

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND GOVERNANCE



TOPIC

**perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon in
zimbabwe: a case of mazowe district.**

By

B203213B

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to analyse the perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon in Zimbabwe a case study of Mazowe District. The study was guided by the theory of punishment, the literature revealed that they are positive and negative perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts. The study based on qualitative approach using a case study as the research design. The target population of the study was Mazowe district. Participants were selected basing on convenience sampling technique, 25 as the sample size. The study utilized in depth interviews and questionnaires to collect data. Research findings indicated the presidential pardon as fair, positive reintegration of convicts into communities and communities benefiting from skills attained during incarceration and family reunions. Research findings also indicated that the presidential pardon negatively encourages recidivism, poses risk to public safety and robs victims chance to recover from crimes caused by the perpetrator. Therefore, the study concluded that the presidential pardon perceptions depend on the specific circumstances on the nature of crime committed as some participants viewed the presidential pardon positively others negatively. It is recommended to establish a victim offender dialogue that allows victims to have a voice in the presidential pardoning of convicts. Further study should focus on the impact of the presidential pardon on crime rate.

Key words; presidential pardon, incarceration, recidivism, reintegration, restorative and retributive justice

DECLARATION FORM

I, B203213B do hereby declare that this project is the result of my own study and research, except to the extent indicated in the acknowledgements and references included in the body of the research ,and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other University.

Supervisor Signature

Chairperson Signature

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my parents who have sacrificed so much for me to reach this milestone.

Your support and encouragement have been the driving force behind my academic journey.

Thank you for being my rock and inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to the following individuals who have provided invaluable support and guidance throughout my academic journey:

Firstly, I recognise the providence of God, who has brought me to this point and His unending blessings throughout my academic pursuit.

I am grateful to my supervisor who has been an outstanding mentor and the whole team of lecturers at Bindura University, thank you for your profuse contributions.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my sister, Prescilla whose unwavering moral and financial support has been instrumental in my success. Your unwavering belief in me has given me the strength to pursue my goals and achieve my dreams. I am eternally thankful.

Lastly, I will also not forget to appreciate my friends who have been a vital part of my academic experience. Your friendship has helped in my academic success and commitment to my goals.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

ZIMSTAT- Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

ZPCS- Zimbabwe Police and Correctional Services

ZPS- Zimbabwe Police Services

TABLE OF CONTENT

ABSTRACT	1
DECLARATION FORM.....	2
DEDICATION.....	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	5
TABLE OF CONTENT	6
CHAPTER ONE	9
INTRODUCTION.....	9
1.1Background of the study	9
1.2 Problem statement	10
1.3 Aim of the study	11
1.5 Research questions	11
1.6 Significance of the study.....	11
1.7 Delimitations.....	12
1.8 Limitations.....	12
1.9 Definition of key terms	13
1.10 Chapter outline.....	13
CHAPTER TWO	15
REVIEW OF LITERATURE	15
2.1 Introduction.....	15
2.2 Theory of punishment.....	15
2.3 The nexus between restorative and retributive	17
2.4 Positive perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon	19
2.5 Negative perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon	21
2.6 Arguments surrounding the presidential pardon and release of convicts	23
2.7 Chapter summary	24
CHAPTER THREE	25
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25
3.1 Introduction.....	25

3.2 Research approach.....	25
3.4 Target Population.....	26
3.5 Sample.....	26
3.6 Sample size.....	27
3.7 Sampling technique.....	27
3.8 Research instruments	28
3.9 Reliability.....	29
3.10 Validity	29
3.11 Data presentation and analysis	29
3.12 Ethical considerations.....	30
3.13 Chapter Summary	31
CHAPTER FOUR.....	32
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	32
4.1 Introduction	32
4.2 Bio Data.....	32
4.2.1 Sex.....	33
4.2.2 Age	33
4.2.3 Level of education	34
4.3 Positive perceptions on the release of convicts	35
4.3.2 Reintegration of convicts.....	36
4.4 Negative perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts.....	38
4.4.1. Convicts are released with negative characteristics.....	39
4.4.2. Risk to public safety.....	40
4.4.3 Recidivism and dependency of crime and presidential pardon.....	41
4. 5 Chapter summary	42
CHAPTER FIVE	43
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	43
5.1 Introduction.....	43
5.2 Summary.....	43
5.2.1 Summary of the whole project.....	43
5.3 Conclusions.....	45
5.4 Recommendations	46
REFERENCE.....	48

APPENDIX A	52
Questionnaire on the perception of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon	52
APPENDIX B	55
Interview Guide for respondents in Mazowe.	55
APPENDIX C	57
A letter from the department and approval from the Mazowe Rural District Council ..	57

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The presidential pardon dates to the Roman empire and the ancient regimes and monarchs. However, the first president to perform this pardon was George Washington in 1795 all other states followed behind exercising their powers for negative and positive outcomes (Morison, 2020). This resides on the issue of power of the state head and lead to the issue that his word is only answerable to God. Many state heads are using the presidential pardon powers using the provision of the constitution in the clemency section. The release categories then differ whilst all constitutions are governed by the international law. The United States Supreme Court indicated that that the clemency is “fail safe” of the judicial system as there’s a form of injustice. Globally the number of pardons is greatly increasing as noted by Shenkin (2019). These are pre- and post-conviction pardon.

The Zimbabwean constitution on the section 112 of power of mercy, the president after the consultation with the cabinet may exercise the power of mercy to grant a pardon to any person concerned in or convicted of any offence against the law. Clemency is a grant given to a convict as a form of relief from a court sentence which is a form of immunity. In Zimbabwe the clemency is ordered by the president in conjunction with the ZPCS. However historically it has been used for the following mercy, politics and at times justice. In the first republic the president granted an extraordinary pardon in 2009 to 3000 prisoners as a way of celebrating the twenty ninth anniversary. As generally the probability of recidivism offence is very high children and women in general are at risk according to Petersillia (2019). Theres no form of public engagement and input in Zimbabwe concerning the presidential pardon and the release of convicts.

The release of convicts has been taking place in closed doors much detail has never been on focus as there's no form of knowledge on who has been released and their offences. Till recently in Zimbabwe the president gazetted Clemency Order Number 1 where prisoners of many crimes were pardoned including sexual offenders and nonviolent crimes. This has questioned then the number of other dangerously sentenced inmates who crip back to the community where their victims are living. However, it should be noted that the release of these inmates was an exception that they had reached sixty and would have effectively served one tenth of their sentence according to the clemency. Also, under the section remission of sentence for the disabled persons, blind and physically challenged inmates were released not considering the crime they committed.

1.2 Problem statement

Convicts have the potential to cut short their convicted sentences under the presidential pardon through clemency order that grants an amnesty. This has made victims usually unable to completely rely on the justice system as at times it unheavenly supports criminals. This has made many individuals question the way these laws have been set in place. The pardon has created a problem between the followed procedure and their views that rely on the issue of releasing of convicts because of the presidential pardon as the official capacity of prisons is 17000 whilst the current numbers reached to over 20000. Also, there's no transparency as to the actual numbers per each section of release so that the public might not stay in an unknown danger. According to ZIMSTAT over 3000 sexual violence offences were committed in Zimbabwe. Approximately four thousand two hundred inmates making it nineteen percent of the prison population have been released according to Glez (2023). It becomes difficult to rely on the justice system, these release of inmates of sexual offences have been happening in closed

doors. Henceforth the project seeks to analyse the issues surrounding the presidential pardon and the release of convicts.

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to analyse the perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon in Zimbabwe: A case study of Mazowe District

1.4 Research objectives

- 1.To analyse the positive perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon.
2. To examine the negative perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon.

1.5 Research questions

- 1.What are the positive perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon?
- 2.What are the negative perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study is important to the public because the needs of individuals are presented and their ideas concerning the release of convicts and what should be done to protect the victims. The government might benefit when they amend the constitution. After laying down the opinion there might be a change or amendment in the clemency laws that gives mercy to convicts before serving their full time. As these findings might be used in constitutional amendment for advocates in this scope. Also, scholars and Bindura university might find insights to consider

and take note of the study and fill the research gaps that surround the issue of the presidential pardon. The civil society organisations such as the Zimbabwean Lawyer for Human Rights and Zimbabwe Peace Project are also going to benefit as they are a group of individuals who represent the vulnerable groups of the society. The study will provide a closure for the victims and citizens as their voices might be heard as they indicate what should be done on an experience-based opinion.

1.7 Delimitations

The study only focuses on the perceptions of citizens on convicts released under the presidential pardon in Mazowe District leaving other areas unturned which is a limitation in research (Brewer 2019). Mazowe district is situated in Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe located in the North of Zimbabwe with an approximate population of 236 000 people as of August 2023 census data from ZimStat. The area has a diverse and dynamic area that has people of different background that have the same agenda of mining. The specific area for study is the Jumbo mine area that has miners, vendors, and canteen workers as possible respondents of this study.

1.8 Limitations

The major problem that the student might face is lack of personal information from the participants that might benefit on the research. As digging personal information might send the person into survival mode and limits the information to disclose. This can be avoided by first creating an environment that the interviewee feels comfortable. Also, the student might have lack of experience as this is initial research. To solve this the solution is working extra hard to attain all the information in the given space. Fielding (2019) indicated that there is a general mistrust of researchers in Zimbabwe due to the political atmosphere as most potential

respondents fear to be quoted. To circumvent this the student is going to first discuss the key components of ethics that includes privacy and confidentiality.

1.9 Definition of key terms

Presidential pardon refers to the power or authority given to the president in a republic to exempt individuals from serving their penalties. According to Udofa (2018) the presidential pardon is an important component of executive power, and it allows the president to intervene and grant pardons as a way of dispensing the mercy of government.

Presidential pardon and amnesty are different as the pardon is more general than the amnesty that is specific to political crimes. Individuals who have already committed crimes receive pardons while amnesty can be granted before court procedures. Amnesty clearly wipes out crimes while the pardon saves one's criminal records. This study focuses on presidential pardon.

Convict is a person found guilty of a crime. In Zimbabwe according to the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act (2014) the main types of convicts are those who have been sentenced to life imprisonment and those who have been sentenced to a fixed term of imprisonment.

Recidivism is the tendency of a person who has been convicted of a crime to reoffend a new offence or the first crime. According to Zimring (2014) recidivism has age, race, gender, and socioeconomic status as factors of contribution.

1.10 Chapter outline

CHAPTER ONE

Chapter one consists of the background of the study, problem statement and the aim of the study. Research objectives and questions will be indicated as well as the significance of the study. Also, delimitations and limitations and definition of key terms are highlighted.

CHAPTER 2

This chapter has literature review indicating the theoretical framework that will be used in the project. Also, the perceptions of other scholars concerning the release of convicts under the presidential pardon.

CHAPTER 3

Addresses the methodology and the techniques, research designs and research instruments that are going to be used in the study. Together with the data analysis methods with ethical principles being taken note of and the targeted population.

CHAPTER 4

This chapter presents, discusses and analyses data gathered from interviews and questionnaires. Data is presented through bar graphs, pie charts ,direct quotations and responses derived from questionnaire and interviews conducted.

CHAPTER 5

This chapter summaries the whole project, indicate conclusions that are drawn from findings and provides recommendations that are the gaps realised during research for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the literature on the subject matter of the perceptions of the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. The study will utilise the approaches of restorative and retributive justice as they strengthen the perceptions surrounding the connection between convicts and presidential pardon.

2.2 Theory of punishment

One of the most well-known studies was conducted by social psychologists on the theory of punishment are Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky in the 1970s. Their research found that people tend to have a strong preference for retributive justice, even when they are presented with alternative approaches that are more effective at reducing crime. In their research, Kahneman and Tversky presented participants with a hypothetical scenario in which two approaches to reducing crime were compared. The first approach involved rehabilitation, which would reduce crime by 50% over the next 10 years. The second approach involved harsher punishments, which would reduce crime by only 10% over the next 10 years. However, the participants still overwhelmingly preferred the punishment approach, even though it was less effective at reducing crime. This emotional response can outweigh the rational assessment of which approach is most effective at reducing crime. Another explanation is that people want to see a sense of "just desserts" or balance restored after a crime has been committed. This "just desserts" approach to justice is often seen as a necessary part of maintaining a moral and just society as supported by Kant in the 18th century. Which relates to the perceptions surrounding the presidential pardon creating space for citizens to support and disagree with.

Kants (1797) in his book *Metaphysics of Morals* argued that punishment was a moral duty, and that it was an important part of upholding a just society. Kant believed that the purpose of punishment was not to inflict suffering, but to enforce the law and maintain order. He believed that this was necessary for the sake of the common good, and that the state had a duty to protect its citizens from harm. On the one hand, he argues that the state has a duty to protect its citizens, which is a key principle of restorative justice, however arguing that punishment is necessary to enforce the law and to deter future crime, which is a key principle of retributive justice. The term that often used to describe Kant's approach to punishment is "the retributive theory of punishment". This theory holds that punishment should be proportional to the crime committed, and that it should be inflicted only for the purpose of upholding the law. According to Kant, punishment is not merely a means to an end, but rather an end. In other words, the purpose of punishment is not just to deter crime or to prevent future harm, but to uphold the moral law. Kant believed that the law should be impartial and that all citizens should be treated equally. This means that all offenders should be punished proportionately, regardless of their social status or personal circumstances basically trying to remove issues of impunity in all its forms. In addition, it's important to note that Kant's theory of punishment is not just about holding offenders accountable. It's also about the larger aim of upholding the moral law and creating a just society. In this way, Kant's theory of punishment can be seen as supporting both retribution and restoration. Which leads to the citizen perceptions that the concept of presidential pardon undermines the concept of proportionate punishment and questions the fairness of the Zimbabwean criminal justice system whilst others view it as an opportunity for rehabilitation and reintegration.

2.3 The nexus between restorative and retributive

The debate often comes down to a question of values and priorities. Retributive justice focuses on the need for justice and fairness, while restorative justice focuses on repairing the harm that has been done. One example of how the two approaches can be complementary is the idea of "hybrid" justice. This approach combines elements of both restorative and retributive justice, aiming to achieve both justice and repair. Hybrid justice may involve a mix of sanctions, such as community service and reparations, as well as measures to promote reconciliation and reintegration. This approach is often seen as more effective than either restorative or retributive justice alone, as it can address both the needs of the victim and the offender. Braithwaite (1989) argued that a purely restorative or retributive approach was not effective in achieving justice, and that a hybrid approach could be more successful.

The first point is that hybrid justice is a combination of restorative and retributive justice. Restorative justice focuses on repairing the harm caused by crime, while retributive justice focuses on punishing the offender. Hybrid justice combines elements of both approaches, to achieve both justice and repair (Braithwaite, 2013). For example, a hybrid justice approach might involve imposing a fine on the offender, while also requiring them to participate in community service or therapy. This approach allows for both the punishment of the offender and the repair of the harm done to the victim and the community.

Hybrid justice takes a more holistic approach, recognizing that crime has a broader impact than just the offender. By addressing the needs of all those affected by crime, hybrid justice can help to restore relationships and create a safer and more just society. Here, the underlying rationale of retributive justice views the offender as one who "has taken an unfair advantage in committing a crime, which can only be corrected by the administering of a punishment" (Roche, 2011: 78). On the other hand, restorative justice, which gained increasing attention

within the field of criminal justice in the 1990s, is focused on restoring broken relations between victim and offender.

The presidential pardon is an example of how hybrid justice can be used in the criminal justice system. The pardon process typically involves a review of the individual's criminal record and an assessment of whether they can be released leading to the individualised approach to punishment. The individualized approach to punishment is a key component of hybrid justice. This approach recognizes that each offender is unique, with their own personal history and circumstances. Rather than treating all offenders the same, the individualized approach considers factors such as their age, mental health, and economic status. This allows for more tailored punishments that are more likely to be effective in reducing recidivism and promoting rehabilitation. It also recognizes the importance of human dignity and the need to treat offenders with respect and fairness.

The psychological underpinnings of retribution by McCullough. According to McCullough (2008) research shows that people often have a strong desire for retribution when they feel that an injustice has been committed. This desire is thought to be linked to feelings of anger and a need for fairness. For the “forgiveness instinct” retribution is necessary to restore a sense of balance after an injustice has been committed.

In trying to underpin retribution as a course of inevitable punishment Haidt (2001) has written extensively about the psychology of morality and its role in human behaviour. His theory of "moral foundations" suggests that retribution is one of several moral foundations that guide human behaviour. Other moral foundations include care, fairness, loyalty, authority, and purity (Haidt, 2012). There is, however, call for recognition of alternative forms of justice and highlight the compatibility of restoration and retribution. These two concepts may in fact be

integrated as part of the same system of justice, where they would complement and work in tandem with each other rather than operate as opposing or alternative systems (Zedner 1994).

However, it should be taken to consideration that several studies have suggested that the severity of a punishment may have less influence on its efficacy as a deterrent than the certainty that a punishment will be administered and the celerity of its administration (Nielsen & Ehlers, 2005). It is important therefore to reintegrate the offenders in the community to create reengagement so that they participate in community activities.

2.4 Positive perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon

2.4.1 Fairness of the presidential pardon

The presidential pardon can be seen as an act of mercy and compassion which is fair to individuals having the potential to promote justice in the criminal justice system. The pardon is fair because it creates chances of family reunions. According to Baunach (1985) family split ups affects women more as worry about their children in their absence. The pardon then provide the chance for families to re create lost relationships as most pardons covers all female inmates expect those convicted of murder, treason, rape, robbery, human trafficking, and other mentioned crimes. The other reason of the fairness of the pardon is it provides a platform for a second chance for convicts because inmates who are physically challenges and visually impaired during incarceration benefit from the presidential pardon. The fairness of the presidential pardon is not clearly stated most work critics the presidential pardon understating the positive impact of the presidential pardon.

2.4.2 Falsely incarceration reliever

Some convicts are falsely incarcerated, the presidential pardon works as a reliever. This is because the presidential pardon is for individuals who have their alleged offences in line with the requirements of the clemency (Waldman & Chettiar 2017). Therefore, chances of being released are notable though they have not been indicated clearly. In reports from journalists interviewing released convicts the joy they present and express speaks more of the importance of the presidential pardon. The aims of the Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Services include the protection of society from criminal elements through incarceration and rehabilitation of convicted persons and others who are lawfully required to be detained. Therefore, the presidential pardon relieves individuals who have been falsely incarcerated especially when they are mass incarceration. However, the presidential pardon as a falsely incarceration reliever has its own weaknesses as wrongfully incarcerated individuals face barriers in meeting the criteria of being released as there is no comprehensive centralised system to track the reasons and circumstances behind every individual's pardon. Though it is important to acknowledge that they are available and unknown statistics of individuals released.

2.4.3 Community benefits from reintegration programmes offered to convicts before released.

Reintegration programmes that include open prison, skills training, vocational trainings, academic education, spiritual counselling, sports, and recreation are benefitable to communities when convicts reintegrate in the society. The changes of the ZPS to ZPCS has led to equipping prisoners with practical skills such as carpentry and agricultural oriented skills that are beneficial to communities. These skills are beneficial to the community as in detail the vocational trainings are in areas such as hairdressing, cosmetology, chicken rearing, tailoring, secretariat, knitting and hospitality. Hence positively viewing the presidential pardon. Release of convicts has a tone of reintegration that has a goal of reducing recidivism. As supported by

Maria Noel Rodriguez during the Brazil 2010 UN Conference social welfare officials should facilitate the re-entry into society of convicts help them find accommodation and other important life supporters. If not treated well convicts might get into social prisons created by the society to promote reintegration. Information on the benefits of reintegration is inadequate and most of the research were done in basing on Western prisons. Also, the benefits of reintegration programmes should be studied because there is need to explore long term impact of the programmes on overall quality of life and successful community reintegration leading to the need to include this in the study.

2.5 Negative perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon

2.5.1 Community safety is threatened.

According to Owonike (2022) the negativity towards ex-convicts released before full term is caused by the type of crime committed, for example, rape, murder, and terrorism. This negative disposition limits any form of reintegration. The labels created by the society to exconvicts (Webner 2020) plays a significant role in discriminating and stigmatising individuals as they have a potential of reoffending. When community members feel that their personal safety is being threatened, they tend to create barriers between them and the released convicts. This is stimulated by the perception that community members feel threatened by the convict as they live in the same area as they base on assumptions of reoffending. Basically, security and safety issues tend to be undermined by the correctional services provided by prisons to the convicts during their imprisonment. In this nature there is clarity of negativity of release of convicts under the presidential pardon as most convicts do not receive adequate support and resources to transition back into communities. The lack of assessment on level of risk individuals pose leads to high rates of recidivism. They are few services that are for transitioning convicts and

their work is usually fragmented and disconnected from the criminal justice system. Most studies overlook how community safety is threatened creating the need of successful transitioning of convicts when released under the presidential pardon which shows the need to consider it in the study.

2.5.2. Robs victims a chance to recover from the crimes caused by the perpetrator

The early release of prisoners robs families of victims from closure in all cases of crimes whether petty crimes or notable crimes basing on the sentence time. It undermines confidence in the criminal justice system that is there to make a fair rule between the offender and victim. Taking into consideration the 2023 case of Bobby Makaza and the 15-year-old who was released under the presidential pardon without completing the rape sentence as indicated in The Herald July 11. This is just an indication of many other cases where the perpetrators were released under the presidential pardon. According to Ismaila (2020) the presidential pardon undermines the process of victim restitution. The victim's voice is invalidated as explained by Chikadzi et al. (2022) who examined the psychological impact of crime on victims. This therefore erodes trust in the justice system, hence there the presidential pardon being negatively perceived. Most studies lack clarity on how the presidential pardon opens wounds caused by the perpetrators, therefore understanding this was done in the study.

2.5.3 Questions the justice system

Release of convicts before completing their full sentence downplays the concept of proportionate punishment that is retributive punishment that can lead to recidivism. When released from prison exconvicts have a chance of reoffending because of lack of necessary needs when trying to meet the socio-economic needs they face a dilemma of recidivism (Muchena, 2014). It undermines confidence and reliability in the criminal justice system that is there to make a fair rule between the offender and victim. As supported by Verreycken (2019)

historically granting pardons is a product of a weak corrupted justice system that preferred to remit crimes in exchange for money rather than prosecuting perpetrators. In a way it exposes prosecutorial misconduct in the justice system this raises dilemma of unequal access to justice. The presidential pardon blurs the line between the innocent and guilt as the decision making behind the release of prisoners is not clearly communicated which fuels suspicion. There is a form of disregard of victim's rights hence the presidential pardon fails to adequately consider victims and survivors of crime.

2.6 Arguments surrounding the presidential pardon and release of convicts

After individuals have been released citizens have attitudinal differences there is a form of infringement, they are placed in from socialising with the community members. The society might create moral panic from the realisation that within the community there's probability of violation of their safety or recidivism (Furedi, 2005). In the case of a sexual offender in most cases leaves the survivor alive thus there's pure evidence to pinpoint, closure is not given to the survivors after court proceedings there is no state psychological reference.

There is a lot of controversy surrounding the release of convicts under presidential pardon. On one hand, some people argue that these individuals should be given a second chance and allowed to reintegrate into society. They may argue that the individual has served their time, and that they should be given an opportunity to prove that they are rehabilitated. On the other hand, there are many people who believe that sexual offenders should not be released under any circumstances. They may argue that the nature of the crime is too serious, and that the victim's safety should be prioritized over the offender's rights.

The media has portrayed this issue positively and negatively as there is potential for released offenders to reoffend, the safety of the victims being compromised also the offenders may have inability to reengage into the community. According to Lageson, (2015) it is likely that the

offenders will re-offend or worse of commit gruesome crimes. The offenders may face discrimination and social exclusion. The reactions to this situation differ accordingly mostly because of how it might be displayed on social media and how it reached their understanding. There is need for more information on the presidential pardon.

2.7 Chapter summary

The chapter discussed the theory of punishment and concepts that are in sync with the project. All this are discussed in the chapter in detail and subtopics. The other limitations surrounding proposed line of thought have also been talked of.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study is on citizen perceptions on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. This chapter indicates the research designs and methods. This chapter plots how research collection will be done and how it will be analysed and presented. In this chapter sampling methods, sampling size and the target population are presented in conjunction with ethical considerations.

3.2 Research approach

Flanagan (2013) claims that the scientific method is the most powerful tool for discovering truths about the world, explore new theories and perform their empirical validation. The research is based on the qualitative approach. This approach explores the complexity and diversity of human experience (Denzin, 2013). Qualitative research is flexible for ideas and assumptions which is important in this project as it bases on one's assumptions on the subject at hand. Qualitative research generates new insights and understanding of the perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. Basically, using qualitative research captures the full complexity of social phenomenon, develops rich and detailed and uncovers unexpected data that is expressed emotionally (Charmaz, 2014). According to Parton (2015) qualitative research provides the ability to engage in participatory and collaborative research methods. Maxwell (2013) advocates that qualitative research works with the universe of meanings, motives, aspirations, beliefs, values, and attitudes, which corresponds to a deeper space of relationships, processes and phenomena that cannot be reduced to the

operationalization of variables. These are going to be used through questioner and focus group discussions on the research project.

3.3 Research Design

Simons (2009) created the following definition of a case study based on a critical review that sought commonalities of various case study definitions case study is an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program, or system in a ‘real life’. The research design for this study is a case study. Saunders (2014) argues that a case study enables the researcher to isolate one setting or phenomena for in depth study particularly when the impact of the phenomenon to be study may vary from case to case. Houghton (2017) also highlights the benefits of case studies, such as their ability to capture the lived experiences of participants and can provide rich and detailed data.

3.4 Target Population

Target population is a group of people that share certain characteristics that are relevant to the research questions which is within the context of the researcher research (Hoy & Adams, 2018). The population targeted of this project include community members and workers in Mazowe District who provided their perceptions on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. The diversity of targeted groups is a way of avoiding any form of bias. In this project the targeted population refers to individuals from 20 years and below to 51 and above who work or live in Mazowe District.

3.5 Sample

A sample is a subset of the population that is selected to represent the entire population (Chiang, 2019). It also refers to a subset of individuals selected from a larger population selected

for the study to provide information needed. The sample consisted of males and females between the age group of below 20 to 51 and above. The sample served as the basis for data collection and analysis allowing the researcher to understand the population.

3.6 Sample size

Sample size refers to the number of participants included in a study that determines the precision and reliability of the findings (Boddy, 2016). The project had 35 individuals as sample size to make the results statistically significant. The sample size was small for the researcher to gather detailed and rich information.

3.7 Sampling technique

Sampling technique refers to the methods used to select a representative sample of population for the purpose of making inferences about the characteristics of the entire population (Etika etal, 2016). Non-probability sampling is a type of sampling technique that does not rely on random selection to choose participants. Instead, participants were selected based on some non-random method, such as convenience sampling. In Bates (2017) convenience sampling is often defined as a type of non-probability sampling where participants are selected based on their accessibility and availability, rather than their representativeness of the population. The researcher did interviews during lunch time where respondents had time to spare. A convenience sample is often chosen when time and resources are limited, and when the researcher does not need to ensure that the sample is representative of the population (Harrison, 2019). Which is an important factor in the research project as other respondents were doing their usual core business.

3.8 Research instruments

The study utilized in-depth interviews and questionnaires. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2016), in-depth interviews are often face to face question and answer segments between the researcher and participant that are common in qualitative study. In-depth interviews allow researchers to gain a detailed understanding of participants' thoughts, feelings, and experiences according to Fingerman (2016) which is important in analysing the perceptions of the respondents in the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. In-depth interviews also give participants the opportunity to explain and elaborate on their responses, which can lead to richer and more meaningful data. In-depth interviews offer very rich data, and it offers the chance to ask follow-up questions, probe additional information, align previous answers, and establish a connection between several topics. It also created a comfortable atmosphere in which respondents may feel more comfortable to establish a conversation. However, in-depth interviews are time consuming as they require significant time and effort to recruit participants and schedule interviews also in-depth interviews are lengthy as they require a lot of time (Delany, 2020). Though having these weaknesses in depth interviews are valuable.

Questionnaires are defined as any text-based instrument that give survey participants a series of questions to answer or statements to respond to either by indicating a response or ticking an applicable box as in this project. They are countable number of responses that are easy to understand. The data that will be gathered from a questionnaire can be processed and analysed relatively easily compared to spoken data which must be recorded and transcribed before analysis. According to Kulkarni (2020) questionnaires are relatively inexpensive and can be administered to many people however they are difficult to design and interpret.

3.9 Reliability

Reliability is the consistency and stability of data collection procedures, measurement instruments and research methods used (Creswell 2014). Methods used in this research that is interviews and questionnaires when repeated will yield constant results allowing other researchers to replicate the same study and obtain similar findings. The researcher collected data from different respondents who gave their knowledge and permission to conduct the study was approved by the Mazowe Rural District Council in Concession.

3.10 Validity

Whiston (2012) defined validity as obtaining data that is appropriate for the intended use of the measuring instruments. Validity tells you how accurately a method measures something. If a method measures what it claims to measure, and the results closely correspond to real-world values, then it can be considered valid (Privitera, 2020). The project presents internal, external, and statistical validity of the research. Social validity refers to the judgments, beliefs, and values made by others about the acceptability of goals and plans for a specific treatment or intervention, which is in direct link with the research as indicated from interviews and questionnaires that are conducted by the researcher.

3.11 Data presentation and analysis

3.11.1 Data presentation

Data presentation involves organising and presenting the finding from the research that will be carried out mainly in a sequential and understandable way. This may be shown through graphs, charts, tables or reports and articles (Denzin, 2014). Data will be presented in graphical methods that include bar graphs and pie charts. Bar graphs are used because they are easy to comprehend and easily interpreted also, they are versatile that can represent a wide range of

data types. Whilst pie charts are essential because they display proportions and percentages as they are visually appealing.

3.10.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically collecting, cleaning, transforming, describing, modelling, and interpreting data, generally employing statistical techniques. The thematic analysis will be used in the project as it examines information provided in the interviews and questioner to be used. Thematic analysis is the most appropriate approach to the research project because there is need to find out participants views, opinions, knowledge, experiences, or values on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon.

3.12 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations help ensure that people's rights are respected and protected when carrying out research. The researcher sought for informed consent before the participant agreed or denied being part of the respondents as it is an individual right to participate. According to Faden (2015) there is need of the respondent to understand what the research is about and how one will be involved. The researcher provided full information on the key points of the study which includes the topic and aim of the study before response answered the questionnaire or participated in the interview.

According to Clark (2019), confidentiality of participants should be protected therefore pseudo names were used in the research project and anonymity of the ideas they presented. This is a way of protecting respondents privacy and confidentiality also minimising potential harm or consequences of the ideas presented during interview or questionnaires. The researcher demonstrated commitment to ethical research practices at this applied to all participants.

The researcher protected respondents from any forms of harm. The protection from harm is also known as the principle of non-maleficence or the do no harm principle. The principle holds that there is an obligation of the research or the researcher not to inflict harm on others (Cresswell, 2014). This research made sure no harm was inflicted by the study be it to the respondents or by the findings. There was no coercion of research respondents to participate in the research.

3.13 Chapter Summary

The chapter focused on methodology that will be used in data collection through qualitative research. The instruments that are going to be used are focus group discussions and in- depth interviews. Also highlighted on sample, sample size and targeted population. The data analysis and presentation have been highlighted. The following chapter has details on presentation and analysis of data that will be collected.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The study was on analysing the perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon in Mazowe District. This chapter presents and analyses the data gathered in themes from the interviews and questionnaire of the study. Data is presented using graphs and tables for clarity and effective communication. The chapter upholds ethical issues by not sharing names of the respondents. Key findings were compared to similar literature.

4.2 Bio Data

The demographic information of respondents helps to provide context for the data as it has influence on their response. Demographic data also helped the researcher gain insights into the characteristics and behaviours according to of convicts released under the presidential pardon (Hayes 2024).

4.2.1 Sex

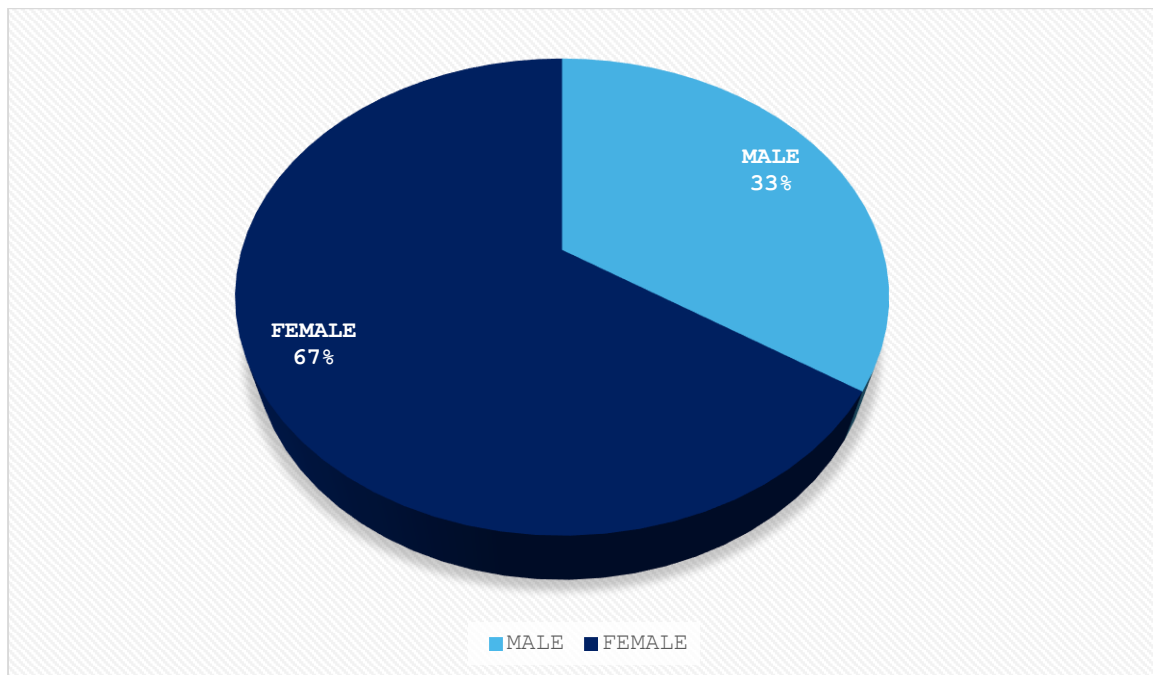


Figure 4.1: Sex (No. 30)

Figure 4.1 show that most of the respondents 20 (67%) were females while 10 (33 %) were males. The representation of both males and females provided unbiased information which helped the researcher to interpret the findings more accurately and draw meaningful conclusions. Females participated more on the study because they were conveniently located and easy to access.

4.2.2 Age

Table 4.1 : Age (No 30)

Age groups	Frequency	Percentage %
Below 20	4	13
20-30	13	43
31-40	8	27

41-50	2	7
51- above	3	10
Total	30	100

Table 4.1 shows that most participants 13(43 %) fell between the age of 20- 30 years whilst the least were respondents 2(7%) were from 41 to 50 age group. Representation of all age groups provides unique experiences and perceptions which makes the results more reliable as all age groups have provided their insights.

4.2.3 Level of education

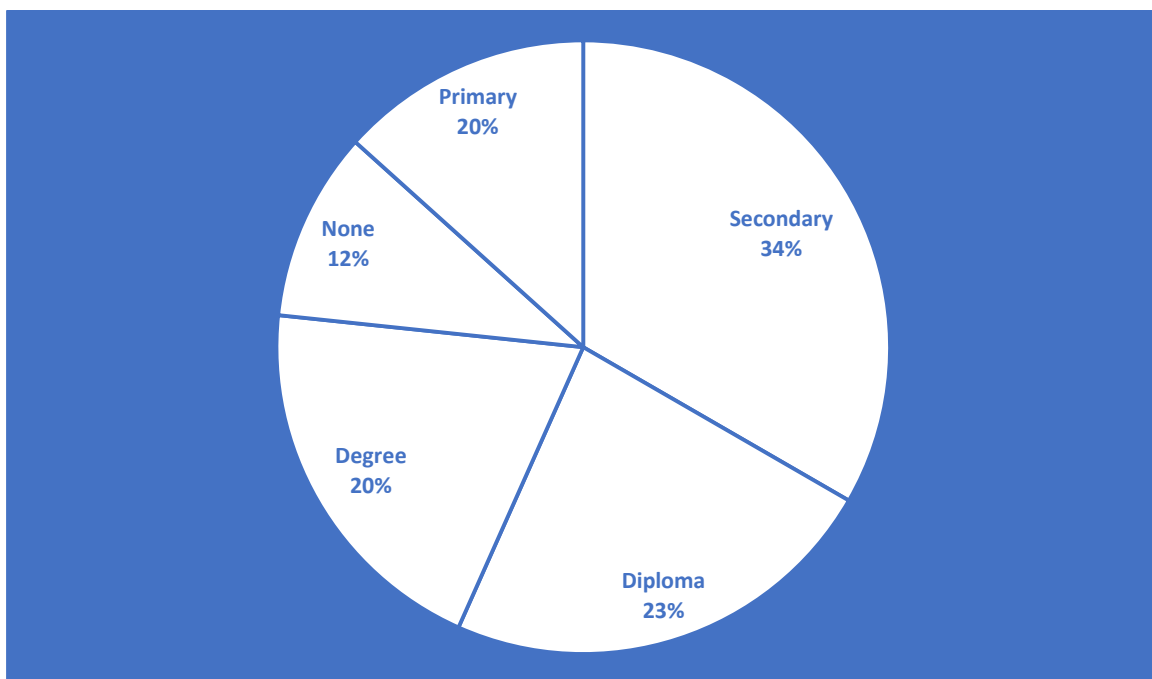


Figure 4.2 : Level of education (No 30)

According to Figure 4.2 most participants 10(33%) attained secondary education whilst the minority 3(10%) have no education background. This is important in the study because

educated individuals comprehended the questionnaire easily and participated in follow up questions quickly providing precise and accurate data.

4.3 Positive perceptions on the release of convicts

Respondents were asked on the fairness of the presidential pardon and the possibility of convicts to reintegrate and the results are given in Table 4.3.

Table 4.2: Positive perceptions on the release of convicts (No 30)

QUESTION	True		False	
	No	%	No	%
Releasing convicts before completing their full sentence in prison is fair.	19	63	11	37
Reintegration is possible to prisoners released under the presidential pardon.	17	57	13	43

4.3.1 Fairness on the release of convicts

Respondents were asked if the release of convicts is fair which is shown in Table 4.3. Most of the respondents 19(63%) agreed that the release of convicts under the presidential pardon is fair. This was supported by a female respondent in an interview who said:

The presidential pardon is a valuable tool for justice to individual who were jailed for wrongs that they did not commit, just like my grandson who was accused because of being at the wrong place on the wrong time. When he was released, I realised that the pardon is a necessity as it brings back our loved ones. (Participant A interview)

Another male respondent gave similar view relaying that:

In the prison most people have deteriorating health conditions and when it's beyond the prisons hospitalisation nothing is done, they become moving graves until they die as some convicts do not have any relative that are concerned about their lives. When they are released, they can start seeking medical treatment. (Participant B interview)

The results above indicate that the presidential pardon is regarded as fair by most participants. These results are similar to studies by Baunach (1985) who notes that releasing convicts is fair in the criminal justice system as convicts are also citizens who have their rights that should be upheld. This is in line with restorative justice that recognises the idea of restoring lost rights when incarcerated which is further supported by Ismaila (2020) who asserts that convicts when incarcerated their freedom is lost. Therefore, the presidential pardon works as mechanism for upholding human rights by rectifying loopholes of the justice system which includes wrongful incarceration and wrongful sentences at some point mass incarceration that can be corrected by the presidential pardon.

4.3.2 Reintegration of convicts

Respondents were asked on the possibility of reintegration as in Table 4.3, most respondents 17(57%) agreed that there is a chance that convicts can reintegration in societies after they are released under the presidential pardon. This was supported by a male respondent in an interview who averred that,

I have seen a lot of people living together without knowing that the person they are calling husband was once a prisoner. Usually when prisoners are released, they create new lives even an identity as the ties they have in the previous life might change. Women easily give up on their husbands and remarry same as men when they are released. (Participant B interview)

The line of thought was also conveyed in an interview by a female respondent who indicated the possibility of reintegration saying,

When working at the mines we do not share real identities and you never know who was once in prison as it never shows. Names are sacred here. (Participant C interview)

The findings above indicate that convicts can coexist with civilians when released from prison. Hence there is leeway of reintegrating with convicts which is in line with restorative justice that provides one a holistic approach to crime. The presidential pardon creates individual

change hence it is individual focused that's the reason why most respondents indicated that convicts benefit more. According to Guolea (2022) releasing convicts provides emotional relief to the convict's family lifting past crimes. This opens new opportunities scrapping off the stigma that creates boundaries on the family of the convict. Released convicts regardless of their offense require employment to adjust to civilian life in several ways (Chikadzi et al., 2022). Therefore, if past crimes are uplifted there is a chance of getting employed leading to possibility of reintegration of convicts in line with restorative justice that offers convicts another chance of restoring lost relationships.

4.3.3 Community benefits from reintegration programmes

Respondents from face-to-face interviews were asked if convicts are released with positive traits under the presidential pardon. A respondent agreed conveying that,

Individual come back trained now, they leave prison with concrete qualifications and hands on training and skills. Seems as if prison has become a school that one doesn't pay school fees because outside prison individual pays to attain such skills and qualifications. (Participant C interview)

Another respondent underlined that;

The programmes offered according to what I heard foster a sense of community belonging as they become productive members of the society even family members benefit from a well skilled individual. In simple terms in prison individuals are taught to be self sufficient, innovative and entrepreneurs. (Participant B interview)

Supporting the above another respondent stated that;

I have seen firsthand how hairdressing skills trained by individuals in prison has changed lives. One individual in particular comes in mind who was released from prison with unique hairdressing skills which boosted her confidence and gave her sense of purpose. After some time, she opened her hair salon and employed her fellow ex-convicts according to hearsays. Such changes provided a positive impact on the community at large. (Participant E interview)

Interviews above indicate that the community benefits from reintegration programmes offered to convicts before released. The programmes lower recidivism rates leading to safer communities as there is fewer criminal engagements. The programmes create successful

transitioning back into communities after incarceration. The findings are similar to Berghuis (2018) who indicates that a combination of vocational trainings and educational programmes are effective in reducing recidivism for male offenders. The study was limited to male offenders however the underlining factor of reducing recidivism remains constant. This is further supported by Fabelo (2002) who presents that prison education can lower natural barriers to positive community reintegration. The above emphasise the importance of programmes offered in prison showing that the presidential pardon is perceived positively.

4.4 Negative perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts.

Respondents were asked on their familiarity on the negative characteristics that are seen on individuals released from prison, the concept of recidivism and the presidential pardon risking public safety, results of questionnaire are presented in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.3 Negative perceptions on the release of convicts (No 30)

Questions	Agree		Neutral		DISAGREE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Negative characteristics are notable in convict after being released .	20	67	6	20	4	13
The release of convicts poses risk to public safety.	24	80	4	13	2	7
Criminals are depending on the presidential pardon.	20	67	6	20	4	13
Convicts after released commit the same crime.	22	73	5	17	3	10

4.4.1. Convicts are released with negative characteristics

In Table 4.3 most of the respondents 20(67%) agreed that convicts are released possessing negative characteristics. These negative traits include a criminal mindset as crimes are what brings them together in prison and violent tendencies. In support of that one female respondent asserted that ,

They talk about crimes only every time and that's their root stories the reason why they are in jail. It becomes easy to try what the fellow criminal did before they were caught. Making it easier to follow the same footsteps of an idea that is being told directly. The criminal mindset will continue growing adding more tactics in prison. (Participant D interview)

The violent tendencies were mirrored by other respondents in an interview who said ,

The boy who lived close to my place was once arrested but is back now, whenever I hear there was a bar fight um certain its him , his fighting habit worsened. We tried talking to him but it's beyond the words of elders, he lost cultural respect in prison for sure. (Participant C interview)

Findings indicate that released convicts have negative characteristics that include violent tendencies. This is further supported by American psychologist C. Haney (2019) notes that “ at the very least , prison is painful and incarcerated persons often suffer long term consequences from having been subject to pain, deprivation and extremely atypical patterns and norms of living and interacting with others.” Therefore, the conditions they live in prison make them continue to be in defence mode while it takes time to change such behaviours. Adding on, poor coping adjusting skills create negative characteristics of convicts released under the presidential pardon. According to Baffour eta al (2021) convicts struggle in adjusting changes that come being released under the presidential pardon leading to them to act impulsively making rush decisions without thinking of the consequences that follow. This also encompasses frustration and improper behaviours making them irrational leading to violent tendencies. Henceforth negative characteristics are a common trait that convicts possess as they experience changes when released under the presidential pardon.

4.4.2. Risk to public safety.

The release of convicts risking public safety was highlighted by most respondents 20 (80%) in a questionnaire. This shows that most participants agreed on the idea of risking the public safety if convicts are preterm released. In an interview an elderly female whole heartedly said,

We are dealing with murders who have left prison before experiencing the pain of prison, if only they could stay there, we are tired of these criminals. They have not yet changed and left their old habits. They will continue from the same spot they left when they were imprisoned. (Participant B interview)

Another female respondent in an interview indicated that,

After working hard from mining it's difficult to eat lavishly the fruits of your hard work criminals who have been modified in prison will force fully take your gold dumps or stones, what am sure of is they once tested prison and their business is clean showing that they have done it before. (Participant D interview)

Another male respondent compassionately indicated that,

It's difficult to share the same community with individual who have been released early from prison. It's difficult to heal whilst facing the demons that you are running away from same as that girl on social media. There is a chance that the same might happen to the next girl. (Participant C interview)

The results above indicate the risks caused by the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. In this study there is evidence of prevailing social unrest because of the risks posed by convicts released under the presidential pardon. The premature release of convicts has been a cause of concern posing public risks as individuals fear for their safety basing on what if the same crime is repeated. Appleton (2010) supports the above stating that the release of individuals including homicide offenders and terrorists may generate large scale societal disturbance. The public at some point fear of their safety within communities they negatively perceiving the presidential pardon as it leaves criminals inhabiting with victims and survivors as recidivism rates after release from prison are high worldwide (Macdonald 2024). Therefore, when dangerous criminals are released back into communities there is high probability of risking public safety as there are chances of recidivism that will be discussed below. This erodes

faith in the justice system as innocent lives are at risk. Moreover, wounds of victims and survivors will be reopened before they heal from the crimes that affected them directly or indirectly.

4.4.3 Recidivism and dependency of crime and presidential pardon.

The presidential pardon negatively has led to recidivism as supported by most respondents 22(73 %). This is further indicated by one young respondent in an interview who said,

People now know when to commit crime this is when elections are near. They are just be released without sitting too long , and only 3 months after it's over and come back in the communities and repeat the same cause they were jailed for or something bloodier then the first time. (Participant E interview)

The above was mirrored by another participant in an interview supporting on the chances of recidivism as follows,

Obviously they are risks that are inevitable such as recidivism and public safety can be compromised as it sorely depends on an individual and how he or she perceives pardon, in regret might never commit the same crime vice versa. (Participant C interview)

According to Table 4.3 most respondents 17(57%) supported that releasing convicts under the presidential pardon leads to recidivism. In the study there is a link between incarceration and probability of recidivism. When an individual is released under the presidential pardon there is lack of motivation to change as a way of avoiding future criminal activities if crimes have less consequences as the released individuals will not have completed their term of conviction creating opportunities to learn and address the issues that have led to incarceration from the onset. This is similar to Loeffler and Nagin (2022) who examines the impact of incarceration on the likelihood of recidivism. When people with a history of criminal behaviour receive the presidential pardon, there's a hazard of recidivism (Yukhnenko et al 2023). Individuals believe that they can escape the consequences of their actions through presidential pardon, then the deterrent effect of punishments then regulatory system of punishment may be weakened which is supported by retributive justice. Perceiving the presidential pardon as a way out, can reduce

fear of consequences and potentially weaken the preventive impact of criminal incarnation. The presidential pardon was therefore seen as tool that encourages recidivism and criminals are depending on it as a crime reliever explain why individuals would prefer retributive. Hence creating a negative perception on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon.

4. 5 Chapter summary

The chapter presented, analysed, and discusses the findings of the project on the perceptions of citizens released under the presidential pardon a case study of Mazowe District. The presentation of data was through bar graphs, pie charts and direct quotation and responses derived from questionnaire and interviews conducted.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon are summarized in this chapter. The study utilised the approaches of restorative and retributive justice as they strengthen the perceptions surrounding the connection between convicts and presidential pardon. Summary of key findings where present in alignment with the stated objectives on the perceptions of citizens in Mazowe area. Conclusions are drawn from the findings presented in the previous chapter and recommendations are the gaps that have been noted from the participants.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Summary of the whole project

Chapter One consists of the background of the study, problem statement and the aim of the study. Research objectives and questions were indicated as well as the significance of the study. Also, delimitations and limitations and definition of key terms where highlighted.

Chapter Two looks at the literature on the subject matter of the perceptions of the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. The study will utilise the approaches of restorative and retributive justice as they strengthen the perceptions surrounding the connection between convicts and presidential pardon.

Chapter Three focused on methodology that will be used in data collection through qualitative research. The instruments that are going to be used are focus group discussions and in- depth

interviews. Also highlighted on sample, sample size and targeted population. The data analysis and presentation have been highlighted.

Chapter Four presented, discussed and analyses the data gathered from the interviews and questionnaire of analysing citizens perceptions on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. The presentation of data was through bar graphs, pie charts and direct quotation and responses derived from questionnaire and interviews conducted. The chapter upheld ethical issues by not sharing names of the research.

Chapter Five presents the summary and conclusions of the project are drawn from the research conducted. Recommendations are then made from the findings and conclusions that need action indicating areas for future studies.

5.2.2 Summary of the research findings

The first objective was to analyse the positive perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. The research show that the release of convicts under the presidential pardon is fair as supported by most participants. The pardon corrects past injustices in the criminal justice system, gives a second chance to make a fresh start, provides a way to restore hope and dignity to inmates and an opportunity to redemption. The notion of reintegration being possible had a larger scale of participants support providing space for the possibility of reintegrating with convicts as there is no clear evidence that shows and proves that one was once in prison.

The second objective was to examine the negative perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. Convicts have negative traits when released under the presidential pardon as supported by most participants in the study. This include a criminal mindset as crimes are what brings them together in prison and violent tendencies. Such adjustment may be difficult as convicts struggle in adjusting changes that are caused by being

released under the presidential pardon. Leading to individuals to act impulsively making rush decisions without thinking of the consequences that follow. This also encompasses frustration and improper behaviours making them irrational leading to recidivism. Furthermore, the presidential pardon was viewed as tool that encourages recidivism and criminals are depending on it as a crime reliever from the study individuals believe that they can escape the consequences of their actions through presidential pardon, then the deterrent effect of punishments then regulatory system of punishment may be weakened. Convicts perceive the presidential pardon as a way out which reduces fear of consequences and potentially weaken the preventive impact of criminal incarnation. Also, the release of convicts under the presidential pardon poses a risk to public safety. The premature release of convicts has been a cause of concern posing public risks as individuals fear for their safety basing on what if the same mistake is repeated. The community then stay in fear of the unknown as dangerous offenders might be released because of serving the prescribed time of release basing on the Clemency Order Act.

5.3 Conclusions

The first research question was to analyse the positive perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. The study has shown that some citizens have positive perceptions on the release of convicts as the presidential pardon has given a second change and an opportunity for reintegration and restoration of normal life outside prison which is an important factor of family reunions. The presidential pardon is important to convicts because they take it as a step to freedom. Significantly the presidential pardon reduces prison overcrowding as the numbers of incarceration are snowballing greatly. Therefore, the presidential pardon restores hope for convicts who were falsely accused of and creates a new chance outside of prison which a positive factor of the release of convicts under the presidential

pardon. The study has shown that this mass release of prisoners is important to Zimbabwean prisons. In the context of attaining SDGs the presidential pardon perceived as fair strengthens public trust in the justice system which is a core component of SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. Positively the presidential pardon promotes transparency and full administration of justice which support goals of SDG 16.

The second research question was on the negative perceptions of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. Findings indicate that released convicts have negative characteristics that include violent tendencies that they portray when released under the presidential pardon. The premature release of convicts has been a cause of concern posing public risks as individuals fear for their safety basing on what if the same crime is repeated. The presidential pardon has a negative impact to communities because it creates divisions particularly victims families and perpetrator as they view it as unjust as offenders are not held accountable. The release of convicts under the presidential pardon creates a sense of fear and anxiety among community members as there are chances of recidivism.

5.4 Recommendations

a. The study revealed that victims have limited participation and input regarding the presidential pardon. There is need to establish victim offender dialogue allowing victims to have a voice in the pardoning of convicts proving an opportunity for offenders to take responsibility and make amends.

b. The study revealed that public safety is being threatened by the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. To the Zimbabwe Republic Police is recommended that there is need for public safety to be of paramount consideration in decision making process for presidential pardons. Through post pardon monitoring behaviour system as a way of controlling reintegration of individuals into communities.

- c. The study revealed that communities have limited knowledge on the presidential pardon. There is need to establish clear guidelines and criteria for pardons by implementing clear and publicly available standards outlining the circumstances and types of offence eligible for a presidential pardon.
- d. The study revealed potential for successful reintegration of convicts. Therefore, there is need to allocate community or national resources to establish comprehensive transitional support programmes for pardoned convicts and reintegration plans.
- e. Further research should focus on the impact of the presidential pardon on crime rate in Zimbabwe.

REFERENCE

- Appleton, C. A. (2010). *Life after life imprisonment*. Oxford University Press.
- Baffour, F. D., Ohene, S. A., & Owusu, G. (2021). Exploring the role of community-based organizations in offender rehabilitation. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 60(1), 1-19.
- Bats, J. (2017). *Criminal justice process*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Braithwaite, V. A. (1989). *Crime, shame, and reintegration*. Cambridge University Press.
- Braithwaite, V. A. (2013). *Hybrid justice: On the moral economy of a post-Newtonian age*. Sage.
- Brewer, M. (2019). *Research methods for business students**(5th ed.). Pearson Education Ltd.
- Chaikadzi, M., Walters, G. D., & Blasko, B. L. (2022). Adverse childhood experiences and criminal thinking. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 49(6), 787-805.
- Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*. Sage Publications.
- Chiang, C. (2019). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. Sage Publications.
- Clark, K. J. (2019). *Qualitative research*. Routledge.
- Denzin, N. K. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Sage Publications.
- Fader, J. J. (2015). *Criminal justice policy review*. Sage Publications.
- Fielding, J. (2019). *Probation in the United States*. Oxford University Press.
- Fingerman, K. L. (2016). *Mixed methods in family research*. Routledge.
- Flanagan, T. J. (2013). *Probation and parole*. Jones & Bartlett Publishers.
- Fouls, T. (2019). *Corrections in the community*. Routledge.

- Furedi, F. (2005). *Culture of fear: Risk-taking and the morality of low expectation*. Continuum.
- Glez, J. (2023). An analysis of recidivism rates. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 55, 101-114.
- Guolea, J. (2022). Lessons from justice reinvestment. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 700(1), 79-96.
- Haney, C. (2019). The psychological impact of incarceration. In M. Tonry (Ed.), (Vol. 26, pp. 79-142). University of Chicago Press.
- Harrison, P. M. (2019). *World prison population list*. International Centre for Prison Studies.
- Haughton, L. (2017). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis*. Sage.
- Hayes, J. (2024). Recidivism rates and risk factors. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 87, 101-112.
- Hoffman, E. (2018). *Intimate punishment: Understanding the prison system's response to sexual violence*. Columbia University Press.
- Hoy, W. K., & Adams, C. M. (2018). *Quantitative research in education*. Sage Publications.
- Ismaila, A. (2020). Probation officer decision-making. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 47(5), 608-626.
- Kulkarni, S. J. (2020). *Social work practice*. Sage Publications.
- Lageson, V. A. (2015). Rapist reoffending and recidivism: Perceptions of sexual risk and the origins of a myth. *American Journal of Sociology*, 120 (2), 537-576.
- Loeffler, C. E., & Nagin, D. S. (2022). The impact of incarceration on recidivism. *Annual Review of Criminology*, 5, 133-152. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-criminol-030421-021115>

- Lincoln, Y. S. (2016). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. Sage Publications.
- Macdonald, S. (2024). Desistance from crime. *Annual Review of Criminology*, 7, 229-248.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2013). **Qualitative research design*. Sage Publications.
- McCullough, M. E. (2008). The psychology of retribution: Why do people desire punishing outcomes, and what are the social consequences of retribution? *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 17(5), 347-351.
- Melany, A. (2020). *Qualitative research*. Sage Publications.
- Moore, R. (2017). *Criminology*. Oxford University Press.
- Nielsen, R., & Ehlers, C. (2005). Management of the sex offender using the ‘good lives’ model: A South African perspective. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 35 (3), 325-331.
- Parton, N. (2015). *The social work process*. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Petersillia, J. (2019). *Probation in the United States*. Oxford University Press.
- Privitera, G. J. (2020). *Research methods for the behavioral sciences*. Sage Publications.
- Saunders, B. (2017). Saturation in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 17 (2), 82-92.
- Shenkin, B. (2019). Should the power of presidential pardon be revised? *The Power of Clemency (2018)*. *The New York Times*.
- Simons, H. (2009). *Case study research in practice*. Sage Publications.
- Udofa, I. (2018). The abuse of presidential power of pardon and the needs for restraints. *Beijing Law Review*, 9, 113-143.
- Whiston, S. C. (2012). *Principles and applications of assessment in counselling*. Cengage Learning.

Yukhnenko, D., Sridhar, S., & Fazel, S. (2023). A systematic review of criminal recidivism rates worldwide. *Criminal justice and behavior*, 50 (1), 3-21.

Zimring, F. E. (2014). *The great American crime decline*. Oxford University Press.

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire on the perception of citizens on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon

My name is B203213B. I am a student at Bindura University of Science Education studying Peace and Governance. In partial fulfilment of my degree, I am seeking your permission to complete the questionnaire below answering the questions to the best of your knowledge. The project topic is analysing citizen perceptions on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. Be assured that the information gathered is strictly for academic purpose and complete ethical considerations. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Please tick the response that represent your best choice.

Section A

Biographical Data

1. Sex

FEMALE	
MALE	

2. Age

Below 20	
20-30	
31-40	
41-50	
51 – above	

3. Level of education

Primary	
O level	
Diploma	
Degree	
None	

Add any other.

.....

4. Occupation

.....

.....

Section B

QUESTION	TRUE	FALSE
5.Releasing convicts before completing their full sentence in prison is fair.		
6.Reintegration is possible to prisoners released under the presidential pardon.		
7. Convicts do not expose that they were once convicts in societies.		
8.Have you been in contact with any convict released from prison?		

9.Who benefits more from the release of convicts under the presidential pardon? Tick one

Family	
Community members	

Convicts	
-----------------	--

Section C

QUESTIONS	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE
10.The release of convicts poses risk to public safety.			
11. Criminals are depending on the presidential pardon.			
12.Living in the same area with a convict is impossible			
13.Convicts after released commit the same crime.			
14.Negative characteristic are notable in convict after being released .			

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide for respondents in Mazowe.

My name is B203213B. I am a student at Bindura University of Science Education studying Peace and Governance. In partial fulfilment of my degree, I am seeking your permission to participate in interview that will be carried out answering the questions to the best of your knowledge. The project topic is analysing citizen perceptions on the release of convicts under the presidential pardon. Be assured that the information gathered is strictly for academic purpose and complete ethical considerations. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Interview guide questions

Section A

- 1 Do you think more information should be given to the public on the nature of the release of convicts?
2. What should be done for the victims before convicts are released?
3. Should there be a follow up of all convicts after being released?
4. Do you think the release of convicts is fair?
5. What do you think about the criteria for eligibility for the pardon?
6. What are the risks of the release of convicts under the presidential pardon.

Section B

7. Is reintegration possible with convicts.
8. What are the major benefits of releasing convicts under the presidential pardon?
9. Who benefits more from the release of convicts under the presidential pardon?

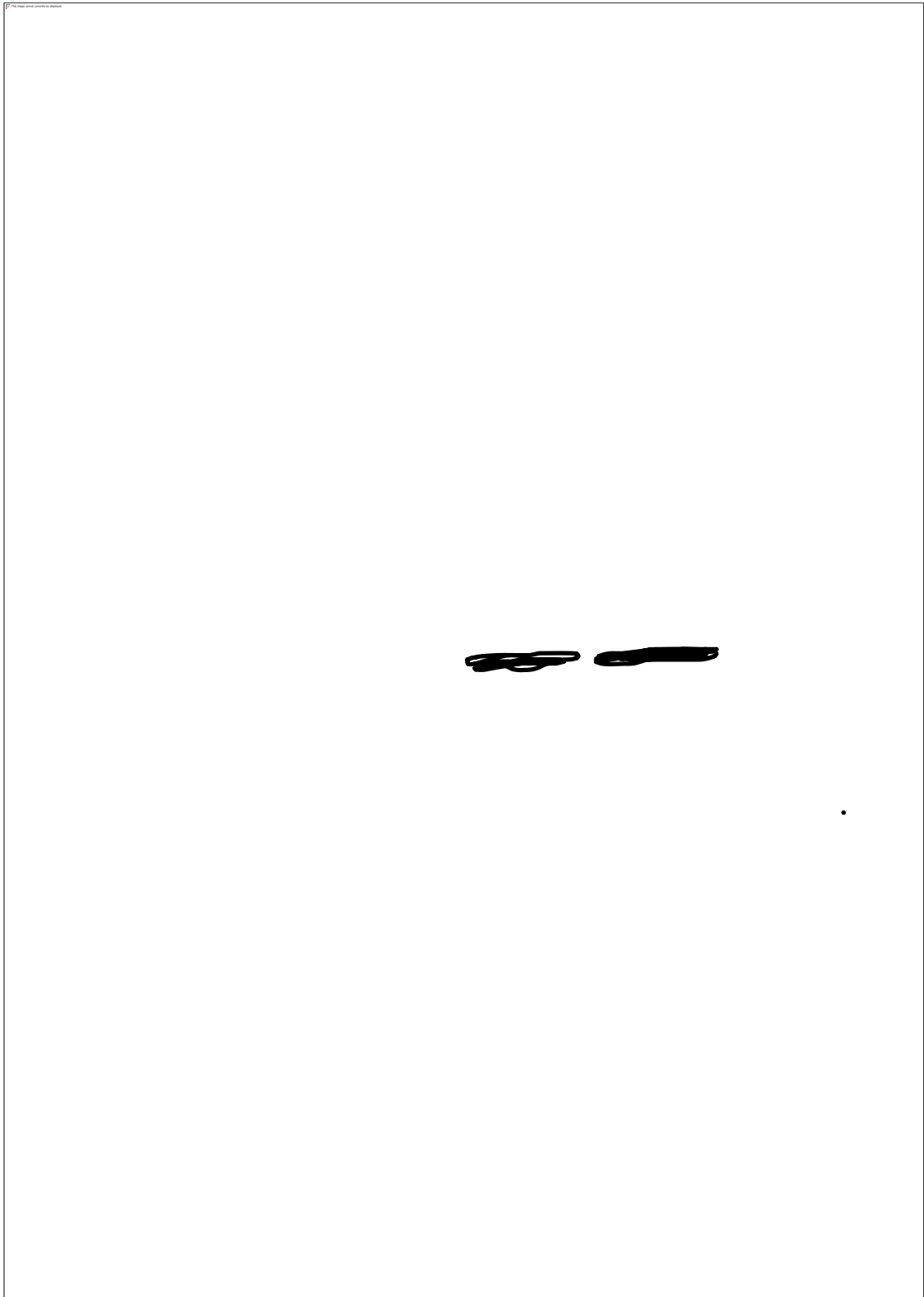
10. Are convicts releases with positive traits when released under the presidential pardon?

If yes, please explain.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

APPENDIX C

A letter from the department and approval from the Mazowe Rural District Council



Declaration

I, Patience Madziwa (B203213B), declare that this dissertation is the outcome of my personal study and research, excluding those specified in the acknowledgements and references included in the body of the paper, that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other university.

Patience Madziwa

Student's Signature

18/09/2024

Date

Patience

Supervisor's signature

18/09/24

Date

Muo

Chairperson's Signature

18/09/2024

Date

