

Journey of Transformation: A Case Study on Probationer's Path to Redemption and Reintegration

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ABSTRACT

Probation is a way of decongesting the penal institution and jail facilities because of its type of correction in the community. It is one of the programs of community-based corrections by letting the convicts out after the declaration of their final judgment. This study focuses on the treatment and acceptance of the community towards the probationer as they reintegrate back into the community. It explored the relationship of the family and community to the probationer's success in finishing the entire probation program. It explored the coping mechanism of probationers in dealing with challenges. A case study research design with Yin's 5-step data analysis approach was used in generating the theme with the use of an interview protocol in gathering the data. The data gathered resulted in the discovery of five (5) themes, namely: Reconciliation and Acceptance with the Family; Good Community Relations; Positive Mindset; Self-Actualization; and Difficulties in Landing a Desired Jobs. Despite all of the good community feedback are, development of problem is still visible like their difficulties in landing a job. Probationers may continue to become positive and build continuing stronger relationships with the community. In conclusion, the support of the community is essential to the probationers, especially the family's support, it leaves a big impact on the successful completion of the probation period. Probation Officers or the government may conduct symposiums in the community to orient and educate the people in the community that probationers are trying to change themselves and it will be successful with the support of the community. The community may also support and accept the probationers as they are.

Keywords: acceptance, community relations, family, probationers, treatment

INTRODUCTION

Probation is a community-based correction, an alternative to incarceration, which is granted by the court given to criminal offenders (Cuevas, 2020). In simple terms, probation is a sentence that is served outside of prison. The probationary period is set by the court and is usually based on the severity of the crime and the offender's criminal history (Frase, 2019). The probationary period can last anywhere from a few months to several years (Gupta, 2021). It is normally granted to first-time offenders who have committed non-violent crimes (Omboto, 2022). The offender is placed on probation for a specified period, during which they have to meet specific conditions (Sotula, 2022).

Presidential Decree No. 968 also known as the Probation Law of 1976 which was amended by Republic Act No. 10707 is the act that governs probation in the Philippines. This law is complex and can vary depending on the jurisdiction (Van Deinse et al., 2019). In dealing with specific sorts of offenders, probation has demonstrated compassionate and restorative justice (Blankley & Jimenez, 2019). In the context of societal reforms, giving it the moniker "pristine jewel in the crown of the criminal justice system" (Chan, 2021). In addition, probation must be reasonably tailored to the offender and must be effective in promoting

rehabilitation.

Furthermore, probation is an important part of the criminal justice system (Porporino, 2018). The study of Belur (2022), noted that probation has many benefits that can be extremely helpful to both the offender and society. It also allows offenders to be monitored and supervised in the community, rather than being incarcerated. This permits offenders to continue to work, support, and reconnect to their families, and maintain their ties to the community (Omboto, 2022). And as for society, probation can provide a cost-effective alternative to incarceration and can help reduce recidivism rates (Justice, 2022).

According to the 2021 Annual Report of the Parole and Probation Administration, a total of 124,953 probation supervision cases were handled and out of it, 7,859 cases were terminated and 579 were revoked. By which the remaining were granted temporary liberty under a suspended sentence and upon close supervision of the Probation and Parole Officers. The Parole and Probation Administration is required to support the rehabilitation of criminal offenders who are minimized and incorporated within the probation, parole, and pardon systems decreasing the rate of recidivism, which in turn helps bring about societal peace and order and reduce crime (Akashi, 2018).

Nonetheless, probation officers supervise probationers who are sometimes dangerous and resistant to intervention (Viglione, 2019). Most, if not all probationers face a variety of problems in the implementation of probation conditions (Taylor, 2022). If a probationer violates or does not abide by the terms of their probation, they may receive a warning from their probation officials or perhaps go to jail (Olson, 2019). The study by Kovera (2019) asserts the difficulties that offenders frequently encounter in adjusting to the harsh reality of finding jobs with a criminal record, maintaining healthy relationships, and refraining from previous behaviors that got them in trouble in the first place give rise to the issues surrounding this admirable goal. The community stigma is that convicts should not be allowed back into society to potentially commit other crimes (Crawford, 2022).

The study by Alonso & Delgado (2020) stated that prisoners were given unprecedented access to probation service. They stated that probationers are frequently hindered by the public's lack of understanding of their situation and the government workers' lack of sympathy. There has been no comprehensive knowledge of the factors influencing public opinion on prisoner reentry (Altier, 2021). Nor is there support for legislation extending to people's willingness to interact personally with ex-offenders (Ouellette et al., 2017). The study of Ouellette et al., (2017) added that the degree to which the public supports reintegration programming can be predicted in large part by the redeemability of criminals.

Hence, the researchers wanted to explore the experiences of the individual granted probationary status by the court. This study aims to know the treatment and acceptance of probationers in the community. Thus, this study will assess the community treatment and acceptance of the probationers and their untold experiences.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Social Reaction Theory or Labeling theory by Charles Lemert (1951) and Social Support theory by Francis T. Cullen (1994).

Social Reaction Theory or Labeling Theory relates to the community treatment and acceptance of the probationers. The focus of social reaction theory, often known as labeling theory, is on the tendency of majority groups to negatively label minority groups or those perceived to be deviants (Bernburg, 2019). Charles Lemert, a social reaction theorist, was the founder of the societal reaction theory approach. Social reaction theory is a vibrant area of research and theoretical development within the field of criminology (Lemert, 1951). Social reaction theory's claim that the process of specifying and suppressing deviance is

important to social camaraderie (Matsueda, 2017).

Waite & Rodriguez (2022) claims that the notion of self-fulfilling prophecy and stereotyping are related with social reaction theory or labeling theory. It is concerned with how the labels used to define or classify someone can determine or influence their self-identity and behavior. This theory is mainly classified by how personal identities are influenced by the way authority categorizes the offenders (Tannenbaum & Goffman, 2021). The societal reaction approach distinguishes between primary deviance, in which individuals do not perceive themselves to be deviants, and secondary deviance, in which deviant status is accepted (Worthen, 2021).

Moreover, this theory relates to the study in relation to probationers' response to the reaction given by the community. The probationer's reaction can be negative or positive depending on how they assess and handle the comments and criticisms thrown at them. This theory is concerned with how individuals in a person's society impact their self-identity and conduct. Labeling theory is concerned with how the labels used to define or classify individuals can determine or influence their self-identity and behavior and is linked to the concepts of self-fulfilling prophecy and stereotyping (Waite-Jones & Rodriguez, 2022). The main idea of looking glass self is that people define themselves based on how society perceives them. The concept of the looking glass self is central to labeling theory and its approach to a person's acceptance of labels imposed by society (Liyange & Adikaram, 2019).

The study was also anchored on Social Support Theory which discusses that people who have strong social networks are better able to manage stress and are less likely to suffer from negative consequences including depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues (Bashiran et al., 2019). The study of Bashiran (2019) and Chouhy (2020) stated that social support can come from a variety of sources, including family members, friends, coworkers, and community organizations. The theory suggests that individuals who lack social support are more vulnerable to negative outcomes and may be more likely to engage in risky or harmful behaviors as a coping mechanism (Chouhy et al., 2020).

In relation to this study, social aid can be a support system for probationers who are experiencing difficulties in serving probation. Families and the community will help the probationer in avoiding criminality again (Schaefer et al., 2022). It suggests that the more positive support a person can get, it reduces the chance of them to engage again in any criminal behavior as a coping mechanism for any adversities they may encounter (Buff, 2022). This theory posits that social support can serve as a protective factor against criminal behavior by providing individuals with a sense of belonging, emotional support, and guidance. This theory shows a very critical role towards the successful reintegration of probationers into the community.

Conceptual Framework

This part of the study showed the concepts which were derived from the themes identified based on the responses of the participants during the conduct of the interview with the researchers. There were five (5) identified concepts that were found in the study, such as, reconciliation and acceptance with the family, good community relation, positive mindset, self-actualization, and difficulties in landing a desired job.

Reconciliation and Acceptance with the Family

Family is the most essential concept and plays a crucial role in society. Family encompasses more than simply biological ties; it also refers to the love and trust you may provide those in your life (Galvin et al., 2015). It can provide support and a strong relationship towards its members in the family in all ages (Connidis and Garnett, 2018). As well as to inspire in becoming the best and to forgive when there are shortcomings.

A wrongful act could lead to broken family ties. Being a probationer could cause mistrust and disappointment in family members. But it could give a chance to reconcile with family and a chance to be accepted. The strongest support for any probationer's treatment journey comes from their families that could lead to effective probation (Agnes et al., 2022). Support and acceptance give a higher chance for probationers to have successful treatment and reentry in the community without becoming a recidivist.

One way of giving support a family can give is to have better and constant communication with each of the members. The study of Panesilvam et al., 2022 stated that, most of the offenders will rely on their families support in desisting crime. The more positive the families communicate, the higher chance the probationers will cope up from the stress and other negative emotions they feel. When families are communicating regularly, their relationship will become stronger that builds trust and respect. And through family guidance, it could help them face difficult situations and make better decisions away from linking to crime (Lado et al., 2023).

Good Community Relation

Negative community relationships and the influence of a bad environment end up as factors that cause a person to commit a crime. Acceptance of the community creates a sense of belongingness and connectedness among members (Cuevas, 2020). It develops a healthy and happy relationship and builds the trust towards one another stronger which leads to the increased chance of becoming safe and secure. Freedom experienced by the probationers is an opportunity given which draws a path of their social reintegration.

Belonging to this kind of society as a probationer could be very effective in completing the period of probation and reintegrating back into the community. Support of friends, officemates, relatives and neighbors towards offenders or violators could boost their self-esteem and could build confidence for their change of lifestyle. Social support is necessary in the success of crime desistance (Redondo et al., 2022). Through this, it could lessen crime rates and can make the community a safer place to live.

Through the community's support, probationers will be controlled in committing crime (Jacobs & Gottlieb, 2020). It can be associated with social control, because as the person sees that they have a good reputation in the community, they would be hesitant to commit crime which could lead to ruining it. In relationship to probationers, they are afraid to make mistakes again that could contribute to destroying the trust given by the community.

The success of good community relationships in deterring crime may vary depending on what type of social circle a person has. When a probationer that is associated with person with current criminal actions and still making violation could lead to unsuccessful changing of the probationer's behavior (Hoeben et al., 2020). It is important that a person should be in a good circle of people in starting again.

Positive Mindset

In dealing challenges with a positive mindset could be a way of learning and growing. Some probationers see problems as a challenge to them in enhancing themselves and obtaining new knowledge to learn from their past mistakes (Sirdifield & Brooker, 2020). Being grateful can be a practice to cultivate a more positive outlook in life. Probationers are encouraging themselves in focusing on the good things in life and approaching difficulties with a clear mind (Bourassa, & Orjuela-Laverde, 2020).

Appreciating small things and surrounding the self with positive people is a practice of having an easy way to live life. Thinking positively could build relationships easier and a way of not letting yourself get

discouraged from the rejections of life may give (Sturm et al., 2020). Probationers were eager to do the right thing to avoid going back to jail (Sirdifield & Brooker, 2020). Rejections by many gives an impact on themselves but they did not see it as a problem and dealt with it and moved on (Brooker et al., 2020).

Due to their experience within the jail, they realize how difficult it is to live inside the jail without freedom or with restricted things to do and see, so they remain positive and avoid things that may put them back (Viglione et al., 2020). They are more focused on themselves, and the things need to be done first as a step towards changing their old habits (Whyman, 2019). The effectivity of confinement is visible because of how much they are afraid to lose their freedom again. And out of the problems they encountered, participants are so positive in dealing with challenges and accepting denials in life (Rodriguez, 2019).

Self-Actualization

Self-actualization is the process of achieving personal progress and realizing your full potential (Gopinath, 2020). Self-actualization involves a deep understanding of oneself, including one's strengths, weaknesses, and values (Grudistova et al., 2019). It calls for a dedication to one's own personal growth and development as well as a readiness to take chances and push oneself above one's comfort zone (Gopinath, 2020). The activities of probation like volunteer work shift their attention away from committing the same mistakes they have made (Dominey & Gelsthorpe, 2020).

Probationers evaluate their behavior and acknowledge their mistakes (Elam, 2022). Those mistakes were seen as a weakness and made their family's support is their strength (McGee, 2022). They showed their regrets of making faults and become more careful in making decisions in life, such as, deciding not to do any violations again as it could lead to having regrets and can ruin their reputation. Probationers discover their full potential under probation period (Worrall & Mawby, 2019).

They are finding a way to change by setting and achieving goals and building their confidence self-esteem again (Kemshall, 2019). They feel remorseful for the acts they did for the reason that instead of having fun out of that experience and easy way of dealing life battles, it made their life harder and ruined their reputation (Robinson & Dominey, 2019). Having a positive and supportive relationship with family and others leads the probationers to be motivated in their goals (Kimchi, 2019).

Difficulties in Landing a Desired Job

Finding a job is necessary for everyone, especially if they have their own family who is dependent on them. Landing the desired job for the probationers is hard as not all people in the community know them well and trust is not easily given. Limited job opportunities are offered to probationers as the employers are hesitant to hire someone with a criminal record to the point that they were doubted that they may commit crime again even though they are trying to turn their life around (Sykes et al., 2022).

Experiencing the number of barriers, they encountered causes their low self-esteem because they were not given chances to change and were discriminated. Spending their time in jail, many lose their skills as not all skills are addressed and practiced inside (Maksymova et al., 2022). It also hinders them from experiencing a better exposure needed in the qualifications. As a result, they will have less job opportunities and will be less likely to acquire their desired job.

Most probationers struggle to find work once they are released to the community, increasing the likelihood they will slip back into a life of crime (van Beek et al., 2022). While rehabilitation advocates say the situation is improving, they also see more that could be done to help probationers overcome employment challenges (Sturm et al., 2020).

More than 9,000 people are released each year granting of probation and most of them struggle to find a job in the community of which he was known (Capece, 2020).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The case study research design was employed in the study. A case study thoroughly assesses the analytical unit (case). Data triangulation is a crucial part of the design to provide a thorough, complete, and contextual description. The study is strengthened by information from other sources (Smith, 2018). Because it provides concrete, contextual, and in-depth information about a particular real-world topic, a case study is a useful research approach. It allowed the researcher to delve deeper into the case's main traits, significance, and ramifications. The study adopted Yin's (2011) method of data analysis. This study design is suitable for exploring the journey of transformation of probationer's path to redemption and reintegration to the community.

The study was conducted in Ozamiz City, in which the probationers were mostly from the province of Misamis Occidental, City of Ozamiz. The researchers chose Ozamiz City as their setting because most probationers are present in the area. Ozamiz City is a 3rd class component city in the province of Misamis Occidental, Philippines. According to the 2020 census, it has a population of 140,334 people.

The study was participated by eight (8) probationers released in Ozamiz City. These participants were purposively identified, and they were chosen based on the following criteria: 1.) serving their probation period, to know their experiences while still on probation to relate from the community's present state 2.) having dependents just as their wife, children, and parents, and 3.) willingness to participate.

The study used an interview guide crafted by the researchers. The interview guide was checked by the adviser and at the same time, it was checked and approved by the panel members before it was administered to the participants. Furthermore, the instrument will be validated by the Dean since the study is also inclined to the discipline. The researchers used an audio recorder during the interview conducted with the participants.

Data collection is vital in every research endeavor. Before the actual data collection, the researchers started asking permission from the Dean of the College of Criminology of the university which allowed the researchers to pursue the study and to conduct the interview. The researchers used the Snowball Sampling Method in conducting and collecting the data. The researchers set an appointment with the identified participants and proposed a schedule for the interview. The researchers informed the participants that the conversation was recorded and assured them that all their responses were kept with the utmost confidentiality. Further, the minimum health protocol was observed during the conduct of the interview considering the pandemic.

In the current study, the ethical standards were always observed by the researchers. The researchers strictly observed the voluntary participation of all the participants involved in the study. The interview was conducted with personal consent by allowing them to sign the informed consent form that was prepared by the researchers. In terms of the participant's identity, the researchers applied the measure to promote anonymity and secrecy by not mentioning the names of any participants during the conduct of the interview. Privacy and confidentiality were always observed, particularly the name of the participants and other information unnecessary to the study. The researchers adhered to the guidelines set by the Republic Act No. 10173 known as the "Data Privacy Act of 2012".

In this study, Yin's 5-step data analysis approach was used to analyze the data and allow researchers to analyze textual data (Yin, 2011). Yin's (2011) process consisted of five steps: (1) compiling the data; (2)

disassembling the data; (3) reassembling the data; (4) interpreting the data’s meaning; and (5) concluding the data. To construct categories, the researcher first collected the data. The second step involves the researcher breaking down the data to reduce and eliminate recurring themes of the phenomena. The researcher clustered the main themes in step three after reconstructing the data. To evaluate the meaning of the data, the researcher compared patterns to interview transcripts, reflective journals, and documents in step four. In step 5, the researcher concluded or put the facts into a distinctive structural description. Based on the key themes that emerged from the various responses of the survey participants, conclusions were reached.

The interview responses were analyzed using the NVivo program to generate codes that served as a roadmap for constructing the themes. Software for qualitative and mixed-methods research is called NVivo. It was used to assess unstructured text, audio, video, and image data from various sources, including but not restricted to interviews, focus groups, surveys, social media, and journal articles.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of the written transcript from the participants’ in-depth interviews revealed five (5) common themes that relate to the community treatment and acceptance of probationers. With the prevalence of these experiences, the following themes were formulated: reconciliation and acceptance with the family, good community relations, positive mindset, self-actualization, and difficulties in landing a desired job.

Table 1. Profile of the Participants

Code Name	Age	Civil Status	Crime Committed
P1	33	Live-in Partner	Using of Illegal Drugs
P2	64	Married	Using of Illegal Drugs
P3	47	Married	Using of Illegal Drugs
P4	34	Married	Using of Illegal Drugs
P5	60	Married	Illegal Cutting of Trees
P6	23	Live-in Partner	Robbery
P7	35	Live-in Partner	Using and Selling of Illegal Drugs
P8	30	Single	Estafa

A total of 8 probationers participated in the study through face-to-face interview. The participants ages 23-64 years old. All the participants came from Ozamiz City in different Barangays. Our participants are four (4) of them are married, three (3) live-in partner status and one (1) single status. Most of the committed crimes involves using of illegal drugs.

Reconciliation and Acceptance with the Family

This theme shows that reconciliation and acceptance with the family are one of the positive impacts of community treatment and acceptance of probationers. The support of the family is the reason why probationers are willing to change for the better. By giving empathy to the probationers, the gap between their families has been filled. Reconciliation and acceptance with the family of a probationer is a long process with great effort and patience. But the results can create a stronger relationship, deeper understanding, and peace within one another.

Results show that participants’ families were happy that they got out behind bars. They also mentioned that their family did not treat them indifferently and negatively and got to bond with their family. Participants

disclosed that they were accepted by their families and were even worried for the participant's well-being and could not believe the happenings. They were loved, accepted, and treated the same way they were treated way back the happenings. These were mentioned in the answers of the following participants:

"My family was happy that I got out. They greeted and asked me how I was inside the jail, and I said: It is very hard inside ma, every morning the only thing that you can hold is the iron of the cell." (P1)

"I was accepted by my family because it is natural to get caught if you are involved in drugs." (P2)

"They didn't treat me negatively. It is maybe or actually a blessing in disguise because we got to bond with my family after that happening. They are happy because I am now present in every outing with them." (P3)

"Our home is at peace because my salary goes directly to our family expenses unlike before, it will all be spent for illegal drugs and gambling. I am accepted by my family because I am the Padre de Pamilya of the family." (P4)

"I was accepted by my family and accepted the situation I am in because they don't have a choice and it already happened. They were worried about me and couldn't believe that incident. My child from abroad cried out of shock and can't believe that his father who is a good person and who doesn't have any bad records at the barangay was caught. They were happy that I got out and accepted me. Even though my neighbors got things to say, they'd still accepted me and respected me." (P5)

"My family accepted me and treated me the same way as before. They didn't even say any hurtful words towards me." (P6)

"I am accepted by my family. There are no negative words towards me and was treated the same way as before." (P7)

"Yes, my family accepted me and loved me and didn't hear any unnecessary words from them." (P8)

Probation contributed a lot to each of the probationers and their families. A happy home was developed, and they become more peaceful in living life than before (Phelps et al., 2022). Families of the probationers might not be fast to accept, but as they show their support for the change shown, probationers become motivated in taking responsibility for their actions and work on repairing their relationship with their families (Phillips et al., 2020). Rebuilding trust towards family is not an easy process, it takes a lot of patience, effort, and compassion in achieving it (Sermon, 2023). With each probationer's persistence and not giving up on building their home again, it leads them to acceptance by their family and a new aspect of their lives (Grove et al., 2020).

Findings show that based on the answers of the participants, they see probation as a hope and a blessing in their life as it gives a way to help them communicate with their families again. It also shows how the probationer's family accepted them for who they are and are happy for their release. The finding is consistent with the finding in the study of Phillips et al. (2020), Sermon (2023), and Grove et al. (2020) that accepting and building trust towards the family and probationers is not an easy process but takes a lot of patience, effort, and compassion. These were supported by Social Support Theory which shows how the family supported the probationers and how accepted them as they reconciled.

This implies that reconciliation of the probationer with their family brings about acceptance and a good relationship. Families tend to accept their probationer members as they were released. Fair treatment is given and positive towards them. They are willing to support and provide for their family and were grateful that they were released via probation. It is important that probationers find ways and means to support

themselves and their families. To let them see how much you have changed and regret your actions and to let them know that you deserve the probation you have received.

Good Community Relation

This theme shows that good community relations are one of the positive impacts of community treatment and acceptance of probationers. Having good community relationships provides successful reentry into society as the probationers feel more connected and belong to the members of the community. It enables the probationers to do the process of probation willingly and effectively. Moreover, the support given by the community is one big factor for the probationers not to be tempted by their old habits.

Results show that participants' friends, relatives, and neighbors accepted them and treated them the same way. Some were even sure that they were accepted as they worked for the same company and had the same job and were not treated differently. Words cannot be avoided however, participants were still accepted and respected by the community. These were mentioned in the answers of the following participants:

“Just like how my family treated me, my neighbors, relatives and friends asked how am I doing? They even praised me by saying “your skin looks so white it’s like you’ve been from abroad”.” (P1)

“My neighbors, relatives and friends, even the barangay officials accepted me because before I was released from jail, they were asked to sign a paper with a content of agreeing to let me go back in our home, in our community.”

“My friends, relatives and neighbors accepted me and treated me the same way as before with no negative intentions.” (P3)

“Yes sure, I am accepted by the community because I am still here working with the same officemates. (P4)

“They were happy that I got out and accepted me. Even though my neighbors got things to say, they’d still accepted me and respected me. My relatives and friends were worried about me because I am old already. Yes, they accepted me as I am with no judgement.” (P5)

“Yes, sure I am accepted by my neighbors. They have tons of words to say at first, but they see how I am reflecting on the mistakes I’ve made.” (P6)

“Yes, sure I am accepted by my neighbors. They have tons of words to say at first, but they see how I am reflecting on the mistakes I’ve made.” (P8)

Reactions of the community may vary in the case of the involvement of the offender, others might be easily accepted if they didn't cause harm to people's life and property (Phelps, 2020). Establishing faith in probationers results in positive changes in behavior therefore, the participants are more dedicated to working hard to be respected again in the community (Puglisi & Shavit, 2020). These results showed that greater relationships with friends, relatives, and neighbors gives a greater effect on esteem, health, and emotional well-being and they feel a sense of belongingness (Jiang et al., 2020). There are some others who are not fully accepted but still trying and working hard to comply with the conditions of probation and in making the community trust them again (Norman & Ricciardelli, 2022).

Findings show that the support provided by the community is a step to probationers for a better relationship other than their families. Moreover, the community's support enabled the probationer to successfully complete the probationary period and demonstrate their desistance to crime. The finding is consistent with the finding in the study of Phelps (2020), Puglisi & Shavit (2020), Jiang et al., (2020), and Norman

& Ricciardelli (2022) that good community relations could help probationers feel belonged and help complete their probation period without resentment. These were supported by Social Support Theory which shows probationers establish a good relationship with the community, and society giving full support and acceptance towards them.

This implies that the probationers do the process of probation willingly and effectively as they establish a good community relationship. This also entails how accepted and supported they were by the community for them to be able to complete their probation period while maintaining a good relationship with the community. Good relationships are important for the probationers, and it is suggested that they continue building up good relations for them to be able to complete their probation period without any worry of discrimination and judgment. It is also important for probationers to avoid getting on the bad side of people and be good to everyone.

Positive Mindset

This theme shows that having a positive mindset is one of the positive impacts of community treatment and acceptance of probationers. Looking ahead and not listening to negativities thrown by others is a way of dealing with a problem. It improves health and mental concerns. Being appreciative of any scenario faced is an effective technique for dealing with difficulties. It can help a person become more resilient and is an excellent approach to coping with hardships.

Results show that participants tried to become positive at all times. They even mentioned that they stayed calm amidst the situation to avoid the revocation of probation. They were being extra careful not to be admitted again. Participants even disclosed how positively looked at this problem, their wrongdoing, and thought that it would end soon. Some even testified how positively they think and look at the brighter side to avoid getting discouraged by any rejections that may come to them. These were mentioned in the answers of the following participants:

“It is better to follow the rules and avoid wrongdoings than to be in jail for a long period of time. And always think positive.” (P1)

“I stayed calm because small mistake could lead to my admission again in jail.” (P2)

“To those people to be granted probation, always think positive, trust yourself and family. Move on and don’t listen to the negativity of others.” (P3)

“By calling out to God and asked to help me become normal again and entrusting myself unto Him.” (P4)

“To always have a positive mindset so I can easily handle my problems and follow what are the given rules to avoid violations.” (P5)

“I will think positively about this trial because I intentionally made it and maybe all these challenges will pass soon.” (P6)

“It is to think positively and look on the brighter side. To not be discouraged by any rejection and strive harder on looking for a job.” (P8)

Probationers were eager to do the right thing to avoid going back to jail (Sirdifield & Brooker, 2020). Due to their experience in jail, they realize how difficult it is to live inside the jail without freedom or with restricted things to do and see, so they remain positive and avoid things that may put them back (Vigliano et al., 2020). They are more focused on themselves, and the things that need to be done first as a step towards changing their old habits (Whyman, 2019). The effectiveness of confinement is visible because of how

much they are afraid to lose their freedom again. And out of the problems they encountered, participants are so positive in dealing with challenges and accepting denials in life (Rodriguez, 2019). Rejections by many gives an impact on them but they didn't see it as a problem and dealt with it and moved on (Brooker et al., 2020).

Findings show that probationers are so positive in dealing with challenges and accepting denials in life. It also shows how they tried their best to do everything they could to be able to live freely without restrictions. The finding is consistent with the finding in the study of Sirdifield & Brooker (2020), Viglione et al. (2020), Whyman (2019), Rodriguez (2019), and Brooker et al. (2020) that probationers tend to try to have a positive mindset to avoid being incarcerated again. These were supported by Social Support Theory which shows how probationers wanted to be positive amidst trials that were supported by their family, friends, and community.

This implies that probationers looked ahead and did not listen to the negativities thrown by others and remained positive to counter all the negativities around them. It also implies that probationers avoid things that could endanger their probation and always stay positive. It is suggested that probationers keep being positive and avoid things that could taint their minds. They should stay away from toxic things and strive hard to change their old habits.

Self-Actualization

This theme shows that good self-actualization is one of the positive impacts of community treatment and acceptance of probationers. Self-actualization is a term that refers to the process of realizing one's full potential. This may be a difficult assignment for probationers because they are frequently coping with the consequences of illegal conduct and face constraints on their freedom. Nonetheless, for probationers, self-actualization is still attainable, and it may be an important element of their rehabilitation and reintegration.

Results show that participants decided not to do anything wrong again. They even said to avoid temptations as they have realized their freedom and wanted to stay on the good side. Some participants even disclosed how they know of their own potential and do not want to go back to jail for their own good. Some avoid evil things, not to disappoint their family and realized how happiness from temptations was temporary only, thus they wanted to avoid it. They even testified to how careful they were in making the same mistakes again and how big of a lesson they learned from their situation. These were mentioned in the answers of the following participants:

“Not to do again what is wrong, I've been in there and I don't ever want to go back again. Always avoid the temptation of evil because being there inside is not easy, we are freer in the outside so always do good.” (P1)

“Always avoid doing what is wrong, doing good comes first because I don't want to go back again in jail. Follow the rules always because it is for your own good and to avoid revocation of the given probation.” (P2)

“By avoiding the temptations of the evil that will cause no good to me and will cause mistrust towards me by my family and the community. Always trust God, trust yourself, follow the rules and be good always. Temptation is just a temporary excitement, the consequences you have to bear will be long term and will cause your regrets.” (P4)

“I will remove all my bad thoughts and acts and repent on the sins I've made. Not to do it again because I will suffer more from the effects of it. Just follow the rules given by the probation officer to avoid incarceration.” (P6)

“To be careful in life and not to be involved in wrong acts that could ruin your status in life. This challenge I am in will impart biggest lessons in my life. To do good and follow what the probation officer said if you don’t want to go back to jail.” (P8)

They are finding a way to change by setting and achieving goals and building their confidence and self-esteem again (Kemshall, 2019). They feel remorseful for the acts they did for the reason that instead of having fun out of that experience and an easy way of dealing with life battles, it made their life harder and ruined their reputation (Robinson & Dominer, 2019). Having a positive and supportive relationship with family and others leads the probationers to be motivated in their goals (Kimchi, 2019). The activities of probation like volunteer work shift their attention away from committing the same mistakes they’ve made (Dominey & Gelsthorpe, 2020).

Findings show that probationers realized their full potential and avoided things that could ruin their potential. The probationers are recognizing their mistakes and were ready to accept the rehabilitation to change themselves for the better. The finding is consistent with the finding in the study of Kemshall (2019), Robinson & Dominer (2019), Kimchi (2019), and Dominey & Gelsthorpe (2020) that probationers are finding ways to bring back their confidence and unlocked their full potential. These were supported by Social Reaction Theory or Labeling Theory which shows that probationers are afraid that their families would be disappointed in them and would react differently towards them.

This implies that probationers realized their self-actualization and wanted to make use of it for the better good. It also entails how broad their potential could be and how realization hits them that they wanted to avoid things that could revoke their probation. This suggests that participants should try out new things and expand their potential. They should also try to ask other people for help to be a better citizen and discover new skills to be able to showcase their potential.

Difficulties in Landing a Desired Job

This theme shows that difficulties in landing a desired job are one of the challenges of probationers in terms of community treatment and acceptance of probationers. Having a job today is very essential as the world or the Philippines is in crisis. Planning to apply for work you decide to have been difficult if you already have a criminal record. Many failed to apply for the same job they had before they were incarcerated. Employers are doubtful of every criminal record holder employing that they may commit a crime again and employers want to ensure they are building a safe and secure working environment for their men. Because of the difficulty encountered, it will lead to unemployment and causes recidivism.

Results show that participants, being a probationer, find it difficult to find a job. They even mentioned how difficult it is to find a job given their status. They even mentioned that some people did not trust them fully. They also mentioned that having a record makes it more difficult to find a job. These were mentioned in the answers of the following participants:

“It was also difficult for me to find a job because of my current status as a probationer and also my age.” (P2)

“Looking for a job is difficult because those who don’t know you don’t trust you, especially when you already have a record in the police as a probationer.” (P4)

“It is difficult for me to look for a job because I already have a record, specifically with robbery. It is hard because at this young age of mine I already committed violation of the law.” (P6)

“Looking for a job is hard especially when they see my record and the case, I was involved in.” (P8)

Having a record as a law violator breaks everyone's trust, and the offender has to bear the consequences of their action (Ersayan et al., 2022). Spending their time in jail, many lose their skills as not all skills are addressed and practiced inside (Maksymova et al., 2022). Being worried, hesitant and mistrustful are the frequent reactions given to probationers, especially discrimination (Roddy & Morash, 2020). These reactions of the people are common and oftentimes become the reason for the offender to become a recidivist (Phillips et al., 2021). This becomes the hardest part for the probationer because it holds them back from rebuilding the trust of the community (Krupa, 2021). It pressures them because they have a family to support them financially, and it is an important duty to maintain continuous support for them for the completion of probation (Tumitit, 2020).

Findings show that experiencing the number of barriers they encountered caused their low self-esteem because they weren't given chances to change and were discriminated against. It also hinders them from experiencing the better exposure needed in the qualifications. As a result, they will have fewer job opportunities and will be less likely to acquire their desired job. The finding is consistent with the finding in the study of Ersayan et al. (2022), Phillips et al. (2021), Krupa (2021), and Tumitit (2020) that people still find the probationers difficult to trust due to their criminal record. These were supported by Social Reaction Theory or Labeling Theory which shows that some people still label them as fugitives despite being on probation which makes it harder to find a job and be accepted by some people in the community.

This implies that despite those situations, they are acknowledging the consequence of their action, they are taking responsibility for it because entering and involving in criminal activity is their chosen act. This also entails that even though their families, friends, relatives, and neighbors supported them, there are still hardships in the working environment, especially in looking for a job. It is important that probationers slowly build trust towards the people through actions and let them see how you regretted doing wrongful acts and how skillful you are befitting for the job.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the relationship between the probationers and the community is all good. It implies that the support given by the community, especially the family, leaves a big role for probationers in the completion of the probation period and the avoidance of committing the same violations they've made. They developed a fear of committing an offense as they are afraid of being incarcerated. Additionally, removing their freedom influences them not to break the law. The pressure of being a probationer is still visible, usually in looking for a job. They were not able to go back to the same employment they had before, which they find difficult because of the status they have that will leave them with a criminal record. As probationers, being labeled as one means criminal for others out of the violations they made. It can be frustrating, hard, and stressful, but they did not see it as a hindrance in making themselves change greatly. They always look for the brighter side and stand strong to continue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the findings and conclusion, the researchers come up with the following recommendations: First, the probation officers or the government may conduct a symposium in the community to orient and educate the people in the community that probationers are trying to change themselves and it will be successful with the support coming from the community. Giving knowledge to people may give a different approach to dealing and communicating with the probationers. Secondly, the community may encourage other members of the community to support the probationers, especially those who are cooperating and willingly changing for the better, to make them feel fully supported and belong to avoid triggers of committing crimes. Third, people should avoid labeling the probationers as criminals as

most of them are not involved in criminal activities. Most of the participants are drug users/surrenderers who are trying to turn their lives around. Thus, future researchers can use these findings to support their prospective investigation, particularly in the tales of probationers: experiences on community treatment and acceptance.

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