

Relapse Factors and Strategies to Cope With Relapse Among Observation Cases in Community

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Abstract: This study aims to identify relapse factors and explore strategies to cope with relapse among observation cases, analyze and improve the current treatment and rehabilitation programs in community. Qualitative study based on Hermeneutic Method which is interpreting text was used. Purposive sampling of 20 research subjects from observation cases and 5 research subjects; staff of National Antidrug Agency (NADA) were involved. Four types of research instruments were used in frame to fulfil Triangulation Method; interview, observation, questionnaires and documents analysis. 20 research subjects were interviewed individually and their answers were recorded. 5 research subjects of NADA staff were involved in the questionnaires. Data from the questionnaires was collected from the staff of NADA. Observation was done by visiting the research subjects at their homes through 'Home Visit' programs. Observation was done for a period of one year. Data from documents analysis; Inmates Valuation of Recovery Performance Report (IVRPR) was collected from Cure and Care Rehabilitation Centres (CCRC). The findings highlighted that the dominant factors contributing to relapse is peer influence; 25 (29%) and their own attitude; 21 (24%) research subjects. The findings also outlines the dominant effectiveness of drug treatment and rehabilitation programs has a change in attitude; 30(25%) and forget misuse of drugs; 24 (20%) research subjects. The findings also shows the dominant improvement is to increase more recovery programs; 31 (27%) and create more job opportunities; 22 (19%) research subjects and the dominant prevention strategy is to make them stronger physically and mentally; 14 (24%) and increase faith in God; 13 (22%) research subjects. The implication of this study shows that the government through lead agency, NADA and the parties responsible should take proper action to prevent relapse rate among observation cases and ensure the process of recovery is maintained effectively throughout the observation period in community.

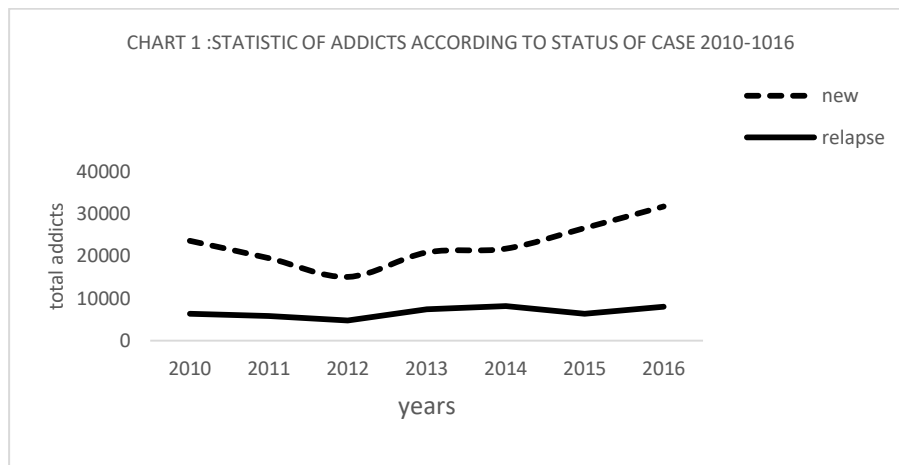
Keywords: relapse, observation cases, treatment and rehabilitation program, community, Hermeneutic approach.

1. INTRODUCTION

Drug addiction is a major problem compared to other problems in Malaysia. It has become more serious with the rise of relapse cases among observation cases in community annually. In 1983, Malaysian Government declared drug addiction as the number one problem of this country compared to other social problems. The statistic between 2015 and 2016 showed an increase of 1661 cases in relapse cases, from 6,379 (23.92%) to 8,040 (25.32%) cases [National Antidrug Agency (NADA), Malaysia, 2017]. It shows that this problem is getting worse although the Malaysian Government has taken full effort and spent a lot of money to eradicate this problem since 1975 (Tan, Sabri & Sharon Yam, 2007). Misuse of drugs and relapse cases are more dangerous because it can collapse the harmonies life of people and the national defence of the country and topple the social, economic and political stability of the country. So, this study is to identify relapse factors and strategies to cope with relapse among observation cases in community. Simultaneously, this study will also analyse and improve the current treatment and rehabilitation program in community to reduce the relapse rate. Statistics of addicts based on case status are given in TABLE 1.

TABLE 1: STATISTICS OF ADDICTS BASED ON CASE STATUS FROM 2010-2016 (NADA, 2017)

Year	New		Relapse		Total	
	Figure	Percentage (%)	Figure	Percentage (%)	Figure	Percentage (%)
2010	17,238	72.91	6,404	27.09	23,642	100
2011	13,683	70.06	5,848	29.94	19,531	100
2012	10,301	68.21	4,800	31.79	15,101	100
2013	13,481	64.54	7,406	35.46	20,887	100
2014	13,605	62.47	8,172	37.53	21,777	100
2015	20,289	76.08	6,379	23.92	26,668	100
2016	23,724	74.68	8,040	25.32	31,764	100

**Fig 1: Statistics of Addicts According to Case Status 2010-2016 (NADA, 2017)****STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:**

Eradicating drug problem is a collective responsibility and for that purpose National Drug Policy (NDP) was formed. The purpose of this policy is to free Malaysia from the dangers of drug by the year 2015. Unfortunately, this was not achieved when 31,764 cases were recorded in year 2016 whereby 8,040 were relapse cases (NADA, 2017). In year 2015, NADA has spent RM 322.962 million for the management and development of NADA (NADA, 2015) nevertheless failed to eradicate drug problem in this country. Overall, misuse of drugs gives a negative impact on the finance, security and defence of the country. According to Zarina et al. (2015), from the perspective of security, Malaysia is greatly influenced by drug problems of the neighbouring countries such as Thailand, Indonesia and Philippines.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Scott et al. (2005), drug addiction is a chronic situation with a few transitions between relapse, re-entry and recovery. At same time, addicts go through a few transitions from treatment seeking, treatment linkage, engagement, treatment exit and re-entry. So, according to McLellan, 2002: McLellan, Lewis, O'Brien and Klebar (2002), addicts confront relapse repeatedly and continuously participate in relapse-treatment-recovery cycle. According to Fauziah et al. (2012), social pressure contribute to physiology, social, and psychology problems. She added that this kind of situation creates conflict among individual which gives opportunity to them to involve in relapse. Meanwhile, Rokiah (2010), stated that since 1970s, drug problem in this country showed unsatisfactory record. She added that this problem is connected to other social problems such as prostitution, violence, crime, AIDS and HIV. She explained further that this social problem has a strong power to unnerve and damage the economy, social, and culture, stability of politic and defence of the country. According to Tam and Foo (2013), Malaysian government has spent RM3000 per-addict and approximately RM300 million for treatment and rehabilitation program annually. In addition to that, Fauziah (2012), has also stated relapse is a challenging problem to this country. According to Rusdi et al. (2008), all inmates do well while undergoing treatment in drug rehabilitation centers. He added, they are able to abstain from misuse drugs during the period nevertheless once released from the centers, they are more exposed to risky situations in which they eventually fail to overcome and finally relapse.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

This researcher has a few objectives to achieve as following:

- i. To identify contributing factors among observation cases involved in relapse
- ii. To analyse the current treatment and rehabilitation program to cope with relapse.
- iii. To improvise the current treatment and rehabilitation program in community.
- iv. To analyse prevention strategies which can be done by the observation cases to cope with relapse.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

There is a few research problems identified to answer the research objective which is decided as following:

- i What are the contributing factors to relapse?
- ii How far treatment and rehabilitation programs can cope with relapse?
- iii What improvisation that can be done to the current treatment and rehabilitation programs in the community to cope with relapse?
- iv What are the prevention strategies to avoid relapse?

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

To answer these research questions, the researcher has done conceptual framework to make it easier, clearer, and structured systematically to understand the objective of this study well. This conceptual framework is shown in FIGURE 2.

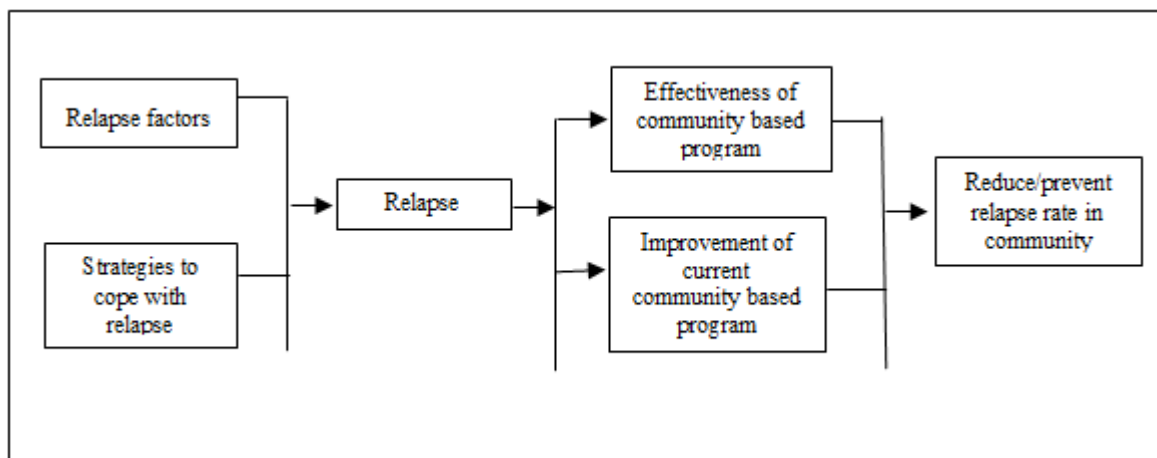


Fig 2: Conceptual Framework

HERMENEUTIC APPROACH:

Hermeneutic is the process of interpreting texts (Suppiah, 2016). According to Chambers (1987), Hermeneutic is very hard to explain but in a wide explanation, it's learning about understanding but in narrow explanation, it is about principles of methodology for interpreting and exploring texts. According to Loganathan (1992), Hermeneutic is science of discussing about human behavior through suitable methodology. He added, Hermeneutic science deemed as an inquiry which investigates and reveal hidden mystery about human behavior and character. In context with this research, Hermeneutic approach was used to analyse data collected from instruments such as interview, observation, questionnaire and documents analysis and finally the data was interpreted as text. For the purpose of this study, all completed instrument has become texts and interpreted for answering the research questions which was created.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK:

Research framework is important to guide the purpose of this study. It gives a clear picture of how the study has been carried out systematically. For this purpose researcher did a framework as shown in FIGURE 3.

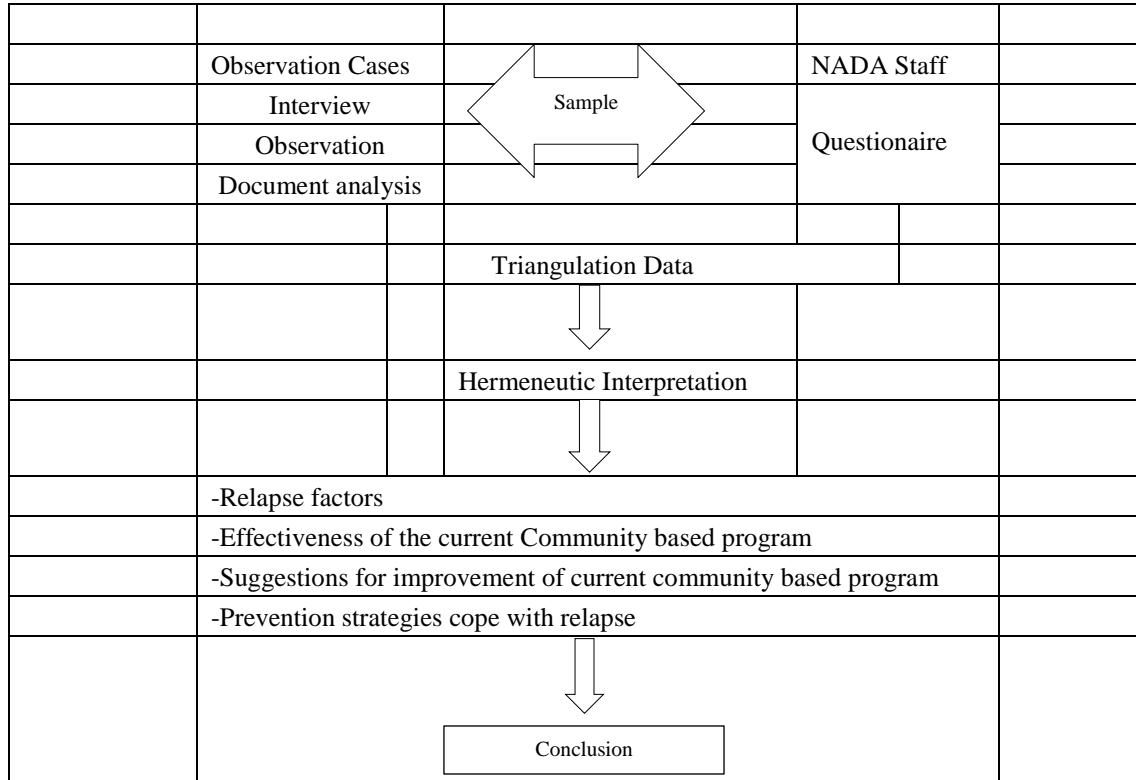


Fig 3: Research Framework

4. FINDINGS

Findings of this research is based on research questions which is stated below.

Research question 1: What are the contributing factors to relapse?

The findings shows that the dominant factors contributing to relapse is peer influence;25 (29%) research subject, their own attitude; 21(24%) research subject, environment 18 (24%) subject, lack of family love 13 (21%) research subjects and having lot of money; 10 (15%) research subjects. This findings are shown in FIGURE 4 clearly.

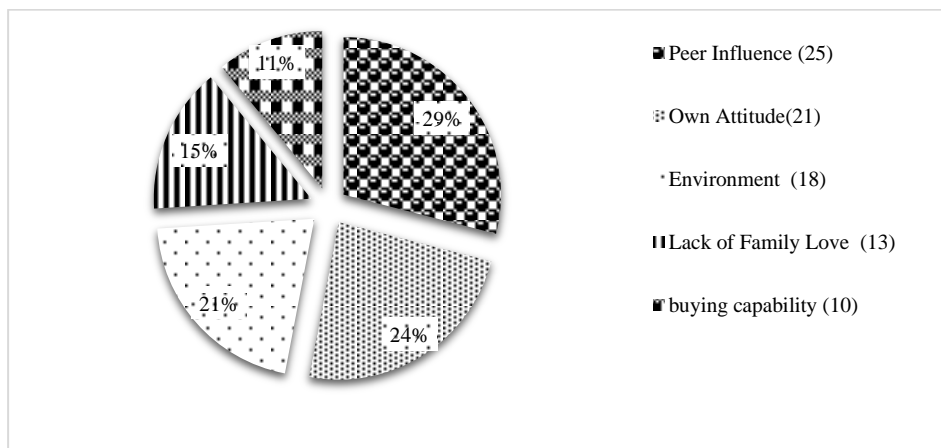


Fig 4: Relapse Factors

Research question 2: How far treatment and rehabilitation programs can cope with relapse.

The findings reveal that the dominant effectiveness of drug treatment and rehabilitation program has assisted in a change of attitude; 30 (25%) research subjects, forget misuse of drugs; 24 (20%) research subjects, created a good rapport and relationship with local community; 23 (19%) research subjects; share experiences; 23 (19%) research subjects and to sustain relationship with family members; 21 (17%) research subjects. The effectiveness of the current treatment and rehabilitation problem shown in FIGURE 5.

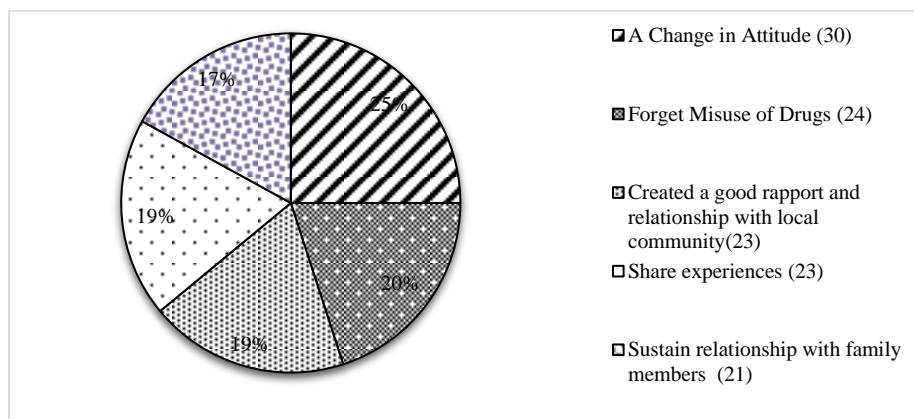


Fig 5: The effectiveness of the current treatment and rehabilitation program

Research Question 3: What are the improvements that can be done to the current treatment and rehabilitation programs in the community to cope with relapse?

The findings also show the dominant improvement is to increase more recovery programs; 31 (27%) research subjects, create more job opportunities; 22 (19%) research subjects, implement programs or activities such as sports, recreation and community based programs; 20 (18%) research subjects, to modify programs according to age, situation and suitable environment; 20 (18%) research subjects and frequent meet up with rehabilitation officers or professional counsellors; 20 (18%) research subjects. The improvement of the current treatment and rehabilitation program displayed in FIGURE 6.

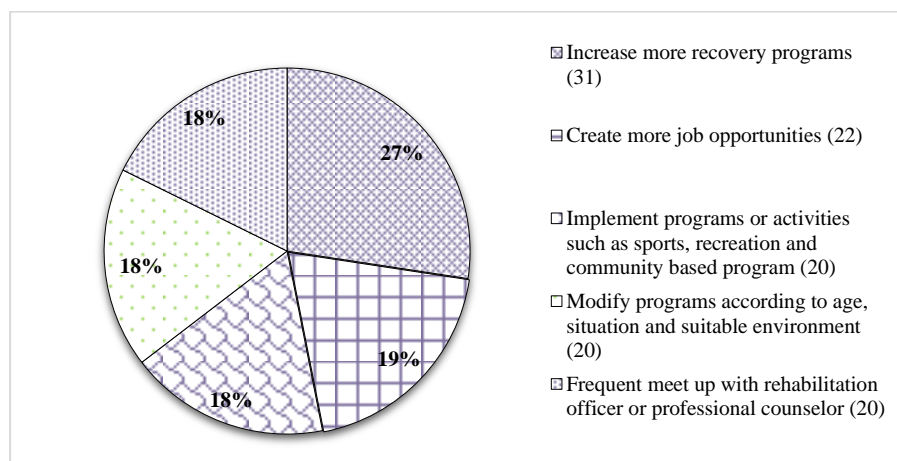


Fig 6: The improvement of the current treatment and rehabilitation program

Research 4: What are the prevention strategies to avoid drug relapse?

The findings also show that the dominant prevention strategies are to make them stronger physically and mentally; 14 (24%) research subjects, to increase faith in God; 13 (22%) research subjects, getting support from family and community; 12 (21%) research subjects, restraint from meeting peers; 10 (17%) research subjects and migrate or shift; 9 (16%) research subjects. The prevention strategies are shown in FIGURE 7.

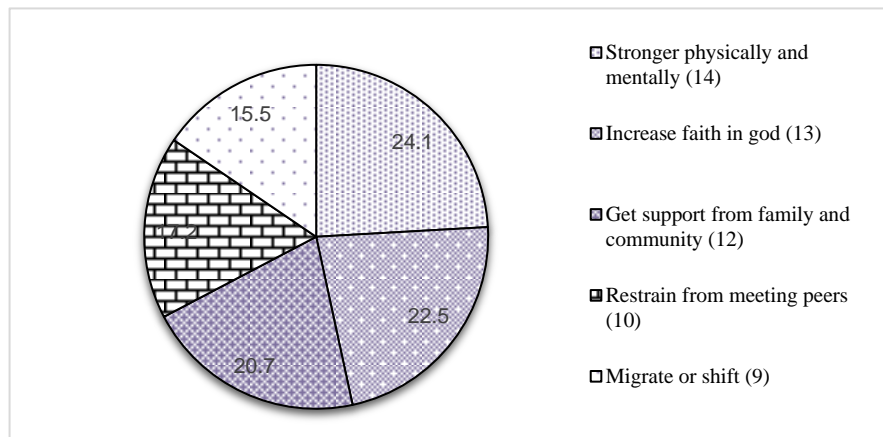


Fig 7: The prevention strategy to prevent from getting involved in drug relapse

5. CONCLUSION

Relapse among observation cases is a serious issue in Malaysia. The findings of this research indicate that the responsibility of handling or coping with relapse is a collective responsibility. This research has also identified a lack of collective participants especially from the community and family members of the addicts. For example, research findings show that peer influence is stronger therefore family role is vital than other parties. Another example is the attitude and character of the observation cases itself which becomes contributing factors for the relapse. The effectiveness and the improvement of the current programs suggested by research subjects requires proper attention. The research subjects who experience relapse are the right person to give ideas and suggestions to improve the current treatment and rehabilitation programs than other parties. Research subjects experience turbulent life as they themselves need to cope with relapse because the research shows that they themselves lack self-management. According to researcher, self-management is very important for observation cases to make them stronger physically and mentally which will assist them 'to say no to drugs' and avoid relapse in future. In addition, building a strong faith in god will make the observation cases to have a stronger spiritual life and confidence to say 'NO TO DRUGS'. Furthermore, support from family and local community is highly appreciated. In conclusion, we need to seriously address all the research findings and the suggestions given by all parties to free Malaysia from misuse of drugs. Furthermore, a necessary constructive action must be taken to overcome relapse among observation cases in community. The implication of this study shows that the government through lead agency, NADA and the parties responsible should take proper action to prevent relapse among observation cases in community. The process of recovery should continue and maintain throughout the two years observation period as stated in the Drug Addiction Act (Treatment & Rehabilitation) 1983 (Act 283) Amendment 1998 in community.

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