

2835 Kaula Road

Lamontville

Durban

4027

Dear L. Mngoma

We wish to inform you that full approval/permission has been granted for you to conduct research in the form of data collection in the Lamontville community amongst paroles and other community members as part of your studies towards a Master's Degree in Peace Building at the Durban University of Technology entitled: CHALLENGES FACED BY MALE PAROLEES IN LAMONTVILLE ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY KWAZULU.

You may proceed with data collection.

Yours Faithfully



Sibusiso Siveshe

Councillor of Lamontville

