

Approaches and Methods of Treatment in Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Centers in Malaysia

Mohd Radhi Bin Abu Shahim^{1*}

Kamarul Bin Md. Shah¹

Rozita Binti Jayus¹

Zaida Nor binti Zainudin²

Mohd Norazmi Nordin³

¹Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu

²Faculty of Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia

³Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

m.radhi@umt.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Substance abuse and drug addiction is a complex disease, which damages the life of an addict especially in terms of physical, mental, social and spiritual. The National Anti -Drug Agency (AADK), defines drugs as psychoactive chemicals used for non -medical purposes and it is prohibited. This study focuses on the methods of treatment in rehabilitation centers in Malaysia. This qualitative study applies the case study method by conducting observations and interviews. Data collection was obtained through the analysis of structured interviews with two officers and two center residents for each of the rehabilitation centers involved. Findings show that methods of treatment can be categorized into four main elements namely psychosocial approach, psychospiritual approach,, pharmacology and alternative approach. Few recommendations presented in term of monitoring the staff, facilities, modules and activities for better management of th centres.

Keywords: substance abuse, rehabilitation, methods, approaches

INTRODUCTION

Drug addiction is a complex disease, which damages the life of an addict especially in terms of physical, mental, social and spiritual. Recognizing this situation, addiction treatment should pay attention to the various needs of the addict covering physical, psychological, mental, spiritual, and social aspects to aid his recovery process. The more severe the problems and damage the addict suffers in each of these aspects, the higher the likelihood of relapse. In order to be drug-free, supported of family, personality and lifestyle changes, are essential for full recovery.

The National Anti -Drug Agency (AADK), defines drugs as psychoactive chemicals used for non -medical purposes and is prohibited (AADK 2010). The use of this substance causes a person to be constantly physically and psychologically dependent as well as increased tolerance. The use of this substance causes damage to oneself, family, society and the country.

Drugs is defined as medicine. Drugs mean when psychoactive chemicals either in natural or synthetic form that when ingested, smoked, swallowed, inhaled or injected into the body affect the human nervous system (Mahmood Nazar 2009). The Arabic language defines drugs as *al-mukhaddarat* derived from the word *mukhaddara* which mean things that can cause loss of judgment and sanity. Based on the study of Islamic scholars and physicians, the use of marijuana or *hasyisy* has the same effect that is similar to the effect of drinking alcohol because it can intoxicate and destroy sanity. The meaning of *al-mukhaddarat* is as intoxicating things and can destroy the sanity of the mind (Al-Marbawi 1998). This *Hasyisy* was discovered in the sixth century and early seventh century through a leader of a Sufi group known as Haidar in 658 H. The sheikh ate the leaves and gained calm, the body felt fit and the problems faced were gone due to the imaginary effects of *Hasyisy*. (Jami ' & Fathi'ID 1999).

In Malaysia, institutional drug treatment and rehabilitation programs have started since 1975. This program is under the **Ministry of General Welfare** and uses a social and welfare rehabilitation approach. In 1983, when the government recognized drugs as a threat to national security, drug treatment and rehabilitation programs were entrusted under the **Ministry of the Interior**. A new act, the Drug Addicts (Treatment and Rehabilitation) Act 1983 passed and came into force on 15 April 1983.

According to Fox (1977), rehabilitation is a method that allows the offender to return to the bosom of society and make a contribution to society or at least not harming others. Irwin (1974) in Abd. Hadi (1992) states that rehabilitation is an effort to improve the quality of life of offenders by shaping them into useful individuals, independent, with self-perfection and social awareness and can engage in social activities with other individuals. Snarr (1996), on the other hand, defines rehabilitation as systematic efforts organized by society to punish offenders, protect the public from offenders, change offender behavior and provide compensation to individuals who are victims of offenders. The 4 main elements of this definition are (i) punishment, (ii) protection, (iii) alteration and (iv) damages.

The main objective of treatment and rehabilitation is to transform the offender into a useful individual and easily accepted by members of society (Abd. Hadi 1992). To achieve that objective, a form of rehabilitation that can be carried out is through the reshaping of the offender's behavior (Walker 1980). Behavioral modification is a form of rehabilitation given to offenders that aims to change the offender's behavior so that they can respect the rules and laws. It also aims to reduce the tendency of offenders to commit prohibited acts. This form of rehabilitation can be done through counseling, vocational skills training, religious activities and moral education as well as civics education.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main research objectives in this study are as follows:

- 2.1 To identify the approaches in drug abuse rehabilitation centers in Malaysia;
- 2.2 Identify methods of treatment in drug abuse rehabilitation centers in Malaysia.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative case study applies observation and interview method in gathering data. Visits to rehabilitation centres in Kelantan and Terengganu. Purposive sampling is used in identifying the subjects and the criteria is either management staff or resident of the centres. Data collection was obtained through structured interviews with two officers and two center residents for each of the centers involved. Among the institutions involved are, Cure & Care Rehabilitation Center (CCRC) Kuala Terengganu; Madrasah Khairul Insan, Janagor, Terengganu; Rakan Islah Rehabilitation Center, Setiu, Terengganu; Parole Office, Kuala Terengganu; Baitul Taubah Rehabilitation Center, Pasir Puteh, Kelantan; Pondok Remaja Inabah 2, Kuala Terengganu; Baitul Cakna Care Center Kuala Terengganu; and Manzilu Rahmah Rehabilitation Center, Bachok, Kelantan.

FINDINGS

After observations and interviews, it can be concluded that these centres apply four approaches in developing their module of treatment. These methods of treatment and rehabilitation can be categorized into four main approaches namely psychosocial approach, psychospiritual approach, pharmacology and alternative approach.

4.1 Psychosocial approach

Psychosocial approach are methods that combine therapies that emphasize on self-development and social skills to help the residents recover from addiction. The psychosocial approach apply activities such as counseling, peer-support group, vocational skills training, family therapy, sports activities, social skills, health education, community service and social integration, inventory and screening tests.

Counseling is a method to help individuals with coping problems to return to their normal life (Amir Awang, 1987; Mohd Mansur, 1993; Suradi, 1996) including for those who addicted to drugs (Mahmood, 1999). Counseling services provided individuals counselling, groups counselling and family counselling. Based on previous studies, counseling services have been found to be effective in the rehabilitation process of drug addicts and if it is handled professionally and systematically, then it will further increase the effectiveness of rehabilitation (Mahmood Nazar Mohamed, 2001).

Peer-support group also known as Peer-Counselors (Pembimbing Rakan Sebaya) is activity that involve former addicts that have totally recovered from addiction. This PRS serves as "role model". Activities such as experience sharing, confrontation and self-reflection sessions is run by the PRS. This activity serves to meet the psychosocial needs of residents who desperately need support, attention and love from those around them in addition to the challenges and urges that test their resilience.

Career and vocational development is the training of vocational skills provided in the area of tailoring, vehicle repairing, agricultural, farming and so on. Through the training gained, the residents acquire skills that can give them the opportunity to get a job and at the same time be able to earn a living after completing their rehabilitation.

Family therapy or better known as "Therapeutic Community" (TC) is a psychological rehabilitation program that emphasizes the concepts of family and community relations that can lead to behavior change and the formation of positive attitudes.

Leisure and sports activities involve physical activities that can provide fitness and physical health of the residents. Activities include marching, sports such as football, badminton, and archery.

Community service and social integration are known as volunteer activities is the activity to bring residents closer to the community as well as to build self-confidence. Common activities carried out at the rehabilitation centers are such as gotong-royong to clean the surrounding area, preparation of food for breaking fast, congregational prayers and sharing experiences with the community.

Residents are also exposed to social skills. Social skills are important for residents to continue living in a community. Organized activities are like motivational talks from guest speakers or from the officials themselves. Residents are also taught various social skills modules such as communication skills, assertiveness and self-confidence.

Residents are also given health educational talks to provide exposure and knowledge about health care. Health talks are also more focused on hygiene and drug-borne infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, TB and Hepatitis.

There are also treatment and rehabilitation centers that use inventory and Screening Tests as one of the methods to understand the personality, career interests and level of mental health of the inmates. Commonly used inventories are such as the mental anxiety screening test (DASS), the addiction level screening test and the career interest test.

4.2 Psychospiritual Methods

The psychospiritual method, on the other hand, emphasizes spiritual elements and religious practices. The treatment and rehabilitation centers involved are using treatment and rehabilitation methods based on Islamic teachings. The Islamic methods used are such as the appreciation of the Qur'an and *Hadith*, the guidance in *fardu ain*, *fiqh*, *tasawuf*, *muamalat*, *congregational prayers*, *sunat prayers*, *qiamulail* and *zikr* practices. These spiritual practices are meant to strengthen the faith by remembering Allah s.w.t consistantly. This is further confirmed by the proposition of Allah s.w.t which means:

"And We have sent down the Qur'an as a healer and a mercy for the believers"

(al-Israk: 82)

4.3 Pharmacological Methods

Pharmacological methods are treatments that rely on drugs in order to reduce craving and withdrawal symptoms. It can also suppress the symptoms of drug withdrawal and activity commonly experienced by residents who have just stopped taking drugs. This method is like giving fiber drugs in a program known as 'Replacement Therapy Treatment (RTG)' such as

Methadone, Naltrexone, Levo-alpha-acetylmethadol (LAAM) and Buprenorphine for residents who are addicted to opiate type drugs such as heroin and morphine. There are also some treatment and rehabilitation centers that use the pain killer drug Mabrone to reduce withdrawal symptoms such as headaches, nausea and joint aches. Mabrone administration is controlled with a dose not exceeding 6 pills per day.

4.4 Alternative approach

Alternative methods used as rehabilitation therapy include bath therapy (hydro-therapy), coconut-water consuming, music therapy, sunnah food intake, detoxification, nerve treatment, sauna treatment, dew bath, *rapids* and *khalwad*.

The Hydro-Therapy method is also known as night bath or repentance bath which is done as many as 40 dippers in the morning as early as 3 am for forty consecutive days. Each dipper is recited certain prayers. This treatment is aimed at keeping the client's blood vessels shrinking on the surface of the body and stimulating blood flow to the brain, heart and liver resulting in a feeling of calm and drug addiction can be reduced.

Consuming coconut water is used as a mechanism to remove toxins present in the patient's body as a result of drug addiction. The method of treatment for each patient is different according to the type of drug taken, age and several other factors. The use of coconut water is as a method to speed up recovery and reduce the pain experienced by the residents. Coconut water contains macro elements such as nitrogen and carbon, and also consists of micro elements needed by the body. The nitrogen element in it is in the form of proteins composed of amino acids, such as alanine, cystine, arginine, alin, and serine. The amino acids contained in young coconut water are higher than the content in cow's milk. While the element carbon can be found in the form of simple carbohydrates such as glucose, sucrose, fructose, sorbitol, inositol, and others. Similarly, the micro elements in coconut water in the form of minerals that are needed as a substitute for body ions. Therefore, when we consume coconut water, our body will be fresh. Coconut water also contains a variety of vitamins such as the dominant vitamin C, nicotinic acid, folic acid, pantothenic acid, biotin, as well as riboflavin. That is why this young coconut water has become the choice in traditional medicine. In addition, in particular, coconut water is rich in potassium (potassium). In addition to minerals, coconut water also contains sugar (range between 1.7- 2.6 %) and protein (0.07- 0.55 %). Patients were given to drink coconut water for a week every morning before they took breakfast. They will also be given a flower bath so that the body will be more fresh and energetic.

Popular music therapy is a technique pioneered by a music group called 'Dendang Anak Jenagor' which was founded by Kumpulan Anak Jenagor since 1999. This technique is used as a method of rehabilitation and aims to restore the customs, manners of residents who were previously involved in drug abuse. This technique is one of the famous techniques in Madrasah Khairul Insan, Janagor, Terengganu. The therapy is used continuously to the residents and it makes them easily drowsy, sleepy and lose focus. Music therapy is interspersed with lyrics that shaped the faith and consist of advices. Most of the lyrics display the greatness of the Divine as well as in the form of advice.

Consuming sunnah foods such as habatus sauda, zam-zam water and honey are also practiced. Habitus sauda, bee honey and black dates are mixed and taken every two weeks for two months. A study conducted by a group of researchers from Sultan Zainal Abidin University, UNISZA found that water from zam-zam wells and black seed can reduce drug addiction, especially those who are addicted to opiate drugs. The use of zam-zam water and habatus sauda can reduce methadone intake among addicts which can harm them if the methadone has been taken excessively.

Quarantine or detoxification methods are performed by isolating new resident in a confinement room. It aims to eliminate the symptoms of addiction, withdrawal syndrome and aggression that can occur to new occupant. The duration of confinement is dependent on the client's condition and one's level of addiction.

Nerve treatment is done in the beach area which is done twice a month. This method is done by burying the bodies of drug users excavated beach sand. It aims to remove acid in the body and activate dead cells, after undergoing treatment residents will experience fever, varicose veins, toothache and runny nose as a sign of the process of acid production in the body.

Sauna treatment is also known as steaming or 'Javanese-style' technique. Residents are required to sit in a blind well or well undressed for 4 to 5 hours a day starting from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Performed 4 times a week. This technique is intended to expose the occupants to sunlight and the occurrence of toxic -containing sweat excretion in the body.

The Dew Bath is to ask the residents to lie down on the meadow without clothes after the dawn prayers until 7 am. The occupants are left to cool because the morning dew can reduce the sense of addiction experienced by the occupants.

Rapid immersion is done in the flowing river water. This method is done as early as 3 am until 7 am. This method aims to provide a coolness that can restore the shrunken brain structure back to its original state as a result of addiction.

The last method is berkhalwad which is seclusion in the cemetery by meditating while praying to Allah s.w.t. This method is intended to create a sense of self -awareness in the residents to better appreciate life as a temporary stopover.

CENTRES	TREATMENT
Cure & Care Rehabilitation Center (CCRC) Kuala Terengganu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <i>Early Recovery;</i> • • <i>Relapse Prevention;</i> • • <i>Social support groups - 12 anonymous recovery steps;</i> • • <i>Career development;</i> • • <i>URICA - urine test;</i> • • <i>Test Assist;</i> • • <i>Individual Counseling Guidance and PRS co - support groups (Peer Counselors consisting of former addicts who have recovered);</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Health model - HIV/AIDS and TIBI.</i>
Madrasah Khairul Insan, Janagor, Terengganu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Music Therapy: Dendang Anak Jenagor - song lyrics with elements of advice and divinity;</i> • <i>Self-reflection;</i> • <i>Majlis Ta'alim-zikir, al-Quran and Hadith.</i>
Pusat Pemulihan Rakan Islah, Setiu, Terengganu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cool The key-Bathe repeatedly 15-20 times to keep the body cool to avoid addiction;</i> • <i>Drug therapy -Pain killer that is Mabrone which is controlled dose of 6 pills a day, Methadone Replacement Therapy as to treat withdrawal symptoms (withdrawal symptoms), to reduce the symptoms of Opiod type drug addiction such as Heroin.</i> • <i>Psychosocial methods-community service such as gotong-royong, breaking fast ceremony, congregational prayers at a mosque near the village;</i> • <i>Career development such as cooking, agriculture and livestock activities;</i> • <i>Psychospiritual through spiritual filling and worship such as the practice of zikir (zikir Jahar- out loud 300 times, zikir khafi- with the heart, zikir Ya-Latif & Lailahaillah to soften the heart;</i> • <i>Therapeutic Community (TC) emphasizes the concept of family and "Self-Help Group".</i>
Pusat Pemulihan Baitul Taubah, Pasir Puteh, Kelantan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Detoxification - confining new occupants as quarantine and seclusion to eliminate symptoms of addiction, withdrawal symptoms and aggression;</i> • <i>Emphasis on congregational prayer;</i> • <i>Night Bath (Hydrotherapy) or Mandi Taubat for 40 days starting at 4 am for 40 dippers;</i> • <i>Drink coconut water;</i> • <i>Practicing Zikr (Jahar and Khofi);</i> • <i>Increasing the scattering of the Qur'an and sunnah prayers;</i> • <i>Individual and group counseling sessions;</i> • <i>Motivational programs and talks;</i> • <i>Vocational skills such as farming, animal husbandry and welding skills;</i> • <i>Physical activities such as foot marches, football, sepak takraw, basketball and futsal;</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community programs such as gotong-royong, kenduri with the villagers.
Pondok Remaja Inabah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarantine for 14 days to eliminate the addiction and aggression of new residents; • Qiamulail; • Repentance bath; • Practice of knowledge and remembrance; • Counselling session; • Fasting circumcision; • Methadone Replacement Therapy; • Talqin and Bai'ah; • Community service ; • Zikir Lailahaila.
Baitul Cakna, Ajil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm reduction program - needle exchange program (HIV/AIDS sufferers) in collaboration with MOH; • Outreach; • Congregational prayers and religious talks from guest speakers; • Economic cultivation and generation programs; • Peer support; • Community based training; • Health and hygiene.
Pusat Pemulihan Manzilu Rahmah, Bachok, Kelantan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nerve Treatment • Javanese-style treatment (sauna or steam) • Sunnah nutritional treatment • Quarantine • Dew Bath • Rapid Immersion • Berkhalwad - seclusion in the cemetery/ munajad to Allah

Figure 1: Summary of Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation in Drug Rehabilitation Institutions

5.0 CONCLUSION

Further studies to see the effectiveness of treatment and rehabilitation of drug abuse in treatment and rehabilitation centers in Malaysia, several recommendations can be considered.

Firstly, the management of treatment and rehabilitation institutions must provide adequate training to treatment and rehabilitation officers before they are placed in the center. Especially in the skills of counseling services and rehabilitation treatment. Most of the rehabilitation officers involved are lack of basic knowledge in addiction-related counseling

and rehabilitation. With the basic knowledge and skills of counseling and addiction rehabilitation, it is hoped that the officers involved will be able to establish a closer relationship with the residents and be able to calm the tense that arise among the residents.

Secondly, monitoring of programs implemented by the rehabilitation centers involved should be done by authoritative bodies such as the National Anti-Drug Agency more frequently and periodically. This step can further increase the effectiveness of treatment and rehabilitation. The modules of the treatment and rehabilitation program should be constantly reviewed and improved at all levels.. Similarly, the facilities of the rehabilitation centers need to be improved for the residents' comfort and effectiveness of a program conducted.

Researchers also believe that the drug treatment and rehabilitation programs provided can be developed and enhanced through creative ideas and innovation through cooperation from various parties such as the private sector, voluntary organizations (NGOs), academics in institutions of higher learning and government agencies. This mobilization of energy is seen as very important in designing a more holistic treatment and rehabilitation program.

Overall, the researchers found that the treatment and rehabilitation approaches used in the selected treatment centers were influential in shaping the values, attitudes and personalities of the residents in a more positive direction. The average resident found that spiritual approaches such as remembrance, prayer, bath of repentance and circumcision fasting apart from psychosocial and pharmacological helped the resident to strengthen the soul and reduce the memory to re-addiction. However, researchers argue that the determining factor to occupant change depends a lot on the occupants themselves. In short, residents need to show a positive attitude, motivation and high willingness in undergoing treatment and rehabilitation provided in treatment and rehabilitation centers in order to have a profound effect towards a more positive attitude change.

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