

**Sentenced offender rehabilitation and reintegration: a case study of Boksburg
Correctional Services, South Africa**

by

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Sentenced offender rehabilitation and reintegration: a case study of Boksburg Correctional Services, South Africa

I fully declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the resources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation and research that has not been submitted before for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

Signature: 

Date: 20/07/2026

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation work to my lovely wife, Thabsile, daughter, Mandisa, and the Khanye and Letsoalo families who were always there for me every step of my way and for also shaping my future. Their advice on perseverance and diligence gave me confidence that, with enough willpower and self-belief, I could do anything in my life.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my colleagues who have been there supporting me and with abundance words of encouragement throughout this journey.

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Abstract

The South African correctional population has experienced an exponential rise in recent years and has been rated, together with other countries, as the top 11 countries globally with the highest incarcerations. The country's correctional population supersedes that of countries which are five times larger than her national population and has a rate of imprisonment much higher than that of any other country in Africa. While the 1994 White Paper on Corrections emphasises the penal procedures, it also emphasises rehabilitation and the reduction of recidivism which are best achieved through corrective measures and the development of offenders. This study thus sought to investigate the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programmes offered at the Boksburg Correctional Services and to assess whether these programmes prepare offenders for their eventual reintegration into society and to avoid recidivism. The study adopted the interpretivism paradigm, with the qualitative research approach and the case study research design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 31 offenders and four correctional officials who were purposively sampled. Data were analysed using the thematic analysis method. The study found that the appropriateness of rehabilitation programmes in preparing offenders for reintegration into society is effective in understanding and accepting past mistakes, as well as through skills for community contribution. The offenders' amenability to participate in rehabilitation programmes is understood in their motivation to change and their personal growth and learning. The study further established that the offenders perceive the rehabilitation programmes as sufficient for reintegration as they address recidivism and prepare them for societal roles. Further findings are that programme presenters' methods for assessing the offenders' preparedness for reintegration include one-on-one and group interactions and a focus on behavioural change. The study recommends that, to enhance the appropriateness of rehabilitation programmes in preparing offenders for reintegration into society, there should be a focus on programme relevance and modernisation, enhanced practical application, individualised motivation strategies, stronger post-release linkages, and the encouragement of self-discovery and emotional growth. To improve the offenders' amenability to participating in rehabilitation programmes, it is recommended that programme relevance and structure be strengthened, peer support and role modelling enhanced, facilitator engagement and training improved, psychological resistance and

other barriers addressed, and programme accessibility and flexibility increased. For rehabilitation programmes to be sufficient in supporting successful offender reintegration, the study recommends enhanced practical training opportunities, strengthened post-release support mechanisms, updated and responsive programme content, deliberate efforts to address stigma, and the creation of sustainable support networks that extend beyond incarceration. To enhance programme presenters' methods for assessing offenders' preparedness for reintegration, the study recommends the use of individualised assessments, a balanced integration of behavioural and psychological evaluations, improved group session dynamics, and structured preparation that equips offenders to cope effectively with real-world challenges.

Keywords: Sentenced offender, retribution, rehabilitation, reintegration, correctional services, incarceration, programme, recidivism; halfway houses; unit manager.

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Abbreviations

CMC – Centre Management Committee

CMA – Centre Management Administration

CSA – Correctional Services Act

CSP – Correctional Sentence Plan

DCS – Department of Correctional Services

KRAs – Key Responsibility Areas

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

UNISA – University of South Africa

WHO – World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Correctional institutions should provide rehabilitation programmes to offenders to curb recidivism. Key stakeholders, including correctional officials, social workers, psychologists, incarcerated persons, and the broader community, should thus remain integrally involved in the rehabilitation process, as each plays a critical role in facilitating offender rehabilitation and successful reintegration. Notwithstanding these efforts, offenders encounter rehabilitation programme-related impediments within Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre that undermine the efficacy of rehabilitation efforts. Consequently, structured mechanisms should be instituted to ensure that offenders acquire the requisite competencies and employability skills upon release. Compulsory basic education should, therefore, be made accessible to all offenders, while those who demonstrate the capacity and motivation to pursue further studies, including tertiary education, should be actively supported and encouraged. Such an approach would ensure that all offenders attain, at minimum, foundational educational qualifications to enhance their prospects for social and economic reintegration.

During the correctional centre admission process, the classification of offenders should be carried out according to the crimes that have been committed with the purpose of providing effective rehabilitation programmes. Vicious offenders should be separated from non-violent offenders to enable rehabilitation programmes to be developed to suit the classification.

Maqhina (2020:10) cited in Fitz (2021:1) disclosed 939 unresolved civil claims, 342 assault-related claims, and 66 damages (harm suffered), in which the South African Department of Correctional Services has failed to protect offenders. This occurrence indicates that the Department of Correctional Services is under pressure to safeguard defenceless offenders from abuse and threats from vicious offenders.

It is important to place offenders according to the severity of their crimes for effective rehabilitation and re-integration into society. Offender reintegration entails the process of transition from imprisonment into normal society. During this process, offenders have to adapt to a free domain after their experience of incarceration and enter society with the hope that their lives would be crime free. The Department of Correctional Services has put several objectives and goals in place, which include services to offenders, correctional officials, and the community. The Department of Correctional Services endeavours to attain these goals through a variety of philosophies and systems that have been introduced, including the White Paper on Corrections; the Annual Performance Plan; principles of service delivery; strategic planning sessions; the Code of Conduct; restorative justice; and the mode of intervention, rehabilitation, and unit management (Department of Correctional Services, 2016:23). Some of these strategies are still in the rolling-out process, while others are already in place.

1.2 Problem statement

The South African correctional centre's population has experienced an exponential rise in recent years, which is a cause for considerable concern. Statistics indicate that South Africa has been rated, with other countries like the United State of America, China, Russia, Brazil, India, Thailand, and Mexico, as the top 11 countries globally with the highest incarcerations. It is evident that South Africa's correctional centre's population supersedes the correctional centre's population of the countries which are five times larger than her national population (The World Prison Brief, 2017:2). Motlalekgosi (2015:151) adds that South Africa's rate of imprisonment is much higher than that of any other country in Africa.

Offenders should be classified on entry into a correctional service centre. A classification system is used as a management tool to distinguish between offenders who may be high risk and those who are defenceless or may be afraid, controlled, and maltreated by the high-risk offenders (Fitz, 2021:3). According to the Research Agenda of the Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2019-2023:5), offenders should be placed in line with the principle of a need-based rehabilitation

approach that emphasises the provision of appropriate facilities and services to accommodate all categories of offenders.

According to the World Prison Brief (2020:4), correctional centres across Africa are overwhelmed and under-resourced due to various reasons. Security facilities and rehabilitation programmes have not been sufficiently effective, and the continued incarceration of offenders remains costly for correctional facilities. According to the National Treasury (2020:335), the Department of Correctional Services' budget is projected to average approximately R29.8 billion annually for the 2022/23 period.

Significant changes relating to the Department of Correctional Services were introduced through Section 35 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, which specifically provides for the rights of detained, arrested, and accused persons to the extent that they have the right to be informed promptly of the reason for detention; be detained under conditions that are congruent with human dignity; and consult with legal practitioner.

The Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998:1) provides for the implementation of sentences imposed by the courts, while ensuring the safe detention of incarcerated persons. The Act further takes cognisance of their human dignity and endorses the social responsibility and human development of all offenders (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa, 2016:23).

The 1994 White Paper on Correctional Services (herein referred to as the White Paper of 1994) emphasises penal procedures and did not put focus on the key issues pertaining the facilities of the new rehabilitation centres system (White Paper on Corrections, 2005:12). However, the 2005 White Paper on Correctional Services (herein referred to as the White Paper of 2005) emphasises rehabilitation and the reduction of recidivism, which are best achieved through corrective measures and the development of offenders. The following are three main objectives of the Department of Correctional Services that have to be achieved in the near future: "the correction of offending behaviour; human development; and the promotion of social responsibility and positive values" (White Paper on Corrections 2005:23). The 2005 White Paper thus defines the main business of the Department of Correctional Services as "correction within the safe, secure, and humane environment in order to fulfil the

desired outcome of restoration of an offender” (Department of Correctional Services, White Paper on Corrections 2005:20).

The Department of Correctional Services (White Paper on Corrections 2005:15) indicates that there is no reliable data in South Africa on recidivism, hence success in the following areas could be a good indicator of the effectiveness of both internal departmental programmes and societal initiatives:

- i. Reduction of repeat offending.
- ii. Productiveness of released offenders to society.
- iii. Reduction of new offending as societal institutions begin to play their part.
- iv. Reduction or elimination of criminal offending within correctional centres.

This study thus sought to investigate the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programmes offered at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, and whether these programmes prepare offenders for their eventual reintegration into society and to avoid recidivism. The challenge arises from overcrowding in correctional service centres, which negatively affects the appropriateness of the programmes offered.

1.3 Aims and objectives of the study

This study sought to examine whether the rehabilitation programmes offered at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre are appropriate and adequate to prepare offenders for reintegration into society.

The following were the objectives guiding the study:

- i. To make enquiries whether the rehabilitation programmes are appropriate and adequate to prepare offenders for reintegration into society.
- ii. To ascertain if offenders are amenable to participating in the programmes.
- iii. To establish whether offenders deem the programmes sufficient to prepare them for reintegration.
- iv. To determine how the presenters of the programmes ascertain whether offenders have been sufficiently prepared for reintegration into society.

The importance of this study lies in its aim to determine how effective rehabilitation, with its challenges, leads to the successful re-integration of offenders into the community. In addition, the study focused on the challenges faced by the Department of Correctional Services, including overcrowding, misclassification of offenders, the rehabilitation process and its challenges, and the effective reintegration of offenders into the community. Finally, recommendations are made to the Department of Correctional Services for the development and implementation of effective rehabilitation programmes.

1.4 Research questions

1.4.1 Main research question

- i. What are the effects of rehabilitation programmes on offender behaviour from both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre?

1.4.2 Sub-questions

The study answered the following sub-questions:

- i. How do offenders view the rehabilitation programmes in which they are involved?
- ii. What is the influence of rehabilitation programmes on the reduction of recidivism?
- iii. To what extent have the rehabilitation programmes influenced offenders against recidivism?
- iv. What recommendations do offenders have to improve the programmes?

1.5 Motivation for the research

1.5.1 Value for science

Correctional officials have diverse and versatile roles. According to the Department of Correctional Services (White Paper on Corrections 2005:10), “the ideal correctional centre’s officer should be someone you can relate to and empathise with. Along with the ethical code of conduct adopted by the department.” That person becomes a manager, supervisor, custodian, disciplinarian, and peacemaker, all essential in the Department of Correctional Services. In addition, correctional officers have a dual role: corrections and rehabilitation, both intended to advance the objectives of modern correctional institutions. Rehabilitation is a process that enables an offender to reflect upon and address the harm caused by their criminal behaviour to victims of crime and to the broader community.

The Department of Correctional Services (White Paper on Corrections 2005:25) asserts that the Department should align the organisational structure, culture, and human resources with its rehabilitation objectives. This will enhance the effectiveness of the Department's rehabilitation process, contributing to the eventual goal of successful offender reintegration. Future crime may be prevented through thorough restoration and by detecting and curbing the character traits which cause an offender to commit illegal acts (Department of Correctional Services, White Paper on Corrections 2005:30).

1.5.2 Value for society

Upon release from incarceration, offenders face a myriad of challenges (Davis, Bahr & Ward, 2012:447). Offenders are plunged into an environment that differs from what they were accustomed to in rehabilitation centres, hence they battle to survive. However, ex-offenders who have better support from family cope well with attaining an occupation and being stable in the occupation than individuals who do not have as much or any support.

Commonly, ex-offenders who have children find it difficult to reunite with and care for them. Most children experience custodial separation, instability in residential plans, and experience stress when visiting parents who are incarcerated (Davis & Shlafer, 2017:188). Additionally, it may be problematic for children to continue an association with a parent who is incarcerated.

Most families visit the incarcerated to bond and sustain contact during incarceration (Benning & Lahm, 2016:3; Cochran & Mears, 2013:3; Liu, Pickett, & Baker, 2016:3). In addition, maintaining social connectedness may improve individuals' transitions during re-entry (Liu *et al.*, 2016:3; Mowen & Visser, 2016:3) and reduce recidivism.

1.5.3 Value for the administration of justice in South Africa

The primary goal of the correctional system is to ensure that offenders are rehabilitated while in custody. The Department of Correctional Services is responsible for ensuring that the rehabilitation environment is safe for the incarcerated and that offenders' human rights are protected. According to Cullen and Jonson (2012:150), the rehabilitation process seeks to produce a social good by improving the offender, reducing recidivism, and increasing public safety.

1.6 Key theoretical concepts

- **Rehabilitation:** This is a comprehensive process aimed at correcting offending behaviour through various therapeutic, educational, and social interventions designed to reduce the likelihood of reoffending and facilitate successful reintegration into society.
- **Recidivism:** This is the tendency of a convicted criminal to reoffend or return to criminal behaviour after serving their sentence, often measured by re-arrest, reconviction, or re-incarceration rates.
- **Overcrowding:** This is a condition in correctional facilities where the number of inmates exceeds the designed capacity, leading to inadequate living conditions and reduced effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes.

- Reintegration: The process of transitioning former inmates back into society as law-abiding citizens, involving social, economic, and psychological adjustments to community life.
- Offenders: Individuals who have been convicted of criminal offences and are serving sentences in correctional facilities.

1.7 Research design

Kanday (2023:367) refers to a research design as “a procedural plan that is adopted by a researcher in order to answer questions in a valid way”. The author further states that “every researcher has a list of research questions which need to be assessed, and which can be done with research design.” Kanday (2023:370) points out that research without a pre-dawn plan is like an ocean voyage without Mariner's compass. In order to answer the research questions, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with the selected participants.

1.8 Research methodology

1.8.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research involves understanding phenomena through the intensive collection of narrative data. These strategies are particularly suitable for the study of rehabilitation and reintegration and for the evaluation of rehabilitation programmes. The qualitative research design was employed in this study, since it was deemed the most appropriate to collect the information required to answer the research questions (Neuman, 2000:2). Qualitative researchers use data collection techniques such as observations and interviews, in which the data is generated in words.

1.8.2 Population

According to Babbie (2017:117), the population for the study is a group about whom researchers want to draw conclusions. The population also refers to the entire group

that displays characteristics in which the researcher is interested in (Bezuidenhout, Davis & Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014:132). The target population for this study were the offenders who are involved in the rehabilitation programme at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre.

1.8.3 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting a sample from the population (Shukla, Satish Prakash, 2020:5). The purposive sampling method was used to choose the sample for this study. Purposive sampling selects items according to a specific logic or strategy carefully, but not randomly (Patton, 2014:4). According to Stratton (2024:121), purposive sampling is a sampling process in which a researcher selects research participants based on their presence in a population of interest, or their characteristics and experiences with a phenomenon. By using purposive sampling, the researcher identified the concepts, standards, and social issues affecting offenders. A researcher believes he can obtain a representative sample using sound judgment, thereby saving time and money. For example, 31 offenders at the Boksburg Correctional Centre were selected as a sample from the offender population. In other words, sampling includes only a chosen few from the entire population and represents the larger population of offenders.

1.8.4 Data collection

Data collection is the process of collecting and measuring information about variables of interest. Data collection involved various methods, such as qualitative interviews, which enable the interviewer to explain behaviours through interactions with participants (Syed Muhammad, 2016:2). Data for this study were collected through interviews with participants and analysed and interpreted to ascertain the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes. With the permission from the Department of Correctional Services, the researcher made appointments with the Boksburg Correctional Service correctional officials in order to determine and make arrangements for data collection with the potential participants. According to

Taherdoost (2021:12), data collection methods are divided into two main categories, namely, primary, and secondary methods.

According to Sajjad (2020:204), data that has been collected from first-hand-experience is known as primary data. Primary data has not been published yet and is more reliable, which the researcher obtains information himself/herself for the particular purpose of their research. However, data collected from a source that has already been published in any form is called secondary data (Sajjad, 2020:205). Sources like books, newspapers, and records form part of secondary data.

1.8.5 Data analysis

Interviews were recorded using a digital recorder with the consent of the participants. The researcher sought to collect information across various ethnic groups or races in order to answer the research questions and allow for diversity among the offenders.

The thematic data analysis method was used to analyse the data from the interviews after transcription. Babbie (2017:397) states that coding is an important process for analysing information in qualitative research, which involves labelling and classifying data (Flick, 2014:373). There are three phases through which raw data passed. The first pass is known as open coding, where labels are assigned to the raw data; the second phase is known as axial coding, where similar labels of data are clustered, and the third phase is where themes emerge and are identified to answer the research questions (Neuman, 2011:460).

1.8.6 Validity and reliability

Qualitative research is based on the fact that validity is a matter of reliability and reliability (Zohrabi, 2013:15). Consequently, numerous qualitative researchers resist that qualitative research should have unrelated notions of validity and reliability to those of the quantitative research because the basis of qualitative research is on diverse theories of authenticity.

Internal validity, external validity, and reliability are unacceptable for qualitative research because of their philosophical and epistemological orientation. The extent to which results are consistent over time, as well as an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability; and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable (Joppe, 2000:1).

1.8.7 Research ethics

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:196) state that research ethics establish confidences pertaining what is true or untrue, appropriate or inappropriate, and commendable or futile in research. It is imperative to abide by ethical considerations when conducting research studies. According to Bellalem, Mirza and Mirza (2023:2), ethics revolve around the responsibilities of the researchers towards their participants' audience and society. Bellalem *et al.* (2023:2) point out that "the researcher should also use some ethical guidelines to ensure they have followed the principles of good research practices."

The principle of autonomy is fundamental in research ethics. Participants must not be coerced into taking part, and they should be fully informed about the purpose of the study, what their participation entails, and how their confidentiality will be protected. Despite these safeguards, ethical challenges may arise at various stages of the research process (Creswell, 2013:56). A project population or sample needs to be comfortable giving the researcher personal details or discussing controversial information, and, importantly, the researcher should respect the confidentiality of the information.

1.9 Layout of chapters

Chapter One: Introduction to the study

This chapter introduces the study and motivates reasons for conducting the research.

Chapter Two: The history, theory, and philosophy of punishment and imprisonment

This chapter explores the evolution of punishment and incarceration in South Africa. It outlines the philosophy behind punishment, various theoretical frameworks, and the historical progression of correctional centres, emphasising the Biblical viewpoint and the Medieval period.

Chapter Three: The historical development, theory, and philosophy of rehabilitation that are related to reintegration

This chapter presents the historical development, theory, and philosophy of rehabilitation that are related to reintegration. The chapter also discusses the four functions of imprisonment related to rehabilitation, namely, custodian, restorative, controlling, and maintenance.

Chapter Four: Programmes aimed at the rehabilitation and re-integration of offenders: A South African perspective

This chapter presents a discussion on the various programmes available to offenders for their rehabilitation.

Chapter Five: Research design and methodology

This chapter outlines the design of the research and justifies the methods that were adopted in line with the research objectives.

Chapter Six: The profile of the Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre

The chapter discusses data obtained through in-depth interviews with the participants to provide insights on the lifestyle or behaviour of the offenders at the Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre.

Chapter Seven: Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre

This chapter presents, analyses, and discusses the data collected for the study, including the demographic profiles of participants. The chapter analyses the participants' responses to each interview question and addresses challenges encountered during the interviews.

Chapter Eight: Findings and Recommendations

This chapter summarises the findings obtained through interviews with the participants. The chapter discusses puts forward evidence-based recommendations that directly correspond to each finding and concludes with suggestions for future research and final reflections on offender rehabilitation and reintegration.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the study, with a focus on the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes and their role in preparing offenders for successful reintegration into society. The study is particularly significant, given South Africa's high incarceration rates and the challenges faced in reducing recidivism.

The study adopted the qualitative research approach and the purposive sampling technique, and interviews were conducted with 31 offenders with the aim to obtain valuable insights on the rehabilitation of offenders from the perspectives of those directly involved. By examining both the appropriateness and adequacy of

rehabilitation programmes, this study sought to understand whether these interventions effectively prepare offenders for life after incarceration.

The research was motivated by several critical factors, namely, overcrowding in correctional facilities, the need for proper classification of offenders, and the importance of successful reintegration for both the offenders and society at large. Through careful examination of these aspects, the study aims to contribute to the broader understanding of rehabilitation effectiveness and potentially inform improvements in rehabilitation programme design and implementation.

This investigation is timely, given the Department of Correctional Services' emphasis on rehabilitation as outlined in the (White Paper on Corrections 2005:38), and the ongoing challenges in preventing recidivism. The findings from this research may provide valuable recommendations for enhancing rehabilitation programmes and improving the success rates of offender reintegration into society.

The study's methodological approach, incorporating both primary data from interviews and secondary data from existing literature, ensures a comprehensive examination of the rehabilitation process and its outcomes. This study seeks to contribute to the development of more effective rehabilitation strategies that better serve both the offender population and society as a whole.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORY, THEORY, AND PHILOSOPHY OF PUNISHMENT AND IMPRISONMENT

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the universal phenomenon of punishment and imprisonment, tracing its historical origins, philosophical foundations, and theoretical developments that have shaped modern correctional approaches. The purpose is to establish a comprehensive understanding of punishment as a social institution, its evolution from ancient practices to contemporary frameworks, and its relationship to rehabilitation and reintegration objectives. The chapter explores the fundamental question of why societies punish wrongdoers, how different theoretical justifications have emerged over time, and how these developments have influenced the shift towards rehabilitation-focused correctional systems.

The chapter examines the philosophy of punishment, various theories of punishment, and the historical development of correctional centre's systems from biblical times through medieval practices to American innovations. This chapter demonstrates how the phenomenon of punishment has gradually evolved from purely retributive approaches towards rehabilitative models that emphasise offender transformation and successful reintegration into society.

2.2 The philosophy of punishment

Contemporary philosophical discourse on punishment reveals the fundamental complexity of understanding why societies impose deliberate suffering on wrongdoers. Ryberg (2024b:1) notes that “when we are confronted with situations in which someone becomes victim of physical assault or subject of other people's coercive treatment, it is usually (and luckily) something that strikes us as highly worrying or even shocking.” This fundamental concern leads to what Ryberg (2024b:1-2) describes as a central philosophical puzzle: “why is it morally acceptable (or even required) for the state to impose punishments on citizens who have broken the law?”

The philosophical foundations of punishment have evolved significantly throughout human history. Punishment, as a universal phenomenon, is viewed as a social institution where if an individual commits a crime, the state or community is justified to impose consequences (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.a: 1). Kumari (2007:1) defines punishment as “pain, suffering, loss, confinement or other penalty inflicted on a person for an offence by the authority to which the offender is subjected to.” This definition captures the essential elements that characterise punishment across different societies and historical periods: the intentional infliction of hardship, the requirement of wrongdoing, and the necessity of legitimate authority.

The evolution of punishment philosophy reflects broader shifts in human understanding of justice, morality, and social organisation. Ryberg (2024b:5) observes that “the dominance of the retributivist approach in the past decades has faded somewhat and left a more diverse theoretical picture.” This theoretical diversity has enabled more nuanced approaches that combine insights from different justificatory frameworks, moving beyond the traditional dichotomy between consequentialist and retributivist theories. Contemporary punishment philosophy increasingly recognises that effective punishment systems must address multiple objectives simultaneously, including accountability, public safety, victim restoration, and offender rehabilitation.

The relationship between punishment and rehabilitation has become increasingly central to modern philosophical discourse. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (n.d.a:1) claims that punishment, particularly imprisonment, is seen as the most severe form of punishment that can be imposed by courts worldwide. However, this severity brings with it the responsibility to ensure that punishment serves constructive purposes beyond mere retribution. The principle that punishment “should engrain only the loss of the right to liberty, and not the loss of other human rights or the imposition of additional punishment” (UNODC, n.d.a:1) reflects the contemporary understanding that effective punishment must maintain human dignity while achieving its corrective objectives.

Brunk (2005:25) articulates this rehabilitative philosophy by arguing that “punishment should not make the offender a worse person. Ideally, it should make them a better one.” This perspective represents a fundamental shift from historical approaches that focused primarily on inflicting suffering as an end in itself, toward approaches that view

punishment as a means of facilitating positive transformation. The philosophical challenge lies in balancing the competing demands of justice, public safety, victim restoration, and offender rehabilitation within a coherent theoretical framework.

The effectiveness and justification of punishment remain subjects of ongoing philosophical debate. The UNODC (n.d.a:1) argues that the adoption of imprisonment as punishment raises questions about its “effectiveness, fairness and humaneness since it has been claimed by theorists that the pain of punishment along with the costs of imposing that pain upon the offender are both overshadowed by the social benefits that are therefore enjoyed.” This utilitarian calculation requires careful consideration of whether punishment systems actually achieve their stated objectives, including the crucial goal of reducing future crime through successful rehabilitation and reintegration.

The philosophical evolution toward rehabilitation-focused approaches reflects growing recognition that sustainable crime reduction requires addressing the underlying causes of criminal behaviour rather than simply inflicting retributive suffering. This shift has profound implications for how punishment systems are designed, implemented, and evaluated, emphasising the need for evidence-based approaches that demonstrate effectiveness in promoting genuine behavioural change and successful community reintegration.

2.3 The different theories of punishment

The philosophical foundations of punishment have generated numerous theoretical frameworks that attempt to justify when, why, and how societies should punish wrongdoers. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (n.d.a:1) and Brunk (2005:25) identify five main theories of criminal punishment, namely, retribution, incapacitation, deterrence, rehabilitation, and reparation. However, contemporary philosophical analysis reveals additional theoretical frameworks that enhance our understanding of punishment justification. Each theory contributes differently to the rehabilitative approach, demonstrating how modern correctional systems can integrate multiple approaches while prioritising offender transformation and successful reintegration.

Understanding these theories in their universal context provides the foundation for developing effective punishment systems that serve multiple objectives simultaneously. The theoretical diversity reflects the complexity of the punishment phenomenon and the various social, moral, and practical considerations that influence how societies respond to criminal behaviour.

2.3.1 Retribution

The Modern Retributive Theory has evolved significantly from its historical foundations as simple vengeance. Berman (2024:43) explains that “retributivism is a family of theories that purport to justify criminal punishment by reference to a wrongdoer's negative desert,” noting that “individual members of the family differ from one another on many issues, including what it is that wrongdoers deserve and what is the character and force of the fact that they deserve it.” The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (n.d.b:1) identifies retribution as “probably the oldest justification of punishment,” based on the principle that crime justifies proportional punishment with the following two underlying premises:

- i. Only those convicted of a crime deserve punishment, and that
- ii. The severity of punishment should correspond to the gravity of the crime, neither exceeding nor falling below what is proportionate.

The Contemporary Retributivist Theory goes beyond simple proportionality to address deeper questions about moral responsibility and desert. Berman (2024:43) introduces “prospect retributivism,” arguing that “culpable wrongdoers deserve to experience their wrongdoing as personally costly to them, and the state assumes a pro tanto duty to cause wrongdoers to experience those costs in virtue of barring retaliation by victims and their surrogates.” This approach emphasises the moral significance of ensuring that wrongdoers experience appropriate consequences while maintaining state monopoly over legitimate punishment.

The Retribution Theory relates to religious and theological frameworks where criminal activity is regarded as sin or wrongdoing against moral order. Brunk (2005:25) point out that the primary goal is ensuring that offenders “pay back to society or victim for

the sin that they have committed.” However, in the context of rehabilitation, retribution's emphasis on moral responsibility can contribute to offender accountability, which is essential for genuine rehabilitation. When offenders accept responsibility for their actions through retributive processes, this creates the foundation for meaningful behavioural change and successful reintegration programmes.

Brunk (2005:25) argues that the strength of retributive theory lies in treating “offenders as morally responsible members of society as opposed to treating them as sick and irresponsible.” This recognition of moral agency is crucial for rehabilitation because it acknowledges the offender's capacity for choice and change. The acceptance of responsibility and moral accountability can lead to genuine reconciliation and restoration, aligning with rehabilitative goals of transforming offenders into productive community members who understand the impact of their actions on others.

2.3.2 Incapacitation

The incapacitation approach centres on crime prevention through the physical removal or restriction of dangerous individuals from society. Davidson (2022:1) explains that “the incapacitation theory believes that punishment should aim to prevent future crimes by removing individuals from society or limiting their physical ability to commit further offenses.” Though fundamentally protective, this approach establishes controlled environments conducive to educational programming, skills training, and therapeutic intervention.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (n.d.b:1) describes the Incapacitation Theory, stating that “the state has an obligation to protect the public from future wrongs or harms, and that protection can be afforded through some form of institutionalisation or in capitation.” This protective obligation promotes the safety of the public and creates opportunities to achieve meaningful engagement in programming for vulnerable individuals during confinement.

In rehabilitation based-theories of incapacitation, and specifically retribution, the incapacitation period is used to provide expansive developmental programming rather than simple in capitation. Blumstein (1983:1) indicates that with the Selective

Incapacitation Theory, “a small group of offenders is responsible for committing a relatively large portion of all crimes”, and provides the basis for implementing interventions aimed at tackling on-going offending patterns and bringing about reductions in recidivism through rehabilitation rather than a life sentence of incapacitation.

In confronting the rehabilitation incapacitation challenge, the aim is to ensure that the incapacitation period is directed at some constructive and re-integrative purposes, such as programming. An effective programming approach, for example, integrates public protection with an extensive range of rehabilitative services that may include addressing criminogenic needs, developing pro-social or pro-attitude behaviours, and facilitating practical and appropriate preparation for re-entry to the community. Such approaches could transform the incapacitation of sanction into a transformative opportunity for both public safety and personal development.

2.3.3 Deterrence

The Deterrence Theory aims to discourage criminal behaviour through the threat and application of punishment. Brunk (2005:25) explains that “the primary goal of punishment is to ensure that society is protected from offenders” through discouraging both specific offenders and potential offenders from committing crimes. Mohanty (2015:5) divides the Deterrence Theory into the following two categories: (i) special deterrence, aimed at preventing reoffending by individuals who have already been punished, and (ii) general deterrence, designed to discourage potential offenders by demonstrating the consequences of criminal behaviour.

Contemporary analysis reveals the complexity of the Deterrence Theory within broader theoretical frameworks. Ryberg (2024a:60) notes that deterrence falls within consequentialist theories of punishment, where “the rightness or wrongness of punishment is exclusively determined by its consequences.” This consequentialist foundation means that deterrent punishment is justified only when it produces net positive outcomes in terms of crime reduction and social welfare.

The effectiveness of the Deterrence Theory depends on several factors, including the certainty, severity, and swiftness of punishment, as well as the rational calculation capacity of potential offenders. However, research suggests that the certainty of detection and punishment is more important than severity in achieving deterrent effects. This finding has important implications for rehabilitation-focused approaches, as consistent enforcement of reasonable consequences, combined with rehabilitation programmes, may be more effective than harsh punishments alone.

In rehabilitation terms, effective deterrence occurs not through fear alone, but through positive transformation that makes crime unappealing. When offenders develop new skills, address addiction issues, build positive relationships, and establish stakes in conventional society through rehabilitation programmes, they are naturally deterred from reoffending because they have viable alternatives and meaningful connections to law-abiding life. This represents a more sustainable form of deterrence than punishment-based approaches, as it addresses the underlying factors that contribute to criminal behaviour while providing positive incentives for continued law-abiding behaviour.

2.3.4 Rehabilitation

The Rehabilitation Theory conceptualises punishment as a means for positive change and development. Brunk (2005:27) describes the Rehabilitative Theory as tending “to either see the offender as a patient, a victim, or both”. This is the basis for understanding punishment as serving constructive purposes in society besides retribution or containment. Thomas, Hurley and Barnes (2007:5) describe rehabilitation as “the idea that punishment's purpose is to provide treatment and training to the offender so that he is made capable of returning to society and fulfilling the role of a law abiding citizen.”

The Rehabilitation Theory has the following several aspects necessary for recidivism reduction: addressing offence-related needs, developing prosocial attitudes and behaviours, treatment for underlying issues such as addictions and mental health problems, educational/employability preparation, and assisting in successful community reintegration. The Rehabilitation Theory recognises that criminal behaviour

occurs from interacting personal, social, and environmental factors, all which can be subjected to structured interventions.

The philosophy of the Rehabilitation Theory balances rehabilitation's recognition of offender agency and the need for support. Brunk (2005:27) emphasises the importance of treating "inmates as responsible moral agents, and not as ill patients in need of treatment" while providing rehabilitation assistance necessary to facilitate an offender's change process. This nuanced approach respects inherent human dignity and the capacity for change, while enabling practical assistance for positive change.

Evidence-informed rehabilitation programmes target criminogenic factors identified through research as contributing to criminal conduct. These elements encompass antisocial thinking patterns, criminal peer associations, substance dependencies, educational and employment deficits, family dysfunction, and impulse control difficulties. Effective programmes employ structured cognitive-behavioural interventions helping offenders develop alternative thinking patterns, coping mechanisms, and life competencies to support law-abiding conduct.

The Rehabilitation Theory's success depends on matching programme intensity with risk levels, addressing individual requirements, and learning preferences, and ensuring service continuity from incarceration through community reintegration. This comprehensive approach recognises that sustainable behavioural change requires ongoing support and reinforcement, as offenders navigate community return challenges and establish law-abiding lifestyles.

2.3.5 Restitution

The Restitution Theory focuses on repairing harm caused by criminal behaviour through compensation or service to victims and communities. Davies (2009:355) states that "an offender can be ordered to make financial compensation to individual victims, or to symbolically pay back society or the state for the harm done." The Contemporary Restitutions Theory offers a more comprehensive framework than traditional approaches focused solely on monetary compensation.

Hershenov (2024:142) argues that “it is better if punishment is construed as restitution,” suggesting that “the main advantage is that it prioritises the victims but it can even benefit the criminal who wants to repay a debt in order to reconcile with those people he has wronged and be restored to society as an equal citizen.” This modern restorative perspective emphasises the transformative potential of making amends rather than simply requiring payment as an additional burden on offenders.

The theoretical advantages of restitution extend beyond victim compensation. Hershenov (2024:142) notes that restitution “can better explain why failed attempts are punished less severely than successful crimes” and that “restitutions principles are not compromised by shows of mercy.” These characteristics make restitution particularly compatible with rehabilitation objectives, as the process of making amends can facilitate moral development, empathy building, and community reconnection.

In the rehabilitation context, restitution serves multiple constructive purposes. It reinforces accountability by requiring offenders to confront the concrete consequences of their actions, provides practical means for making amends that can restore relationships and community standing, and facilitates the development of empathy as offenders understand the impact of their behaviour on others. The process of working to repair harm can be deeply meaningful for both offenders and victims, creating opportunities for genuine reconciliation and healing.

Effective restitution programmes combine material compensation with restorative processes that address the emotional and relational dimensions of harm. This may include victim-offender mediation, community service projects, and participation in restorative justice circles that bring together offenders, victims, and community members to address the broader impact of criminal behaviour and develop plans for repair and prevention.

2.3.6 Rights Forfeiture Theory

The Rights Forfeiture Theory offers a distinctive approach to understanding punishment justification that complements traditional theories by addressing the fundamental question of why punishment does not violate offenders' rights. Bell and

Wellman (2024:113) explain that “a rights forfeiture theory of punishment seeks to explain when and why punishment is permissible,” arguing that “while traditional accounts, such as the retributivism or deterrence theories identify morally valuable aims that punishment might secure, only a forfeiture theory of punishment successfully establishes why a wrongdoer's rights are not violated when she is subjected to hard treatment.”

The theoretical foundation of rights forfeiture addresses a fundamental puzzle in the Punishment Theory that other approaches struggle to resolve. Bell and Wellman (2024:113) note that this theory “aims to provide an overview of forfeiture theory, clarify the concept, and discuss a number of puzzles and objections raised by the theory.” The core insight is that through their wrongdoing, offenders forfeit certain rights, making punishment permissible without violating their fundamental moral standing as persons.

This theory has particular relevance for rehabilitation-focused approaches because it addresses the temporal nature of rights forfeiture. Bell and Wellman (2024:121) discuss the concept of “rights reclamation,” noting that “with the possible exception of the gravest wrongs such as murder, torture, and terrorism, a wrongdoer's right against punishment is typically only temporarily forfeited.” This temporal aspect creates space for rehabilitation programmes that can help offenders to reclaim their full moral and legal standing through demonstrating genuine reform and making appropriate amends.

The rights reclamation aspect of the forfeiture theory aligns closely with rehabilitative goals by providing a clear pathway back to full citizenship for reformed offenders. Bell and Wellman (2024:121) explain that “once a proportionate punishment has been exacted, the wrongdoer regains her forfeited rights, making it once more impermissible to visit hard treatment upon her.” This creates incentives for meaningful rehabilitation and provides hope for offenders that their efforts towards positive change will be recognised and rewarded.

The theory also addresses questions about what types of interventions are permissible during the period of rights forfeiture. While offenders may have forfeited certain rights through their wrongdoing, they retain other fundamental rights that must be respected

throughout the punishment process. This framework supports rehabilitation programmes that work within these constraints to facilitate positive change while respecting human dignity and the offenders' capacity for moral development.

2.3.7 Self-defence theories

Self-defence theories of punishment provide another contemporary framework for understanding criminal justice justification based on the widely accepted right to protect oneself and others from harm. Pereboom (2024:127) explains that these theories concern "treatment of criminals grounded in the right to self-defence," noting that "the self-defence theories for treatment of criminals that are of special interest are those that stand to secure ecumenical support by crucially relying only on a fairly uncontroversial right of self-defence."

The theoretical advantage of self-defence approaches lies in their broad acceptability across different moral and political frameworks. Pereboom (2024:127) argues that these theories secure "ecumenism by avoiding reliance on controversial justifications such as classical retributivism and those that fall prey to a powerful use objection." This broad consensus makes self-defence theories particularly valuable in pluralistic societies with diverse views on punishment, as they rely on principles that most people intuitively accept.

In the context of rehabilitation, self-defence theories emphasise protective intervention rather than purely retributive measures. Pereboom (2024: 127) notes that "the theory for criminal jurisprudence that the author defends features incapacitation justified by the right to self-defence and defence of others conceived in this way together with limited additional general deterrence." This approach supports rehabilitation programmes as effective means of permanent protection through transformation rather than permanent exclusion or indefinite confinement.

Self-defence theories can accommodate extensive rehabilitation efforts by viewing them as forms of protective intervention that address the underlying causes of dangerous behaviour. When rehabilitation programmes successfully address criminogenic factors such as substance abuse, antisocial attitudes, lack of education

and employment skills, and mental health issues, they provide society with more effective and humane protection against future harm than continued incarceration alone.

The protective focus of self-defence theories also supports community-based rehabilitation and reintegration programmes that maintain protective supervision while allowing offenders to rebuild their lives in the community. This approach recognises that sustainable public safety requires not just removing dangerous individuals from society temporarily but addressing the factors that make them dangerous in ways that promote long-term positive change and successful community integration.

2.4 The historical development of prisons

The progression of correctional centres from simple confinement to multidimensional correctional facilities that contribute to change mirrors an evolving philosophy of punishment, as well as a refined understanding of human psychology and behaviour, and a growing awareness that to effectively curb crime it is crucial to address the root causes of criminal behaviour, rather than meting out retributive suffering.

Since past societies operated correctional centres in different stages, such as holding someone until their trial or execution, or keeping them for punishment or rehabilitation for an extended period of time, correctional centres have served several purposes. Prisons and confinement for punishment go back to biblical times, when common offenders were locked in dungeons or pits (Jeter, 2017:1). Over time, the purpose and function of correctional centres have shifted to place greater emphasis on rehabilitation and reducing recidivism (Geltner, 2010:79).

The following sections review the evolution of correctional centres as a form of punishment from biblical and medieval perspectives and show how early concepts of containment and a shift in moral development contributed to the development of modern correctional approaches that focus on rehabilitation.

2.4.1 Biblical perspective

The biblical view of imprisonment and punishment provides important historical foundations for understanding the role of confinement, moral transformation, and restoration that shaped the development of correctional systems. Cioffi (2017:1) observes that “from Joseph’s imprisonment to Satan’s in Revelations, the Bible has numerous references to the prison that has guided Christians in their response to crime, punishment, imprisonment, release.” To this effect, the religious influence has played a significant role in the evolution of modern prison systems, and the manner in which some reasonable belief in access to rehabilitation is provided to an offender.

Jeter (2017:1) explains that “in ancient times, prisons were not often utilised as punishment; prisons were typically used as temporary spaces to confine offenders until trial or execution.” At this time, punishment for crimes were typically harsh and swift, going as far back as banishment, to beatings, torture, death, with long-term prison sentences being an exception (Cioffi, 2017:1). In this historical context, the notion of imprisonment, as affording access to moral transformation and rehabilitation, is quite a departure from the restorative and punishments of the past.

The early Christian contributions to the correctional centre, along with the standard of treatment of offenders, fostered important standards under which humane treatment and rehabilitation began to be developed. Generally, Christians were against the brutal treatment of offenders and encouraged humane treatment. Jeter (2017:1) provides an account of the awful conditions of ancient correctional centres, in referencing the Mamertine Prison that the Apostle Paul was confined, he states “it was an unbelievably dark, damp, and dirty place...as it had a horrible and grotesque character to it, it was frightening from mistreatment to lack of light and smell.” These things began to prompt Christian reformers, to advocate for and improve the condition of offenders.

The transformation of Christian influence on criminal justice occurred when Emperor Constantine legalised Christianity in the early fourth century. Cioffi (2017:1) explains that Constantine “issued an edict in 320 that aimed to improve the treatment of offenders. This edict specifically prevented the unnecessary use of chains, ensuring that offenders were not subjected to undue pain or mistreatment. The edict

emphasised the importance of maintaining offenders' well-being and forbade their torture or abuse."

This early reform movement established principles that remain central to modern rehabilitation-focused corrections: the importance of maintaining human dignity during punishment, the prohibition of cruel and unusual treatment, and the recognition that punishment should serve constructive rather than purely retributive purposes. These principles create the foundation for rehabilitation programmes that seek to address the underlying causes of criminal behaviour while respecting the offender's inherent worth as a human being.

Augustine's theological approach to criminal punishment provided important intellectual foundations for rehabilitation theory. Cioffi (2017:1) notes that "Augustine preached that the purpose of criminal punishment should be the moral and spiritual rehabilitation and transformation of the offender, guiding them back to the path of societal good and, ideally, to God." Augustine's emphasis on compassionate punishment that seeks restoration rather than mere retribution represents an early articulation of rehabilitation principles that continue to influence modern correctional philosophy.

The practical application of these principles led to significant correctional centre's reforms. Elizabeth Fry and William Penn played crucial roles in developing modern correctional centre's systems based on Christian principles. According to Cioffi (2017:1), they "united different sectors of society, including the judiciary, religious groups, and civil society to address issues related to crime, punishment, and correctional centre's conditions." Their reforms aimed to create correctional centre's environments that promoted moral and spiritual development rather than simply inflicting suffering.

The History of Social Work (2009:1) notes that Fry's visits to the Newgate prison "exposed shocking conditions, particularly for women and their children, leading to a renewed focus on correctional centre's reform." Both Fry and Penn "advocated for the abolition of capital punishment and emphasised the role of religion in defining the purpose of correctional centres. They criticised physical punishment, encouraged

personal contact and positive influence, and organised voluntary groups of Christians and concerned citizens to regularly visit inmates.”

These early reforms established important precedents for modern rehabilitation programmes, including the importance of maintaining family connections, providing education and moral guidance, treating offenders with dignity and respect, involving community volunteers in reform efforts, and focusing on preparing offenders for successful return to society. The influence of Christian thought on correctional centre’s development demonstrates how religious and moral frameworks can support rehabilitation approaches that emphasise human potential for positive change and the importance of restoration over mere punishment.

2.4.2 Medieval era

The medieval period marks a significant transitional phase in imprisonment development as punishment and rehabilitation. Despite common misconceptions about medieval society being purely punitive, Geltner (2008:1) demonstrates that it “displayed a more nuanced approach in defining and addressing social groups that were considered on the margins.” During this era, “the use of incarceration as a formal punishment was more common than people may typically think,” although Geltner (2006:1) clarifies that “punitive incarceration either did not exist or was extremely rare” in absolute terms.

Medieval correctional centres development connected closely with urban expansion and sophisticated law enforcement needs. Geltner (2010:1) identifies “a strong connection between the establishment of correctional centres and the growth of late-medieval city architecture, yet the challenges faced by urban correctional centres during this time were primarily related to their role in traditional Christian beliefs and imagination.” Urban complexity demanded organised law enforcement and incarceration systems, prompting correctional centre’s construction serving multiple community functions.

Christian beliefs and imagination significantly influenced medieval correctional centres’ systems, affecting an offender treatment and confinement purposes.

Religious and cultural elements shaped inmate perception and treatment, potentially affecting correctional centre's design, function, and social role in ways anticipating modern rehabilitation approaches. Christian emphasis on redemption, moral transformation, and spiritual renewal provided theological foundations for viewing imprisonment as transformation opportunities rather than mere punishment.

Medieval correctional centres practice notably included formal release and rehabilitation recognition through ceremonial processes. Geltner (2010:79) observes that "the ceremonies conducted during a convict's release marked their transition back into society, reflecting the intended purpose of imprisonment as a means of rehabilitation and reintegration." These ceremonies highlighted rehabilitation and reintegration concepts, recognising successful societal return required formal acknowledgment of offender transformation and community acceptance of renewed status.

Release ceremonies demonstrate early recognition of principles central to modern rehabilitation practice: marking punishment completion and law-abiding citizenship transition, community involvement in reintegration processes, formal recognition of offender transformation and rehabilitation, and symbolic importance of full community membership restoration. These practices suggest medieval society understood effective crime reduction required not only punishment but successful reformed offender reintegration.

Medieval correctional centre's systems' practical challenges revealed early understanding of adequate facilities and resources importance for effective rehabilitation. Geltner (2010: 73) notes "the conditions or limitations of the current correctional centres led some citizens to take action and formally request the establishment of a new correctional centre as the existing facilities were unsatisfactory or inadequate in some way." This community involvement in correctional centre's reform demonstrates recognition that effective correction requires adequate resources and community support.

Citizen advocacy for improved correctional centres indicate several important developments in punishment and rehabilitation thinking: recognition that correctional centres' conditions affect successful rehabilitation likelihood, community responsibility

for maintaining effective correctional centres, understanding that inadequate facilities can undermine punishment purposes, and civic engagement importance in criminal justice reform. These insights anticipate modern community corrections approaches and recognition that successful rehabilitation requires community involvement and support.

Despite positive developments, medieval correctional centres faced significant challenges highlighting ongoing tensions between punishment and rehabilitation objectives. Geltner (2010:55) acknowledges that while “correctional centres serve a crucial role in rehabilitating offenders and deterring potential criminals,” some argue “they have not been effective in reducing crime and can worsen the inmates' mental health.” This recognition of imprisonment's potential negative effects demonstrates early awareness of issues continuing to challenge modern correctional systems.

The medieval experience with imprisonment established several important precedents for modern rehabilitation-focused corrections: the recognition that imprisonment should serve constructive purposes beyond mere punishment, the importance of community involvement in both correctional centres operations and offender reintegration, the need for adequate facilities and resources to support rehabilitation objectives, formal recognition of offender transformation through ceremonial processes, and understanding that successful crime reduction requires addressing the underlying causes of criminal behaviour through positive intervention rather than simply inflicting suffering.

2.5 The historical development of prisons in the United States of America

The development of correctional centres systems in the United States represents a crucial chapter in the evolution of modern correctional approaches, with innovations that have influenced rehabilitation practices worldwide. The history of American correctional centres can be traced back to the colonial era when jails were used primarily for detention rather than punishment (Mauer & Chesney-Lind, 2002:3). However, it was during the 19th century that significant changes occurred in correctional centres design and operation, leading to the development of systematic approaches to offender rehabilitation and reform.

The American correctional centres experience introduced several innovations that have shaped modern understanding of effective correctional practices. These developments occurred during a period of significant social and political change, when reformers were actively seeking alternatives to harsh physical punishments and capital punishment. The three major systems that emerged - the Walnut Street Jail model, the Auburn system, and the Pennsylvania system - each contributed different insights about the relationship between confinement conditions and rehabilitation outcomes.

Clear (2009:73) notes that “despite these different approaches, both systems faced criticism for their harsh conditions and lack of rehabilitation programmes.” However, the experiments conducted in American correctional centres during this period provided valuable lessons about the importance of balancing security, humanity, and rehabilitation objectives. Over time, American correctional centres “have continued to evolve and adapt to changing societal attitudes towards crime and punishment” (Clear, 2018a: 3), contributing to the development of evidence-based approaches to offender rehabilitation and reintegration.

2.5.1 Walnut Jail

The Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia, established in 1790, represents the first systematic attempt to implement solitary confinement as a means of punishment and rehabilitation. Shapiro (2019:544) explains that “the first system for punishing criminals with solitary confinement started at the Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia.” This innovation occurred during a period of significant social reform, as Shapiro (2019:546) notes that “while the Bill of Rights was being discussed, Philadelphia created a new way to punish criminals by putting them in solitary confinement at the Walnut Street Jail.”

The theoretical foundation for the Walnut Street Jail approach was influenced by the reform ideas of John Howard, who believed in the rehabilitative potential of controlled solitary confinement. However, Howard recognised the dangers of excessive isolation. Shapiro (2019:549) reports that “John Howard, who believed that solitude could change criminals, did not think that inmates should be in solitary confinement for more than a year because it was too severe.” This early recognition of the potential harmful

effects of prolonged isolation demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the psychological dimensions of punishment and rehabilitation.

Gehrig (2018:1) identifies Howard as “the founder of the prison reform movement” and notes his systematic approach to understanding effective correctional practices. After extensive research into prison systems, Howard concluded that “solitary confinement for long periods of time is not good for offenders because it can lead to mental health problems and idleness. It may have some short-term benefits, but these can wear off and the offender can become unresponsive. It is better to have communal exercise and labour for offenders” (Shapiro, 2019:550). This early evidence-based approach to correctional practice established important precedents for modern rehabilitation programmes.

Howard's reform philosophy emphasised the importance of humane treatment combined with structured intervention designed to promote positive change. His efforts led to significant legislative reform, as Shapiro (2019: 550) notes that “Howard's efforts culminated in the Parliament's enactment of the Penitentiary Act of 1779, as he emphasised humanity in the treatment of offenders.” This legislation established important principles that continue to influence modern correctional practice.

Gehrig (2018:1) identifies Howard's three most important recommendations that have enduring relevance for rehabilitation-focused corrections: “(i) salary jailers, so they do not have to live by collecting bribes and through other forms of exploitation, (ii) separate offenders, so correctional centres will not function as schools for vice, and (iii) classify offenders, so they can be included in programmes relevant to their needs.” These recommendations address fundamental issues that continue to challenge modern correctional systems, including the importance of professional staff, preventing negative peer influence, and individualising treatment approaches.

The influence of the Walnut Street Jail model extended beyond its immediate implementation. Shapiro (2019:53) notes that “in the 1780s, leaders like Rush and Justice Bradford promoted solitude as a way to rehabilitate offenders and reduce the death penalty.” This represents an early articulation of rehabilitation as an alternative to capital punishment, demonstrating how prison reform has historically been

connected to broader humanitarian concerns about the purposes and methods of criminal justice.

The lessons learned from the Walnut Street Jail experience continue to inform modern rehabilitation practice, including the importance of balancing solitude and social interaction in promoting positive change, the dangers of prolonged isolation and the need for structured programming, the value of professional staff training and adequate compensation, the importance of classification systems that match interventions to individual needs, and the potential for rehabilitation programmes to serve as humane alternatives to more severe punishments.

2.5.2 Auburn system

The Auburn system, developed in New York at Auburn State Prison and Sing Sing Correctional Centre, represented a significant innovation in correctional practice that emphasised the rehabilitation potential of structured work and discipline. Thorsteinson (2017:1) explains that “the reformers aimed to make the prison a model for family and education, hence they developed a system that focused on rehabilitation rather than strict punishment.” This approach, also known as the silent system or congregate system, became “a significant development in the history of correctional centre’s systems” that influenced correctional practice worldwide.

The Auburn system was influenced by earlier innovations but developed distinctive modifications that addressed some of the limitations of pure solitary confinement. Thorsteinson (2017:1) notes that “the construction and management of the Auburn Prison was inspired by the Pennsylvania system, although the Auburn system consequently developed several key modifications, and adopted a more Puritan ethic of fair compensation.” This evolution demonstrates how correctional systems can learn from previous approaches while developing new methods that better serve rehabilitation objectives.

The operational structure of the Auburn system balanced congregate work with controlled living conditions. Easton (2013:27) notes that the Auburn system emphasised “congregate labour in workshops during the day, with silent and separate

confinement during the night.” Dowden and Andrews (2014:120) add that the system enforced “a system of strict discipline and hard labour” as part of its approach to offender management, maintaining strict discipline with harsh punishments for rule violations while providing structured work opportunities that developed practical skills.

The rehabilitative philosophy underlying the Auburn system was influenced by religious principles and beliefs about the transformative power of work and reflection. Easton (2013:28) suggests that “the Auburn system was influenced by the Quaker principles and their belief in the power of work and silence for spiritual reflection.” The system's rehabilitation approach was “premised on silence which promoted spiritual reflection” combined with structured labour that developed work habits and practical skills.

The Auburn system was based on reformatory ideals that sought comprehensive character development. Easton (2013:28) explains that it “aimed to instil discipline, morality, and work skills in offenders” and “sought to reform individuals through rigorous labour, religious instruction, and the establishment of a structured daily routine, with an emphasis on silence.” The system's notable features included “the use of distinctive striped uniforms worn by the offenders which became a symbol of incarceration and were meant to deter criminal behaviour” (Dowden & Andrews, 2004:120).

One of the most significant contributions of the Auburn system to modern correctional practice was the development of aftercare concepts for post-release reintegration. Clear (2018:156) notes that the Auburn system had “a significant impact on the development of modern correctional centre's systems around the world, including the development of the 'aftercare' concept of rehabilitation for reintegration after release from correctional centre.” This aftercare concept “focused on preparing inmates for reintegration into society through education, training, and support upon their release.”

The Auburn system's approach to reintegration recognised that successful rehabilitation required continuity of support beyond the prison walls. Clear (2018:156) suggests that “the Auburn system's idea of aftercare, which included a period of supervised work release, has influenced contemporary practices in preparing offenders for successful reintegration.” This insight that rehabilitation is a process that

extends into the community remains central to modern evidence-based correctional practice.

The legacy of the Auburn system demonstrates several important principles for effective rehabilitation: the value of structured work in developing discipline and practical skills, the importance of balancing individual reflection with social interaction, the need for consistent discipline combined with opportunities for positive development, the recognition that successful rehabilitation requires preparation for community reintegration, and the influence of moral and spiritual frameworks in supporting positive change. These insights continue to inform contemporary approaches to offender rehabilitation and successful reintegration.

2.5.3 Pennsylvania system

The Pennsylvania system, also known as the separate system, represented a distinctive approach to correctional centre's reform that emphasised individual rehabilitation through solitary confinement and religious instruction. Rothman (2002:1) explains that this system "was developed in the early 19th century and was based on the idea of solitary confinement and religious instruction as a means of rehabilitation." The Pennsylvania system emerged as "an alternative to the Auburn system, which emphasised hard labour and strict discipline as a means of punishment and rehabilitation" (Clear, 2009: 72).

The operational structure of the Pennsylvania system involved extensive isolation designed to promote individual reflection and moral transformation. Clear (2009:72) states that "in this system, inmates were kept in individual cells for 23 hours a day and were only allowed to leave for one hour of exercise and one hour of religious instruction." This intensive isolation was intended to provide inmates with opportunities for deep self-examination and spiritual development.

The rehabilitative philosophy underlying the Pennsylvania system emphasised the transformative potential of solitude and spiritual reflection. The system "aimed to provide offenders with the opportunity to reflect on their actions and turn towards moral and spiritual transformation as it emphasised the importance of introspection and self-

improvement in isolation” (Clear, 2009:72). Clear (2018b:27) explains that this system intended to create an environment where offenders could experience “purification, contemplation, and self-redefinition.”

However, the Pennsylvania system faced significant criticism for its psychological effects and limited effectiveness. Clear (2009:72) notes that “this system faced criticism for its harsh conditions regarding the psychological and physical effects of prolonged solitary confinement and the lack of effective rehabilitation programmes.” These criticisms led to important modifications in correctional practice, as “this led to a shift away from strict adherence to the Pennsylvania system, with modifications and alternative approaches adopted in many correctional centres.”

Contemporary research has confirmed many of the early concerns about prolonged solitary confinement. Rushforth (2017:4) highlights “the negative consequences of long-term solitary confinement such as serious negative effects on offenders' mental health which can lead to an increased risk of recidivism.” These findings demonstrate that “these consequences triggered adaptations in modern correctional practices to address its harmful effects,” leading to more balanced approaches that provide opportunities for both individual reflection and social interaction.

Despite its limitations, the Pennsylvania system made important contributions to modern correctional practice. Rothman (2002:1) notes that “the Pennsylvania system had a significant impact on the development of modern prison systems as it influenced the design of prisons in the United States and contributed to the development of the modern concept of rehabilitation.” The system's emphasis on individual treatment and moral development established important precedents for contemporary rehabilitation approaches.

The architectural innovations of the Pennsylvania system also influenced modern correctional centre's design. Fabelo, MacKenzie and Chitsabesan (2013:170) note that correctional centre's architecture in the Pennsylvania system involved “single-cell blocks or wings” that “revolutionised the concept of imprisonment, focusing on individual reflection and moral reform through solitary confinement.” While the extreme isolation of the original Pennsylvania system has been modified, the recognition that

effective rehabilitation requires individualised treatment approaches continues to influence modern correctional design and programming.

The lessons learned from the Pennsylvania system experience have important implications for contemporary rehabilitation practice: the importance of individual treatment and reflection in promoting positive change, the dangers of excessive isolation and the need for balanced programming, the value of moral and spiritual development in supporting rehabilitation, the need for evidence-based approaches that monitor psychological effects of different interventions, and the recognition that effective rehabilitation requires both individual work and social interaction. These insights continue to inform the development of effective, humane approaches to offender rehabilitation and successful community reintegration.

2.6 The transition from the Pennsylvania system

The transition from the Pennsylvania system, a 19th-century model defined by total solitary confinement and silent reflection, to modern correctional infrastructure represented a dramatic shift in architectural philosophy and the sociological understanding of rehabilitation. Between the end of the Pennsylvania era and the emergence of contemporary facilities, correctional centres' design evolved through several generations, each seeking to address the shortcomings of its predecessor in relation to safety, sanitation, and offender management.

2.6.1 The first generation: Linear cages

Following the decline of absolute isolation, the first generation of jail design emerged, with many variations remaining in use well into the 20th century. According to JRank Articles (2026:12), these facilities were characterised by inflexible cells and cage-like dayrooms. In these structures, rows of cells faced large communal bullpens, and inmates had minimal contact with correctional officers. This design encouraged boredom and inactivity, which commonly resulted in increased violence. JRank Articles (2026:12) further notes that these correctional centres suffered from poor sanitation,

including inadequate access to toilets and showers, contributing to the spread of infectious diseases.

2.6.2 The second generation: Technological surveillance

By the mid-20th century, second-generation correctional centres had become more common. These centres adopted linear construction, with multiple occupancy cells and dormitories arranged along long corridors, sometimes forming a spoke-like layout. According to JRank Articles (2026:13), these prisons were designed to operate with fewer staff members by relying on technologies such as closed-circuit television (CCTV) and audio surveillance to support supervision. However, because staff generally conducted only intermittent patrols, meaningful interaction between offenders and correctional officers remained limited. As a result, these centres continued to experience problems associated with overcrowding, insufficient programme space, inadequate separation of inmates, and limited institutional resources.

2.6.3 The third generation: Modular direct supervision

A major shift occurred during the early 1970s with the introduction of third-generation jails. According to JRank Articles (2026:15), this design was based on the principle that humane treatment should form the foundation of correctional practice. The third generation introduced the modular concept, in which inmates are housed in small, self-contained units accommodating between eight and 46 individuals.

Wener, Frazier and Farbstein (1985:19) explain that these facilities were informed by behaviour-based evaluations aimed at improving the relationship between the physical environment and the organisational and behavioural needs of those who use it. Their main characteristics include direct supervision, normalised environments, and self-contained housing units.

Under direct supervision, specially trained correctional officials are stationed within the housing units around the clock rather than supervising offenders from behind bars or

security glass. Normalised environments incorporate features such as carpeting, natural lighting, upholstered furniture, and colour to reduce the institutional atmosphere and minimise stress among offenders. Self-contained units integrate accommodation with visiting centres, rehabilitation programmes, and recreational areas, thereby reducing unnecessary offender movement while improving safety and operational efficiency.

2.6.4 The unit management concept

A key feature of third generation correctional centres is the unit management concept, which combines security and rehabilitation functions within each housing unit. According to JRank Articles (2026:15), this approach increases daily interaction between offenders and correctional staff, creating a safer and more humane environment. Research cited by JRank Articles (2026:15) further suggests that the effectiveness of this model depends on strong managerial leadership and well developed interpersonal skills among correctional personnel.

2.6.5 The current situation: South Africa and Boksburg

Correctional infrastructure has continued to evolve towards what is referred to as fourth generation prisons, which build on the modular model by incorporating more advanced open booking systems and integrated social support services. Although the available sources focus primarily on developments within the United States, similar architectural and operational principles have influenced correctional systems in other countries.

Evidence beyond the provided sources indicates that South Africa has increasingly adopted modern correctional infrastructure to overcome the limitations of earlier correctional centre's designs. The Boksburg Correctional Centre is widely recognised as an example of third generation correctional centres' design in South Africa. The adoption of the modular direct supervision model resulted in the centre seeking to replace outdated and overcrowded housing arrangements with an environment that

promotes human dignity, safety, and rehabilitation. This approach aligns with international best practice and reflects the open systems approach described by JRank Articles (2026:14), which views corrections, policing, and the courts as interconnected components of a coordinated criminal justice system.

In conclusion, the development of correctional centres design from the Pennsylvania system to the third and fourth generations demonstrates a clear movement towards normalisation and the recognition that the physical environment plays an important role in shaping offender behaviour, supporting rehabilitation, and facilitating successful reintegration into society.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has examined punishment and imprisonment as universal phenomena, tracking their historical development, philosophical foundations, and theoretical evolution that shaped modern correctional approaches. The examination demonstrates how philosophical understanding and practical methods have progressively transformed from purely retributive practices toward rehabilitation-focused systems emphasising offender transformation and successful reintegration. Punishment philosophy exploration reveals the fundamental complexity of justifying state-imposed suffering, while contemporary theoretical frameworks offer sophisticated approaches to balancing competing justice objectives, public safety, victim restoration, and offender rehabilitation.

The Punishment Theory analysis demonstrates rich diversity of justificatory frameworks available to modern correctional systems. Traditional retribution, incapacitation, deterrence, rehabilitation, and restitution theories each contribute important insights, while contemporary theories like rights forfeiture and self-defence approaches provide additional theoretical foundations. Ryberg's (2024b:5) observation that "the dominance of the retributivist approach in the past decades has faded somewhat and left a more diverse theoretical picture" reflects growing punishment theory sophistication and its implications for rehabilitative practice.

Integrating these diverse theoretical perspectives supports comprehensive correctional practice approaches serving multiple objectives simultaneously. The Rights Forfeiture Theory provides frameworks for understanding how rehabilitation can restore offenders' full moral and legal standing through demonstrated reform (Bell & Wellman, 2024:121), while self-defence theories support rehabilitation as effective long-term protection through addressing underlying dangerous behaviour causes (Pereboom, 2024:127). Contemporary restitutionist approaches emphasise how making amends can facilitate moral development and community reconnection (Hershenov, 2024:142), while modern retributivist theory recognises moral responsibility and accountability importance as genuine rehabilitation foundations (Berman, 2024:43).

The historical examination of correctional centres development from biblical times through medieval practices to American innovations reveals that moral transformation, community reintegration, and individual rehabilitation concepts have deep historical roots. Early Christian emphasis on human dignity and redemptive possibilities, medieval recognition of ceremonial reintegration processes, and American innovations in structured rehabilitation programming all contributed to contemporary evidence-based offender transformation approaches development.

The American correctional centre's experience, from the Walnut Street Jail through Auburn and Pennsylvania systems, provided crucial insights about confinement conditions and rehabilitation outcome relationships. These experiments demonstrated both potential and limitations of different individual and social intervention approaches, establishing principles continuing to inform modern practice: balancing individual reflection with social interaction importance, structured work and education value in promoting positive change, excessive isolation dangers and evidence-based intervention effect monitoring needs, and recognition that successful rehabilitation requires community reintegration preparation and ongoing support.

The progression documented establishes rehabilitation as both historical development and contemporary necessity, supported by diverse theoretical frameworks collectively emphasising human transformation potential within justice systems respecting dignity while maintaining accountability. Philosophical evolution from purely retributive approaches toward comprehensive rehabilitation models reflects growing

understanding that sustainable crime reduction requires addressing criminal behaviour underlying causes through evidence-based interventions promoting genuine behavioural change and successful community integration.

This historical and theoretical foundation demonstrates that effective rehabilitation programmes must integrate insights from multiple disciplinary and philosophical perspectives while maintaining focus on ultimate recidivism reduction objectives, promoting successful reintegration, and contributing to community safety through positive offending behaviour transformation. The rich theoretical and historical legacy examined provides the foundation for understanding how contemporary rehabilitation programmes can build upon centuries of human experience with punishment and correction to develop more effective, humane approaches to crime reduction and offender transformation.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT, THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF REHABILITATION THAT ARE RELATED TO RE-INTEGRATION

3.1 Introduction

The main purpose of correctional programmes is to assist offenders by identifying the risks and needs of each individual offender as stipulated by the Correctional Sentence Plan. The objective of this chapter is to explore rehabilitation theories and assess their application in South Africa. This chapter will discuss the programmes available to inmates to assist with their rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation has a central role in South Africa's criminal justice system. It shows the country's commitment to transforming offenders into law-abiding citizens and reducing recidivism (Department of Correctional Services, Annual Report 2021/2022, 2023:13). Unlike purely punitive approaches, rehabilitation recognises that crime commonly erupts from social, economic, and psychological factors, and seeks to address these primary causes while nurturing personal development (Marshall, 2025:1). The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2023:14), in line with the White Paper (Department of Correctional Services, White Paper on Corrections 2005:1), notes that the South African criminal justice system, through the Department of Correctional Services, helps to reintegrate offenders successfully into the society by equipping them with skills, education, and social support, thereby enhancing public safety and reducing the long-term costs associated with repeated incarceration.

Rehabilitation also aligns with the key restorative and human-rights principles embedded in South African law, including the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:20), which mandates humane detention, needs-based interventions, and reintegration programmes. Effective rehabilitation contributes to social cohesion, as communities benefit when former offenders are productive and accountable citizens. Moreover, Matthee (2025:1) argues that effective rehabilitation in South Africa facilitates a shift from a retributive model towards a balanced approach where punishment and social reintegration coexist. In this context, rehabilitation

becomes a tool for offender transformation, as well as a critical mechanism for strengthening the legitimacy, fairness, and effectiveness of the entire criminal justice system.

3.2 The philosophy of rehabilitation in South Africa

According to the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 and the Department of Correctional Services (White Paper on Corrections 2005:1), rehabilitation is a process that, in order to be effective, must take into account the particular history of the individual in question. The Department of Correctional Services (White Paper on Corrections, Eight draft 2016:2) defines rehabilitation as the process of guiding offenders towards embracing positive and socially acceptable norms and values, while also providing them with alternative ways of social interaction. It involves equipping individuals with essential life skills, as well as social and employment-related competencies, with the overall aim of supporting their holistic development and reducing the likelihood of reoffending. Taylor (2017:3) adds that the process of rehabilitation encompasses the incarceration and rehabilitation of both adult and juvenile criminals.

Rehabilitation is the process of equipping offenders with the skills to reintegrate successfully after release, while equally engaging them in meaningful and productive activities during their incarceration (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2022:4). The main goal of rehabilitation is to provide offenders with the skills, knowledge, and support which they require to change their behaviour, attitudes, and beliefs, thereby decreasing the risk that they will commit crimes again. It focuses on dealing with the underlying issues that contribute to criminal behaviour such as substance misuse, a lack of education, unemployment, and harmful peer pressure (Department of Correctional Services, n.d). Recognising that rehabilitation is a dynamic and diverse process involving a variety of programmes which are designed to suit the unique requirements of each individual offender, the Department of Correctional Services has developed programmes to address these needs. The development of social skills, career training, drug abuse counselling, mental health assistance, and educational programmes are a few examples of these. The goal of

these rehabilitation programmes is to equip offenders with the tools they need to reintegrate into the society as law-abiding individuals.

The implementation of extensive rehabilitation programmes within correctional centres is a crucial component of reintegration in encouraging personal change among offenders (Legodi & Dube, 2023:1). The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2023:1) notes that these programmes address the root causes of criminal behaviour which include substance abuse, mental health disorders and the lack of education or employment skills as this may help the offenders to be able to reintegrate into society successfully.

An increasing body of research on reintegration and rehabilitation in correctional programmes has been conducted in recent years. For example, Murhula and Singh (2019:22) note that criminal rehabilitation is part of many correctional centres' programmes, adding that rehabilitation is essentially the process of helping and allowing offenders to separate themselves from the factors that made them to offend in the first place. They further state that the idea of rehabilitation is to treat each of the major contributing factors in order to give offenders the ability to live a crime-free life after they are released from incarceration.

To this end, a variety of rehabilitation programmes are available to aid in offenders' rehabilitation in correctional facilities. Rehabilitative programmes are described by the World Health Organisation (2023:1) as a group of activities designed to assist offenders in becoming as independent as possible in their daily tasks and to enable participation in employment, education, leisure activities, and significant life responsibilities such as caring for family members. The introduction of rehabilitation programmes gives offenders the chance to build relationships with their families and communities, and to lead law-abiding and productive lives (Department of Correctional Services, n.d.). According to the National Treasury (2020:335), needs-based programmes and interventions are used to facilitate the rehabilitation of youth offenders and enable their social reintegration through correctional programmes, offender development programmes, and psychological and spiritual services.

3.2.1 Implications of different definitions of rehabilitation and how they impact policy and practice

The concept of rehabilitation in South Africa does not carry a single or universally agreed definition and this lack of uniformity has implications for policy and practice. A definition by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2022:7) emphasises rehabilitation as correctional treatment, where the focus is on changing individual behaviour through counselling, skills training, or psychological interventions. Under this view, rehabilitation programmes are mainly offender-centred and they seek to “correct” deviant behaviour. The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2022:8;9) offers anger management courses and substance abuse treatment to address the primary causes of crime. However, while these initiatives may be applauded in contributing to personal reform, they may neglect the broader socio-economic conditions that drive criminality, such as poverty, unemployment, or lack of education.

Other definitions frame rehabilitation as a process of restorative justice. For example, Lehuco (2025:1) highlights the need to repair harm between offenders, victims, and the community. In this approach, the author explains that rehabilitation is about changing the offender but also about rebuilding relationships and reintegrating the offender into society. Mubihanti (2025:1) also views rehabilitation as a process focused on repairing the harm caused by crime, with a focus on restoration and healing for both the offender and the community, rather than relying solely on punitive measures. Victim–offender mediation programmes in South Africa illustrate this, where offenders meet with victims to acknowledge harm and negotiate restitution (South African Law Reform Commission, 2025:61). The Department of Justice and Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2024:7) also note that restorative justice is a rehabilitative response to crime that prioritises repairing the harm caused, holding offenders accountable, and promoting healing for victims, offenders, and communities. It relies on voluntary participation, encourages social dialogue and reconciliation through various programmes, and may also take the form of alternative dispute resolution processes conducted outside the formal court system (Department of Justice and Correctional Services, 2024:7). Drawing from the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (2025:1), policies influenced by this definition may thus

prioritise voluntary participation, reconciliation, and community healing. However, Lehuco (2025:1) claims that “there is no legislation in place to support” restorative justice as a rehabilitation approach.

A further definition views rehabilitation as social reintegration that equips offenders with the skills and opportunities to function as law-abiding citizens. Legodi and Dube (2023) define rehabilitation as a stance to the community reintegration of offenders in South Africa that is aimed at assisting those who have served part of their sentence in a correctional centre to re-enter society. According to the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2025:1), rehabilitation in South Africa is also executed through social integration programmes that encompass training in areas such as plant production, welding, plumbing, computer literacy, and entrepreneurship. It further notes that the Department of Correctional Services also emphasised using initiatives like the Community Corrections Forum and the Ambassador Programme to facilitate the rehabilitation through social reintegration of parolees without traceable addresses into communities through halfway houses. This approach underpins initiatives that prepare inmates for employment after release. Therefore, the way rehabilitation is defined directly influences correctional practice, whether the emphasis is on individual reform, restorative healing, or socio-economic reintegration, and it shows that South African rehabilitation could be a hybrid approach.

3.3 The relationship between incarceration and rehabilitation

It is not too difficult to reconcile the detention function with the treatment function of the correctional centre, as one clearly contains components that complement the other. Rehabilitation of offenders is the main goal of the Department of Correctional Services penal system, with the purpose of mitigating the crime of the offender. According to Tharshini, Kamaluddin, Rathakrishnan and Nasir. (2021:1) reduced criminal behaviour may be mediated by personality, behaviour, abilities, attitudes, or other causal factors. In contrast, according to Ryan and Sim (2016:146), the correctional centre is a place of subordinations, rather than rehabilitation, and tends to be characterised by violence, intimidation and trauma. However, The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2023:14) notes that the Department

must thus guarantee that offenders receive appropriate services and opportunities in various areas that promote rehabilitation and reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

According to the Government of South Africa (2025:1), the Department of Correctional Services' overarching objectives are to detain offenders in safe, secure, and humane conditions in correctional centres and remand detention centres; provide sentenced offenders with needs-based rehabilitation programmes and interventions; and reintegrate offenders into communities as law-abiding citizens by effectively managing noncustodial sentences and parole. These are discussed subsequently.

The Department of Correctional Services seeks to detain offenders in safe, secure, and humane conditions in correctional centres and remand detention centres (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2025:1). The Department of Correctional Services, guided by the Correctional Services Act of 1998, the Criminal Procedure Act of 1977, and subsequent White Papers, are mandated to provide a secure and humane correctional environment while implementing rehabilitation and reintegration programmes that promote a just, peaceful, and safe society by reducing reoffending facilities from the Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2025:1). Detaining offenders in safe, secure, and humane conditions is therefore a foundational objective, as it creates the environment in which rehabilitation efforts can meaningfully occur. When correctional centres fail to uphold humane standards, they risk becoming breeding grounds for further criminality, gang activity, and trauma, which work against rehabilitation. For example, South Africa has a history of overcrowded correctional centres, with an occupancy rate of 200%, particularly in Durban (Prison Insider, 2023:1; Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:14). This has undermined educational and vocational programmes, as safety concerns take precedence over rehabilitative activities (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:14). Humane conditions, including adequate healthcare, nutrition, and opportunities for constructive activity, signal that offenders are still valued as human beings who are capable of change. This recognition of dignity aligns with international human rights standards and strengthens the legitimacy of rehabilitation as a central goal of incarceration.

According to the Government of South Africa (2025:1), the second objective of the Department of Correctional Services is to provide sentenced offenders with needs-

based rehabilitation programmes and interventions. Over the medium term, the Department of Correctional Services aims to strengthen rehabilitation through targeted programmes and interventions, while enhancing community safety by reintegrating offenders as law-abiding citizens, with these efforts primarily implemented through the Security Operations, Facilities, Remand Detention, and Offender Management sub-programmes within the Incarceration programme (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2025:1). Therefore, 90% of offenders are expected to participate in these programmes (Justice and Correctional Services, 2023:18). These interventions are designed to address the main causes of criminal behaviour, which, as Tharshini et al. (2021:1) suggest, may be linked to personality traits, behaviour patterns, abilities, and attitudes. Needs-based programmes in South African correctional centres include literacy classes, vocational skills training, psychological counselling, and substance abuse treatment (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2016:20). Tailoring rehabilitation to individual needs is therefore critical because a “one-size-fits-all” model risks leaving the primary issues unaddressed. For instance, an offender with a history of substance abuse will require different interventions from one who committed a financial crime due to economic desperation. However, Mendel (2024:1) notes that challenges such as limited resources, staff shortages, and overcrowding can restrict the effectiveness of such programmes. Therefore, it can be said that there is a gap between policy objectives and practical realities.

Third, the Department of Correctional Services aims to reintegrate offenders into communities as law-abiding citizens by effectively managing noncustodial sentences and parole (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2025:1). This indicates that rehabilitation does not end at the correctional centre gates, but it continues through reintegration into communities (Legodi & Dube, 2023:1). Through the Social Reintegration Framework, Department of Correctional Services seeks to reduce recidivism and support offenders in becoming law-abiding citizens by managing noncustodial sentences and parole effectively (United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs, 2022:5). According to the Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2016: 27;39) and Widodo and Kasih (2025:1), noncustodial options such as community service, probation, and correctional supervision allow offenders to remain within their communities while being monitored and rehabilitated,

thereby reducing the negative impact of incarceration, such as family breakdown or loss of employment. Parole, similarly, provides structured re-entry into society, combining supervision with opportunities for work and family reintegration (Widodo & Kasih, 2025:1). For example, parolees in South Africa may be required to attend further skills programmes or report regularly to parole officers, ensuring that support and accountability continue post-release (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2024a:1). However, the Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2015:1) notes that the successful reintegration of offenders into society may depend on community acceptance and the reduction of stigma, and without these, offenders may struggle to secure jobs or rebuild relationships, thereby increasing the risk of reoffending.

3.3.1 Custodian functions

According to the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:20;42), the Department of Correctional Services is responsible for ensuring that rehabilitation and effective reintegration programmes are carried out, as well as for housing offenders in a secure, safe, and compassionate setting. The Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1989:10), also notes that the Department has obligations and limitations placed on offenders must be applied in a way that is consistent with their intended outcome and does not adversely impact the offender to a larger extent or for a longer period of time than necessary in order to ensure safe custody by preserving security and good order. The Department of Correctional Services has to ensure that the minimum rights of offenders guaranteed by this Act cannot be violated or limited for any other reason than discipline.

The Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 provides that the custody must satisfy the following requirements:

- In terms of floor space, cubic capacity, lighting, ventilation, sanitary facilities, and general health conditions, offender's housing must comply with statutory criteria.
- Each inmate must receive an appropriate food that promotes health.

- Every offender must keep his or her person, clothing, bedding and cell clean and tidy.
- To ensure that every offender can live a healthy life, the Department must offer, within the limits of its financial capacity, adequate primary health care services.
- Department of Correctional Services must encourage offenders to maintain contact with the community and enable them to stay abreast of current affairs.
- The Department shall permit offenders to freely and voluntarily attend religious services and meetings held in the centre and to possess religious publications.
- The Department of Correctional Services may provide development and support services even when not required to do so by this Act.
- Every offender is entitled to consult on any legal matter with a legal practitioner of his or her choice at his or her own expense.

3.3.1.1 How custodial functions can support or hinder rehabilitation efforts

Custodial functions are central to correctional practice, as they ensure offenders are housed in safe and secure conditions while protecting society from further harm (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2024:1). When exercised humanely, custody supports rehabilitation by providing stability, dignity, and an environment that is favourable to behavioural change (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2020:13). For instance, access to health care, adequate nutrition, and opportunities for maintaining family ties can reduce hostility and promote personal growth. However, when custody is overly punitive, through overcrowding, solitary confinement, or excessive restriction of rights, it affects rehabilitation by breeding resentment, alienation, and trauma (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2024b:1; Mendel, 2024:1). In such cases, incarceration functions as containment instead of correction, and this weakens the Department of Correctional Services' rehabilitative mandate.

3.3.1.2 Specific practices within correctional facilities that align with or contradict rehabilitative goals

Several practices within South African correctional centres balance rehabilitative goals. Those that align with rehabilitation include facilitating family visits, providing legal access, and offering education, vocational training, and spiritual support (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2022:1). These practices seek to respect the right of offenders and to prepare them for successful reintegration into society (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2025:1). In contrast, neglecting primary health care, failing to meet housing standards, or withholding developmental opportunities contradict rehabilitative ideals and leave offenders ill-equipped to live as law-abiding citizens after release. For example, an offender who receives skills training is probable to secure employment post-release, while one who endures poor living conditions and lacks development opportunities may revert to crime. Therefore, centre practices directly influence whether custody achieves its rehabilitative purpose or merely perpetuates cycles of offending (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:1).

3.3.2 Control functions

There must be a relationship between an offender and correctional official, even if it is not easy. In order to successfully rehabilitate offenders, officials and inmates must have a positive working relationship (Muthaphuli, 2008:62). Violence frequently breaks out in correctional centres, both between the offenders and correctional officials. Offenders are accountable for the crimes they commit (Murhula & Tolla, 2020:1).

3.3.3 Restorative function

According to Molefi and Geoff (2022:3), African societies dealt with internal conflicts and bad behaviour even before the arrival of colonial forces with the purpose of sustaining social cohesion. The authors outline the following methods of conventional African conflict resolution:

- Affected parties submit their testimony at open-air events attended by the whole community.
- Offenders are encouraged to accept responsibility Sinners must beg for forgiveness to victims who should be forgiven. for the crime committed, repent and express regret.
- Sinners must beg for forgiveness to victims who should be forgiven.
- Depending on the nature of the case, criminals must pay compensation to the victim.
- A symbolic act of reconciliation between representation of the aggressor and victim is often used as a means to encourage offenders must be held accountable for their actions, to repair damage to victims and the community and induce pro-social behaviour in the process of detention and release.

The restorative function is of African traditions of conflict resolution, which emphasises accountability, mediation, consensus-building, forgiveness, and reconciliation as pathways to rebuilding social harmony (Metekia, 2025:1). The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (2025:1) notes that unlike punitive approaches, restorative practices highlight the offender's responsibility to repair harm and restore relationships, making them highly relevant to modern rehabilitation. In South Africa, where correctional services seek to punish and yet reintegrate offenders, restorative justice syncs with the philosophy of rehabilitation by promoting social cohesion and encouraging pro-social behaviour. For instance, by facilitating dialogue between offenders, victims, and communities, restorative practices address the emotional and social dimensions of crime to help reduce recidivism and strengthen communal trust. This is why restorative principles have been integrated into contemporary correctional frameworks alongside custodial and developmental functions (Spies, 2025:1).

In South Africa, restorative justice has been increasingly integrated into correctional settings as a complement to traditional punitive measures (Isiaka, 2025:1). According to Mungroo (2022:1), the Department of Correctional Services has implemented various restorative practices aimed at fostering accountability, healing, and reintegration. One notable example is the victim-offender dialogue programme, which facilitates face-to-face meetings between offenders and their victims or their victims' families (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:1). This

process allows offenders to acknowledge the harm caused, express remorse, and work towards making amends, while the victims have the opportunity to share the impact of the crime and seek closure. Such initiatives are designed to promote empathy, reduce recidivism, and support the reintegration of offenders into society.

Moreover, the Department of Correctional Services has adopted a needs-based rehabilitation model that incorporates restorative principles (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2022:1). According to the United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs (2022:10), this approach tailors rehabilitation programmes to address the specific needs of offenders, considering factors such as the nature of their offences, personal histories, and psychological profiles, hence it focuses on individual social functioning and mental well-being. The programmes offered under this model aim to equip offenders with the tools necessary to reintegrate successfully into their communities, and they include social work services, spiritual care services, and psychological services (Marshall, 2025:1). These restorative justice practices are in line with South Africa's commitment to human rights and constitutional principles to ensure that justice processes are fair, inclusive, and conducive to healing for all the parties involved.

3.3.4 Maintenance function

Offenders should be provided with a variety of services, including housing, food, laundry and ironing facilities, and other resources. This is necessary while they are incarcerated to manage the offender population and maintain control in the correctional centre. The Department of Correctional Services must also provide services such as social services and recreational activities (Muthaphuli, 2008:62). In contrast, the treatment programmes only focus on sentenced offenders, not at all offenders.

The Department of Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:20) outlines the responsibilities of the Department of Correctional Services as to provide humane conditions for offenders, including adequate housing, nutrition, and access to healthcare. It also stipulates that offenders must be held in conditions that respect their human dignity, which includes providing necessary services for their well-being. Furthermore, the Correctional Services Act mandates the provision of

rehabilitation programmes to all sentenced offenders, thereby ensuring that they have opportunities for personal development and reintegration into society. The maintenance function aligns with these provisions by ensuring that the basic needs of offenders are met, which creates a conducive environment for rehabilitation. For instance, correctional facilities help offenders to acquire skills that are essential for their reintegration into the community through providing access to education and vocational training. Therefore, the maintenance function is integral to the implementation of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:18) as it supports its objectives of humane treatment and rehabilitation.

3.3.4.1 Broader implications of maintenance functions on rehabilitation

The maintenance function in South African correctional facilities encompasses essential services such as housing, food, laundry, and recreational activities. While these services are fundamental for the daily operation of correctional centres, they also play a crucial role in the rehabilitation process. However, the Parliament of South Africa (2025:1) laments that correctional centres in South Africa are overcrowded at 234% and they experience maintenance delays. The Department of Correctional Services in South Africa provides a stable and humane environment and these services help to reduce offender stress and anxiety, and they create a conducive atmosphere for participation in rehabilitation programmes (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2025:1). For instance, access to adequate nutrition and healthcare ensures that offenders are physically well, hence they can engage more effectively in educational and vocational training. Mkwelo, Shai, Madide, Mahlalela, Malema, Malema. (2023:1) add that recreational activities offer inmates opportunities for physical exercise, social connection, personal development, and mental relaxation, which are vital for emotional well-being and social development. Therefore, the maintenance function addresses the basic needs of inmates and it supports their rehabilitation by fostering a balanced and supportive environment.

3.3.4.2 How these functions support the overall goals of correctional facilities

The primary objectives of correctional facilities in South Africa include ensuring the safe and secure custody of offenders, providing rehabilitation programmes, and facilitating the reintegration of offenders into society (Government of South Africa, 2025:1). The maintenance function directly supports these goals by creating a stable and humane environment that allows for the effective implementation of rehabilitation programmes, Department of Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:42). For example, well-maintained facilities with adequate housing and sanitation contribute to the safety and security of the institution by reducing incidents of violence and unrest. Providing services such as social work and recreational activities helps address the psychosocial needs of inmates, promoting their personal development and readiness for reintegration (Marshall, 2025:1; Mkwelo *et al.*, 2023:1). Therefore, the maintenance function enables correctional facilities in South Africa to fulfil their objectives of rehabilitation and reintegration by ensuring that the basic needs of offenders are met.

3.4 Key stakeholders in rehabilitation process

An offender must be willing to change his or her attitude to become a better person and if not, the recovery will not work. Stakeholders who are responsible for the treatment of offenders within correctional centres, such as correctional officers, must understand offenders' needs to ensure they are treated appropriately. The role of the community in the rehabilitation of offenders is highlighted by the Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2005:179), which states that “the forging of closer links and cooperation between the Department, the community and other state departments is crucial in the fight against crime, reparation of relationships and the rehabilitation of offenders.”

3.4.1 Offenders

Offenders are active stakeholders in their own rehabilitation, and their engagement is crucial for the effectiveness of correctional programmes (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2014:1). In the South African context, participation in education, vocational training, restorative justice initiatives, and psychosocial interventions allows offenders to develop personal accountability, self-efficacy, and prosocial attitudes (United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs, 2022:1). According to the Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2021:1), through the pre-release programme, offenders are involved in decision-making about their rehabilitation pathways, hence they gain a sense of ownership over their transformation, which increases motivation and commitment to change. The offenders' insights and feedback could help correctional authorities to design programmes that are responsive to real needs in the quest to promote a rehabilitative environment that is participatory and not prescriptive.

Coetzee and Gericke (1997:84-89) point out that offenders need to be occupied with meaningful activities to avoid engaging in negative behaviours such as sexual deviance, gang activity, escapes, and even riots and protests in correctional facilities. As a result, Deutschman (2007:15) proposes three keys to change, namely relate, repeat, and reframe, which may also assist transform offenders' attitudes as they provide fresh hope, new abilities, and new thinking.

3.4.1.1 Relate

Deutschman (2007:15) states that the new connection aids the offenders in developing the necessary new routines and abilities. He also states that, in their road to rehabilitation offenders can form a new, emotional relationship with a person or a community that it inspires and sustains hope.

3.4.1.2 Repeat

The new connection made within the confines of the offenders will enable the offender to view the world in a manner that would have seemed so alien to them before they transformed. According to Deutschman (2007:15), having a good teacher, coach or mentor who will give guidance, encouragement, and direction when it is needed will help offenders achieve their dreams. Offenders will discover fresh perspectives on their situation (Muthaphuli, 2008:70).

3.4.1.3 Reframe

In order to learn the most recent ways to think about their circumstances and their life in general, offenders need to form new interactions (Deutschman, 2007:15). Bartollas (2002:256) identifies three main groups of ex-offenders, namely, those who will ultimately fail, those who will make a marginal adjustment to society, and those who will succeed. The author also gives the following reasons why offender who want to succeed end up failing:

i. Failure of will

According to Rafael (2018:8), facilitating offender reintegration is a complex task, and the impact of specific interventions is often difficult to measure. Offenders are released from incarceration with certain expectations. When these expectations are not met, they find it difficult to adjust to the outside world. They struggle to deal with practical problems such as work or lack of a support system, and they easily turn to a life of crime that would lead recidivism.

ii. Dissatisfaction with the straight life

If the offender does not accept a true, crime-free life, it may cause them to give up on a normal life or take theft as a means of survival. Bartollas (1985:2610) states that, for example, an offender who is used to making money every day by doing burglaries may

find it difficult to work in a company for which he is paid only once a month. Therefore, the commission of crime would become a way of life.

iii. Inability to succeed in the outside world

According to Legodi and Dube (2023:1), some offenders who are unsuccessful in society go back into a life of crime. Is it a well-known fact that most companies are reluctant to employ ex-offenders, leading to many inmates not being able to find jobs to support their lives. This causes offenders to commit crimes to earn money that they need. In addition, the act of coercion prevents the offender from being free for life.

3.4.1.4 Challenges in reintegration

Offenders in South Africa face numerous challenges when reintegrating into society, which can hinder their rehabilitation and increase the risk of recidivism (Kılıç & Tuysuz, 2024:1). Legodi and Dube (2023:1) note that stigma from communities and families isolates former offenders, hence it becomes difficult for them to secure employment, housing, or social acceptance. Many released offenders lack formal education or vocational skills, and they have limited opportunities for legitimate livelihood (Marshall, 2025; Mafilika & Marongwe, 2024:1). Substance use disorders and poor social and cognitive skills also add to the challenges in reintegration for South African offenders (Marshall, 2025:1). These challenges show that rehabilitation programmes should address behavioural correction and social, economic, and psychological reintegration.

3.4.1.5 Strategies to increase the participation of offender in rehabilitation programmes

Ramakulukusha, Babalola & Mashau (2022:1) propose several strategies to enhance offender participation in rehabilitation programmes within South African correctional facilities. For example, Mangwiro, Tanga & Ekobi (2024:2960) note that the use of diversion programmes which redirect offenders away from the courts when suitable

and enable them to avoid criminal records while facilitating accountability, reconciliation with victims, and transformation into role models for their peers. The incorporation of religion and structured counselling is also vital, as it provides discipline, emotional support, and a sense of care, thereby countering feelings of rejection that are associated with incarceration (Jang, Johnson, Anderson & Booyens, 2023:1; Khan, 2023:1). Similarly, the integration of life skills, educational, vocational, and emotional development opportunities equips offenders with the tools necessary for successful reintegration into society and reduces the likelihood of reoffending (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:14). However, it is important to ensure professionalism within rehabilitation efforts in order to enhance the credibility and consistency of the programmes and minimise negative perceptions of incarceration such as humiliation.

3.4.1.6 Motivation for the offenders to participate actively in rehabilitation

Offenders are motivated to engage actively in rehabilitation programmes in South Africa, which stems from both personal and external factors. Symkovych (2025:1) notes that personally, many offenders are driven by a desire for self-improvement, a recognition of past mistakes, and the aspiration to reintegrate successfully into society as law-abiding citizens. Educational and vocational programmes provide opportunities to gain skills, improve literacy, and enhance employability, which can serve as strong incentives for participation (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:14). Externally, Legodi and Dube (2023:1) state that the prospect of restoring relationships with family, community, and society, especially through restorative justice initiatives, provides moral and relational motivation for offenders to take responsibility and actively participate.

3.4.2 Correctional officials

The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2005:114) realises that each member has a role in the rehabilitation of offenders and to achieve this, there needs to be a good working relationship between all members, including social

workers, psychologists, nurses, pharmacists, health officials, theologians, and all staff in the correctional system. Bartollas (2002:258) certifies that the work of correctional officers as well as people working in the correctional system is not an easy task because it requires both physical and emotional strength. As a result, correctional officers can play multiple roles of being a supervisor, protector, discipline, peacekeeper, manager, observer, manager, facilitators, advisors, suppliers, classifiers, and diplomats (Liebling & Price, 2001:43).

Seiter (2002:383) indicates that civil servants have the following roles for crime recovery and these roles are based on how public servants conduct themselves, whether they are counsellors or therapy experts:

- Contribute to a controlled environment free of threat or stress, promote good working relationships among civil servants and offenders.
- Interacting with offenders on a professional basis, means that officers must always remember that offenders are people who, like them, deserve respect.
- Focus on providing human services. Since it is the duty of the officers to make sure that the offenders adequately addressed, officials must always respond to the offender's needs. As part of humane treatment, they must provide the offenders' basic needs, such as food and clothing.

3.4.2.1 The importance of training correctional personnel

Training correctional officials is a critical component of effective rehabilitation in South Africa. Well-trained personnel are better equipped to manage the complex dynamics of correctional facilities, including security, inmate behaviour, and rehabilitative interventions (Mafilika & Marongwe, 2024:1). Training enhances their understanding of offender psychology, restorative justice principles, and evidence-based rehabilitation programmes, allowing them to implement interventions that address both the needs of the offenders and the safety of the public. Training in conflict resolution, communication skills, and trauma-informed approaches enables staff to respond effectively to tensions, prevent escalation, and create a supportive environment conducive to behavioural change (Ryan, Brennan, McNeill & O'Keeffe (2021:110). Without adequate training, correctional personnel may rely solely on custodial

functions, which can hinder rehabilitation efforts and increase the likelihood of recidivism.

3.4.3 Community

Birzer and Roberson (2004:37) note that, as part of the rehabilitation approach, offenders are assigned to participate in programmes designed to prepare them for rehabilitation or reintegration into the community. According to the (Department of Correctional Services, White Paper on Corrections 2005:90), rehabilitation could not have been successful without the community and other stakeholders.

3.4.3.1 Role of the community in the reintegration process

Communities play a pivotal role in the reintegration of offenders in South Africa. The community plays a vital role in offender reintegration through its influence on the labelling process, which makes its inclusion in criminal justice proceedings essential. Research shows that involving victims and community members in these processes supports reintegration and, when effectively implemented, can contribute to reducing recidivism (Buen, Lee & Moss 2020:1; Cardoso, Quintas & Santos, 2025:1; Lin, Chen & Wu 2023:1).

3.4.3.2 How communities can be better prepared to support returning offenders

For communities to effectively support reintegration, taking into consideration their role and facilitating influence on the labelling process, the importance of including the community in criminal justice proceedings cannot be ignored (Cronje, 2025:1). Buen *et al.* (2020:1) argue that it has been found that the involvement of community members in the criminal justice process has a positive effect on offender reintegration and is therefore necessary as it can decrease recidivism if it is executed correctly. The community can reduce help to reduce stigma, highlight the benefits of reintegration, and promote a culture of second chances (Marshall, 2025:1). When communities are

prepared, they become active partners in rehabilitation by creating conditions that reduce reoffending and enable offenders to become productive, law-abiding citizens.

Plaatjies (2005:310) points out that communities can also assist in reintegration of the offender in the following various ways:

- Being creative when conflicts need to be resolved.
- Conducting school groups during correctional centre visits.
- Managing cultural differences.
- School and church response to stop crime.

Some community organisations play a crucial role in offender rehabilitation through the Promised Land, Khulisa, and residential community centres. This is discussed subsequently.

3.4.3.3 *Promised Land*

The Promised Land was discovered in 2004 by Lynn Smit, who is the Executive Director and Founder. The aims of the organisation are to:

- Improve the effectiveness of offenders' community reintegration.
- Support and help develop life skills for inmates.
- Promote stakeholder engagement to provide hope for continued rehabilitation, employment opportunities, support services, and relapse prevention.
- Enhance healthy family relationships.

The organisational objectives are to:

- Change offenders' criminal behaviour in a safe, secure, and humane environment.
- Provide leadership support to offenders in their society.
- Encourage intact healthy relationships between offenders, the community, and society.
- To instil discipline towards the offender.

3.4.3.4 Khulisa

Khulisa was found in 1997 in South Africa as a non-profit organisation and it operates nationwide. It operates hand in hand together with other following stakeholders: The departments of Correctional Services, Education, Foreign Affairs, Health, Justice, Social Development, Community Safety, Housing and Labour. According to Muthaphuli (2008:174), Khulisa focuses on the following activities:

- **Discovery, My Path:** This programme is designed to ensure that offenders understand their situation and that they find themselves. This programme is a self-help programme because crime perpetrators can then gain emotional and social, physical, and psychological understanding through this programme.
- **Silence the Violence:** Under this programme, offenders' violent behaviour will be challenged for 12 days. Perpetrators understand the nature and punishment of their violent behaviour and recognise their offence.
- **Restorative Justice:** This is to ensure that offenders are held accountable for their crimes and are able to meet face-to-face with victims and their families through the victim-offender dialogue to resolve issues and move on with their lives.

3.4.3.5 Residential community centres

Residential community centres in South African rehabilitation practices come in the form of a halfway house. A halfway house is a community-based residential centre where offenders serve part of their sentence under supervision, receiving 24-hour monitoring, counselling, and support (Law, 2015:1). The author adds that admission is generally limited to offenders aged 18 or older who have completed rehabilitation programmes and are parole-eligible but lack a fixed address, while individuals convicted of sexual offences are excluded. The United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs (2022:6) recommended the creation of halfway houses in collaboration with NPOs to accommodate offenders without traceable or verifiable addresses as an evidence-based, promising practice for reducing reoffending. Halfway houses are highlighted by the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2025:1) as vital for high-risk parolees, yet concerns were raised over the lack of a dedicated budget to support

them. While the Department of Correctional Services acknowledged their importance, it confirmed that no budget line existed, although an estimated R2.7 million would be required to establish five small, family-style facilities in partnership with NPOs. This model also allows for external donations because it shows innovation and financial uncertainty in sustaining these initiatives.

3.4.4 Challenges of reintegration

Residential community centres serve as transitional facilities that help offenders adjust from incarceration back into society (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2025:1). However, they face multiple reintegration challenges in South Africa. Although correctional centres claim to promote rehabilitation, they hinder inmates from rebuilding their lives, making genuine restoration better suited to alternative environments (May, 2023:1). The author adds that in the 19th century, pre-release residential facilities or halfway houses emerged to support offender reintegration by easing the transition between rigid incarceration life and the demanding responsibilities of the outside world. Unlike increasingly specialised rehabilitation or training initiatives, halfway houses offer an approach that acknowledges that although not always resolving, the challenges of overcoming are carceral trauma. Halfway houses embody the tensions of being 'halfway' within a total institution as they are positioned between confinement and freedom and thus reflect the conflict that ex-offenders face as they straddle two worlds (May, 2023:1).

3.4.4.1 *Employment barrier*

Ex-offenders in South Africa face the barrier of employment and, even more so, constant employment (Grace, McNary & Murphy, 2023:1; Kolbeck, 2020:1). According to Marshall (2025:1), many employers are reluctant to hire individuals with criminal records due to concerns about trust, safety, and reputation, hence returning offenders have a few legitimate income opportunities. This lack of employment can exacerbate financial instability, social isolation, and the risk of reoffending. Residential community centres attempt to address this barrier by providing vocational training, skills

development, and links to supportive employers, as ex-offenders lack such marketable skills (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:30). Therefore, there are employment gaps for offenders upon reintegration that hinder offenders from attaining sustainable, stable livelihoods while reintegrating successfully.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that rehabilitation in South Africa is central to correctional practice and to the broader goals of justice, safety, and social cohesion. The discussion highlighted how incarceration and rehabilitation must be balanced, with humane custody forming the foundation for effective treatment. Various models, from the medical to the community and restorative approaches, were shown to shape policies and practices in different ways and how each influences the way offenders are supported in their rehabilitation and integration.

Furthermore, the chapter discussed the essential roles of key stakeholders in rehabilitation, including offenders, correctional officials, and communities, in ensuring that rehabilitation efforts succeed. The chapter further illustrated that rehabilitation is most effective when it is needs-based and collaborative. The chapter did this by assessing the challenges in the South African rehabilitation practices, such as overcrowding and employment barriers. Ultimately, rehabilitation in South Africa represents more than offender reform because it is a mechanism for strengthening justice, reducing recidivism, and facilitating inclusive reintegration into society.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROGRAMMES AIMED AT THE REHABILITATION AND RE-INTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS: A SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

4.1 Introduction

The National Treasury (2020:335) points out that correctional programmes offer needs-based programming in accordance with correctional sentence plans and includes addressing components linked with offending behaviour while concentrating on the offences for which persons are detained. According to the Department of Correctional Services, correctional programmes must place a strong emphasis on raising a public awareness of the necessity of behaviour modification to reduce the likelihood of reoffending. The main purpose of correctional programmes is to assist offenders by identifying the risks and needs of each individual inmate as stipulated by the Correctional Sentence Plan. It also aims to raise awareness, provide information and to develop skills. This chapter will present a discussion on the different programmes available to inmates to assist with their rehabilitation.

The significance of reintegration is in enabling offenders to successfully rebuild their lives within society (United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs, 2022:4). Promoting self-sufficiency through rehabilitation programmes supports this process, as the practical skills gained through participation in various self-sustainability and development projects empower offenders to contribute productively and regain the trust of their communities upon release (United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs, 2022:4). Similarly, rehabilitation equips offenders with the skills and mindset needed to function effectively after their release, while also ensuring that they engage in meaningful and productive activities during their incarceration (United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs, 2022:4; Legodi & Dube, 2023:1). The myriad of correctional programmes are discussed subsequently.

4.2 Rehabilitation programmes

The National Treasury (2020:337) notes that correctional programmes provide needs-based correctional programmes in line with correctional sentence plans, and entails targeting elements associated with offending behaviour, focusing on the offences for which people are incarcerated. The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2025:1) adds that correctional programmes shall focus on raising awareness of the need to change behaviour and therefore reducing the likelihood of re-offending, and these include the following:

- i. anger management programme,
- ii. crossroads correctional programmes,
- iii. preparatory programme on sexual offenses,
- iv. pre-release programme,
- v. substance abuse programme,
- vi. restorative justice orientation programme, and
- vii. new beginnings orientation programme.

These correctional programmes are discussed in subsequent subsections.

4.2.1 Anger management programme

This programme assists offenders in overcoming past aggressive tendencies and creating new, constructive coping mechanisms and outlets for their own rage. The programme also intends to enhance their understanding of the causes and symptoms of anger and teach them how to control it (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2025:1). Masango (2014:1) points out that there is a lot of aggressiveness, rage, and violence in the world nowadays. According to Scott and Cogburn (2017:1), a wide range of violent behaviours such as homicide, serious assault, rape, domestic violence, child abuse, bullying, torture, and even terrorism, are linked to anger. In correctional facilities, the anger management course is offered with the goal of minimising reoffending and, as a result, the number of young people who are imprisoned annually. The goal of the anger management programme is to help offenders learn how to regulate their angry emotions and antisocial actions that may

result in re-offending behaviour (Mathabathe, 2015:55; Masango, 2014:1). It is a cognitive behavioural group aggressive, disruptive intervention.

During the programmes, strategies are put into place to help the offenders understand where their anger comes from and how to avoid the triggers in order to control it. However, in light of this, it is important to note that professional psychologists are essential to the delivery of this training. According to the National Institute of Justice (2019:2), anger management therapy sessions involve psychoeducation, skill development, problem resolution, and instruction on applying these skills to actual life situations. Having said that, anger is acknowledged as a condition of some kind because it affects mental health and behaviour, and because uncontrolled anger frequently results in the catastrophic behaviours listed above, there is a need to treat anger in an effort to lessen its triggers and reoffending.

4.2.2 Crossroads correctional programme

The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2025:1) states that the primary goal of this programme is to address criminal behaviour through the use of fundamental behaviour modification techniques while concentrating on the causes and effects of drug and alcohol abuse, as well as criminal activity. The initiative aims to enlighten offenders about alternatives to criminal activity, resources for alcohol and drug addiction treatment, and information on sexually transmitted illnesses and their treatment options (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2025:1).

4.2.3 Preparatory programme of sexual offences

The Preparatory Programme on Sexual Offences' principal goal is to include sexual offenders in a correctional programme that addresses their sexually offending behaviour by helping them to develop the necessary knowledge and skills (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2025:1).

This programme equips the participants with specific knowledge and behavioural skills aimed at addressing and correcting deviant sexual conduct (Setshedi, 2024:22). Its primary goal is to help offenders to identify the primary causes of their deviant sexual behaviour and develop strategies to change these patterns (Mtikitiki, 2017:39). Through participation, offenders gain self-awareness, emotional regulation, and impulse control skills to enable them to recognise triggers and manage inappropriate urges (Setshedi, 2024:22). According to Goge (2022:60;61), they are also taught to understand the psychological and emotional consequences of their actions, especially the harm inflicted on victims, which encourages empathy and moral responsibility. Through the preparatory programme of sexual offences, offenders are better prepared to make informed, non-violent choices upon release through developing self-control, empathy, and personal responsibility (Goge, 2022:60;61). These competencies reduce the likelihood of reoffending, as they support safer reintegration of the offenders into society and contribute to future crime prevention.

4.2.4 Pre-release programme

According to the Department of Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:46), the goal of the Pre-release Programme is to provide offenders with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully reintegrate into society by preparing them to handle any problems that may arise following their release.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2022:9), the pre-release programme equips offenders with the necessary skills including bakery, woodwork, welding, therapeutic programmes and knowledge to help them to reintegrate successfully into society and handle the challenges that they may encounter after their release. The pre-release programme allows offenders who are convicted of non-violent and non-sexual offences to qualify for up to 24 months of sentence remission upon completion of the programme and risk assessment, as well as after submitting their fingerprints and DNA samples for verification against the South African Police Service database (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:1).

4.2.5 Substance abuse correctional programme

The primary goal of the substance abuse programme is to aid participants in developing an understanding of the detrimental consequences of substance misuse (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2025:1).

4.2.6 Restorative justice orientation programme

The primary goal of this programme is to introduce restorative justice to offenders and get them ready for subsequent restorative justice interventions (Department of Correctional Services, 2025:1).

Restorative justice interventions for which offenders are prepared include programmes, strategies, and processes that focus on repairing harm, rebuilding relationships, and promoting accountability (Justice and Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2024:7). These interventions may take various forms such as victim-offender mediation, community dialogue sessions, restitution agreements, and reintegration circles, which are all designed to address the emotional and social consequences of crime in a constructive and reconciliatory manner. The basis of restorative justice is that crime destroys relationships among individuals and community members and causes impairment (Goge, 2022:60-61). Therefore, through these interventions, offenders are encouraged to acknowledge the harm they have caused and to take responsibility for their actions, which is a critical step in personal transformation (Justice and Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2024:7). Engaging directly or indirectly with victims and the affected community allows offenders to understand the real impact of their behaviour so that they show empathy and remorse, and a level of moral awareness in order to dismantle denial and blame-shifting tendencies and replace them with genuine accountability and social consciousness.

4.2.7 New beginnings orientation programme

The New Beginnings orientation programme aims to provide offenders the tools they need to become more self-conscious and aware of their surroundings. The programme aims to empower offenders by enhancing their self-awareness and understanding of their surroundings (Setshedi, 2024:24). According to Goge (2022:64), the programme is designed to build offenders' self-esteem, strengthen their decision-making abilities, and discourage involvement in gangsterism.

The New Beginnings Orientation Programme employs a range of tools and techniques designed to help offenders to adjust to the correctional environment (Setshedi, 2024:24). These include orientation sessions, written informational materials, and structured counselling activities that introduce offenders to the rules, regulations, and expectations of the centre, as mandated by the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:42). Providing written information ensures that offenders clearly understand institutional procedures and their rights and responsibilities with the aim to reduce confusion and anxiety during the initial stages of incarceration. Goge (2022:64) adds that activities promoting self-esteem, decision-making, and anti-gangsterism education are central techniques in the programme. According to the author, these help offenders to develop positive coping strategies, enhance their confidence, and reduce dependence on negative peer groups. Therefore, these tools and techniques assist offenders in understanding correctional life, managing emotional stress, and building pro-social behaviour, which together facilitate smoother adjustment to the incarceration centre and support rehabilitation.

4.2.8 Offender development programmes

According to Mokoena (2017:1), education and skill development in correctional centres are crucial and essential for offenders to successfully complete their rehabilitation and to make it easier for them to reintegrate into society following their release. Offender development programmes, according to the National Treasury (2020:336), include services such as technical training and education, with the goal of enhancing skills by giving offenders a chance for skill and social development. The

objective is to improve social reintegration by giving offenders the information and skills they need to succeed in the job market.

According to the Department of Correctional Services in Australia (2021:1), improved reading and numeracy skills have been shown to assist prevent re-offending, as these skills place a heavy emphasis on giving basic education to offenders. In this effort, educational programmes provided by the Department of Correctional Services must be needs-based and in line with career prospects (Johnson & Quan-Baffour, 2015:52). Quan-Baffour and Zawada (2012:73) also agree on the value of educational programmes in correctional facilities, stating that reoffending can be prevented if offenders participate in educational programmes there more often. South African institutions of higher education, particularly those that offer distance learning, should be at the forefront of the effort to address this issue. According to Makgatho (2018:1), there are young offenders attending classes at the Boksburg Correctional Services who are seeking education, whether they are in Grade 10, matric, or post-matric. Furthermore, according to Makgatho (2018:1), 81 of the 210 young offenders housed at the institution are enrolled in adult education and training programmes.

The United Nations Offices on Drugs and Crime (2022:10) notes that the Education and Training division within the Department of Correctional Services offers Adult Education and Training and other developmental programmes, including formal education for illiterate offenders, further education for Grades 10 to 12, and post-school learning opportunities through access to TVET programmes and enrolment in Higher Education and Training institutions. The Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2021:1) adds that Adult Education and Training programmes in correctional facilities are offered in partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training, from levels 1 to 4, along the General Education and Training band, which focuses on promoting literacy among offenders. There are 17 registered DCS schools following the CAPS curriculum from the Department of Basic Education, and offenders also have access to the Second Chance Programme to improve their qualifications, with all educational offerings complying with national education policies and annual curriculum interventions to ensuring that educators remain equipped with current knowledge and effective teaching practices (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2021:1). According to Mukeredzi (2021:1), offenders engage in adult education to enhance their

academic abilities and increase their employment prospects after release; to avoid reoffending and prepare for a law-abiding lifestyle upon reintegration; and lastly, they view education as a constructive outlet that helps them to cope with rehabilitation by keeping their minds occupied and productively engaged. However, the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2021:1) laments that although participation in Adult Education and Training increased between the first and second quarters, a decline was observed in the third quarter due to the winter season.

4.2.9 Psychological and spiritual services

The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2023a:1; 2023b:1) notes that sentenced offenders, probationers and persons under correctional supervision have equal access to needs-based psychological services, despite the limited number of psychologists in the Department of Correctional Services, in order to maintain their emotional well-being for continued effective functioning and improved quality of life. The Department offers needs-based social work, psychological, and spiritual care services and programmes aimed at enhancing inmates' social functioning and mental well-being (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2025:1). Psychological and spiritual services offer programmes and services based on individual requirements with the goal of preserving the wellness of those who are incarcerated and providing spiritual services to those who are in correctional facilities by promoting social functioning and spiritual, moral, and psychological wellbeing (National Treasury, 2020:336). The Social Work Policy in 2007 states that through these services, the Department of Correctional Services can be better equipped to prioritise rehabilitation.

The primary goal of correctional psychology services, according to The Online Psychology Degrees (2022:1), is to assist offenders to get well and make the transition from incarceration to society. These services include therapeutic, informative, supportive, crisis intervention, development, administrative, assessment and evaluation services (Department of Correctional Services, 2025:1).

Rule 4 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the 'Nelson Mandela Rules') realises that spiritual assistance is appropriate to

reducing re-offending, and that prison administrations and other competent authorities should therefore offer it (United Nations, 2015:3). Churches must assume a prominent role in educating the public about the need of assuming responsibility in assisting offenders in their reintegration process (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:1).

In order to meet the contemporary circumstances of offenders, including young people, the Ukuphula Iketanga programme, which translates to “breaking the chains,” has been established for prison chaplaincy (International Prison Chaplains Association, 2022:1). According to the Director of Spiritual Care, Dr. Menzi Mkhathini, who is referenced in the Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2023:1), spiritual care within the context of the criminal justice system in South Africa is required by the constitution, hence the church is required to care for its members who are incarcerated.

However, according to the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2025:1), the Portfolio Committee expressed concern about the Department of Corrections’ high vacancy rate in mental health services, particularly among psychologists and social workers, and questioned how the vulnerable inmates could receive meaningful support in such circumstances. Among other things, the sorry state of psychological wellbeing of the inmates was credited to overcrowding by the Portfolio Committee, given that in the first quarter of 2025/26, there were 163,179 inmates housed in facilities designed for only 107,067, leading to a 52% overcrowding rate.

A correctional services system that is centred on rehabilitation depends on the expertise of professionals like psychologists, vocational counsellors, social workers, and spiritual care providers, including volunteers, to deliver its programmes (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:109). The National Commissioner, Thobakgale, responded to the Committee’s claims regarding staffing capacity, and reported that 71 psychologists and 37 community service psychologists were currently employed, with recruitment efforts ongoing. He explained that job advertisements had recently been issued in April for 410 positions, including psychologists and social workers, among others (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2025:1).

Despite this, the Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2023:28) reported that psychological and spiritual services, along with social work support, skills development, and victim-offender dialogues or mediations, were provided to offenders who were not yet ready for parole or correctional supervision. This is in contrast to the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2023:38) and Shishane, John-Langba & Onifade (2023:1), who lamented that psychological services are limited due to the ongoing cycle of offender release and re-arrest, which has steadily increased incarceration rates and led to overcrowded correctional facilities, deteriorating living conditions, and diminished access to individualised psychological care.

Furthermore, Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2023:73) reported that the presence of community service psychologists has continued to enhance the capacity of departmental psychologists, resulting in 52,058 inmates representing 33% of the total prison population receiving psychological services during the 2022/23 financial year, which is an increase of 7,731 individuals compared to the previous year.

4.3 Reintegration programmes

The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2025:1) notes that the main goal of social reintegration programmes is to give offenders the support and supervision which they may need to stop committing crimes when they reintegrate effectively into society to prevent a return into criminal conduct. It further notes that the implementation of social reintegration programmes provide an opportunity for offenders to connect with their families and community and to live a productive and law-abiding life. Establishing supportive environments in communities for the successful reintegration of parolees and probationers requires a variety of services and programmes, including izimbizos and halfway houses to facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration processes.

4.3.1 Imbizos

The Izimbizo programme is a mandate of the Department of Correctional Services in its efforts to promote social reintegration, offender accountability through community engagement, victim-offender interaction, restitution, and reconciliation (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2022:80). Izimbizo is grounded in Batho Pele principles and it provides a platform for public dialogue and service improvement, although its implementation was severely limited during the COVID-19 pandemic, with only 11 sessions held in 2020/21 and a major rebound in 2021/22, with 543 Izimbizo conducted across regions (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2022:79).

Imbizo seeks to engage, educate, and create awareness to the South African citizens on the importance of accepting the ex-offenders back into their community with an emphasis on their participation in the reintegration of ex-offenders to curb reoffending (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2022:13). Imbizos have garnered community willingness to reintegrate offenders by sharing vital information, although continued efforts are needed to strengthen public education and support (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2022:13). The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2022:16) notes that it maintains its community outreach efforts through the Izimbizo programme, which is a vital component in promoting successful offender reintegration. It further states that in the 2021/22 period, 543 Izimbizo sessions were held across various regions, showing strong community engagement and collaboration in achieving reintegration goals. During lockdown levels 5 to 3, Izimbizo sessions and victim-offender dialogues were suspended and stakeholder engagements shifted to virtual platforms to comply with COVID-19 regulations, hence such programmes were scaled down to protect the health and safety of parolees, probationers, and communities (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2022:79).

According to the Annual Report, the Department of Correctional Services conducted 261 Imbizos (Republic of South Africa 2023-2024:26) across all six regions and collaborated with various partners, including the Departments of Labour, Cooperative Governance, and Social Development, the South African Police Service, educational institutions, the Canadian International Development Agency, and several Non-

Governmental Organisations (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2024:21). For example, a men's forum was organised to educate youth and men about the dangers and consequences of committing crimes against women and children, and orientation sessions were held with stakeholders such as families, victims, and community members to promote responsibility, acceptance, and reduce societal stigma (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2024:21). The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2024:21) further notes that through Imbizo engagements focused on correctional and parole supervision, social reintegration, and departmental challenges, the Department strengthened relationships and created new opportunities for community-based initiatives benefiting both victims and communities, and resulted in high levels of compliance with parole and probation conditions, achieving a 99% compliance rate for both parolees and probationers without violations.

4.3.2 Halfway houses

Kent State Online (2021:1) defines halfway houses as community-based offender programmes that provide support to offenders as part of a primary sentence or licence conditions. Most halfway houses are used to support offenders to reintegrate into the community after they leave the correctional centre (known as halfway-out houses) but they can also be used as an alternative to imprisonment (Kent State Online, 2021:1). The overall definition of halfway houses seems to be on the basis that offenders who leave correctional facilities may not have families or communities, while some may have families although they do not accept them. This can be traced to the stigma that is attached to ex-offenders as they reintegrate into the community.

Xangaza (2021:1) notes that the house is privately owned and rented out to the department to house parolees; those eligible to stay at the houses include people whose families or relatives are not willing to take them back or those who find themselves without a place to stay due for various reasons. In South Africa, the Department of Correctional Services, in collaboration with non-profit organisations, has set up Halfway Houses to support the reintegration of parole-eligible offenders who lack stable addresses or support networks (Department of Correctional Services,

Republic of South Africa 2023:32). However, currently, only one such centre exists in KwaZulu-Natal's Ncome Management Area, but efforts are underway to establish more (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2023:32).

4.3.3 Aftercare programmes

While rehabilitation programmes in correctional services are central to rehabilitating offenders, aftercare programmes are also essential to the reintegration. The South African Government (2025:1) and Eastern Cape Government Online (2025:1) note that to support the successful reintegration of offenders into society, the Department offers aftercare programmes aimed at promoting self-sufficiency among parolees and former offenders. Aftercare structures have been developed to offer supportive programmes aimed at improving the livelihoods of former offenders through the establishment of community forums to encourage community involvement in the reintegration of ex-offenders, as well as the Ex-offender Desk that was formed through partnerships with local stakeholders (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2022:13). To this end, a total of R3.7 billion has been allocated to the Social Reintegration programme over the MTEF period, with R3.3 billion (86.8%) designated for employee compensation (South African Government, 2025:1).

4.4 The difference between rehabilitation and reintegration practices

The provision of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for people in prison is inconsistent from one country to another; where punitive approaches are pursued, or resources are dire there are few opportunities (Thailand Institute of Justice, 2021:1). According to Murhula and Singh (2019: 22), every year, a huge number of rehabilitated offenders leave South African correctional centres and return to their families and communities, and only a little number of them effectively reintegrate into their communities.

Rehabilitation and reintegration practices in South Africa have been a focus within the criminal justice system, with the aim to address the complex challenges associated

with reducing recidivism and promoting successful community reintegration for individuals who have been incarcerated. Murhula and Singh (2019:21) noted that the South African Department of Correctional Services has a constitutional mandate to provide rehabilitation programmes that address offenders' criminal conducts, hence the treatment approach currently used to deliver this mandate is grounded on the Needs-Based Model, where dynamic factors associated with recidivism are systematically targeted in the treatment of offenders' criminal behaviours. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2022:10-11), the following standardised needs-based rehabilitation programmes, which have already been discussed, are offered to incarcerated offenders, probationers, and parolees: anger management, substance abuse, sexual offender treatment, marriage, family care and relationship, parenting skills and supportive services, life skills, youth resilience, and elderly programme.

According to the UNODC (2022:3), South Africa has adopted the Nelson Mandela Rules in its criminal justice approach through the national Department of Correctional Services' three-legged mandate of ensuring safe and humane custody, rehabilitation and social reintegration of offenders. In cognisance of this, South Africa has opted for a human rights-based approach, rather than a stringent law enforcement punitive approach in the management of correctional facilities UNODC (2022:3). As such, the UNODC (2022:3) further elaborates that the country's Department of Correctional Services adopts the following legislative frameworks: Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; Correctional Services Act, Act No 111 of 1998; Child Justice Act, Act No 75 of 2008; Children's Act, Act No 38 of 2005; Criminal Law Amendment Act, Act No 32 of 2007; Criminal Procedure Act, Act No 51 of 1977; National Health Act, Act No 61 of 2003; Health professions Act, Act No 56 of 1974; Nursing Act, Act No 50 of 1978 (Regulations) & nursing Act, Act No 33 of 2005; Adult Basic Education and Training Act, Act No 52 of 2000; White Paper on Correctional Services, 2005; and the Probation Services Act No. 116 of 1991.

However, Murhula and Singh (2019:21) argue that the reality of the matter is that there are systemic problems that challenge the Department of Correctional Services in conveying its moral messaging and fulfilling its legal commitment on the rehabilitation of offenders.

The Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2022:1) highlighted several major concerns from the Department of Correctional Services' Annual Performance Plan and budget presentation, stating that the Department continues to face challenges such as limited national budget allocations, vaccination rollout within correctional centres, persistent overcrowding, weakened relationships with partners and stakeholders, gaps in legislative and policy implementation, and issues affecting social cohesion. The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2024:14) adds that there is also an increased demand for the corrections and rehabilitations services in the country, which presents further challenges, as the Department is compelled to make difficult trade-offs in order to sustain and, where necessary, enhance the most essential areas of service delivery for inmates.

The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2024:15) notes that the rise in the inmate population during the 2023/24 financial year reflects major societal challenges for the Department of Correctional Services, which usually intensify during times of national crisis. It further notes that for years, many correctional facilities have operated under immense pressure due to limited budgets, staff shortages, poor conditions, and the growing number of inmates requiring supervision and care. Therefore, overcrowding remains a persistent issue that strains resources, undermines rehabilitation efforts, and contributes to incidents such as escapes, injuries, and unnatural deaths. The steady increase in overcrowding, combined with the completion of bed space verification, has led to a reduction in available bedspaces, from 107,582 in 2022/23 to 105,474 in 2023/24 (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2024:15).

In response, the Department of Correctional Services informed the Committee that it was addressing these challenges by focusing on reducing overcrowding, strengthening security measures, improving vaccination coverage, rehabilitating correctional infrastructure, and enhancing collaboration with other government departments (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2022:1). The Department of Correctional Services (Republic of South Africa 2024:14) adds that during the Sixth Administration, the government focused on resolving issues that hindered progress, including state capture, the absence of structural reforms, and the impact of COVID-19. It further notes that the Seventh Administration aims to be characterised by better

alignment of strategic priorities, enhanced efficiency, sharper focus, and the optimal utilisation of available resources.

Murhula and Singh (2019:21) further expound that the changes that have occurred in South Africa since the early 1990s have led to new developments in the functioning of the correctional services. The implications of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998, (Republic of South Africa 1998:48) and the White Paper of 2005, (White Paper of 2005 on Corrections 1998:39-40) paved way for a successful offenders' rehabilitation approach in South Africa, but unfortunately the Department of Correctional Services failed to deliver on its mandate to reduce recidivism.

Nevertheless, in the midst of the broad-based legislative framework within which the Department of Correctional Services operates, they are faced with a plethora of challenges. Murhula and Singh (2019:21) posit that the Department of Correctional Services mission is far to be accomplished due to its failure to reduce recidivism. Along these lines, it is subsequently important to develop and to implement new approaches that meet the goals of the South African Green and White Papers on Corrections.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed role of rehabilitation and reintegration in promoting behavioural change among offenders to reduce reoffending and ensure their safe reintegration into society as productive citizens. The Department of Correctional Services has introduced a range of needs-based programmes, such as anger management, substance abuse treatment, restorative justice, offender development, and pre-release initiatives which are designed to address the causes of criminal behaviour and equip offenders with essential life, educational, vocational, and social skills. Reintegration efforts, including halfway houses, aftercare services, and community engagement through Izimbizos, also support the transition from incarceration to community life. However, there are challenges such as overcrowding, budgetary limitations, inadequate staffing of psychologists and social workers, and deteriorating infrastructure, which impede the effective delivery of these programmes. Despite these constraints, the Department of Correctional Services' efforts to strengthen partnerships with government entities, NGOs, and community stakeholders show that

they are committed to sustainable rehabilitation practices. The next chapter provides a research and methodology.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology adopted for the study. Creswell and Creswell (2023:3) define research methodology as a systematic approach used to solve a research problem through data gathering using various methods, providing interpretation of data, and drawing conclusions about the research.

5.2 Research paradigm and philosophical underpinning

A research paradigm is a comprehensive framework that guides how research should be conducted (Turin, Raihan & Chowdhury, 2024:1). Five main research paradigms, namely, positivism, interpretivism, post-positivism, critical theory (ideology), constructivism, and pragmatism are identified by Kumatongo and Muzata (2021:6). This study adopted the interpretivism paradigm to ensure the collection of high-quality data and its meaningful interpretation.

5.2.1 Interpretivism paradigm

Nickerson (2024:1) explains interpretivism as a way of doing research that lets the researcher see the world through the eyes and experiences of the participants. Pervin and Mokhtar (2022:12) add that the interpretivism paradigm makes it possible to create detailed and rich descriptions of what is being studied, hence readers can get a deeper understanding of the issue under study through these descriptions. Interpretivism holds that reality is subjectively constructed by individuals, shaped by social and cultural contexts, best understood through qualitative methods, and interpreted from the participants' own (emic) perspectives (Lewis, 2024:1). According to Ma and Ma (2022:1), researchers who use interpretivism aim to make sense of daily life by looking at the meanings that people attach to their actions and experiences in

their social contexts. In this study, the interpretivist paradigm helped the researcher to understand how participants view and experience the issue of the rehabilitation programmes at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre.

5.2.2 Philosophical underpinning

According to Turin, Raihan and Chowdhury (2024:3), research paradigms are grounded in philosophical assumptions such as epistemology, axiology, and ontology, which together inform methodological decisions in a research study.

5.2.2.1 Ontology

Ontology is the study of reality that is essentially concerned with understanding the nature and form of what exists (Al-Ababneh, 2020:4). Ontological assumptions view reality as something that is socially constructed by individuals (Magano, 2021:1,7). Expanding on this ontological perspective, people interpret and shape reality through their cultural and ideological perspectives, hence a single phenomenon can be perceived in multiple ways (Pervin & Mokhthar 2022:2; Nickerson, 2024:1). Ontology, therefore, seeks to determine what exists and how it exists within a particular context. In this study, reality encompassed the lived experiences of the researcher, the participants, and even those of the readers who engage with the findings. Guided by this ontological assumption, the researcher aimed to represent these multiple realities authentically by drawing on the participants' voices and interpretations of positive and negative views on rehabilitation programmes at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre.

5.2.2.2 Epistemology

Kumatongo and Muzata (2021:3) describe epistemology as the philosophy of knowledge, or simply how we get to know things. Epistemology is about how researchers understand reality and the assumptions about how knowledge is gained

and accepted. Sol and Heng (2022:4) explain that in qualitative research, epistemology looks at how knowledge is built through people's subjective experiences, interpretations, and meanings. Therefore, epistemology revolves around the researcher's own conceptions of knowledge and the world and how these conceptions influence not only the research process but also the outcomes. From this perspective, the study brought to light the most hidden and less obvious factors that, in turn, lead to the success of rehabilitation programmes at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre.

5.2.2.3 Axiology

According to Chowdhury and Tanvir, Mohammed, Nashit and Raihan, and Turin (2024:1), "axiology is like a compass that guides researchers on their journey, it's all about the values and beliefs that shape how they conduct their research". It also influences the framing of research questions, data collection and their interpretation of findings by providing guidance for decisions about what is significant, pertinent, and acceptable from the perspective of the investigation (Bammer, 2022:205). The present research took an axiological stance to firstly place the facilitation of a morally sound engagement with the participants and secondly, to reflect their experiences of the rehabilitation programmes at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre in an accurate manner. Liana and Noermijati (2024: 7) point out that by using this paradigmatic stance, the researcher made sure that the values leading the research are in harmony to yield valuable, locally grounded and morally proper insights.

5.3 Research Approach and Design

Research approaches are structured plans and procedures that guide a study from broad philosophical assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Taherdoost, 2022:1). There are three main research approaches, i.e., qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, mentioned by both the authors (Taherdoost, 2022:1; Creswell & Creswell, 2023:1). The qualitative research approach was employed in this investigation as it enabled the researcher to understand the

user's experience and their point of view deeply, and the study was conducted in the participants' natural environment. The qualitative approach is inductive and aims to explore and understand the meanings that individuals or groups assign to social or human issues (Tenny, Brannan & Brannan, 2022:1). This was aligned with the study's aim to provide rich, descriptive insights rather than numerical generalisations.

A research design is defined by Sallis, Gripsrud, Olsson and Silkoset (2021:9) and Khanday and Khanam (2023:6) as a systematic plan that helps guide how a researcher thinks. Wisenthige (2023:3-4) also notes that a research design gives structure to the study and shows how the researcher will answer the research questions to solve the research problem.

Some common qualitative research designs include the case study, multiple case study, phenomenology, narrative design, and grounded theory. In this study, the researcher used the case study research design. According to Coombs (2022:2), a case study design is a way of looking closely at a single case, situation, or group in order to get a deep understanding of it. A case study is used in research because it allows for detailed and rich descriptions that cannot always be achieved through other designs, especially when the aim is to understand complex issues or social processes (Priya, 2020:12). Salmons (2023:5) notes that focusing on one case can help the researcher to collect different types of data to provide a fuller picture of the topic. The case for this study is for Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre.

5.4 Target population and sampling strategy

Casteel and Bridier (2021:7) define a population in research as a collection of individuals, dyads, groups, organisations, or other entities that a researcher aims to study and to which findings can be generalised or transferred, thereby forming the primary group on which the research is focused. The population for the study was the 400 correctional officials and 3199 inmates at the Boksburg Medium A and 120 correctional officials and 350 inmates from the Boksburg Youth Centre. From this population, a sample was selected to participate in the study.

The “act of choosing a representative portion of the population is known as sampling” (Makwana, Engineer, Dabhi & Chudasama, 2023:10). In this research, the participants were the sample and were considered representative of the study population. To make this possible, the purposive sampling method was employed, whereby individuals are chosen based on the presence of specific characteristics that are relevant to the research (Casteel & Bridier, 2021:8). Tajik, Golzar and Noor 2024:3) are of the opinion that purposive sampling makes it possible to exclude those who do not meet the required criteria. The sample of the study was made up of 31 inmates, 10 of which were inmates from the Boksburg Youth Centre, but three (3) had withdrawn from participation due to their personal reasons, and 21 inmates were chosen from the Boksburg Medium A, and ten (10) had withdrawn for reasons that were not disclosed. There were also four (4) correctional officials who manage rehabilitation programmes at the centre and were sampled, but only three (3) underwent the interview. According to Polit & Beck, (2021:1) the data saturation concept was used to determine the ultimate sample size when no new information could be found, and data was repeated or recurring patterns started to emerge.

5.5 Data collection methods and instruments

Data collection is the process of understanding the perspectives and experiences of the participants in relation to the phenomenon under study (Taherdoost 2021:1). In order to get the data that is relevant and addresses the research problem, researchers use different techniques and instruments, follow a logical procedure, and use specific tools. In this way, the researcher can get answers that directly respond to the research questions. Mazhar (2021:4) states that data collection methods are the ways in which researchers get information from participants. These methods give researchers the opportunity to ask the right questions to the participants (Grover, 2020:3; Taherdoost, 2021:1).

Data for this study were gathered through individual, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. This method was selected because it is generally acknowledged as an efficient and flexible method of qualitative data collection, as it allows for the collection of detailed data and also gives the possibility of further probing to clarify or extend the

answers if needed (Ruslin, Mashuri, Rasak, Alhabsyi & Syam, 2022:10; Kakilla, 2021:8). In view of the fact that this research was based on the interpretivist paradigm, which aims at understanding the participants' subjective experiences and meanings, semi-structured interviews were deemed suitable as they offer a guided but still flexible framework which helps the in-depth discussion of the lived experiences.

5.6 Data analysis techniques

Data analysis refers to “the process of interpreting raw data to obtain valuable insights and understand the implications of the data” (Braun & Clarke, 2024:217; Bingham, 2023:1). Qualitative Data Analysis is dependent on the research methodology and theoretical framework and is aimed at discovering several layers of meaning (Kelley, 2023:1). There are numerous methods for analysing data, such as grounded theory, discourse analysis, content analysis, narrative analysis, and thematic analysis (Humble & Mozellus, 2022:17). The data for this study were analysed through the thematic analysis technique.

Thematic analysis is a method that involves locating, analysing, and presenting the recurring patterns or themes in a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2024:4; Ahmed, 2024:9). Thematic analysis offers theoretical flexibility (Mezmir, 2020:9; Kushnir, 2025:1) and it also allows the researcher to use the appropriate disciplinary lenses for producing contextually relevant interpretations (Lester, Cho & Lochmiller, 2020:10). The data were analysed in accordance with the six-stage thematic analysis process of Braun and Clarke (2024:6). The data were first deeply familiarised through multiple readings and transcription. Subsequently, initial codes were created to highlight the significant features that relate to the research questions, with a focus on the explicit meanings of the data. The researchers then examined the relationships among the codes to identify patterns that represented the participants' lived experiences and, thus, grouped them into themes that aligned with the study's objectives. These themes were then assessed and tweaked to ensure that they were internally coherent and also that there were clear differences between them. After that, each theme was clearly understood and given a proper name that would reflect its core idea. At last, an in-depth report was written that not only provided a logical narrative but also was supported by the

samples taken from the data that illustrated the main points (Braun & Clarke, 2024:7; Naeem, Ozuem, Howell & Ranfagni, 2023:4). Therefore, through thematic analysis, the researcher was able to bring out the participants' views by interpreting their experiences in a meaningful way and at the same time ensuring that the study remained coherent. As a result, the research findings were presented in a reliable and fact-based manner.

5.7 Validity, reliability and trustworthiness

According to Ahmed (2024:1) and Stahl and King (2020:1), trustworthiness is a measure of how much the research findings reflect the reality of the phenomenon being studied. It refers to the degree of reliability and validity of the data and is accomplished through certain control measures that are aimed at ensuring the quality of the data. Johnson, Adkins and Chauvin (2020:7) talked of five main criteria for trustworthiness to be established namely, confirmability, credibility, dependability, transferability, authenticity. According to Johnson, Adkins and Chauvin (2020:7) pointed out that these methods were employed in this research to guarantee that the data collected are correct, valid, reliable, and can be verified.

5.7.1 Confirmability

Confirmability is closely associated with the researcher's effort to show neutrality throughout the work (Ahmed, 2024:1). The data in this study were not only collected but also analysed objectively, hence the results indicate the views of the participants and not the personal opinions or biases of the researcher. The researcher was not a party to the participants' theoretical perspectives, which were the basis of the data collection, and therefore was very careful not to influence the process in any manner. Inter-subjectivity was ensured by the fact that the data constitute the basis of the analysis and interpretation, and all the inferences were directly drawn from the participants' responses.

5.7.2 Credibility

Credibility is associated with the trustworthiness and precision of the information acquired (Johnson *et al.*, 2020:8). The researcher was in the position to take very detailed and extensive field notes during the interview sessions in order to serve as corroborative evidence for the data. Besides that, the audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber, and the resulting transcriptions were sent to the participants for their confirmation regarding their accuracy. This approach made sure that the data also serve as real and accurate representatives of the researched topic and that, in turn, the findings are valid.

5.7.3 Dependability

Dependability is a term that describes the data quality that is both consistent and stable over a period (McLeod, 2024:1). In order to ensure dependability, the researcher focused on the exact words of the participants' statements and made sure that every interview was recorded for a later accurate transcription. As a result, this revealed a trustworthy account of the participants' views and gave the opportunity for the findings to be linked to the original data thus making not only the research process transparent but also consistent.

5.7.4 Transferability

Transferability is the extent that research findings can be applicable in different settings or to different groups (Stalmeijer, Brown & O'Brien, 2024:1). The researcher facilitated transferability by giving detailed descriptions of the characters and the research environment. Such a detailed level will make it possible for other researchers or fieldworkers to make their own decisions about whether the findings can be transferred to their situations, such as different correctional centres or other work settings.

5.7.5 Authenticity

Authenticity is a measure of how real the representation of the characters' voices, their experiences, and their views in the research is (Moser & Korstjens, 2017:5). The researcher promoted authenticity through the accurate documentation of the participants' stories and subsequently by representing the meanings and the intents of the participants without any distortion, and finally, by revealing their views in a manner that acknowledges both the depth and the eloquence of their lived-experiences.

5.8 Ethical considerations

Ethics in research are the rules that determine what is right and wrong in the research process, and they aim to facilitate mutual trust and collaboration between the researcher and the participant (Resnik, 2020:3; Arafat, 2024:2,3). The UNISA Policy on Research Ethics (2024:1) outlines the guidelines that were followed in this study. In line with this policy, the researcher received the ethical clearance and the permission to carry out the study from the Ethics Review Committee of the UNISA College of Law. The Department of Correctional Services and both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre were also asked for permission to access the participants.

According to Section 12 (4b) of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:42), an inmate "should voluntarily participate in a research, called informed consent". On the other hand, Manandhar and Joshi (2020:15), Xu, Baysari, Stocker, Leow, Day and Carland (2020:4) refer to an informed consent as a legal instrument aimed at ensuring that patients or research participants give their voluntary consent to the research study. According to the informed consent procedure, the participants should be made aware of all the facets of the study, after which they decide freely whether to take part in it or not (Xu *et al.*, 2020:3). Participants were given the consent form to enable them to express their voluntary consent to take part in the research study in writing. The informed consent document was a pact between the researcher and the participant regarding the moral issues. These forms disclosed the study, described the kind of data collected, how it would be handled, and

guaranteed the participants that they would not be exposed to risks, injury, or any financial or in-kind benefits that should be involved in the research. Subsequently, the researcher followed the ethical guidelines of informed consent for participant safety.

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study. This means that the participants' responses were not linked to their identities, and their personal information was protected (Tsindos, 2023:2; Kang & Hwang, 2023:1). Pseudonyms were used in reporting the findings and access to raw data will be limited. Measures were taken to protect the participants from any potential harm by securing their data and keeping their identities private (Barrow, Brannan & Khandhar, 2022:12). The participants were also informed that they can withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences (University of Nevada Reno, 2021:1).

Researchers should avoid exposing the participants to unnecessary harm (Islam, Asif, Jamil and Ali, 2022:480). Research should not cause the participants regret or harm beyond their daily experiences. To protect the participants from emotional harm, the researcher provided debriefing sessions at the beginning of the interviews, monitored their wellbeing, offered referral to support services, and demonstrated sensitivity and respect to prioritise their wellbeing and to avoid any emotional distress that could arise during or after the study.

Finally, academic integrity was ensured by crediting all sources in-text and in the reference list (Panjaitan, Novelyn & Angria, 2020:376; University of Southern California, 2025:1). The study was also checked with Turnitin to confirm originality and proper citation practices.

5.9 Limitations of the study

The researcher claims that the study had a number of shortcomings. First of all, a number of participants decided to withdraw their participation during the data-collection phase, leading to a reduction in the sample size and possibly limiting the range of perspectives that were captured. The limitation also caused the data to have gaps in comparative insights which could have been used to strengthen the data analysis. Secondly, language barriers were also among the factors that limited the

study as the researcher had to switch from English to isiZulu and Sesotho to ensure that the participants were understood. While this linguistic adaptability allowed for participation, it also raised the possibility of changes in meaning or inconsistencies in translation in the interviews and data interpretation. As a result, these shortcomings or restrictions may have affected the findings' depth, quality, richness, diversity, and even the clarity.

5.10 Conclusion

The researcher used a qualitative case study design, which was based on the interpretivist paradigm, to understand the participants' experiences in both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre. The study was influenced by the philosophical concepts of ontology, epistemology, and axiology, which not only determined how reality was perceived but also how the meaning was derived and ethically represented during the whole research process. Purposive sampling was used to select only those participants who had the most relevant insights, and semi-structured interviews were used to get the most honest, deep interaction with the correctional officials and inmates. The thematic analysis stage gave them the opportunity to simplify the complicated stories into significant themes, thus enabling them to make a trustworthy and coherent interpretation of the data collected.

The study was rigorous in terms of procedures to enhance credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability. However, it recognises the limitations, for example, the withdrawal of participants and the existence of language barriers, which could have limited the richness of the views and the number of different perspectives captured. Still, among the ethical measures taken, such as getting consent, ensuring anonymity, and taking care of the participant's welfare, the latter was given priority. In general, the research design and methods served as a logically organised and ethically sound framework that could produce truthful, local, and specific insights about rehabilitation programmes and thus be a basis for further empirical studies in correctional facilities.

CHAPTER SIX

A PROFILE OF BOKSBURG MEDIUM A AND BOKSBURG YOUTH CENTRE

6.1 Introduction

The Boksburg Correctional Services is a large correctional centre located in Boksburg (Ekurhuleni) in the Gauteng Province, South Africa. The profile of both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre entail the organogram; staff roles and responsibilities; a description of the head of centres, operational support, centre coordinator in corrections, and unit manager; structured day programmes; the issue of decentralisation; key factors for the successful implementation of unit management; and the orientation and assessment of offenders. This profile was arrived at based on the data obtained through the interviews conducted with correctional official and offenders at Boksburg Correctional Services. The correctional officials who provided data on this profile are herein referred to as participant A, B and C.

The interviews provided significant insights on issues pertaining the lifestyle or behaviour of the offenders before the commission of crime like the use of drugs and peer pressure which led into a violent behaviour. According to Centre Coordinator Corrections in Boksburg, Participant A, Boksburg Management Area consists of the following: Boksburg Medium A, Boksburg Youth Centre; Heidelberg and Boksburg Community Corrections. The researcher aims to target only Boksburg Medium A for adults and Boksburg Youth Centre.

This chapter addresses only the Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre. Boksburg Medium A accommodates adult male offenders and Boksburg Youth Centre who which accommodates young offenders for life or long sentences. The Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:38) and its principal obligation is to accommodate those offenders who have been convicted of various crimes while also facilitating their rehabilitation and eventual reintegration into society. According to the correctional official called Participant B, approximately 3 299 male offenders were kept from Boksburg Medium A during the period 29 April to 3 May 2024, and Participant A also indicated that 90 youth offenders aged between 18 and 24 years old are kept from Boksburg Youth Centre. Both participant A and B point out that the numbers do

sometimes fluctuate over time due to reasons such as renovations, expansions and relocations. Both participant A and B point out stated that Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre are equipped with a variety of facilities for the purpose of rehabilitation of convicted offenders. As a result, Participant A and the correctional official called Participant C mention that the centre is made up of cell blocks, entertainment areas, educational facilities, vocational training workshops, medical facilities, administrative offices, and staff quarters. In addition, the correctional centre maintains an on-site clinic that provides most primary health care services. They mention that offenders who require intensive health care are referred to nearby hospitals.

According to the correctional officials or participants A, B and C, both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre provide a variety of programmes and services targeted at rehabilitating offenders and preparing them for successful reintegration into society. These may include educational programmes such as literacy and General Educational Development (GED) classes and vocational training such as carpentry, welding, and computer skills. A variety of professionals, including educators, counsellors, healthcare providers, vocational trainers, and correctional officials, work in the correctional centre. Participant A stated that Boksburg Youth Centre faces several issues similar to any other correctional centre such as drug addiction among offenders, gang activity, understaffing, budgetary limits, overcrowding, and the requirement for efficient rehabilitation programmes.

6.2 An organogram for Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre

The organogram represents the hierarchical structure and operational framework for the Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre. Figure 6.1 presents the roles and responsibilities within both the Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre in ensuring the efficient management and support for the staff and offenders.

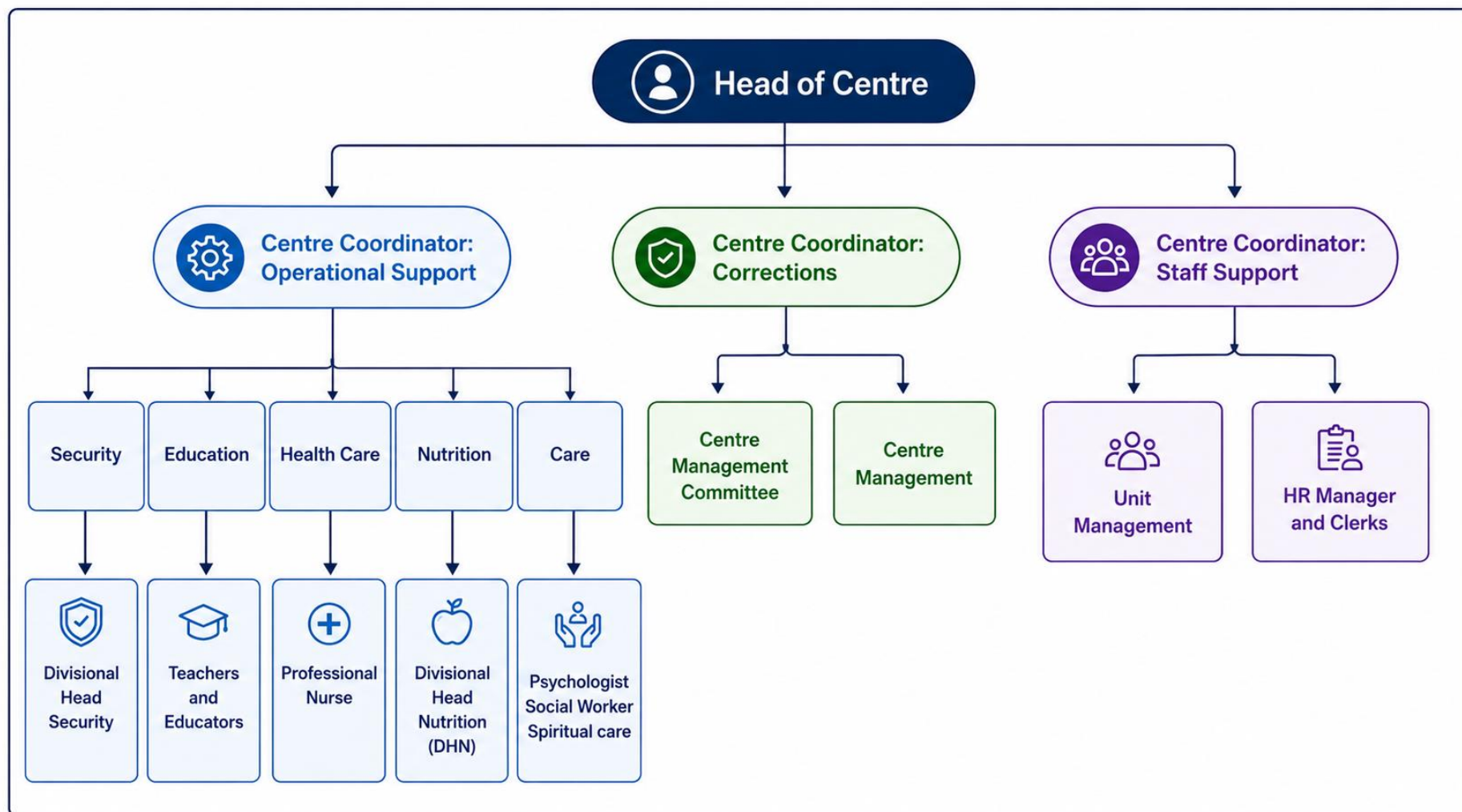


Figure 6.1: Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre organogram

The organogram in Figure 6.1 is divided into several sections, each representing the different levels of management and support within the correctional centres. Different stakeholders play an important role in making sure that incarcerated offenders are kept in a safe, humane, and conducive environment. At the top of the hierarchy is the Head of Centre for both the Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre who oversees the entire operations at the centre. Directly reporting to the Head of Centre are the Centre Coordinators responsible for operational support, corrections, and staff support.

The operational support branch includes roles such as Security, Education, Health, and Nutrition who have specific responsibilities assigned to correctional officials, teachers, psychologists, dietitians, and other relevant role-players. The corrections branch is managed by the Centre Coordinator in Corrections and includes Unit Management, the Centre Management Committee (CMC) and Centre Management Administration (CMA). The staff support branch, which is also managed by a Centre Coordinator, includes the HR Manager and administration clerks.

6.3 Staff roles and responsibilities at the Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre

Participant A indicated that staff role and responsibilities at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre are as follows:

- Head of Centre
- Centre co-ordinator in corrections
- Operational support branch
- Corrections branch manager

Each of the above staff roles will be discussed in more detail subsequently.

6.4 The Head of Centres

According to participant A and B, the Heads of Centre either from Boksburg Medium A or from the Boksburg Youth Centre have to perform similar duties, hence the researcher will not delineate these duties. Currently, there are two acting female Heads of Centre, one for Boksburg Medium A and the other one is for Boksburg Youth Centre. According to Luyt (2020:96), the role of the Head of Centre is to ensure that authority is delegated in an appropriate manner by maintaining the final authority and responsibility of all issues within the centre.

6.4.1 The Key Responsibility Areas for the Head of Centre

Key Responsibility Areas (KRAs) are the specific tasks, responsibilities, and outcomes that the staff is accountable for within their role. KRAs help to define and clarify job expectations as they focus on measurable performance areas to achieve organisational goals. For the Heads of Centre at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, the following KRAs apply based on the description by Luyt (2020:96):

- Delegation of authority: Ensuring authority is appropriately delegated to staff members and overseeing that tasks align with the Centre's goals.
- Final authority and accountability: Maintaining ultimate authority and responsibility over all matters within the Centre and handling high-level decisions and problem-solving.

According to participants A and B, the following are other KRAs performed by the Head of Centre:

- Operational oversight: Supervising daily operations to ensure the Centre's efficient functioning and adherence to policies and standards.
- Staff management: Leading, supporting, and evaluating Centre staff, and ensuring an environment that promotes development and accountability.
- Compliance and regulatory adherence: Ensuring that the Centre complies with all the relevant legal and institutional regulations and standards.

- Resource allocation: Managing and allocating resources effectively, including the budget, personnel, and facilities to support Centre objectives.
- Crisis and incident management: Taking charge during incidents or emergencies, coordinating responses, and ensuring safety protocols are followed.
- Stakeholder engagement: Communicating and collaborating with external and internal stakeholders and providing updates and addressing concerns as needed.
- Strategic planning: Contributing to or leading strategic planning for the Centre and setting objectives and aligning them with organisational goals.
- Reporting and documentation: Overseeing accurate record-keeping and reporting of activities and incidents within the Centre, ensuring transparency and accountability.

External security measures include monitoring access, ground patrolling of correctional officials to ensure that electric fence and watch towers are manned or activated, and escorting and transferring offenders to and from courts (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2015: 24). As offender supervision is of priority in the centre, there should be surprise security checks or searches in order to curb further criminal behaviour. As a result, according to Yao (2021:13), “the practical implementation of the operant conditioning principle in a correctional centre can contribute to offenders’ good behaviour.”

Other key role activities performed by both Heads of Centres in both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre facilities is to ensure that:

- Skills development takes place for the staff.
- Formal and/or basic education is implemented for offenders.
- Sports and recreation for offenders is part of rehabilitation within the centre.
- Social work services, spiritual care services, psychological services, production workshops, and health care services for offenders, are all implemented and monitored closely.

According to participant A, the Centre Coordinators Operational Support, Centre Coordinator Corrections, and Centre Coordinator Staff Support all report to the Heads of Centre.

6.5 Operational support

According to Section 5 of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:20;30), the Centre Coordinator Operational Support is in charge of operations such as security, education, health, nutrition, and care. The Centre Coordinator Operational Support would also assist during the rehabilitation and management of offenders.

Security: Participant A mentioned that the Divisional Head of Security within the centre is responsible for the following activities in Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre.

The Divisional Head Security is responsible for the implementation of security policies and procedures; conducting risk assessments, maintenance of order and discipline from Section 25; establishing security standards and guidelines; investigating security incidents and responding accordingly; and leading and training security teams and to manage user access authentication, and authorisation.

6.5.1 Education and educators

According to Section 1 of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998:40-41), “education” means any programme or activity aimed at promoting the intellectual, emotional, social, physical and moral development of an offender. As a result, offenders from both Medium A and the Youth Centre have access to these types of activities, such as formal education, ranging from primary and secondary levels to tertiary. Section 41 of the Department of Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:14) has a mandate to enhance rehabilitation and acquire the primary educational and training requirements of sentenced offenders. Section 49 of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa,

1998:15) emphasises that every offender has the right to education and training. Participant A further stated that offenders from Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre also have access to the following activities:

- Vocational training;
- Life skills training;
- Recreational activities;
- Cultural and spiritual development;
- Counselling and therapy sessions also play a role, and
- Any programme crafted in order to promote the reintegration of the offender into society.

The Department of Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998:15) also emphasises education as a crucial aspect of rehabilitation, aiming to equip offenders with the skills, knowledge, and values necessary for successful reintegration into society. Over 50% of the offenders appreciated the importance of education because they saw a change in their lives.

6.5.2 Health and care

According to Section 35 of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:20), “every offender has the right to receive medical treatment and health care services”. Every offender must receive medical examination within 24 hours of admission and health care services must be accessible and equitable. Participants A, B and C point out that health and care services would assist offenders to become strong and healthy and therefore capable to attend rehabilitation programmes.

According to participants A, B and C, both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, health care services are always available. They also indicated that health professionals are available to provide medical treatment and health care services. Psychological services play a key role during the offender classification and during education and training. According to the Department of Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:38), sentence planning also involves the

services of the psychologist. Other key roles played by the psychologist involve the following:

- The continuous assessment and diagnosis of mental health needs, hence the psychologist to develop treatment plans;
- Support for rehabilitation and reintegration processes to improve offender behaviour, assist from drug abuse, and reduce recidivism.

Participant A indicated that most of the social workers' responsibilities are the same as that of a psychologist. Few of the social workers' responsibilities are as follows:

- Providing counselling and therapy.
- Addressing social and emotional needs.
- Enhancing offender well-being.
- Rehabilitation and reintegration planning.
- Spiritual care.

Participant A indicates that the following services are being provided from occasionally in both facilities, and that spiritual care is needed in sentence planning. Spiritual care involves the following services:

- Religious counselling.
- Chaplaincy services.
- Spiritual guidance.
- Pastoral care.
- Worship services.

The Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998:23) permits an offender to attend religious services and meetings held within the centre freely and voluntarily and this would boost the offenders' emotional, psychological needs and enhancing the process of rehabilitation and eventually successful reintegration into society.

6.5.3 Professional nurse

The professional nurse plays a key role within Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre. The Professional nurse is responsible for the following duties within the facilities:

- The provision of primary health care services to both facilities.
- Providing medications and treatments to all offenders.
- According to Section 49 of the Act, the professional nurse ought to monitor and give feedback on health-related issues.
- Responding to emergency care services and on first aid related issues.
- Maintaining accurate health records and supporting the rehabilitation and reintegration processes.

6.5.4 Nutrition

According to the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998:16), “each offender must be provided with an adequate diet to promote good health and such diet must make provision for the nutritional requirements of any other category of offenders whose physical condition requires a special dietary, and every offender has the right to receive such nutritious and well prepared food in a hygienic environment.” Participant A mentioned that both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre are equipped with the services of the Divisional Head of Nutrition. The Divisional Head of Nutrition is responsible for the development and implementation of nutrition policies. The Divisional Head of Nutrition is responsible for planning and managing food services, taking into consideration that some offenders need a special diet. The incumbent should also always monitor during food preparation. Participant A emphasised the fact that the Divisional Head of Nutrition’s main role is to ensure that offenders have access to nutritious food, promote health, and assist during the process of rehabilitation.

6.6 Centre Coordinator in Corrections

From both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, the main responsibilities of the Centre Coordinator in Corrections are divided into four, namely, maintenance and offenders' labour; management of offenders' safety, management of offender administration support services, management of provision of education and labour services inside the unit, management of humane detention of offenders and management of offender administration support services.

6.6.1 Management of maintenance and offenders' labour

According to Luyt (2021:289), "developing individual case plans for all offenders may contribute to the offender being more willing to perform specific forms of labour." Luyt (2020:289) further states that "by learning an employable skill or improving a skill that may increase the likelihood of being employed after release." The following are the type of skills that offenders may receive while detained and during rehabilitation:

- Maintenance of the centre.
- Repairs as and when required.
- Production at workshops.
- Agricultural activities.
- Cooking in the kitchen.

6.6.2 The management of offenders' safety

According to the Centre Coordinator at Boksburg Youth Centre, the management of offenders' safety involves the following activities in both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre:

- Ensuring that the gates are manned in the unit or section.
- Determining the timeframe for manning of the gates.
- Determining the number (ratio) of staff manning the (per) gate.

- The classification of offenders between those who pose a security threat to the centre and those who are at risk of being attacked.
- Updating the Head of Centre and reporting any incident that might have occurred by checking recordings from journals.
- Ensuring that offender identification inside the unit is followed properly as per the Department's policy.

6.6.3 Management of provision of education and labour services inside the unit

According to the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:44), its intention is to provide offenders with skills, knowledge, and values in order to be gainfully employed in society on release. Offenders do benefit from education and labour services, they are equipped with these services for their development and self-sustainability, and having benefitted from the services, the rehabilitation process would gradually kick in. According to Section 51 from the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:42), and its objective is to:

- Provide offenders with formal education.
- Provide skills and knowledge to the incarcerated offenders.
- Improve offender self-esteem.
- Always promote rehabilitation and successful reintegration.
- Increase the possibility of employability after serving their sentences, and to always persuade offenders to attend these programmes.

6.6.4 Management of humane detention of offenders

According to Luyt (2021:262), "every effort should be made to ensure that the practices in correctional facilities are humane and do not infringe human dignity and human rights unnecessarily." Therefore, it is the duty of the Centre Coordinator in Corrections to ensure that the environment in which offenders are kept is conducive for living. A conducive environment for offenders should be spacious with ventilation, have enough

lighting and fresh air, the gates should be functionally, have generators for power backup and enough water supply, and all incidents must be reported and investigated as well. According to the participants A and B, both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre have adequate and conducive space for offenders to stay, therefore they (offenders) are able focus and pay attention when the lessons of the programmes are delivered to them. As a result, they respond positively during the rehabilitation process.

According to the study conducted by Legodi and Dube (2023:7), an inhumane environment is unable to yield positive results in terms of a rehabilitation process; therefore, “when offenders are overcrowded, they tend to adopt unruly behaviours then when they exit the system it becomes difficult for them to reintegrate well into the community as they have not been rehabilitated enough, and they end up reoffending.”

6.6.5 The management of offenders’ administration support services

According to Luyt (2021:1), the basic rights from the Constitution is “applicable to persons in conflict with the law, even when they are offenders, whether they have been sentenced or are on remand.” However, the Centre Co-ordinator in corrections has to ensure that the needs within the centre are addressed without any form of discrimination.

Participants A and B point out that the Centre Management Administration (CMA) for records keeps information such as for the potential offenders who qualify for a fine or bail. The Case Management Committee (CMC) intervenes and would classify rehabilitation correctional programmes according to crimes committed by offenders. The Centre Co-ordinator also plays an important role in making sure that qualifying offenders are appointed for labour, for example, cleaning the offices or garden making. In both Boksburg Medium A and Youth Centre, ramps are erected in order to accommodate offenders with disabilities.

According to Section 42 the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (South Africa 1998:45), the introduction of the CMC is of importance in order to ensure that all the processes like offender rehabilitation and reintegration are seriously taken into consideration. According to participants A and B, the CMC consists of the chairperson,

social worker, psychologist, education official, labour official, and security official. The CMC focuses on offender sentences, particularly the needs of the offender, monitoring the offender's progress, recommending correctional programmes, and also ensuring that rehabilitation takes place.

6.7 Unit manager

Unit Managers should be trained and well-equipped to enable the staff members to handle inspections (Luyt, 2021:14). Inspections are carried out in order to assess staff compliance with the policy, and also for data gathering. In both the Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centres, the Unit Manager is tasked with ensuring that the following key responsibility areas are performed and achieved within their department, and also according to Section 24 from the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998, (Republic of South Africa 1998:22)

6.7.1 Key responsibility 1

- Overseeing daily operations.
- Ensuring security and safety.
- Implementing correctional policies.
- Monitoring offender rehabilitation.
- Managing offender classification and placement.
- Coordinating education and training programmes.
- Overseeing labour and industry programmes.
- Implementing corrective measures if necessary.
- Reporting any incidents to the Supervisor or Head of Centre.
- Implementing corrective measures if necessary.
- Reporting any incidents to the Supervisor or Head of Centre.
- Liaising with external stakeholders.

Ultimately, the crucial role played by the Unit Manager is to ensure the effective management, rehabilitation, and reintegration of offenders.

6.7.2 Key responsibility 2

The Unit Manager's further responsibilities include managing the provision of education, labour, and care services inside the unit. The Unit Manager should comply with the structured day programme within the unit, hence it is important to ensure that the following is achieved under their authority:

- That offenders get an opportunity to attend skills development;
- That offenders get an opportunity to attend schools or literacy; and
- The recruitment of offenders to undergo training sessions.

6.7.3 Key responsibility 3

According to the Centre Coordinator in Corrections (participant A), one of the key responsibility of the Unit Manager include strengthening the public or private stakeholders to enhance rehabilitation. The Unit Manager is also the key person to orientate the service providers in terms of security, policies, and procedures of the centre. They ensure the frequency, duration, and scope of activities. Offenders should be able to access and participate in these activities. Luyt (2020:238) suggests that for "unit management to be successful in youth correctional facilities, the correctional administrator must ensure that they provide comprehensive programmes for young offenders." Although each centre can design its own unique daily structure programme, it depends on the needs of that unit.

According to the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998:22), the Case Management Supervisor plays an important role of overseeing the case management process. The Case Management Supervisor reports directly to the Unit Manager. He is responsible for following duties:

- Monitoring offender progress and adjust plans when needed.
- Reviewing and approving sentence plans.
- Conducting performance evaluations and providing feedback.
- Identifying training needs for case managers.

The Case Manager Supervisor is responsible for supervising and coordinating the activities of case managers and ensuring the successful management of offenders' sentences, rehabilitation, and reintegration. The Case Intervention Official deals with programmes and facilitates offender participation in rehabilitation programmes. In Boksburg Medium A, participant B is in charge of the programmes, and participant B is responsible for programmes from Boksburg Youth Centre. Their main objective is to ensure that the offenders' rehabilitation process is enhanced for effective reintegration and reduction of recidivism.

6.8 Master structured day programme for the Maximum Youth Centre

According to the participant A, the master structured day programme for Boksburg Youth Centre outlines the daily routine and specific duties that should be conducted by staff and offenders. According to the participants A, B and C, activities are meant to make offenders healthy, have the ability to focus, to change their mind-sets from negative to positive thinking, share their experiences with one another, and to uplift their spirits with the help from the psychologists, social workers, and pastors. The participants pointed out that part of these activities would normally mould the behaviour of the offenders to become better people. The structured day programme details activities from early morning to evening across weekdays and weekends. The structure provides a glimpse into the various programmes and responsibilities from meal distribution to exercise and religious services for the sentenced offenders and those awaiting trial. It also includes the function and purpose of each housing unit within the centre and specifies quarantine, admission, and specialised units such as the hospital. Table 6.1 presents the master structured day programme for both centres.

Table 6.1: Master structured day programme for Boksburg Youth Centre

TIME	WEEKDAYS / PUBLIC HOLIDAYS MONDAY - FRIDAY	WEEKENDS / PUBLIC HOLIDAYS SATURDAY - SUNDAY
04:30	Nutrition officials report on duty	Nutrition officials report on duty
06:00	Un-mastering of the cells	Un-mastering of the cells

06:30	Unlocking and counting	Unlocking and counting
07:00	Serving of breakfast	Serving of breakfast
07:45	School	Church/Visit
08:00	Remand detainees (awaiting trial) march to court	Church/Visit/ Sport Recreation Arts and Culture (SRAC)
09:00	Psychologist, Social work, Church, awaiting trial, visit, programmes.	Church/Visit
10:00-11:00	Exercise for offenders	Church/Visit
12:30	Lunch time	Church/Visit
14:00	Psychologist, Social work, Programmes, SRAC	Visit Closed
15H00 16H00	Cleaning of Centre	Cleaning of Centre
17:00	Serving of Supper	Serving of Supper
17:30	Mastering of the Centre	Mastering of the Centre
18:00	Knock off	Knock off
UNIT POPULATION SIZE	DATE OF SENTENCE	THE PURPOSE OF THE UNIT
J 1 unit / cell - 5	18 – 26 April 2024	It's for quarantine purposes
J 2 unit / cell - 34	18 – 26 April 2024	To house sentenced offenders
J 3 unit / cell - 34	18 – 26 April 2024	To house sentenced offenders
J 4 unit / cell -	18 – 26 April 2024 No admission	It's for hospital purposes
J 5 unit / cell – 17	18 – 26 April 2024	It's for awaiting trial offenders
J 6 unit / cell -	18 – 26 April 2024 No admission	Receiving / admission unit
Total number of members in charge = 47		

According to participant C, the Boksburg Youth Centre's daily routine starts at 4:30 a.m. and includes structured activities such as cell unlocking, meals, exercise, education, and religious services. Weekday and weekend schedules slightly differ, especially regarding visits, exercise, and social or psychological services. Housing

units serve distinct purposes such as quarantine, hospital care, and housing for sentenced and awaiting-trial offenders. The centre operates with a total staff of 47 members to ensure adherence to the structured routine and specialised functions of each unit.

6.9 Master structured day programme Boksburg Medium A

Participant C outlines the master structured day for Boksburg Medium A. It details the structured daily routine in the correctional centre, including the activities and responsibilities from early morning to evening for weekdays and weekends. It provides insight into the various programmes and services from meal distribution to religious and recreational activities which are organised to support the needs of the sentenced offenders and those awaiting trial. Furthermore, it outlines the purpose and capacity of different housing units within the centre and designated spaces for temporary admissions, special populations, and specific sentence durations. The participants point out that some of the following activities have been identified to have assisted offenders in reshaping their lives; for instance: pastors would come and preach and also attend counselling services. Table 6.2 represents the master structured day programme for Boksburg Medium A.

Table 6.2: Master structured day programme for Boksburg Medium A

TIME	WEEKDAYS MONDAY - FRIDAY	WEEKENDS/PUBLIC HOLIDAYS SATURDAY - SUNDAY
04:30	Nutrition officials report on duty	Nutrition officials report on duty
06:00	Un-mastering of the cells	Un-mastering of the cells
06:30	Unlocking and counting	Unlocking and counting
06:30 07:00	Showering and counting	Showering and counting
07:00 08:00	Serving of breakfast	Serving of breakfast
09:10	Span duties, school, industries, workshop and hospital	Church, family/friends and Pastor's from other denominations visit

10:00 12:00	Counselling services and programmes	Church, visit, soccer league games	
12:00 13:00	Lunch	Lunch	
14:00 16:00	Cleaning of Centre	Cleaning of Centre	
16:00 17:00	Exercise	Exercise	
17:00	Serving of Supper	Serving of Supper	
17:30	Mastering of the Centre	Mastering of the Centre	
18:00	Knock off	Knock off	
UNIT POPULATION SIZE		DATE OF SENTENCE	THE PURPOSE OF THE UNIT
Admission unit – 94			Offenders are temporarily housed
A unit - 54 + 59+50+1543			Hospital, awaiting trial, single cell units for SAPS, Metro and gay offenders
B unit – 848 + 60 + 129, 152		29 April 2024 – 03 May 2024	Sentenced offenders, cooks Offenders with outstanding cases, also attending courts
D unit - 115			Workers and school unit
E unit - 70		29 April 2024 – 03 May 2024	Sentenced offenders with less than 2 years, also isolation unit
I unit - 125			Houses less than 2 years sentence.

According to participant C, the Boksburg Medium A operates on a tightly regulated schedule which begins at 4:30 a.m. with the arrival of nutrition officials and includes routines like cell unlocking, showering, meals, and cleaning. Weekdays focus on structured activities such as span duties, education, and counselling, while weekends are dedicated to visitation, religious services, and recreational events. The centre's units are designated for various purposes, including temporary admission, hospital care, isolation, and housing for both short-term and long-term sentenced offenders.

Participant C indicated that there are specific units which also cater for awaiting-trial individuals, workers, and offenders with particular needs.

6.10 Decentralisation

According to Luyt (2020:3), unit management uses the approach called the “decentralisation approach” with an aim to ensure that administration can be executed in one unit until the offender exits the centre. In contrast, the problematic offender would be moved by the officials in charge from one unit to another in trying to resolve problems. This approach recognises the importance of localised management, where each unit operates semi-autonomously to allow for personalised and consistent care for offenders. Participants A, B and C further elaborated that in both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, decentralised management leads to improved results in terms of offender rehabilitation and reduced recidivism rates.

6.11 The key factors for the successful implementation of Unit Management

According to Luyt (2020:3), unit management should ensure that communication is strengthened amongst staff members and offenders. The unit management should also ensure that the rights of the offenders are protected all the time, that the best ideal form of architecture should be practical, and they should also emphasise on the division of the correctional population into small semi-autonomous units.

6.11.1 Implementation cost

According to participant A and B, unit management is costly at both the Medium A and Maximum Youth Centres, as a new-generation centre. Although these Centres were specifically built to accommodate unit management as a management style, ongoing expenses are incurred to maintain the infrastructure and adapt it for evolving operational needs. This cost includes maintaining specialised structural elements and implementing additional adjustments that arise to support a conducive environment

for unit management. The high costs of unit management emphasise the importance of efficient resource allocation and for successful rehabilitation programmes.

6.11.2 Time of implementation

To introduce unit management at both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, ample time and resources are essential (Du Plessis & Lombard, 2018:1). According to the authors, the transition from traditional and passive custody to active custody requires extensive training for staff members to ensure effective implementation. This is particularly relevant for both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, given their role within the Gauteng Province and the South African correctional system (Symkovych, 2023: 4).

6.11.3 Direct supervision

The shift to active custody involves a more hands-on approach, where staff members engage directly with offenders, manage individual cases, and provide support and development programmes. According to Luyt (2020:24), unit management has the following advantages that can be of benefit to the correctional officials, offenders, and the correctional institution in totality:

- Staff members are permissible to exercise greater responsibility.
- Achievements become evident, and eventually result in increased recognition and greater number of achievements.
- Staff morale and attitudes rise.
- Tension amongst staff members is reduced.
- Illegal activities amongst staff members are reduced.
- As a result, the working environment becomes conducive for everyone.

Offenders feel that they are important because they are in charge of their own development Luyt (2020:25). The advantages for offenders are as follows:

- Staff and offender relationships improve; and

- Assessments become personalised and more suitable to individuals.

However, whether the unit management technique is successfully applied depends, in large part, on the following unit management drawbacks (Luyt, 2020:26).

6.11.4 Using the G303 form

Table 6.3 presents the form that is used by both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre before an offender is admitted into the centre. The Form called G303 provides personal and sentencing information of an offender currently housed in the Boksburg Youth Centre. It includes essential details about the offense, sentencing, admission, and security classification, and it establishes the framework for the offenders' supervision and rehabilitation within the correctional centre.

Table 6.3: Form G303

PERSONAL DETAILS AND INFORMATION		
SURNAME	PARTICIPANT 1	
FULL NAMES	PARTICIPANT	
REGISTRATION NUMBER	000000	
CURRENT OFFENCE	RAPE	
SENTENCE LENGTH	10 YEARS	
DATE OF SENTENCE	12 JANUARY 2024	
DATE OF ADMISSION	05 JANUARY 2024	
CORRECTIONAL CENTRE	BOKSURG	
SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	YOUTH CENTRE	MEDIUM A
(Mark with an X)	X	

An individual, who is identified as participant 1, is serving a 10-year sentence for a conviction of rape. The sentencing was issued on January 12, 2024, following admission to the Boksburg Youth Centre on January 5, 2024. The participant is classified under the Boksburg Youth Centre security level, which indicates a tightened level of supervision within the centre.

6.11.5 Using the G1 Admission Form

Table 6.4 presents the G1 Form with detailed information used during the offender admission at Boksburg Youth Centre in which an appointed correctional official will lead the process.

Table 6.4: Admission Form G1

Phase 1	Activity	Description	Responsibility
	Admission to the Correctional Services Centre		
Admission Point	Welcoming	- Introduce an offender to the Correctional Centre. - An offender is provided with basic information about the processes that will be followed (e.g. identification, admission assessment, health assessment, orientation, comprehensive assessment, profiling assessment).	An official appointed by the Head of Correctional Centre

	• Identification and capturing of personal details	• SAPS 216 body receipt is presented • Completion of detailed report • Verification of warrant • Fingerprint taken • Taking of digital photograph • Completion of relevant data on the admission risk/ needs assessment form • Issuing of identification card, clothing, toiletry and bedding • Recording of valuable items and storage • Case file is created.	Case Management Administration of
	• Admission for immediate risk/ needs assessment within 6 hours after admission	• Health status	Health Care Workers
		• Mental health status	Qualified Clinical psychologist/ counselling psychologist
		• Suicide risk assessments	Qualified Clinical psychologist/ trained nurse
		• Vulnerability	Social workers/ Qualified psychiatric nurse
		• Criminological assessment	Criminologists
		• Security risks	Head case management administration

	Consolidation of risk/ needs assessment information	- Ensure all the fields in the risk/ needs assessment form: - Have been completed - And that decisions regarding referral/ placement are executed.	Head case management administration/ delegated official
	Comprehensive medical/ health assessment	- The assessment that should be done within 24 hours of admission according to the law - Development of Nursing Care Plan where necessary and will contain: - The completed admission screening form - Comprehensive health assessment form. - All other forms and reports that will be generated for the provision of health.	Health Care Worker.

The Admission Form outlines the procedures and responsibilities involved in Phase 1 of an offender's admission to a correctional centre. This initial phase includes multiple assessments and processes designed to ensure accurate record-keeping, health and risk evaluations, and the orientation for the offender upon arrival. Each activity is carefully structured, and it involves specific personnel from various departments within the correctional centre to promote an in-depth and organised admission process. The Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre both use the G303 and G1 forms when they admit offenders, which "is crucial for ensuring accurate information, effective classification, and rehabilitation planning for offenders."

Phase 1 of the admission process for offenders in both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre involves a sequence of activities such as orientation, identification, and risk assessment. These are all designed to address the offender's immediate needs and prepare them for integration into the correctional system. The key responsibilities include welcoming the offender, verifying personal and legal information, assessing health and mental status, evaluating security and suicide risks,

and creating a case file. These tasks involve personnel from several departments such as healthcare, psychological services, and case management to ensure that the offender's entry into the centre is thorough, secure, and compliant with legal standards.

6.12 Orientation of offenders after admission in both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre

Luyt (2021:80) states that the orientation and assessment unit undertake a complete assessment of each individual. From each Centre, an authorised official would address all new admissions, including escapees and parole violators as soon as possible after admission by means of an intercom system, a voice recording device or by reading from the G412 manual for offenders (Department of Correctional Services, Republic of South Africa 2022:10). Where applicable and possible, the services of the interpreter may be utilised. Part of the orientation is that offenders must be orientated on several matters, including the rules and regulations of the centre.

6.13 Assessment of offenders at Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre

According to Section 24 of the South African Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998: 17), it is compulsory that the following should take place:

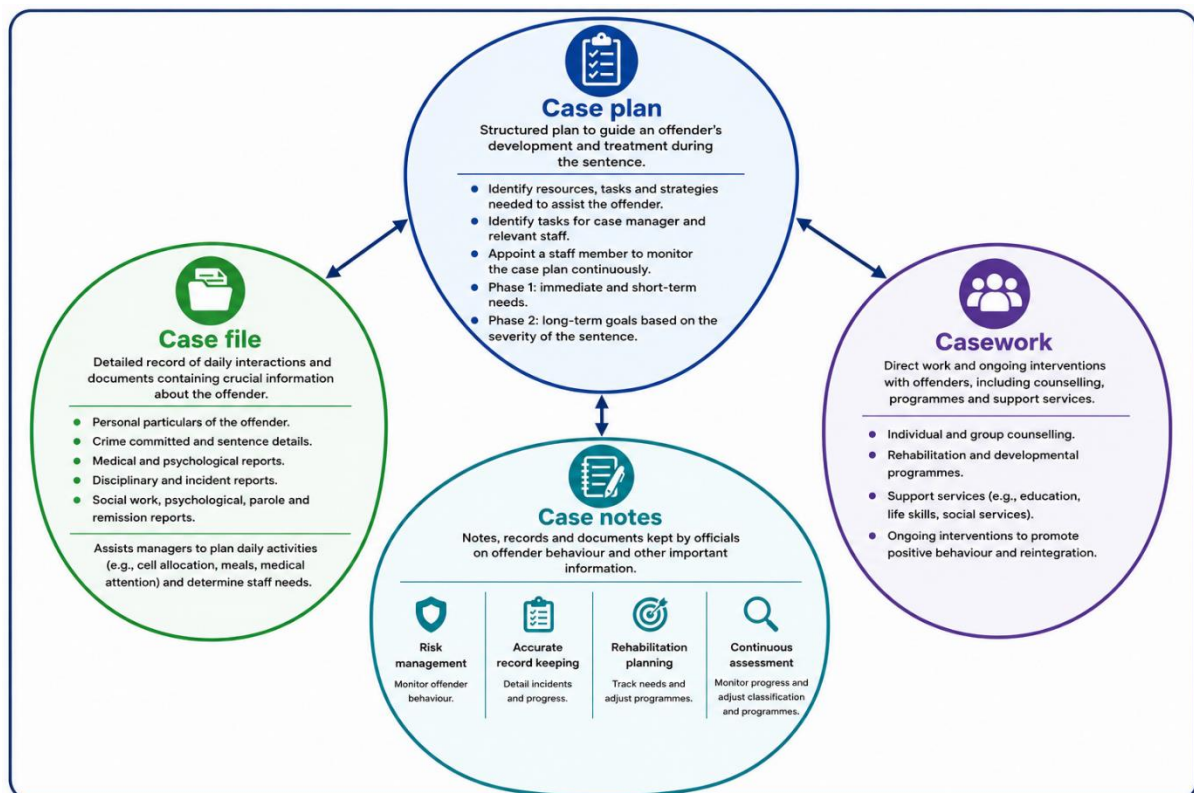
- Security classification of offenders.
- Classification due to health needs.
- Classification due to educational needs.
- Separation due to social and psychological needs, and vulnerability to sexual violence and exploitation.

Once the assessment of the offender is concluded, the Case Management Team (CMT) would then compile a case plan (Luyt, 2021:108).

6.13.1 The case plan and its goal

According to Luyt (2021:108), a case plan “becomes a practical manual for executing individual sentence planning.” The case plan serves as the starting point against where the advancement of the offender is evaluated. Figure 6.2 presents the essential components of a case plan.

Figure 6.2: Components of a case plan



Luyt (2021:109) identifies the key functions of the case plan that should be put in place in order to help an offender's successful development and treatment during the period of their sentence. According to participant A, delegated correctional officials need to take the following into considerations from both Boksburg Medium A and for Boksburg Youth Centre:

- To identify all the resources, tasks, and strategies that are needed to assist the offender;
- To notice all the tasks that have to be completed by the case manager and by other relevant staff members;

- The appointment of a staff member to monitor the case plan continuously;
- Phase one of the case plan which focuses on the immediate and future short-term demands; and
- Phase two, which focuses on the achievement of the long-term goal, but depends on the severity of the inmate's sentence.

6.13.2 The case file

According to Luyt (2021:112), a case file is a “detailed record of the daily interactions between staff members and offenders, and all the documents in the case file should be stored safe in a secure and accessible place. Participant A stated that in both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, the case file contains the most and crucial information of the offender. It contains information such as:

- Personal particulars of the offender.
- Crime committed and sentence details.
- Medical and psychological reports.
- Disciplinary and incident reports.
- Social work and psychological reports and also parole and remission reports.

Offenders' information assists managers to plan daily activities such as cell allocation, meal distribution, medical attention, and to determine the number of staff needed. Participants A and B stated that in both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, case notes are important during the incarceration of the offender.

6.13.3 Case notes

Both participants A and B point out that in Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, case notes refer to any notes, records or documents that are kept by a correctional official or social worker in connection with the offender's behaviour and also keep important information. The purpose of the case notes is to:

- Alert rehabilitation planning processes making regarding the offender;

- Record programme participation and outcome; and
- Record incidents and behaviour that might take place.

Case notes contain the following information:

- Risk management, where the delegated correctional official monitors the behaviour of the offender.
- Accurate record keeping, detailing the incidents and progress of the offender.
- Rehabilitation planning, tracking offender progress, needs, and adjustments of rehabilitation programmes.
- Continuous assessment, monitoring offender progress, and adjusting classification and rehabilitation programmes.

6.14 Human resource manager

Participants A, B and C point out that this important component mainly deals with an ongoing training and professional development of correctional officials. The Human Resource Manager is responsible for the following: implementation of team building, peer support, leaves, payments, overtime, and absenteeism of the correctional officials. The component is not directly involved with the rehabilitation and reintegration of the offender.

The centre coordinator for staff support is another important arm of the DCS which is responsible for the management of personnel, administration and registration, and employee wellness and relations. Participant A and B insist that this arm of the organogram does not play a role in terms of offender rehabilitation and reintegration. Therefore, the researcher is not going to dwell much on the staff support.

6.15 Conclusion

It is important to note that rehabilitation of offenders from both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre as mentioned above could be effective only if there is an intervention from the qualified individuals who possess tons of skills and also

dedicated to achieving the goal. There should be enough funds to be distributed equally in order to assist offenders from Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth offenders' Centres. Stakeholders such as service providers also play an important role in making sure that resources such as TVs and study materials are available for the benefit of all offenders. In the end, offenders should become actively involved in managing their progress during incarceration, and to make it easy for reintegration process to take place. In light of this, recidivism would be a thing of the past.

CHAPTER SEVEN

BOKSBURG MEDIUM A AND BOKSBURG YOUTH CENTRE

7.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses and discusses the findings of the research study on rehabilitation programmes in correctional facilities, specifically focusing on the Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre. The analysis draws from the interviews conducted with 31 participants, examining their experiences and perceptions of rehabilitation programmes. The study explored the effectiveness, appropriateness, and sufficiency of these programmes in preparing offenders for successful reintegration into society.

Rehabilitation programmes are designed to assist offenders in becoming as independent as possible in their daily tasks and to enable participation in employment, education, leisure activities, and significant life responsibilities such as caring for family members (WHO, 2023:1). These programmes give offenders the chance to build relationships with their families and communities, and to lead law-abiding and productive lives (Department of Correctional Services, n.d.). However, Ryan and Sim (2016:146) note that the prison is often a place of subordination, rather than rehabilitation, and tends to be characterised by violence, intimidation, and trauma. This highlights the importance of ensuring every arrested inmate participates in available rehabilitation programmes within the correctional institution (Muthaphuli, 2008:60).

The findings are presented thematically, addressing the following four research objectives:

- i. To make enquiries whether the rehabilitation programmes are appropriate and adequate to prepare offenders for reintegration into society.
- ii. To ascertain if offenders are amenable to participating in the programmes.
- iii. To establish whether offenders deem the programmes sufficient to prepare them for reintegration.
- iv. To determine how the programme presenters' ascertain whether offenders have been sufficiently prepared for reintegration into society.

Through careful analysis of participant responses, several themes emerged that provide insights into the effectiveness and challenges of current rehabilitation efforts. These findings offer valuable perspectives on both the strengths and limitations of existing programmes, while highlighting areas for potential improvement in preparing offenders for successful reintegration into society.

7.2 Demographic profiles of the participants

A total of 31 participants across Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre participated in the study. In terms of age distribution, 10 participants from the Boksburg Youth Centre were aged between 18 and 22 years and comprised eight (8) Black and two (2) Coloured individuals. The remaining 21 participants, aged between 26 and 58 years, were from Boksburg Medium A, with 20 identifying as Black and one (1) as Coloured. The racial composition included 28 Black and three (3) Coloured participants, which reflects a predominantly Black demographic across both centres.

7.3 Findings

This section presents and discusses the findings in line with the themes that emerged from the study. Table 7.1 presents the thematic map to make it easy for to follow through the presentation and discussion of the findings.

Table 7.1: Thematic map (themes and subthemes)

Theme	Subthemes
Theme 1: Appropriateness of rehabilitation programmes in preparing offenders for reintegration into society	1.1 Understanding and acceptance of past mistakes
	1.2 Skills for community contribution
Theme 2:	2.1 Motivation to change

Offenders' amenability to participate in rehabilitation programmes	2.2 Personal growth and learning
Theme 3: Offenders' perceptions of programme sufficiency for reintegration	3.1 Addressing recidivism
	3.2 Preparation for societal roles
Theme 4: Programme presenters' methods for assessing offenders' preparedness for reintegration	4.1 One-on-one and group interactions
	4.2 Focus on behavioural change

7.3.1 Theme 1: Appropriateness of rehabilitation programmes in preparing offenders for reintegration into society

Rehabilitation programmes in correctional facilities are designed to prepare offenders for a life free of crime and to enable their successful reintegration into society. According to Rafael (2018:8), facilitating offender reintegration is a complex task, and the impact of specific interventions is often difficult to measure. Offenders are released from the Correctional Centre, either Boksburg Medium A or Boksburg Youth Centre with certain expectations, and when these expectations are not met, they find it difficult to adjust to the outside world. They struggle to deal with practical problems such as work or lack of a support system, and they easily turn to a life of crime, leading to recidivism (Rafael, 2018:8).

While these programmes aim to address the root causes of criminal behaviour, promote accountability, and instil values that support constructive community engagement, Gröning (2015:1) emphasises that criminal rehabilitation must consider the offenders' capacity to take responsibility for their actions. The findings from the study revealed that while many participants acknowledge the role of the programmes in encouraging introspection and providing a sense of purpose, concerns were raised about their relevance, comprehensiveness, and alignment with external societal

realities. The discussion of this theme emerged with the following two subthemes: understanding and acceptance of past mistakes; and skills for community contribution.

7.3.1.1 Subtheme 1.1: Understanding and acceptance of past mistakes

Findings from the study revealed that understanding and accepting past mistakes is a major outcome of rehabilitation programmes. Participant 5 revealed that “the programme that is not to commit the same crime is the new beginning because in the beginning we are learning to accept you are arrested, you are convicted, and if we have to make better decisions next time.” This suggests that the programmes create an enabling environment where offenders confront their past actions and recognise the importance of accountability.

Similarly, participant 7 expands on this, stating that, “these programmes, they help us not to condemn ourselves. That is not the end of the road for you, since you are arrested, convicted, but they give you a chance to rectify the mistake that you have made.” This shows that the programmes bring hope and a level of renewal for the offenders, which encouraging them to see their incarceration as an opportunity for growth rather than a permanent failure. However, this is contrasted by participant 4, who contends that “sometimes you see your mistakes, but there’s no one helping you to deal with them fully.” While the programmes highlight the importance of self-awareness, they may not always provide the depth of support needed for complete emotional resolution. This can be recognised as a gap in the rehabilitation process. This thus means that while the programmes are effective in initiating accountability, there is a lack of additional psychological support to sustain the process.

To top it, participants 6, 10, and 21 add that it is good to “learn from your mistakes” and try again because the programmes teach you that you have a second chance. This likely stems from the restorative justice focus of some programmes, which emphasise reconciliation and personal growth. This points to the importance of embedding emotional support mechanisms into rehabilitation efforts, which, if left unattended, may hinder long-term behavioural change and reintegration.

Further findings from the study revealed that understanding and accepting past mistakes remains a pivotal outcome of rehabilitation programmes. Participant 15 stated, “the offending nature or behaviour is not being addressed... there’s nothing which is being done to address the reason why someone offended in the first place.” This points to the perceived gap in the programmes’ ability to encourage complete self-awareness. Participant 29 expanded on this, stating that “restorative justice helps me to see how my actions impacted my victim and also the government and the community.” This shows that some programmes succeed in encouraging offenders to reflect on the wider implications of their actions. However, participant 8 contended that “The stigma right now is present... for the rest of your life,” suggesting that external perceptions may undermine the benefits of introspection and accountability. While understanding and acceptance are cultivated within the programme, societal stigma can hinder the offenders’ full reintegration.

Furthermore, participants 8, 11 and 20 added that these programmes allow them to introspect and step back, absorb, and think. This may emanate from the reflective design of the programmes, which promote self-assessment as a foundation for change. However, this reflects the lack of complementary measures to combat societal stigma. If it is left unaddressed, it may corrode the progress achieved during incarceration.

7.3.1.2 Subtheme 1.2: Skills for community contribution

Findings from the study revealed that rehabilitation programmes equip offenders with skills for positive contributions to their communities. For example, participant 6 shared the opinion that “restorative justice helps you understand not just how you feel but how your victim is impacted and not just your victim, the family and the community as a whole.” This indicates the manner in which offenders are taught, which is or may be to empathise with the social consequences of their actions in order to encourage a mindset of community responsibility. Participant 17 elaborates further on this. According to the participant, “it’s not just about you, but for the sake of people who are outside, for the sake of people who are coming in, they will become better when they

come home.” Therefore, it can be said that offenders are motivated to improve themselves and to also inspire others within and outside the correctional system.

However, participant 18 contrasts this. They argue that “the programmes are good, but they don’t always show you how to apply what you’ve learned outside.” While the programmes succeed in developing a mind-set of responsibility, there is a gap in providing practical, real-world applications of the skills taught. This reflects the absence of an integrated stance to rehabilitation that combines emotional readiness with practical skill-building.

In a similar vein, participants 9, 10, and 11 add that they “learn about respect for others and about not getting into fights, and this helps us when we return to the community.” This may be a result of the emphasis on behavioural change within the programmes, which encourages peaceful coexistence and constructive engagement with others. This points to the transformative potential of rehabilitation programmes, which, if enhanced with practical applications, may lead to more effective reintegration outcomes.

Findings from the study revealed that rehabilitation programmes aim to prepare offenders for societal contribution by building interpersonal skills and community awareness. For example, according to participant 7, “the programmes teach us to see our place in the community and not get into fights... to respect others.” This shows that the programmes emphasise peaceful coexistence and social harmony. Participant 9 elaborated further that “substance abuse programmes help us understand how addiction affected our families and the community.” Therefore, it can be said that specific programmes address the relational aspects of behaviour to cultivate empathy and responsibility among the offenders.

However, participant 5 argued this. They lamented that “we’re given skills, but there’s no support outside to apply those skills in the community,” which is a gap between programme training and real-world implementation. There is the absence of post-release support structures which are critical for the effective application of skills gained during incarceration. Moreover, according to participants 7, 9, and 10, these programmes prepare them to become role models, but the lack of government support creates barriers. This is due to a systemic failure to integrate post-release pathways

with the rehabilitation process. There is thus a lack of stronger partnerships between correctional services and external support systems to ensure sustainable community contributions.

7.3.2 Theme 2: Offenders' amenability to participate in rehabilitation programmes

The success of rehabilitation programmes largely depends on the amenability – willingness and motivation, of offenders to engage in them. These programmes provide opportunities for personal growth, learning, and behavioural change, but participation is often influenced by the offenders' readiness to change and the perceived relevance of the programmes. While the findings revealed that many offenders expressed a desire to embrace the lessons offered, others noted barriers such as outdated content and the lack of practical applications for life outside prison. This theme explores the offenders' amenability to participate in rehabilitation programmes. The theme emerged with the following two subthemes: motivation to change; and personal growth and learning.

7.3.2.1 Subtheme 2.1: Motivation to change

Findings from the study revealed that the willingness of the offenders to participate in rehabilitation programmes stems from their motivation to change and improve their lives. Participant 25 revealed that "since I've attended this programme, it helped me to think positive that it is not the end of the whole problem." This indicates that offenders view the rehabilitation programmes as opportunities to rebuild their lives and approach challenges with a renewed mind-set. Similarly, participant 1 expands on this. They state that "the thing that I enjoyed the most about the programmes was that it helps you to understand the impact of your actions, not just for you but for others too." The participants feel an in-depth sense of purpose and responsibility which enhances their willingness to engage with the programmes.

However, this is contrasted by participant 14, who laments that “some people here don’t take it seriously because they don’t see the value in it.” Although the programmes aim to instil a desire for change, not all offenders may feel equally motivated to participate. This can be recognised as a challenge in tailoring the programmes to appeal to diverse individuals. This thus suggests that despite many offenders being motivated to change, the programme facilitators do not identify and address the barriers that inhibit some participants’ engagement.

According to participants 12, 15 and 30, the programmes help them to think about the consequences of crime, hence they are motivated to want to do better. This is due to the reflective nature of the programmes, which encourage the offenders to consider the long-term outcomes of their decisions. This points to the importance of cultivating intrinsic motivation within the participants. Consequently, if unattended, it may reduce the overall effectiveness of the programmes.

Further, the findings from the study revealed that the willingness of the offenders to participate is largely from a desire to change their lives. As participant 5 stated, “it’s up to you as an individual... if I’m not prepared to change, the programmes will do nothing.” This reflects the importance of personal motivation in achieving successful outcomes. Participant 11 expanded on this, stating that “the programmes teach you to accept your mistakes, but if you’re not ready to move forward, they can’t help.” This shows that although the programmes provide tools for change, their effectiveness depends on individual readiness.

However, participant 8 argued that “these programmes are outdated... they don’t address current challenges offenders face when they go out.” Generally, outdated curricula may limit the programmes’ relevance and appeal. While motivation is critical, aligning content with contemporary realities could enhance participation rates. However, participants 19, 10, and 21 explained that the programmes offer guidance on thinking about consequences, and that makes them want to do better. This may likely emanate from the emphasis on self-reflection and decision-making within the programmes. This indicates the relevance of continual programme updates. If these are implemented, they could sustain inmate engagement.

7.3.2.2 Subtheme 2.2: Personal growth and learning

Findings from the study revealed that offenders find personal growth and learning to be integral to their participation in rehabilitation programmes. According to Participant 16, “the most important thing is learning about yourself, about how you can forgive yourself and also forgive others.” Therefore, the participants show to value the self-discovery and healing that is facilitated by the programmes. Participant 3 elaborates further, that “it’s like I’ve taken a treasure because I’ve learnt how to become calm and accept whatever challenges come my way.” The offenders see the rehabilitation programmes as transformative experiences that help them to manage emotions and approach life from a balanced perspective. However, participant 4 disagrees with this sentiment. The participant argues that “sometimes they teach you things that don’t apply to real life, so you’re not sure how to use them when you go out.” Despite the programmes being praised for their impact on personal growth, some offenders feel that the lessons lack practical application. This reveals the potential absence of and need for programme facilitators to bridge the gap between theory and practice to enhance the effectiveness of the programmes.

Furthermore, participants 10 and 17 explain that through these programmes, they learn how to respect others and themselves, and that makes them better people. This is due to the emphasis on restorative practices and self-respect, which instil dignity and oneness in the community among the participants. This points to the value of integrating personal growth into rehabilitation efforts, which, if consistently emphasised, may strengthen the offenders’ commitment to positive change and reintegration.

Findings from the study further revealed that offenders value personal growth and learning as key outcomes of their participation in rehabilitation programmes. Participant 8 stated that “through anger management, I learned to step back, think, absorb, and decide instead of reacting instinctively.” This highlights the transformative effect of targeted skill-building initiatives. In correspondence, participant 25 elaborated that “the programmes give me choices... I’ve learned how to decide what kind of person I want to be.” This reveals that the programmes focus on cultivating the offenders’ autonomy and self-awareness.

However, participant 2 contended that “some programmes just give you information, but they don’t show you how to use it outside.” This suggests that bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical application is crucial and may be lacking for long-term impact. More so, according to participants 3, 7, and 19, the programmes help them to learn from each other and see new possibilities for change. This may be owed to the collaborative environment within group sessions, which promotes shared learning. There is thus a need for experiential learning components in rehabilitation programmes, which, if strengthened, could enhance the offenders’ personal growth.

7.3.3 Theme 3: Offenders’ perceptions of programme sufficiency for reintegration

The offenders' perceptions of the sufficiency of rehabilitation programmes in preparing them for reintegration are critical in evaluating the programmes' effectiveness. Chikadzi (2017:293) identifies the following several significant challenges faced by ex-offenders when re-entering the community after incarceration:

- Family members and the community persistently avoid and isolate them.
- Despite possessing required skills and certifications, many face unemployment due to their criminal record.
- Prevalent feelings of inferiority among offenders.

While the programmes aim to instil responsibility, respect, and accountability for the offenders, the participants expressed mixed views about their adequacy. Many offenders praised the programmes for instilling empathy and promoting self-reflection, while others highlighted gaps such as limited post-release support and outdated curricula that do not align with modern challenges. According to WHO (2023:1), rehabilitation should enable participation in employment, education, leisure activities, and significant life responsibilities, yet the findings suggest these goals are not fully realised. The sufficiency of these programmes is discussed through the lens of the following two subthemes: addressing recidivism; and preparation for societal roles.

7.3.3.1 Subtheme 3.1: Addressing recidivism

Findings from the study revealed that offenders perceive the programmes as tools to address recidivism by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to avoid reoffending. Participant 6 revealed that “restorative justice helps you understand not just how you feel but how your victim is impacted and not just your victim, the family and the community.” This indicates that the programmes focus on critical aspects which are essential for breaking the cycle of crime. According to participant 13, “these programmes make you see how your actions affect others, and that’s what makes you want to stay away from doing the same things.” Offenders thus recognise the programmes as effective in changing their perspective on crime and its consequences.

However, this is argued by participant 14, who challenges that “not all the programmes give you clear tools to handle the temptations or pressures you face outside.” While the programmes provide a foundation for behavioural change, they may lack practical strategies to address external challenges. This can be recognised as a limitation that could affect the long-term effectiveness of the programmes. This thus means that while the programmes are impactful in reducing recidivism, enhancing their real-world applicability could strengthen their outcomes.

Further findings from participants 17, 18, and 10 are that the programmes help them to think about the impact of their actions, hence they do not want to go back to the same mistakes. This emanates from the focus on reflective practices, which instil a deep understanding of the consequences of crime. This brings to light the strengths of the programmes in addressing recidivism. If consistently enhanced, it may sustain the offenders’ behavioural changes and societal reintegration.

Findings from the study also revealed that offenders view programmes as partially effective in addressing recidivism but acknowledge substantial limitations. Participant 15 elaborated on these limitations. According to the participant, “these programmes are just giving us information about what we already know, but they don’t really influence our behaviour.” This points to the perceived gap between the intended outcomes of the programmes and their practical effects on reducing recidivism. Participant 22 expanded on this, stating that “restorative justice shows you the impact

of your actions not just on the victim but on the whole community.” This is however a strength of the programmes in ensuring empathy and accountability.

However, participant 28 argued that “the stigma stays with you no matter what the programmes teach you and that makes it harder to stay out of crime.” While the programmes may address behavioural factors, external societal pressures and stigma remain unresolved. This can be recognised as a limitation to the programmes’ long-term success. To top it, participants 7 and 11 explained that the programmes help them to think about the consequences of their actions, but they do not prepare them for the lack of support outside. This is due to the systemic failure to provide comprehensive reintegration support, hence there is the absence of and need for extensive approaches that address the internal transformation and external societal challenges. If these are left unaddressed, they may perpetuate cycles of recidivism.

7.3.3.2 Subtheme 3.2: Preparation for societal roles

Findings from the study revealed that offenders view the programmes as preparing them for their roles in society by instilling respect, responsibility, and awareness of their place within their communities. This is explained by participant 7, who shared that “the programmes teach us to respect the community, to see a place in as you see yourself, and not get into fights and stuff like that.” This shows that the offenders are equipped with social skills that promote harmonious coexistence. Furthermore, participant 5 elaborates on this, stating that “since I’ve attended this programme, they helped me think positive, that it is not the end of the problem. There is still life after prison.” The participants gain a renewed sense of purpose and a belief in their ability to contribute meaningfully to society after attending the rehabilitation programmes.

However, participant 4 contrasts this by arguing that “sometimes the programmes don’t teach you enough about the real challenges you will face when you’re out.” While the programmes are praised for instilling positive attitudes, their perceived inadequacy in addressing practical challenges could limit their effectiveness. This suggests that incorporating real-life scenarios and problem-solving exercises is lacking to better prepare offenders for societal reintegration. Further findings from participants 8 and 11 revealed that the programmes give the offenders the confidence to share what they

have learned with others in the community, hence they can avoid the same mistakes that they made. This is owed to the restorative justice principles which are embedded in the programmes, which promote communal responsibility and mentorship. This reveals the programmes' role in encouraging proactive societal contributions, which, if bolstered with practical applications, could ensure more effective reintegration outcomes.

Further findings from the study revealed that offenders appreciate the programmes' efforts to prepare them for societal reintegration, but they feel inadequately supported in applying these lessons. For example, participant 10 remarked that "they teach us about respect, accountability, and finding our place in the community but the reality outside is different." Despite the programmes promoting positive ideals, they may not align with the practical challenges faced by the offenders after release. Participant 15 adds that "we're taught skills here, but there's no support system outside to help us to practice what we've learned." This indicates a disconnection between the theoretical and practical aspects of reintegration, as discussed earlier in Themes 1 and 2.

Participant 8 also contended that "some programmes are outdated and don't deal with the real problems we'll face when we leave." Although the programmes succeed in promoting personal growth, their perceived irrelevance to current societal contexts diminishes their effectiveness. In the same vein, Participants 7 and 29 added that they learn to respect themselves and others, but the system fails to support that progress when they go back into the community. This may be attributed to the lack of post-release mechanisms to reinforce the lessons learned. This indicates the failure to align the programme content with real-world contexts. If this is achieved, it could enhance the offenders' readiness for reintegration.

7.3.4 Theme 4: Programme presenters' methods for assessing offenders' preparedness for reintegration

The methods used by programme presenters to assess the offenders' preparedness for reintegration play a huge role in the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programmes. Facilitators adopt a variety of approaches to evaluate the offenders' behavioural changes and readiness for reintegration. While these methods may help to ensure

self-awareness and mutual respect, the study revealed that some participants pointed out that group settings may not provide equitable opportunities for all offenders to express themselves. Furthermore, an emphasis on behavioural assessments was noted by some participants, although some argued for an approach that addresses psychological challenges. This theme is explored through the following two subthemes: one-on-one and group interactions; and focus on behavioural change.

7.3.4.1 Subtheme 4.1: One-on-one and group interactions

Findings from the study revealed that programme presenters use a mix of one-on-one and group interactions to assess the offenders' preparedness for reintegration into the society. Participant 13 revealed that "it's a group session. It comes on one-on-one sometimes or group session." This reveals that facilitators tailor their methods to individual and collective needs with the goal to create spaces for personal reflection and collaborative learning. Participant 2 expands on this, stating that "we are free to pass whatever [we think] ... based on one [session], and if you answer whatever question they are asking you, that kind of relationship gives us that good vision." This interactive nature of the sessions promotes openness and encourages the offenders to share their thoughts, which aids in their self-assessment and growth.

However, this is contrasted by participant 8, who argues that "sometimes, in group settings, not everyone gets the chance to share deeply because of time." While group sessions offer valuable peer learning opportunities, they may fall short in fully addressing individual needs due to constraints. This can be recognised as a potential limitation in group-based approaches. This thus means that while the combination of one-on-one and group interactions is effective, ensuring equitable attention in group settings is essential for comprehensive assessments.

Participants 7, 20, and 13 add that the one-on-one sessions help them to talk about their personal challenges, while the group sessions allow them to learn from others. This likely stems from the dual focus on personal and communal growth, which enhances the facilitators' ability to gauge readiness. This points to the value of balancing these approaches, which, if maintained, may optimise the effectiveness of the programmes in preparing offenders for reintegration.

Further findings from the study revealed that programme presenters utilise both one-on-one and group interactions to evaluate offenders' readiness for reintegration. According to participant 5, "we have group sessions where the facilitator translates the information, and it becomes more of a dialogue." This shows that group settings provide opportunities for collective reflection and learning. Participant 12 expanded on this, stating that there's a mutual respect between the offenders and the facilitators, which makes it easier to share and learn. This points to the importance of cultivating trust and respect in the assessment process.

However, participant 1 contended that "in group settings, not everyone gets the chance to speak or share their personal challenges." This suggests that while group interactions are valuable, they may not fully address individual needs. This can be recognised as a limitation in ensuring comprehensive assessments for all participants. To top it, participants 17, 8, and 22 elaborated that the facilitators combine group discussions with individual sessions to better understand their challenges. This likely stems from a dual approach that balances collective and personal learning, which points to the value of such hybrid methods. If such methods are consistently applied, they could improve the accuracy and depth of inmate evaluations.

7.3.4.2 Subtheme 4.2: Focus on behavioural change

Findings from the study revealed that facilitators place a strong emphasis on assessing behavioural changes as an indicator of readiness for reintegration. Participant 21 shared that "she motivates you... you feel at home... she listens to our stories and also towards us." Therefore, it can be said that facilitators focus on creating a supportive environment that encourages the offenders to reflect on their behaviour and make positive changes. According to participant 3, "they focus on what's inside of you and help you work on your mind-set and behaviour." The facilitators aim to instil lasting changes by addressing the underlying attitudes and perspectives that may contribute to criminal behaviour.

However, participant 16 contrasts this by arguing that "sometimes they focus too much on how you behave now and not enough on whether you are ready for what comes after this." While behavioural assessments are critical, neglecting to evaluate the

preparedness for external challenges may weaken the programmes' long-term effectiveness. This suggests that facilitators do not balance their focus on internal change with practical strategies for coping with real-world reintegration scenarios. Accordingly, participants 7 and 8 explain that the programmes helped to change their mind-sets, and the facilitators see those changes and encourage them to "keep going." Owing to the motivational strategies employed by the facilitators, this helps the offenders to recognise and sustain their progress. Therefore, intensive behavioural assessments are important, hence they should be coupled with practical readiness evaluations to enhance the reintegration outcomes for the offenders.

Findings from the study revealed that facilitators emphasise assessing behavioural changes as indicators of readiness for reintegration. For example, participant 18 stated that, "the programmes make you introspect and reflect on how to handle challenges differently." This highlights the focus on encouraging self-awareness and emotional regulation among the offenders. Moreover, participant 5 elaborated that, the "facilitators guide us to think about our actions and the choices we can make to avoid repeating mistakes." This shows that facilitators encourage critical thinking as a tool for behavioural transformation.

However, participant 17 argued that "the programmes don't always address the psychological challenges we face when dealing with past trauma." While the focus on behaviour is essential, addressing the main psychological issues is equally critical for sustained change. According to participants 16, 2, and 9, the facilitators see the progress that they have made and encourage them to keep building on it, but they also need to help them to prepare for life outside. This is a result of the facilitators' dual role as mentors and evaluators, which enhances the offenders' confidence in their ability to change. It is thus important to integrate psychological support into behavioural assessments. When effectively implemented, it could further enhance the efficacy of rehabilitation programmes.

7.4 Limitations of the study

This study was successful although not without its limitations. The researcher encountered several constraints that should be considered when interpreting the

findings. First, the study was limited to two correctional facilities, namely, Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre, which may not fully represent the experiences of offenders across all correctional facilities in the region. Second, the sample size of 31 participants provided rich qualitative data, although it represents a relatively small proportion of the total inmate population.

Additionally, the predominantly Black demographic composition of the participant group (28 Black and three Coloured) may limit the generalisability of the findings across different racial groups. The study also faced time constraints in conducting in-depth interviews, particularly during group sessions, which may have affected the depth of information gathered from some participants.

Furthermore, the research relied heavily on self-reported data from the offenders and programme presenters, which may be subject to social desirability bias, where the participants might have provided responses which they believed were expected rather than their true experiences. The cross-sectional nature of the study also means that the long-term outcomes and the sustained effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes could not be assessed.

Finally, the study's focus on current offenders meant that perspectives from the successfully reintegrated former offenders, who could provide valuable insights into the long-term impact of these programmes, were not included in the research scope.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter analysed, presented, and discussed the findings from the study. Four themes emerged from the data obtained from the interviews with the participants and based on the objectives of the study. The discussion of the findings is supported by extant literature. The next chapter provides a summary of the findings and recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

The previous chapter analysed, presented, and discussed the findings from the interviews. This chapter summarises and concludes the findings in the study (on a broader basis than only those findings discussed in the previous chapter) and makes recommendations based on the findings and in line with the objectives of the study. In addition to the findings and recommendations, the chapter also puts forward suggestions for further research to bridge the knowledge gap.

8.2 Summary of findings

This section summarises the study in line with the objectives of the study. The subsequent subsections present the summary of the findings.

8.2.1 Appropriateness of rehabilitation programmes in preparing offenders for reintegration into society

The study revealed that rehabilitation programmes in correctional facilities play a major role in preparing offenders for reintegration into society. However, their effectiveness varies due to gaps, including (but not limited to) emotional support, practical skill application, and societal reintegration mechanisms.

Under the subtheme of understanding and acceptance of past mistakes, the findings indicated that these programmes encourage offenders' self-awareness, allowing them to reflect on their past actions and accept responsibility. Many participants acknowledged that rehabilitation gave them a sense of renewal, helping them avoid self-condemnation. However, some participants expressed concerns that the programmes initiate accountability, yet they do not always provide adequate psychological support for extensive emotional healing. More so, the presence of

societal stigma negatively impacts the progress of the offenders, hence reintegration becomes challenging.

Regarding skills for community contribution, the participants noted that rehabilitation programmes promote social responsibility by instilling empathy and interpersonal skills. While many appreciated learning about accountability and peaceful coexistence, there were concerns about the lack of real-world application of these skills during the post-release phase. Several participants highlighted the absence of structured external support, which makes translating their rehabilitation into meaningful societal contributions difficult.

8.2.2 Offenders' amenability to participate in rehabilitation programmes

The study revealed that the success of rehabilitation programmes depends largely on offenders' willingness and motivation to engage with them. While many participants expressed a genuine desire to embrace the lessons and improve their lives, others encountered barriers such as outdated content and a lack of practical application beyond incarceration.

Under the subtheme of motivation to change, the study found that offenders who saw value in rehabilitation viewed it as an opportunity for self-improvement and a renewed approach to life. Many participants appreciated how the programmes encouraged them to reflect on the consequences of their actions and achieve personal responsibility. However, some offenders struggled to connect with the content, as they stated that it did not always address their current challenges. This lack of relevance was seen as a hindrance to participation and engagement.

Regarding personal growth and learning, the findings showed that rehabilitation programmes provided valuable opportunities for self-discovery and emotional development. The participants acknowledged improvements in self-awareness, anger management, and interpersonal skills. Many valued the guidance on self-forgiveness and personal accountability, which helped them to prepare for reintegration into society. However, a recurring concern was the gap between theoretical learning and its real-world application. Some offenders felt that while the programmes provided

useful knowledge, they lacked the practical tools to implement these lessons successfully post-release.

8.2.3 Offenders' perceptions of programme sufficiency for reintegration

Offenders generally recognise rehabilitation programmes as tools for reducing recidivism. Participants reported that elements of restorative justice help them understand the impact of their actions, which, in turn, discourages reoffending. However, they appreciated the reflective practices embedded in the programmes, which assist with self-awareness and accountability.

Despite this, concerns emerged regarding the practical applicability of these lessons. Some participants argued that while the programmes provide theoretical knowledge, they do not equip offenders with concrete strategies to navigate external pressures upon release. Many lamented the persistent stigma surrounding ex-offenders, which remains a barrier to successful reintegration, as well as the lack of post-release support systems, which weakens the long-term effectiveness of these programmes.

Regarding preparation for societal roles, offenders valued the emphasis on respect and responsibility. Many acknowledged that the programmes helped them to develop positive mind-sets and recognise their place within their communities. Some also noted the confidence gained to share their experiences with others, and thus potentially preventing further cycles of crime.

However, there were notable gaps. Several participants pointed out that the programmes did not sufficiently address the realities of life beyond incarceration. They noted that while they were taught valuable skills and principles, these lessons did not always translate into practical and real-world preparedness. The outdated nature of some programme content was also frequently mentioned by the offenders who questioned its relevance in the modern socio-economic landscape.

8.2.4 Programme presenters' methods for assessing offenders' preparedness for reintegration

The study highlights the critical role that programme presenters' assessment methods play in determining the offenders' preparedness for reintegration. Facilitators aim to evaluate behavioural changes and encourage self-awareness through a combination of one-on-one and group interactions. However, the findings indicate that while these methods offer benefits such as openness and mutual respect, they also present certain limitations. Notably, group settings may not always provide equitable opportunities for all offenders to express themselves. Furthermore, behavioural assessments are heavily emphasised, yet some participants felt that psychological challenges were not sufficiently addressed.

Programme presenters employ a mix of one-on-one and group interactions to assess the offenders' readiness for reintegration. Individual sessions provide offenders with a space to discuss personal challenges, while group discussions facilitate peer learning and shared reflection. Participants generally found this dual approach beneficial, as it balances personal growth with collective engagement. However, concerns were raised about group settings, where time constraints sometimes prevent offenders from sharing their experiences in-depth.

Moreover, facilitators predominantly assess behavioural changes as an indicator of readiness. Encouraging offenders to reflect on their past actions and adopt new mind-sets is a core focus. Considering this, many participants found this approach effective in driving positive transformation, although some expressed concerns that it does not adequately prepare them for the psychological realities of reintegration. The lack of attention to past trauma and the challenges of life post-incarceration were also seen as a gap in the programmes' effectiveness.

8.3 Conclusions about the findings

The following conclusions about the findings to the study are made in line with the objectives of the study:

8.3.1 Appropriateness of rehabilitation programmes in preparing offenders for reintegration into society

The findings suggest that while rehabilitation programmes promote self-awareness and accountability, they fall short in offering the in-depth psychological support that is needed for emotional healing for the offenders. This gap in the rehabilitation process limits the programmes' ability to cultivate complete self-awareness, particularly in addressing behaviours linked to offending. Furthermore, the programmes do not sufficiently address societal stigma, hence the progress made during incarceration can be questionable. Although the reflective nature of the programmes encourages offenders to assess their actions and embrace community responsibility, the absence of complementary measures to address stigma negatively affects long-term reintegration.

The offenders are motivated to improve themselves and inspire others, driven by the programme's emphasis on understanding the social impact of their actions. However, while the programmes instil responsibility and promote peaceful coexistence through lessons on respect and societal roles, they do not provide practical avenues to apply these skills in real-world scenarios.

More so, the absence of post-release support structures further widens the gap between training and reintegration. Even though stronger collaborations between correctional services and external support systems are essential to ensure sustainable reintegration, inadequate government support remains a barrier.

8.3.2 Offenders' amenability to participate in rehabilitation programmes

Offenders often view rehabilitation programmes as valuable opportunities to rebuild their lives and tackle challenges with a renewed perspective. This positive outlook emanates from the mind-set that is enforced by the programmes, which recognises purpose and responsibility by encouraging many offenders to engage with the process. The reflective design of these programmes prompts the offenders to consider the long-term consequences of their actions and motivates them to strive for personal improvement. However, not all offenders share the same level of motivation. Many are

inspired to change, yet some face challenges to engagement that programme facilitators do not consistently identify or address.

Despite their effectiveness in promoting self-awareness and personal growth, the rehabilitation programmes lack practical applications. This disconnect between theoretical lessons and real-world scenarios diminishes their impact. However, a notable strength of the programmes lies in their collaborative group sessions, which recognise shared learning and mutual support. Nevertheless, there is a lack of bridging the gap between theory and practice to maximise their potential for meaningful rehabilitation.

8.3.3 Offenders' perceptions of programme sufficiency for reintegration

Offenders recognise rehabilitation programmes as effective in reshaping their perspectives on crime and its consequences. This motivates them to avoid repeating past mistakes. The programmes are impactful in reducing recidivism, but their limitations become evident when addressing external societal pressures and stigma, which remain unresolved barriers to long-term success.

The reflective design encourages the offenders to consider the consequences of their actions and share these insights with their communities. However, the programmes fall short in preparing the offenders for the practical challenges which they face after release. This disconnect between theoretical lessons and real-world application continues to surface.

Although praised for instilling positive attitudes and promoting personal growth, the perceived inadequacy of the programmes in addressing practical reintegration challenges undermines their effectiveness, and the lack of alignment with current societal contexts and external support structures further diminishes their relevance.

8.3.4 Programme presenters' methods for assessing offenders' preparedness for reintegration

Programme facilitators design their methods to address the individual and collective needs of offenders, creating spaces for personal reflection and collaborative learning. Group sessions provide valuable peer-learning opportunities, though they may sometimes fall short of addressing offenders' individual needs due to resource or time constraints.

Through a combination of one-on-one and group interactions, the facilitators assess the offenders' readiness for reintegration to encourage critical thinking as a tool for behavioural transformation. While this approach helps the offenders to recognise their progress and motivates them to build on it, a stronger focus on preparing for life after incarceration is lacking. Furthermore, intensive behavioural assessments are crucial, but coupling these with practical readiness evaluations to improve reintegration outcomes is further absent.

8.4 Recommendations

This study makes the following recommendations to address its findings. The recommendations are based on the study's findings and align with its objectives.

8.4.1 Appropriateness of rehabilitation programmes in preparing offenders for reintegration into society

The following recommendations are made in this regard:

- Programme relevance and modernisation: The findings revealed that some rehabilitation content is outdated and does not adequately address contemporary post-release challenges such as employment, digital literacy, and modern socio-economic realities. Further findings highlighted the offenders' concerns about the irrelevance of certain programme components in preparing them for real-life conditions beyond incarceration. Therefore,

updating and modernising programme content directly could help address offenders' concerns about programmes' irrelevance and enhance engagement, motivation, and preparedness for reintegration. Regular updates to rehabilitation curricula should thus be prioritised to ensure that the content remains relevant to the contemporary challenges offenders face after release. This includes addressing employment readiness, digital literacy, and modern societal reintegration strategies.

- **Enhanced practical application:** The findings revealed gaps in translating rehabilitation lessons into real-world application, particularly in community contribution and societal reintegration. Findings from the study also emphasised a disconnect between theoretical learning and practical post-release implementation. Introducing experiential learning strategies responds directly to the offenders' expressed need for practical tools and skills that can be applied outside correctional facilities. Rehabilitation should therefore integrate more hands-on learning experiences, including role-playing, mentorship schemes, and training in real-world scenarios. Strengthening experiential learning elements can also bridge the gap between theory and practice, making lessons more applicable to reintegration.
- **Individualised motivation strategies:** According to the findings, the offenders' willingness to participate varies greatly, with motivation influenced by personal relevance and support. The findings indicated that group-based approaches may limit individual expression and fail to fully address personal psychological challenges. Personalised motivational approaches address varying levels of engagement and ensure that offenders with diverse backgrounds and needs are adequately supported. Therefore, facilitators should adopt personalised approaches to encourage participation in the programmes. This may ensure that offenders with different levels of motivation and backgrounds are completely engaged. For example, motivational counselling, peer-led initiatives, and tailored support structures may be effective approaches.
- **Stronger post-release linkages:** The findings revealed a lack of structured post-release support systems, which is worsened by societal stigma to hinder successful offender reintegration into society. The participants highlighted the absence of external partnerships that could support employment and

community reintegration. In this regard, establishing partnerships with employers and community organisations directly responds to the identified lack of continuity and support after release. Partnerships between rehabilitation programmes, employers, and community organisations should be established to provide constant support and reinforce the skills learned during incarceration.

- Encouraging self-discovery and emotional growth: The findings acknowledged that while the rehabilitation programmes promote accountability and self-awareness, they are not effective in providing adequate emotional and psychological healing to the offenders. Further findings indicated insufficient attention to trauma, emotional regulation, and psychological preparedness for reintegration. Therefore, strengthening emotional intelligence and personal development components addresses these identified gaps in psychological support and enhances long-term behavioural change. Emotional intelligence and personal development components should be strengthened within rehabilitation frameworks. These should focus on self-acceptance, decision-making, and emotional regulation to enhance offenders' ability to sustain positive change beyond incarceration.

8.4.2 Offenders' amenability to participate in rehabilitation programmes

The following recommendations are made in this regard:

- Enhancing personal motivation: The findings showed that the offenders' willingness to participate in rehabilitation programmes depended largely on whether they perceived rehabilitation as personally meaningful and relevant to their lives. The study further found that a lack of personal connection to programme content reduced motivation and engagement among some offenders. It is thus recommended that both Boksburg Medium A and Boksburg Youth Centre develop personalised rehabilitation plans that align with the individual goals, needs, and aspirations of offenders to increase engagement. Incorporate motivational interviewing techniques to help the offenders recognise the benefits of participation and encourage motivation.

- Improving programme relevance and structure: The findings revealed that offenders struggled to engage with programmes that were outdated or ineffectively linked to real-life reintegration challenges. The participants indicated that limited practical relevance hindered their participation and the perceived usefulness of rehabilitation. It is recommended to ensure that rehabilitation programmes are clearly linked to practical reintegration strategies, such as vocational training, financial literacy, and conflict resolution skills. Offer a variety of rehabilitation activities to cater to different learning styles and interest to make participation more appealing.
- Strengthening peer support and role modelling: The participants (offenders) valued shared reflection, empathy, and learning from others' experiences. The absence of structured peer mentorship was identified as a missed opportunity to enhance motivation, accountability, and confidence. It is recommended to encourage participation through peer mentorship, where rehabilitated offenders share their experiences and success stories to inspire others. Establish support groups within the rehabilitation framework to create oneness in the community and accountability.
- Enhancing facilitator engagement and training: The findings indicated that facilitator approaches greatly influenced offender participation and openness during rehabilitation sessions. The participants noted that limited interactive engagement and insufficient psychological expertise reduced the programme's delivery effectiveness. It is recommended that facilitators be trained to adopt participatory, interactive teaching methods that maintain engagement and encourage open dialogue among offenders during the programmes. Provide facilitators with continuous professional development in psychological support and behavioural change strategies.
- Addressing resistance and psychological barriers: According to the findings, trauma, mistrust, and unresolved psychological challenges hindered the offenders' active participation in rehabilitation programmes. The study found that while accountability was encouraged, the level of emotional and psychological support was insufficient. It is recommended to introduce initial orientation sessions that help offenders to understand the purpose and long-term benefits of rehabilitation programmes. Offer psychological support and

counselling to address the main issues that may hinder their participation, such as trauma or a lack of trust in the system.

- Improving programme accessibility and flexibility: The findings showed that group-based formats and rigid scheduling limited equal participation among offenders. The participants indicated that time constraints and inflexible delivery methods prevented some offenders from fully engaging with rehabilitation activities. Ensure that rehabilitation programmes are scheduled in ways that maximise participation, taking into account the offenders' daily routines and responsibilities. Provide alternative learning methods, such as self-paced modules or blended learning approaches, for those who may struggle with traditional group formats.

8.4.3 Offenders' perceptions of programme sufficiency for reintegration

The following recommendations are made in this regard:

- Enhancing practical training: The study established that offenders perceived a gap between theoretical learning and real-world reintegration demands. The participants generally reported that programmes did not adequately prepare them to manage external pressures after release. Rehabilitation programmes should include real-world scenarios and problem-solving exercises that simulate reintegration challenges. This would better equip the offenders with strategies to manage external pressures and temptations.
- Strengthening post-release support: It was established that there is a lack of structured post-release support systems for offenders as the participants identified the absence of employment linkages, mentorship, and community guidance as major barriers to effective reintegration. A structured reintegration framework should be established to provide continuous guidance, mentorship, and assistance in areas such as employment and housing. Partnering with community organisations could facilitate this process.
- Updating programme content: The findings highlighted concerns about outdated rehabilitation curricula that failed to reflect current socio-economic realities and do not address modern employment and digital skills. Therefore,

regular reviews should be conducted to ensure that the curriculum reflects contemporary societal challenges and opportunities. This could include training on digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and modern employment practices.

- Addressing stigma: Based on the findings, societal stigma posed a negative impact on the offenders' reintegration efforts. Public awareness campaigns and community engagement initiatives should thus be introduced to challenge negative perceptions of ex-offenders. Encouraging reintegration through positive narratives can further improve social acceptance.
- Creating sustainable support networks: The lack of formal peer-based reintegration networks was identified as a gap in sustaining positive change after release for offenders. Peer mentoring systems among former offenders who have successfully reintegrated could serve as a resource for those newly released. This may provide them with relatable guidance and motivation.

8.4.4 Programme presenters' methods for assessing offenders' preparedness for reintegration

The following recommendations are made in this regard:

- Enhancing individualised assessments: The participants reported that one-on-one sessions were quite effective in addressing personal challenges and readiness for reintegration, while group assessments did not always provide sufficient space for individual reflection. While group sessions promote peer learning, one-on-one interactions should be prioritised to ensure that every offender has an opportunity for personalised reflection and feedback.
- Balancing behavioural and psychological evaluations: The participants felt psychologically unprepared for reintegration despite demonstrating behavioural change. Facilitators should incorporate mental health support into their assessment framework to ensure that past trauma and emotional resilience are addressed alongside behavioural change.
- Improving group session dynamics: The findings indicated that time limitations in group sessions prevented equitable participation in rehabilitation programmes, hence some offenders may have felt their voices were

overshadowed, which limits the depth of the programmes. Structured opportunities should be created within group settings to allow all participants to contribute meaningfully. If successful, this might mitigate the risk that some voices are overshadowed by time constraints.

- **Preparing offenders for real-world challenges:** The findings revealed that assessments did not adequately evaluate the offenders' ability to cope with post-release social and psychological pressures. Therefore, the participants expressed a need for practical coping strategies beyond behavioural transformation. In addition to assessing behavioural change, facilitators should integrate training in practical coping strategies for reintegration to help offenders navigate the psychological and social pressures they are likely to face upon release.

8.5 Suggestions for future research

This study makes the following important suggestions for further research:

- i. The long-term impact of rehabilitation programmes on the reintegration of offenders into society. This is because the findings raised concerns about the limited post-release support and uncertainty about whether the gains achieved during incarceration are sustained after reintegration.
- ii. The role of psychological support in improving the participation of offenders in rehabilitation programmes. Further investigation into psychological support is necessary since the findings revealed that while behavioural change is emphasised, emotional healing and trauma support are insufficient and affect offenders' participation in rehabilitation programmes.
- iii. The effectiveness of one-on-one interactions compared to group-based assessments in evaluating the preparedness of offenders for reintegration. Such research is required to compare one-on-one and group-based assessments because the findings indicated that group settings limit individual expression and may not accurately reflect the offenders' readiness for reintegration.

- iv. The influence of peer mentorship on the motivation of offenders to participate in rehabilitation programmes. This is because the findings showed that shared experiences during counselling sessions motivate offenders, although structured peer support systems are absent.
- v. The extent to which rehabilitation programmes address the psychological and emotional challenges of the offenders. Future research is needed to assess how well rehabilitation programmes address psychological and emotional challenges, as the findings highlighted gaps in trauma support despite improvements in self-awareness and accountability.
- vi. The relationship between the behavioural changes of offenders during rehabilitation and their post-release outcomes. This research should explore the link between behavioural change during rehabilitation and post-release outcomes because the findings suggest that observable behavioural improvement does not always translate into successful reintegration.
- vii. The effectiveness of different facilitation styles in rehabilitation programmes since the findings indicated that facilitator engagement and interactive methods have a huge effect on offender participation and openness.
- viii. The impact of tailored rehabilitation approaches on the engagement and learning outcomes of offenders because the findings showed that rehabilitation programmes aligned to individual needs and goals improve motivation and engagement.
- ix. The barriers that prevent offenders from fully engaging in rehabilitation programmes. Research is needed to identify the barriers to full programme participation because the findings revealed challenges such as outdated content, psychological resistance, inflexible programme structures, and limited trust in the system.
- x. The role of external stakeholders in supporting the reintegration of offenders. This is based on the findings that weak partnerships and limited post-release support hinder successful offender reintegration into society.

8.6 Final word

The sentenced offender rehabilitation and reintegration in correctional facilities reflect the progress made and the challenges that remain. The rehabilitation programmes have been successful in reshaping offenders' perspectives on crime and encouraging personal growth. However, gaps such as limited practical applicability, insufficient post-release support, and unresolved societal stigma restrict their long-term impact. Despite this, the dedication of facilitators, the potential for tailored interventions, and the collaborative learning environments within the programmes provide a strong foundation for improvement.

The enhanced alignment between theoretical content and real-world challenges may increase investment in post-release structures and strengthen partnerships with external stakeholders, hence these programmes can evolve into comprehensive frameworks for behavioural transformation for sentenced. The ongoing focus on innovation, stakeholder engagement, and resource allocation signals a promising path forward. There is hope that these initiatives will not only reduce recidivism but also empower former offenders to lead meaningful, productive lives in their communities. Through collective efforts to address these challenges, rehabilitation programmes can serve as pivotal tools to ensure the sustainable reintegration and societal harmony of offenders.

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Annexure A: Inmates' interview schedule

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR INMATES

This interview schedule is designed to explore inmates' perceptions of recidivism, rehabilitation programmes, programme delivery, satisfaction, and perceived benefits of rehabilitation programmes at Boksburg Correctional Centre. Participation is voluntary and responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Section A: Inmates' Views on Recidivism

1. Please explain your understanding of the term *recidivism*.

2. In your opinion, do rehabilitation programmes contribute to the reduction of recidivism? Please explain your answer.

3. Do you believe that participation in these programmes can help prevent you from committing a similar offence in the future? Please elaborate.

4. Please describe how the specific rehabilitation programme(s) you are enrolled in may assist in preventing you from reoffending.

5. In what ways do you think rehabilitation programmes contribute to reducing recidivism? Please provide details.

Section B: Participation in Rehabilitation Programmes

1. Duration of incarceration (please tick the appropriate option):

- ☐ 0–2 years
- ☐ 2–5 years
- ☐ 5–10 years
- ☐ 10 years and above

2. Do you participate in any correctional rehabilitation programmes?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. How often do you attend these programmes? Please specify:

- ☐ _____ times per week
- ☐ _____ times per month
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

4. Please list the rehabilitation programme(s) you currently participate in:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

5. How are these programmes delivered or presented (e.g., group sessions, individual sessions, workshops)?

Do you believe these rehabilitation programmes have had, or will have, a positive impact on your life? Please motivate your response.

6. In your opinion, is the content of these programmes relevant to your individual circumstances?

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. In your view, what effects do rehabilitation programmes have on the behaviour and conduct of inmates at Boksburg Correctional Centre?

Section C: Satisfaction with Rehabilitation Programmes

1. Are you satisfied with the rehabilitation programmes provided to you?

2. Please explain the reasons for your satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

3. Are there any aspects of the programmes that you particularly enjoy? Please describe them.

4. Are there any aspects of the programmes that you find helpful in improving your personal situation? Please explain.

5. How do you usually interact with the programme facilitator(s)? Please describe the nature of this interaction.

Section D: Perceived Benefits of Rehabilitation Programmes

1. Have you benefited from any rehabilitation programme(s) you have completed? Please explain how.

2. To what extent did the completed rehabilitation programme(s) meet your expectations?

3. In your opinion, how well have these programmes prepared you for reintegration into the community upon release?

4. Are there any additional rehabilitation programmes that you have not yet completed which you believe would be beneficial for your successful reintegration into the community? Please specify.

Annexure B: Ethical clearance letter



College of Law_RERC

Date: 11/09/2023

Dear: Mr Shadrack Mathutha Khanye

Ref #: 1144

Name: Mr Shadrack Mathutha Khanye

Student #: 44D11679

Decision: Ethics Approval from
11/09/2023 to 11/09/2026

Researcher: Mr Shadrack Mathutha Khanye

50 O'Reilly Merry Street, Northmead, Benoni

BENONI

44D11679@mylife.unisa.ac.za 0815181789

Supervisor: Professor Nicolien du Preez ndupreez@unisa.ac.za

Sentenced inmates rehabilitation and reintegration: A case study at Boksburg Correctional Services

Qualification: MA CORRECT MAN (98601)

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the College of Law_RERC for the above mentioned research study. Ethics approval is granted for three years.

The medium risk application was reviewed by College of Law_RERC on 11/09/2023 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the College of Law_RERC.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date 11/09/2026. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal, for Ethics Research Committee approval.

Additional Conditions

1. Disclosure of data to third parties is prohibited without explicit consent from Unisa.
2. De-identified data must be safely stored on password protected PCs.
3. Care should be taken by the researcher when publishing the results to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the university.
4. Adherence to the National Statement on Ethical Research and Publication practices, principle 7 referring to Social awareness, must be ensured: "Researchers and institutions must be sensitive to the potential impact of their research on society, marginal groups or individuals, and must consider these when weighing the benefits of the research against any harmful effects, with a view to minimising or avoiding the latter where possible." Unisa will not be liable for any failure to comply with this principle.

Note

The reference number 1144 should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,

Prof Lincoln Fitz
Chair of College of Law_RERC
E-mail: fitzg@unisa.ac.za

Executive Dean / By delegation from the Executive Dean of College of Law_RERC
E-mail: kaleaj@unisa.ac.za

Annexure C: Approval letter from the Department of Correctional Services



correctional services

Department:
Correctional Services
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X136, PRETORIA, 0001 Poyntons Building, C/O WF Nkomo and Sophie De Bruyn Street, PRETORIA
Tel (012) 307 2059, Fax 086 539 2693

Dear Mr Khanye SM

**RE: Sentenced Inmate Rehabilitation and Reintegration: A case study at
Boksburg Correctional Services.**

It is Pleasure to inform you that your request to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services has been approved.

Your attention is drawn to the following:

- This ethical approval is valid from **25 October 2023 to 25 October 2024**
- The relevant Regional and Area Commissioner where the research will be conducted will be informed of your proposed research project.
- **Your internal guide is Director: Personal Development and Care.**
- You are requested to contact the Area Commissioner before the commencement of your research.
- It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your interviewing times.
- Your identity document/passport and this approval letter should be in your possession when visiting regional offices/Correctional Centers.
- You are required to use the terminology used in the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (February 2005) and Correctional Services Act (No.111 of 1998) e.g. "Offenders" not "Prisoners" and "Correctional Centers" not "Prisons"
- You are not allowed to use photographic or video equipment during your visits, however the audio recorder is allowed.
- You are required to submit your final report to the Department for approval by the Commissioner of Correctional Services before publication (including presentation at workshops, conferences, seminars, etc.) of the report.

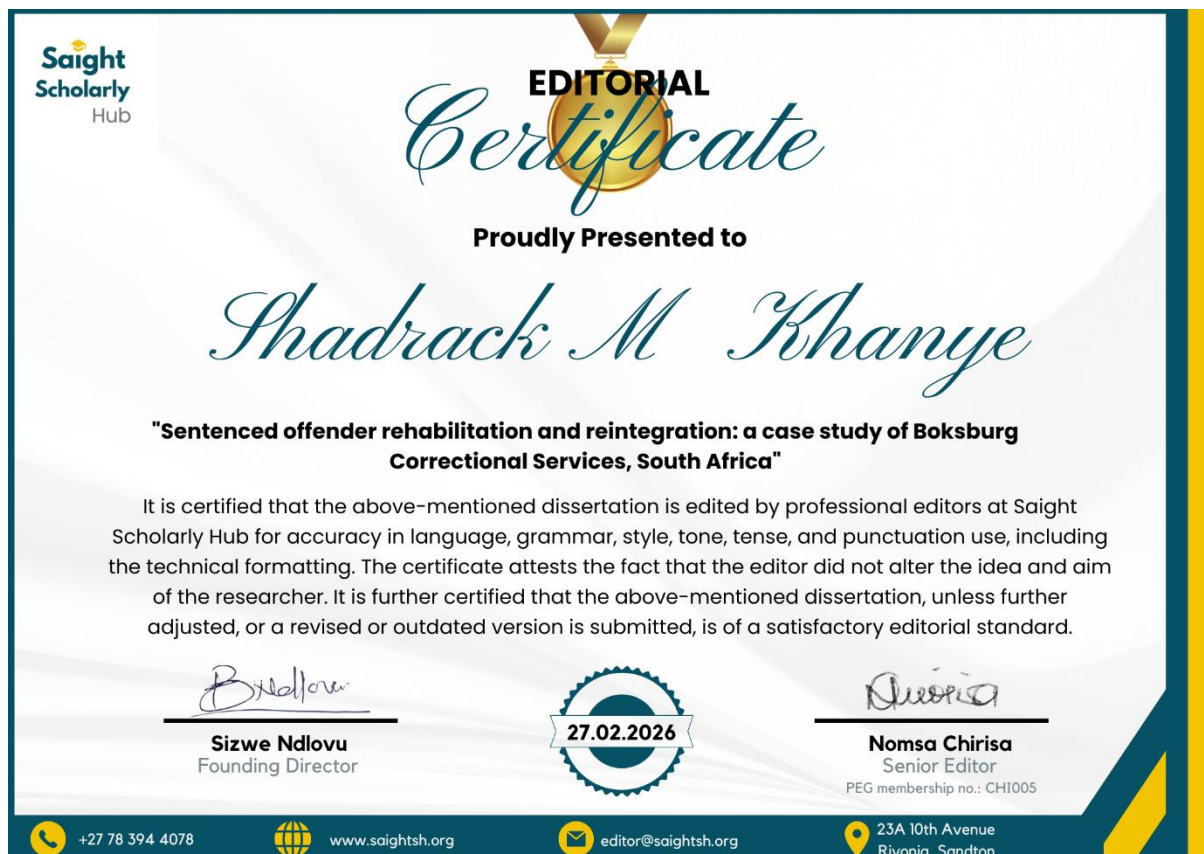
Should you have any enquiries regarding this process, please contact the REC
Administration for assistance at telephone number (012) 307 2059

Thank you for your application and interest to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services.

Yours faithfully

ND MBULI
Chair: DCS REC
DATE: 25/10/2023

Annexure D: Editor's certificate



Annexure E: Turnitin similarity report



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