

Rehabilitation Programs on the Behavior of Juveniles in Manga Children's Remand Home, Nyamira County – Kenya

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Abstract:- This study aimed to investigate rehabilitation programs on the behavior of juveniles at Manga children remand home who are remanded within the facility following an increase in juvenile delinquency over the years since the facility was opened in the year 2008. It was guided by Structural Functionalism Theory and Social Learning Theory. Descriptive research design was applied and 18 juvenile children were sampled from a population of 45 children, through simple random sampling technique, while all the 9 staff members were purposively sampled through census sampling technique. Questionnaires were administered to children for quantitative data, and also Focus group discussion while staff members were interviewed for qualitative data. Quantitative and Qualitative data analysis was done descriptively using, excel word and SPSS version.22 and presented on frequency tables and percentages. It was found that rehabilitative programs that were offered in the remand home were counseling, both individual and group, vocational skill trainings, spiritual welfare, informal education and agriculture. These programs were found to be effective in addressing juvenile behavioral problems and their anti-social behavior. There was positive behavioral change that was observed among the children as a result of the rehabilitation programs. The study also found that most of the staff members were competent given their good academic qualifications and the durations they had taken when offering their services at the facility.

Keywords:- Child Offender, Juvenile Delinquents, Rehabilitation Programs, Recidivism.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Children's Act (2001) laws of Kenya does not allow for a child below the age of 18yrs who has committed a crime to be convicted of an offence. This is also as stipulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) to which Kenya is a signatory, (Cheseto, 2012). Juvenile delinquency is becoming more complex and the programs targeted at their treatment is now increasing in almost all institutions (U.S Department of Justice, 2007). Juvenile delinquents enter into the juvenile justice system with variety of problems that have led them to engage in delinquent

acts (Mincey, Maldonado, Lacey, &Thompson, 2008). Upon completion of their term, juvenile delinquents must re-enter society.

Correctional facilities that are concerned with the rehabilitation process for juvenile delinquents such as remand homes and rehabilitation schools have to address problems that include provision of adequate treatment that rehabilitates the juvenile offender so they are less likely to reoffend, ensuring the juvenile delinquent has access to resources and means to survive in society and making sure the juvenile delinquent is fully understands the importance of reintegration and is ready for the transition back into society. these programs are however either poorly designed to address present scenarios or are not implemented fully. Delinquency amongst juveniles is on the increase in Kenya according to the Department of children Services database CPIMS 2017 (Child Protection Information Management System) Children are engaging in crimes with dynamics on the environment which include child radicalization, cyber bullying among other criminal trends as a result of their environment. Punitive measures that were undertaken by authorities in earlier days to address delinquency among juveniles proved to cause more harm than good and therefore rehabilitation was developed as a method of handling delinquents.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Delinquent behavior among juveniles has been on the increase despite comprehensive Rehabilitation Programs initiated by government and nonprofit organizations for juveniles in conflict with the law. There is still notable steady increase in children being admitted in Manga Children Remand Home which is a transitional facility. Concerted efforts being put in place by the stakeholders concerned with children matters to address delinquency do not seem to impact positively on the behavior of the children admitted in the institution. Recidivism amongst child offenders is recorded frequently in the facility and the question as to whether the rehabilitation programs put in place are adequate to address juvenile delinquency of children in the remand homes. Minimal Research has been conducted on the rehabilitation of juveniles and how the programs in place affect their behaviour. Achieng (2009) conducted a study on the the

socio-economic factors leading to juvenile delinquency in Nairobi. Kikvi (2011), researched on the Rehabilitation of Delinquent Adolescents in Kenya by exploring on the Challenges and possible results for Counseling. Kikvi supports the research by investigating counseling as a component for rehabilitation of juveniles. There is need to investigate rehabilitation programs in place at remand homes and how they affect behavior of the children it hosts. Manga CRH was selected by the researcher due to a notable steady increase in the admission of juveniles in the facility since its inception in the year 2008.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the study were, to find out the rehabilitation programs in place, the effectiveness of rehabilitative programs offered in the facility and to identify behavior change exhibited by children in the institution.

➤ *Structural Functionalism Theory*

Structural functionalism is one of several theories applied in sociology to help as analyze and understand social relationships. It attempts to explain why and how certain social structures in society work by ascertaining their functions (Makert, 1993). Its main idea is that society is a complex unit, made up of interrelated parts. French sociologist Émile Durkheim based his work on this theory. he argued that deviance is normal and necessary to any society because it contributes to the social order. He identified four specific functions that deviance fulfills:

Affirmation of cultural norms and values: Seeing a person punished for a deviant act reinforces what a society sees as acceptable or unacceptable behavior. Sentencing a thief to prison affirms our culturally held value that stealing is wrong. Just as some people believe that the concept of God could not exist without the concept of the devil, deviance helps us affirm and define our own norms.

Clarification of right and wrong: Responses to deviant behavior help individuals distinguish between right and wrong. When a student cheats on a test and receives a failing grade for the course, the rest of the class learns that cheating is wrong and will not be tolerated.

Unification of others in society: Responses to deviance can bring people closer together. In the aftermath of the attacks on September 11, 2001, people across the United States, and even the world, were united in their shock and grief. There was a surge in patriotic feeling and a sense of social unity among the citizens of the United States.

Promoting social change: Deviance can also encourage the dominant society to consider alternative norms and values. Rosa Parks' act of deviance in Montgomery, Alabama, in

1955 led to the U.S. Supreme Court's declaration that segregation on public transportation was unconstitutional.

structural functionalism theory can be applied to the children remand home as a social institution that is connected to society and as such influences behavior of juveniles by acting as a deterrent to deviancy due to the structural environment and rehabilitation programs it offers to improve behavior change amongst juvenile delinquents held in custody for the larger benefit of the society as a whole.

➤ *Rehabilitation Strategies in Place by Manga Children Remand Home*

Rehabilitation of juveniles has been taking place over the years world over and more recently in Africa rehabilitation was shaped by colonial legacy where most African countries borrow their laws (Odongo, 2017) as such the Young Persons Act of 1969 was the point of reference for dealing with issues affecting children. The Children's Act 2001 would subsequently provide a legal framework and following constitutional reforms with the 2010 constitution of Kenya giving provision for inclusion of Children's rights. Children remand homes are established under section 50 of the Children's Act (2001), for detention of children. Children remand homes should only admit child offenders aged 10-17yrs both boys and girls and whose cases are yet to be finalized in the courts of law. However this duration is prolonged in the facility for various reasons that range from lack of resources to have children taken to court, unavailability of witnesses and as such postponement of court proceedings to a later date, lack of funds to carry out tracing and reintegration for children or lack of proper facilities such as Charitable Children Institutions (CCI's) and individuals to whom children can be placed to continue living normal lives. The remand home acts as a place of safety for the children whose matters are pending in court until such a time the court makes a decision (DCS, 2008) Manga children's remand home is one of the 13 remand homes that are currently established in Kenya. It is located in Nyamira County, Manga Sub County. The institution has an average monthly population of 45 children. The numbers vary as children are received and released almost on a daily basis from Nyamira, Keroka, Kisii, Ogembo, Kilgoris, Rongo, Migori, Kehancha, Ndhiwa, Homabay and Oyugis laws courts. The institution admits juveniles who have exhibited behavioral problems such as defilement, stealing, assault, arson, murder, robbery with violence, creating disturbance among other offences. Children tend to engage in deviant behavior as a result of various factors which include but are not limited to neglect, peer pressure, poverty, dynamics on the environment, lack of parental supervision or poor links within the family structure and abuse which may be physical, emotional/ psychological or sexual (Mbugua, 2006). These factors as a result may affect juveniles either positively or negatively and in most cases where the child is unable to develop positive resilience they succumb to delinquency as a method of coping with the

problems they are facing. These problems may be significantly put to a halt if effective rehabilitation measures are put in place to assist these juveniles while in the remand homes which are an integral part of the juvenile justice system as an initial point of rehabilitation of young offenders.

The government through the assistance of NGO’s has put in place several programs for the rehabilitation of children in statutory institutions (Cheseto, 2012) to influence behavior change among the young offenders and those in need of care and protection. Studies conducted on rehabilitative programs on juveniles have focused on rehabilitation schools (Odera, 2013) shedding little light on where these children come from before being admitted in the rehabilitation schools. A study carried out by Mbugua, (2006) addresses rehabilitation of children who have been abused and are in custody of statutory and private institutions and therefore leaves out the category of offenders as it focuses on children in need of care and protection. It is therefore important to note that behavior of juveniles should be monitored at every stage within the juvenile system to prevent reoffending and eventually congestion of statutory institutions. This study sought to evaluate the capability of Manga CRH to provide appropriate rehabilitative programs to the children referred to them by the courts of law hence prepare them for reintegration back to society as law abiding individuals. (Cheseto, 2012) in her study concludes that juveniles who spent time in an institution reported lower recidivism than those released to the community. She further suggests that the quality and amount of treatment the juveniles receive may be the important factor in reducing recidivism. (Ndegwa, 2014) observes that juveniles who receive education and vocational training are to a large extent less likely to return to rehabilitation school after release and are more likely to find employment than peers who do not receive such opportunities. Similarly this study therefore made an assessment of the rehabilitative programs offered in the facility which are vocational skill training, spiritual guidance, guidance and counseling, informal education and agriculture as measures undertaken to rehabilitate the minors as opposed to the more intensive programs offered in rehabilitation schools where their term of stay is prolonged.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

➤ *Research Design*

A descriptive research design study was applied. The researcher described the state of the institution as it is and therefore the variables would not be manipulated. Information was collected through use of questionnaires, interview schedules and group discussions. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) a descriptive survey method of collecting information takes into account people’s attitudes opinions and habits on social issues. Descriptive survey is appropriate for the study because it enables use of both qualitative and quantitative data.

➤ *Sample and Sampling Techniques*

A sample is a subset of a larger population that the researcher chooses in order to have a response to one’s research questions and objectives. The researcher applied simple random and purposive sampling methods which provided an equal opportunity of selection for each element in the population. The study sampled out 20 children from an average monthly population of 45 children (MCRH Annual report 2017). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), when target population is known, then 10-30% of the population is adequate for the study. This figure was representing those juveniles who have been in the facility for a period of more than six months and were sampled out through simple random sampling technique. As for the Manga Children Remand Home staff members, all the 9 staff members were purposively selected through census sampling technique. Purposive sampling was preferred because of the respondents had specific and focused information necessary for the study.

➤ *Rehabilitation Programs for the Juveniles*

The study sought to establish the existing rehabilitation programs that the juveniles underwent during their stay in the institutions. The response was presented in Table 1 below.

Rehabilitative Programs	Frequency per week	Percentages
Counseling programs	15	83.33
Vocational skill training	14	77.78
Spiritual guidance	16	88.89
Agriculture	17	94.44

Table 1:- Rehabilitation programs for the juveniles

Out of the 18 respondents that took part in the study, the findings show that rehabilitative programs that were common among the juveniles were counseling and spiritual guidance at 83.33 % and 88.89% respectively, vocational skill trainings at 77.78%, and agriculture at 94.44%. This shows that Manga Children Remand Home offered array of rehabilitative programs that were tailored to change the juvenile’s behavior. These findings concur with that of Kikvi (2011) who also found out that the main programs that were provided within juveniles rehabilitation schools were education, guidance and counseling, vocational and spiritual training. Similarly, during the interview sessions with the Manga Children Remand Home staff members, it was found that the children were advised and counseled on good behavior, they were learnt farming, underwent spiritual guidance and were also given informal education by attending non formal academic lessons in classes. One of the staff members had this to say;

Juveniles who were in grades higher than the levels of education offered in the institutions were referred to other schools in order for them to continue with their education and rehabilitation processes upon exit. We also life skills training

courses which included beadwork, sewing and, hairdressing, learning sports and character training. These life skills training courses empowered the juveniles were empowered with positive values, attitudes and still had the opportunity of nurturing a healthy mentorship relationship with the teachers. (Interview, Staff 4, 12/2/2019)

➤ *The relevance of the rehabilitation programs in addressing anti-social behavior among juveniles*

The respondents response on the relevance of the rehabilitation programmes in addressing their anti-social behavior was presented in figure 1.

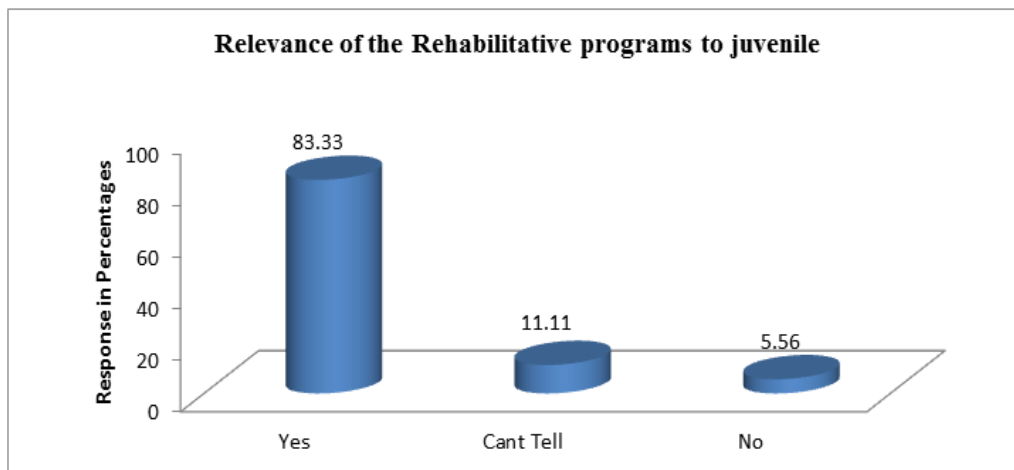


Fig 1:- Relevance of the Rehabilitative Programs to the Juveniles

Majority of the juveniles, at 83.33% indicated that the programmes were of relevance in addressing their behavioural problems, 11.11% could not tell, while only 5.56% stated that the programmes were not relevant in addressing their problems. For those in agreement that the programmes were tailor made to address their anti-social behavior added that so far most of them felt they had changed. They reiterated that most of the activities helped them to know where they had gone wrong and helped in converting them into better individuals. These findings are in line with Lauer (1998) that effective rehabilitation programs are those that focus on changing behavior and beliefs conducive to crime. Counseling helped them express their challenges with the staff and also helping them utilize their time wisely. They staff assisted them by challenging them to make the right decisions, the expected behavior is to do away with bad friends, how to keep off from drugs and not to abuse others in any form. counseling helped them in valuing themselves and others on how to live their lives and helped them address with their realities. Similarly, during the focus group discussions with the juveniles, it was found that rehabilitative programs offered at the facility effectively and positively changed their lives and behavior. For instance, one of the juvenile had this to say;

Vocational skill training courses like barber and saloon helped us get skills we would need in getting jobs or starting our own businesses as well as beadwork and agriculture which assists us become self-employed when we get out of the institutions. Education also help us know how to read and write and give us chance which we could have missed before joining the institutions and having the possibility of having a successful life after national examinations. Through spiritual

teachings, we are taught to be God fearing and to be kind to people. These programmes are well structured and they addressed our troubled backgrounds and helped us gain confidence by shading off our criminal tendencies and transforming us into moral persons. (Focus Group Discussion 2, 14/2/2019)

These sentiments were also echoed by one of the staff members, who had also observed that the programmes were effective in rehabilitating the juveniles because majority of the courses focused on livelihood programmes and where they were issued with recommendation letters to enable them, get into employment upon exiting from the remand home. The staff member said;

The behavior change programmes assist the juvenile in continuing to pursue their education and develop have a positive attitude towards it. Children are able to express themselves especially when they are counseled and become attentive in class as they begin to realize their poor choices and ill behaviour. Vocational and life skills training courses also make the juveniles to acquire some skills and knowledge that enables them to earn a living after the rehabilitation process and to participate fully in nation building. (Interview, Staff 2, 12/2/2019).

➤ *Observation of the Juveniles' behavior change*

Using the non-partisan observation checklist to observe the juveniles behavior, the study rated their behavior and discipline based on Satisfactory, averagely satisfactory and needs improvement. The results were as indicated in Table 2 below;

	Satisfactory		Averagely Satisfactory		Needs improvement	
Leave peacefully and harmoniously	13	72.22	3	16.67	2	11.11
Respect one another	12	66.67	5	27.78	1	5.56
Respect the outsiders	14	77.78	4	22.22	0	0.00
Love one another	15	83.33	2	11.11	1	5.56
Were disciplined	15	83.33	3	16.67	0	0.00
Respected the Authority of the school	17	94.44	1	5.56	0	0.00

Table 2:- Observation of the Juveniles’ behavior change

The study observed that the manner in which juveniles were living with their colleagues and neighbors was satisfactory at 72.22%. It was also found that most of the juveniles respected one another as shown by 66.67% and also respected the outsiders too as indicated at 77.78%. Most of the children at 83.33% loved one another and another 83.33% showed that they were disciplined. Almost all the students at 94.44% were observed to be respectful of their authority.

During the interview with the staff members, it was found that rehabilitative programs were responsible for the positive behavior change exhibited by the children. For instance, one of them mentioned that;

Children had learnt that it was possible to live a responsible drug free life, to always make proper choices or decisions, embrace the importance of education and that the environment where they grows had great influence on their behavior. The juveniles appreciate that humility ,perseverance and hard work pays in life and they accepted social skills to help them relate and cohabit well with others harmoniously. The children understand that negative habits like stealing, abusing others is prohibited. They are trained on good morals through spiritual programs and can now differentiate good from bad, had learnt self-control and make the decision keep off company that could influence them in a negative manner (Interview, Staff 3, 12/2/2019)

These findings show that through rehabilitative programs, children learn how to be responsible in life, become self-aware, observed personal hygiene and to obey their parents/guardians and that negative behavior would eventually destroy a bright future . Oluoch (1993) stated that the best intervention programs had the capability of reducing recidivism rates by as much as (40 percent). However, this observation contradicts Siegal (1997) findings, that if successful rehabilitation is not the main objective of juvenile corrections, the use of residential facilities would be a costly exercise in futility. Every effort must therefore be put in place to make the process of rehabilitating juveniles effective.

Similarly, during the focus group discussions, it was found that rehabilitative programs in school had benefitted the juveniles in terms of behavior change and perceptions about life. For instance, during the discussions, one of the juveniles had this to say.

As a result of staying in this institution, we are able to acquire knowledge and skills through education, life skills training, became responsible and accountable for our actions. The programs enhance our self-esteem and moral ideals, we leave criminal life, develop respect for all the people and become obedient and disciplined individuals, we are able to differentiate between right and wrong and now identified with good company. (Focus Group Discussion 3, 12/2/2019)

This shows that through rehabilitative programs, children are inspired and motivated into a better life were able to reintegrate back to the society and lead a responsible life. The children were able to conduct self-exploration, realize their mistakes and made the right decisions to lead a positively fulfilling life by avoiding behavior that could tarnish their character, learnt about the positive and negative effects of dropping out of school , drug abuse and they were able to live in harmony with other people from different communities. Juveniles could make a choice in career, discovered their talents, able to nurture an understanding with their parents, neighbors and community. According to the Child Care Act, (2011), it is the principal objective of children rehabilitation schools to provide appropriate educational and training programmes and facilities for children referred to them by Law courts. They should have regard to their health, safety, welfare and interests, including their physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing. This was in agreement with Grace (2007) findings that the most effective organized responses to juvenile crimes are through interventions focusing on family functioning, behavioural treatment programs, interpersonal skills and community integration.

V. CONCLUSION

The first study objective sought to investigate the rehabilitative programs and strategies offered in the facility. The study concluded that rehabilitative programs that were common in the remand home for the juveniles were counseling and, vocational skill trainings, spiritual welfare, and agriculture. This shows that Manga Children Remand Home offered array of rehabilitative programs that were tailored to change the juvenile's behavior. On types of counseling programs carried out, counseling programmes were usually a combination of both individual and group. This implied that the facility preferred to combine both individual and group methods of counseling.

The second objective sought to investigate the effectiveness of rehabilitative programs offered in the facility. The study concluded that rehabilitation programs were highly effective in addressing their anti-social behavior, the rehabilitative programmes were relevant in addressing juvenile behavioural problems because these programmes were tailor made in addressing their anti-social behavior and so far most of them felt changed. Most of the activities helped juveniles to know where they had gone wrong and helped in changing them into good people. The third study objective sought to identify behavior change exhibited by children in the remand home. Initially, most of the juveniles got involved in stealing, truancy and loitering in the streets as street children. The other cases of delinquency that were common among the juveniles in custody were school dropout, drug abuse and keeping bad companies. This shows that different reasons admit juveniles at the children remand home, with stealing, truancy, loitering and school dropout being the most notable reasons. On effect of programs on behavior change among the juveniles, the study concluded that as a result of rehabilitative programs offered at the facility, most of the children had become law abiding citizens, had become role model, obedient and discipline, had become focused, while almost all were able to differentiate between bad and good. Most of them were also able to do the right things always. All the children stayed away from drugs as a result of the programs. Using the non-partisan observation checklist to observe the juveniles behavior, the study concluded that the manner in which juveniles were living with their colleagues and neighbors was satisfactory, they respected one another and also respected the outsiders. They also loved one another and were disciplined and were respectful of their authority. The remand home is effectively and efficiently managed, which assisted in giving the juveniles direction, focus and a sense of belonging. The government and all the relevant stakeholders concerned with children matters should develop with more relevant policies address current societal dynamics and to improve on the existing rehabilitation programmes for the juvenile delinquents within the remand homes such that they are effective.

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