



Effectiveness of Probation System and Community Correctional Services in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The key objective of the study was to examine the effectiveness of the probation system and community correctional services which are provided during the probation period in Pakistan. So the main focus of the study is that how the probation system does play a significant role for rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders to the society as better citizens. The Universe of the research is the probationers in jails of Pakistan. It is a survey based study. So, the multi stages sampling method has been applied. Hence seven districts have been selected by using simple random sampling techniques. Resultantly two hundred and ten probationers have been finalized through applying a proportionate sampling method. The result of the study showed that rehabilitation of probationers has been linked with supervision of probation officers. This relationship has been measured through change in the behavior of the probationers during their probation period and the role of the officers for their rehabilitation.



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1. Introduction

Probation means taking an offender back to normalcy by suspending the punishment with a commitment to further avoidance of criminal activities. In probation, an offender is released by the court and is supervised by a probation officer. The word "probation" has Latin origin and has been taken from the word "probates" which means "proved" or "tested". In probation imprisonment is suspended subject to certain terms and conditions. It is also regarded as a judicial warning. Being a substitute of incarceration, the Probation System is an important component of community corrections. Probation also grants an offender a chance to become a normal member of the society.

In Pakistan laws related to probation were adopted with certain modifications which were passed during the British Colonial era. So currently the laws with regard to probation services in Pakistan are: The Probation of Offenders Ordinance, 1960, The Good Conduct Prisoners Probationary Release Act, 1962, The Criminal Procedure Code 1898 and All India Probation Bill of 1931. The enacted laws have been applied with the passage of time subject to the nature of the crimes and the changing trends in the probation system. By following Probation of Offenders Ordinance 1960 and Good Conduct Probation Released Act 1962 which provide release on probation as a substitute for human life and to save an offender from

doing crime repetitively while The Criminal Procedure Code, 1898 provides grounds for probation on the condition if an offender's conduct is good during imprisonment. After evaluation of the conduct of a prisoner under the code he/she can be released on probation. The mechanism which is provided under The Criminal Procedure Code, 1898 has been operating in Pakistan since the British colonial era. It is worth mentioning that the All India Probation Bill of 1931 remained effective during joint administration of English officials and local people in the subcontinent. However, the roots of probation system can be traced much before the presentation of the All-India Probation Bill of 1931 in British times.

As it is said by Martinson and Wilks (1977) that the prime purpose of reformation were to avoid recidivism. Furthermore, in the research work of American Probation and Parole Association it was opined in 2011 that community based correctional programs support offenders to protect their families. In the same way, the United Nation Institute for Crime Prevention suggested in 2003 that the probation system helps offenders to become normal citizens. Probation program is one of the community correctional programs in which offenders are released on certain conditions instead of incarceration. There are a number of advantages of probation namely: it reduces overcrowding in the prison, lowering cost and it would also prevent distress and social stigma caused by imprisonment over them.

Moreover, it is said by McAnany, Thomson, and Fogel (1984) that probation also guarantees liberties and human rights. It also involves association and reassociation with family, friends and circles of society to learn, relearn and to become a breadwinner for family and also generates not only employment opportunity but also rebuild character of an offender to become a regular member of society. The adaptations of values in life in the future of an offender become easy with the assistance of a probation officer.

1.1. Statement of the Problems

The effectiveness of the probation system among other types of systems and models assumes importance if rampancy and recurrence of the crime is to be studied in any country. It is noted that Probation based mediation and other retributive models go parallel in Pakistan. There is no doubt that two studies like "Risk and Need Assessment of Offenders on Probation in Lahore" Bhutta and Wormith (2016) and "To examine the effectiveness of probation services in the criminal justice system in Punjab, Pakistan" Khokhar, Arshad, and Afzal (2014) are conducted in this regard. Instead of both the studies there is a dire need of more studies to probe the matter deeply. So there is a gap which is: to study effectiveness of the probation system and services rendered during probation period to rehabilitate offenders. To fill the gap, present research gives an insight and works like a bridge by studying different aspects that relate to the effectiveness of the probation system in Pakistan.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

- To understand the socio-economic and demographic condition of probationers
- To examine the nature of offense committed by probationers in Pakistan
- To identify the Re-offending of probationers during the probation period.

2. Review of Relevant Literature

The review of the literature refers to comprehensive summary and suitable references of a previous research on a similar topic or more or less same nature of the topics. A survey regarding efficiency of the probation system and services provided during the probation period will be examined. It is observed that when we study the previous research work on the topic or related research works conducted by many researchers, it helps us to develop our understanding about numerous features of community based correctional programs. It also helps us to know about interaction with the people and social re-integration of the offenders released on probation. So for the present research work the study of previous research works is direly needed.

Faiz (1962) carried out research about the probation system and the services provided during the probation period; his center of attraction was based on certain factors necessary for re-adjustment and reintegration of offenders into society. His research work on probation was based on different areas. So it was found that only eleven out of fifteen cases were able

to re-adjust with their family environment. He also noted that out of fifteen only two cases were not satisfied with their occupation and all others agreed with their earning. It was also observed that all of the cases were re-adjusted in society and out of those 15 cases there were two cases which were reconnected to the crime. It was clearly visible out of the research findings that among all correctional programs the probation system was more effective for rehabilitation, reintegration and reformation of offenders.

Khan, Bhatti, and Mustafa (1964) reviewed the "social adjustment of juveniles" in his research study. He observed about the factors that help probationers in their re-adjustment to the society. He concluded that those offenders who had strong family bonding before committing crime were more likely to readjust in normal life than others who had not. He opined that family bondage provides a favorable framework for rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. Idrees and Javed (2023) observed that out of 18 ex- probationers 16 were satisfied and came back to normal. According to the research, all the cases except an old age offender were re-adjusted and rehabilitated. He further argued that 04 out of 18 ex-probationers had negative feelings towards religion.

Irish (1977) also tried to find out the effectiveness of the probation system and the services provided during the probation period. It was concluded by the researcher that around 75% of ex-probationers were re-adjusted and also almost 67% had become conformists. Therefore, by considering the finding of the research he concluded that probation was the most helpful and fruitful method to reform offenders.

Rogers (2021) wanted to check the causes of recidivism by analyzing the population containing 1104 probationers which were an equal mix of both males and females. In her findings she concluded that one out of five probationers was again involved in crime during his probation period. With the passage of time after two years of probation the number of criminals increased from one out of three. It was also surprisingly observed that there was a great criminal tendency in those probationers who were kept under strict supervision then others who were not kept under such conditions.

Allen and Treger (1990) carried out a detailed study between May 01 and June 30th 1987. During the research a biographical and interview based data was applied and those federal probationers from the north district of Illinois who were sent on probation in compliance with called orders reviewed the perception of probationers and best agencies regarding community services order. The research work was based on the theoretical perspective of rehabilitation, deterrence, desert and Justice model. It was concluded from the study that the probation services were very useful for both probationers and agencies. Another research was conducted by McCarthy and Langworthy (1988) in which they tried to compare older with younger probationers in their research work. It was observed that there was a higher success rate for older offenders as compared to younger offenders.

3. Method and Material

3.1. Nature of research

In the research both qualitative and quantitative research methods have been applied. It is common in social sciences research to apply mixed methods of the research.

Table 1
Inclusion of District and Proportion of Probationers

Sr. No	District	No. of Probationers	Proportion@5%
1	Faisalabad	920	46
2	Jhang	307	15
3	Chiniot	370	19
4	Sargodha	712	36
5	Sialkot	1001	50
6	Okara	452	23
7	Khanewal	414	21
Total		4176	210

In the current research work universe of the study was seven districts which were selected namely as Faisalabad, Jhang, Chiniot, Sargodha, Sialkot, Okara and Khanewal by

using simple random sampling techniques. Afterwards 210 probationers were finalized through applying proportionate sampling methods selected from all districts. After collection of data it was analyzed by applying SPSS.

4. Results and Major Findings

Data analysis is said to be very important for the accuracy and validity of the research. Therefore, for the research study a survey method is used to analyze the data.

Table 2
Distribution of Respondent's Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15-25 Years	39	18.6
26-35 Years	82	39.0
36-45 Years	53	25.2
46-55 Years	27	12.9
56 & above	9	4.3
Total	210	100.0

Table no 2 presents the distribution of respondents age and highlighted that less than half 39% (82) were of age group of 26-35 years, 25% (53) were of age group of 36-45 years, 19% (39) belonged to the age groups 15-25 years, 13% (27) were in the age group 46-55 years and only 4% (9) belong to the age group 56 years & above.

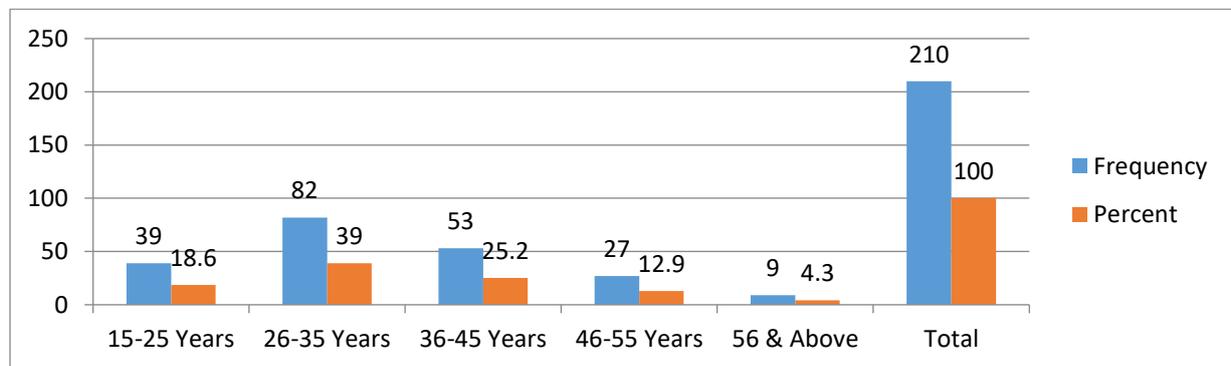


Figure 1: Frequency of Respondent's Age

Table 3
Education Status

Education Status	Frequency	Percentage
Literate	102	48.6
Illiterate	108	51.4
Total	210	100.0

Participants' educational status described in table no 3 and results shows that more than half of the respondents' were illiterate 51 % (108) and less than half 49% (102) were Literate.

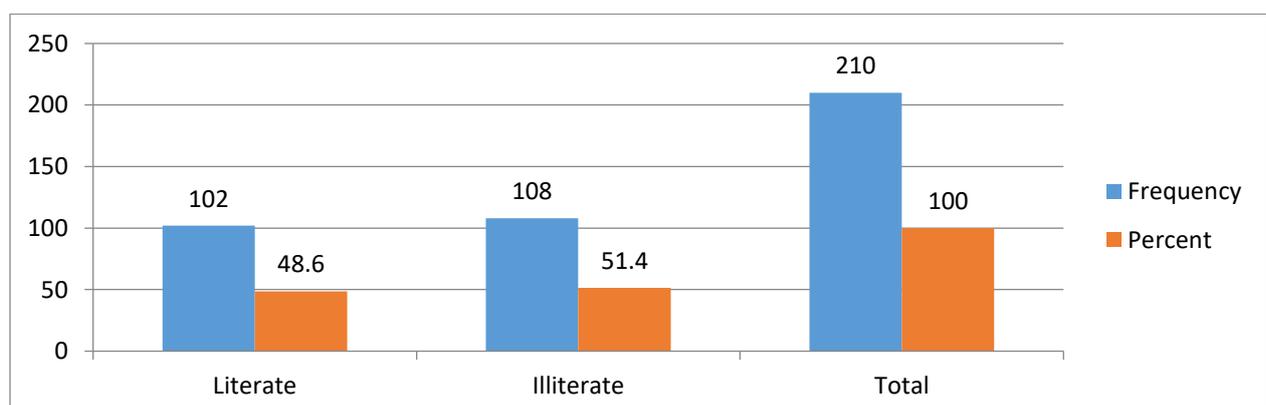


Figure 2: Frequency of Education Status

Table 4

Distribution of Participants with Respect to Offence Committed

Offense committed	Frequency	Percentage
Narcotics	101	48.1
Theft	11	5.2
Cheating	2	1.0
Drug Addiction Keeping	41	19.5
Unlicensed Weapons	38	18.1
Wrongful Diverting Water	7	3.3
Gambling	2	1.0
Harboring offender	3	1.4
Violation Of temporary residence	4	1.9
Violation of Sound Act	1	.5
Total	210	100.0

Table 4 shows the offense committed by respondents less than half 48% (101) were involved in Narcotics, 20 % (41) were involved in Drug Addiction Keeping, 18% (38) were involved in Unlicensed Weapons, 3% (7) were committed Wrongful Diverting Water and other crimes were Gambling 1%, harboring 1% and violation of temporary residence was less than 2% .

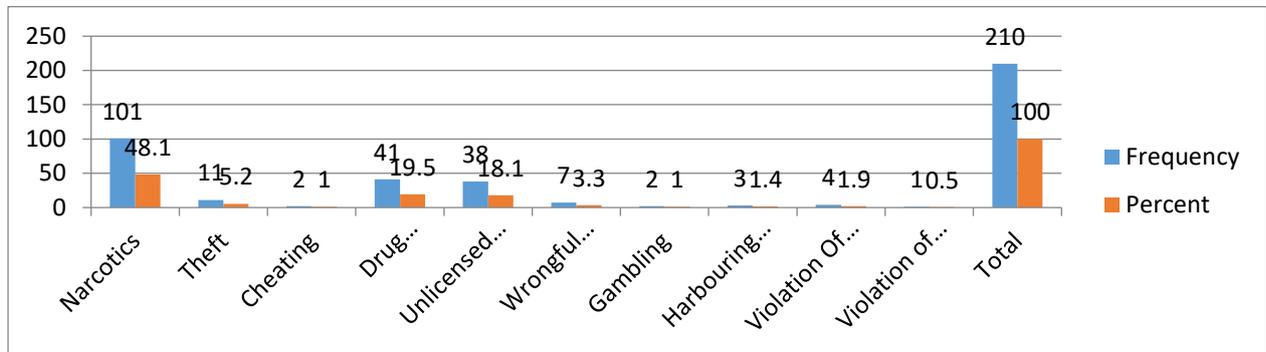


Figure 3: Frequency of Participants with Respect to Offence Committed

Table 5

Distribution of Participants with Respect to Prison

Prison	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	189	90.0
No	21	10.0
Total	210	100.0

Above table 5 shows that 90% (189) respondents were spent some time in prison and only 10% (21) did not spend time in prison.

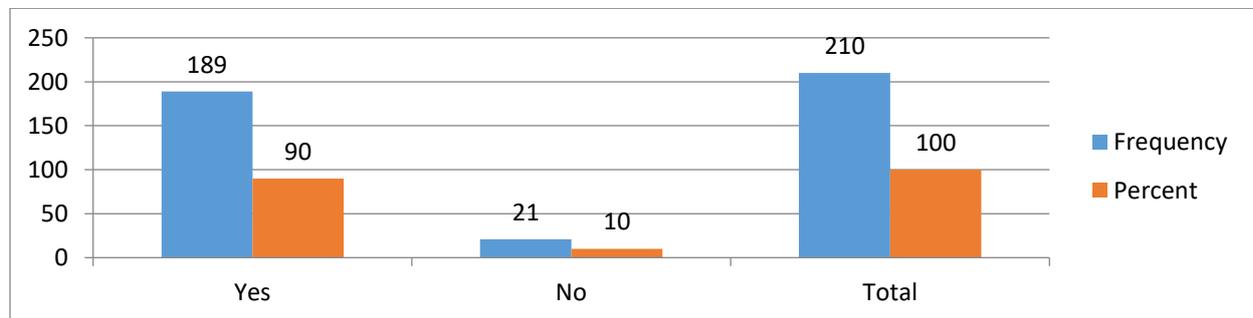


Figure 4: Frequency of Participants with Respect to Prison

Table 6

Distribution of Probation Period

Probation Period	Frequency	Percentage
One Year	210	100.0
Two years	0	0.00
Three years	0	0.00
Total	210	100

Above table 6 shows that all the respondents 100% were placed on probation for the period of one year.



Figure 5: Frequency of Probation Period

Table 7
Assistance Provided by Probation Officer

Assistance Provided by Probation Officer	Frequency	Percentage
Help in Job Finding	7	3.3
Counseling Service	173	82.4
Drug Detoxification	30	14.3
Total	210	100.0

Above table 7 describes that 82% (173) respondents said probation provided assistance for counseling service, 14% said provided assistance for drug detoxification and 7% said probation officers provided assistance for helping in job finding.

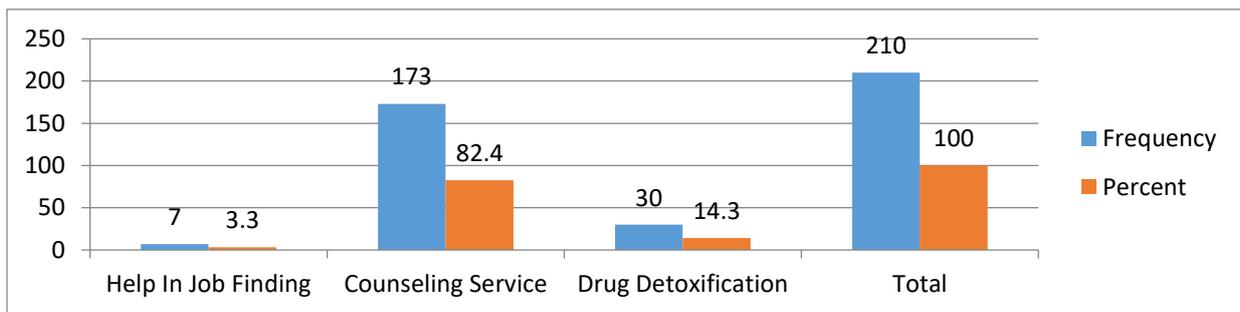


Figure 6: Assistance Provided by Probation Officer

Table 8
Probation Period Helpful to Reintegrate In Society

Probation Period Helpful to Reintegrate In Society	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	66	31.4
Agree	122	58.1
Neutral	20	9.5
Disagree	2	1.0
Total	210	100.0

Above table 8 describes more than half of respondents 58% (105) were agreed that probation period helpful for reintegration in society, 31% (66) strongly agreed, 10% were neutral and only 1% disagreed that probation period helpful for reintegration in society.

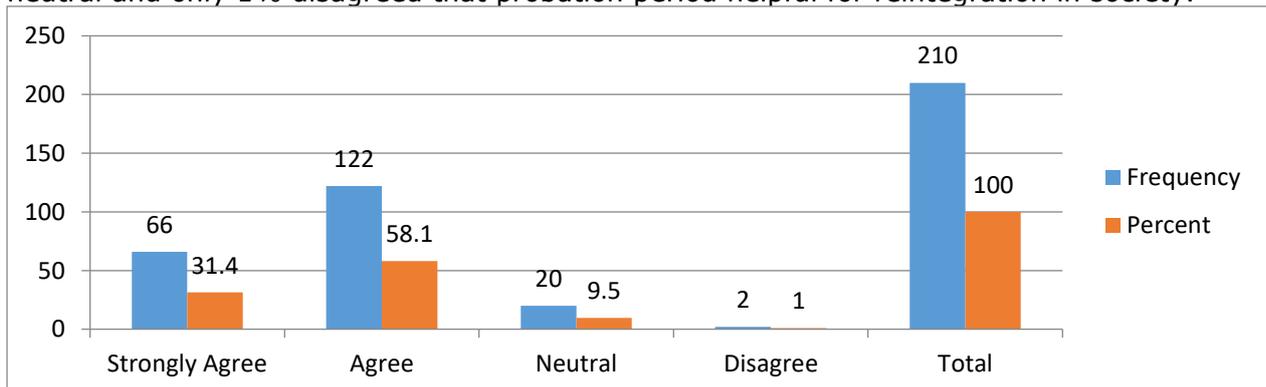


Figure 7: Probation Period Helpful to Reintegrate In Society

5. Conclusion

The study was aimed to find out the positive relationship between the better service delivery of the probation system and its effectiveness. The relationship was determined by examining the socio-economic status of the probationers, the crime committed and the behavior of the probationer during their probation period and the role of officers. After conducting a survey, a quantitative analysis of the data leads to the conclusion that the majority of the probationers were middle aged, married and lived in a joint family system. They were semi-literate or less educated and could hardly make a living.

The majorities were accused of possessing narcotic drugs at the time of arrest and were first time offenders. Hence it can be concluded that the majority of the probationers tend to fall into the hideous crime of possessing drugs only because of the poor financial condition and the burden of the whole family on their shoulders. The dilemma of disappointment, hopelessness and unemployment with poor income force them towards drug addiction.

The probation officers maintained a good and positive relationship with their clients and all earned satisfaction of their probationers and could make them avoid committing crime in the future and there was fruitful impact over rehabilitation of the probationers. It was also proved and affirmed that the criminal theories which provide a relationship between poverty and crime were correct and helpful. So such types of offenders need more help and consideration from the government. It can only be effectively provided by enforcement of the probation system in the country. The results of the research work find it out that probation officers have been committed to their duties within minimum resources provided to them.

5.1. Recommendations

- The probation should be given to the offenders who commit minor offenses and professional training should be given to the probation officers for effective reintegration of the probationers into the society.
- This research work highlights the need for more research about the topic of probation services.
- Reclamation and Probation Departments of the Punjab province provide a new dimension or canvass for correctional theories and the policy in the country as well.

Authors Contribution:

Muhammad Saeed Khan: Supervise the Study and prepared article

Maqsood Anwar: Conduct the study

Afzaal Afzal: Study Analysis, formulation and editing the article

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest w.r.t the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

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