

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter discusses the study that has been carried out. It interprets the findings in the previous chapter. Firstly, the summary of the results is discussed in detail following the order of research questions. The discussion will analyse the key findings in relation to existing literature, highlighting the similarities and divergences. Next, the limitations of the research will be explained. Subsequently, the implication of this study to the practices and recommendations for future research will be deliberated.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This is a quantitative study following a cross-sectional design involving 192 residents of PUSPEN Tiang Dua, Melaka. The participants for the study were recruited via convenience sampling. The study was conducted from April 2024 to May 2024. This study aims to determine the level of motivational readiness for change and the level of work readiness among clients at PUSPEN Tiang Dua. Subsequently, the primary objective of this study is to identify the relationship between motivational readiness to change and work readiness among clients at PUSPEN Tiang Dua. The data was collected using the validated Malay version of the Stages of Change Scale (SoCS) and the validated Malay version of the LAM Assessment of Stages of Employment Readiness (LASER). Finally, the data was collected and analysed using SPSS software version 23. In this subchapter, the researcher will synthesize and interpret the findings in the previous chapter in depth in accordance with the research objectives.

5.2.1 RQ 1: The Level of Motivational Readiness

The Stages of Change Scale (SoCS) results show that 64% of the individuals are in the contemplation stage, indicating that they acknowledge the necessity for change but have not yet committed to taking action. This is consistent with previous studies (Ibrahim et al., 2010; Khairunneezam Mohd Noor et al., 2015) that emphasize the challenge of moving from contemplation to action during recovery. DiClemente (2004) describes the contemplation stage as a period of ambivalence, during which individuals evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of making a change. In the context of substance abuse recovery, this may entail acknowledging the negative impacts of drug usage while resisting the desire to continue using. An individual in recovery might feel torn between the desire to improve and the uncertainty about their capability to achieve it.

The significant association between motivational readiness and rehabilitation duration suggests that longer stays in rehabilitation programs may improve motivation. This could be attributed to prolonged exposure to therapeutic interventions, counselling, and peer support, which can boost people's determination and dedication to change (Prochaska et al., 1994). The findings align with the research by Prochaska et al. (1994), which indicated that individuals in the action and maintenance phases of change were inclined to stay in therapy for extended durations. Likewise, rehabilitation programs often create a structured environment that encourages self-reflection and helps develop coping skills, which can contribute to heightened motivation (Laudet et al., 2019).

However, the lack of individuals in the maintenance phase gives rise to concerns about the long-term effectiveness of the rehabilitation program in fostering lasting

behavioural change. In the maintenance phase, individuals have effectively sustained change for a significant period and work toward relapse prevention (DiClemente, 2004). This discovery is consistent with research that shows high relapse rates among individuals recovering from substance abuse, even after completing rehabilitation (Khairunneezam Mohd Noor et al., 2015; Flynn et al., 2003). This accentuates the importance of on-going social support in preventing relapse.

5.2.2 RQ2: The Level of Work Readiness

The assessment of work readiness using the LAM Assessment of Stages of Employment Readiness (LASER) indicates that a majority (60.4%) of participants are in the contemplation stage. This stage is characterized by individuals weighing the pros and cons of employment and identifying potential barriers and solutions (Noor Emellia Jamalludin, 2009). The study reveals a significant discrepancy between the high employment rate (79.7%) and the distribution of participants across different stages of work readiness. Furthermore, the presence of individuals in the pre-contemplation stage (16.1%) indicates a need for interventions that raise awareness about the benefits of employment and address negative beliefs about work. On a positive note, 23.5% of participants were in the action stage, demonstrating a combination of desire and action towards securing employment. This suggests that a significant portion of individuals in recovery are actively seeking work and may benefit from targeted support to overcome any remaining barriers. The substantial proportion of participants in the contemplation stage, even though the majority were employed, is consistent with findings from Cebulla et al. (2004). This suggests that many employed individuals may be working

out of necessity or in suboptimal conditions, lacking the motivation or skills for fulfilling employment. The presence of participants in the pre-contemplation stage is consistent with SAMHSA (2023) findings, which emphasize that a lack of financial security and job dissatisfaction can lead to anxiety and relapse. This highlights the importance of interventions that target not just job acquisition but also job satisfaction and career growth to promote long-term workplace engagement.

The findings revealed that 46.9% of participants have a Secondary School Certificate (SPM), while 41.1% have only completed secondary school. These findings align with research indicating that individuals with substance use disorders often face educational and vocational challenges (SAMHSA, 2014). Furthermore, this suggests that most of those employed may be working in positions that do not require a higher school degree. This could limit their career growth options and lead to job discontent or underemployment. Participants may be hesitant to return to work due to a lack of confidence in their abilities, concerns about stigma and discrimination, or practical difficulties such as insufficient job skills or experience.

The lack of a significant relationship between work readiness and duration in rehabilitation indicates that factors such as education level, job skills, and social support, may have a more pronounced impact in determining work readiness. This inference is consistent with previous research that has stressed the necessity of comprehensive therapies that address not only addiction but also the social and economic conditions that contribute to unemployment (SAMHSA 2014). This emphasizes the necessity for rehabilitation centres to offer holistic support, including vocational training, job placement assistance, and ongoing support to effectively meet

the diverse needs of individuals in recovery and facilitate their successful return to the workforce.

5.2.3 RQ3: Relationship Between Motivational Readiness to Change and Work Readiness

The moderate positive correlation ($r = .490$, $p = .000$) between motivational readiness for change and work readiness indicates a significant connection between these two constructs. This is in accordance with the theoretical framework postulated in this research, which asserts that motivational readiness for change plays a vital role in influencing work readiness among clients undergoing rehabilitation. The correlation value of .490 suggests a reasonably moderate association, implying that as individuals' motivation to quit their addictive habits grows, so does their preparedness for work. This finding is consistent with the Transtheoretical Model of Change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983), which proposes that individuals navigate through many phases of change and that higher levels of motivation are linked to a greater readiness to act toward change.

Smith (2020) emphasizes the importance of personal agency in behaviour change, which is driven by traits like self-efficacy. This idea is closely related to the current study's findings, as those with greater motivational readiness, and hence higher self-efficacy, are better prepared for work. This suggests that interventions aimed at enhancing self-efficacy and skills training, have the potential to enhance both motivation and work readiness, ultimately leading to improved employment outcomes for individuals in recovery.

5.3 Research Limitation

Several limitations have been identified in this study. The first limitation is the sampling method that has been used in this study. The researcher used a convenient sampling method from a single rehabilitation centre. This may not reflect the actual population and could affect the generalizability of the findings to other populations or settings. Secondly, since this is a cross-sectional study, the researcher could only identify the association between motivational readiness to change and work readiness among PUSPEN Tiang Dua clients but not the causative relationship. Subsequently, the study relied on self-reported responses from participants. As a result, the data is susceptible to social desirability and recollection bias. Participants may have overestimated their motivational or job readiness to present themselves more favourably. Finally, the study did not investigate the specific mechanism the motivational readiness to change affects work readiness.

5.4 Implications for Rehabilitation Centres

Despite the limitation, the study's findings suggest a significant moderate correlation between motivational readiness to change and work readiness. Even though the study did not investigate the causal relationship, higher motivational readiness to change is associated with improved work outcomes and lesser relapse among recovering individuals. The study's findings add to the current body of knowledge by emphasizing the complexity of work readiness among those in recovery. The outcomes of this study have several impacts on rehabilitation facilities. Firstly, the study underlines the importance of assessing motivation for change and work readiness among clients in

rehabilitation programs. This information will be useful in customizing interventions to specific clients at different levels of motivational and work readiness. Individuals in the contemplation stage of motivational preparation may benefit from motivational interviewing, whilst those in the action stage may benefit from work skills training. This is consistent with Khairunneezam Mohd Noor et al.'s (2015) recommendation to strengthen rehabilitation programs by addressing the diverse needs and requirements of people at different stages of change.

Secondly, the study implies that interventions that address both motivation and job readiness may be more effective than those that target solely one of these elements. Since, motivation and work readiness are interrelated, treating both might result in a synergistic effect. Motivational interviewing techniques can help individuals create the motivation to participate in job skills training which in turn helps individuals gain the confidence needed to find and keep work. Short-term skills training provided by rehabilitation centres can be beneficial to recovering persons upon returning home. This is consistent with the findings of Rognli et al. (2022), who found that integrating employment support into substance use treatment has a favourable impact.

Finally, the study indicates the importance of vocational rehabilitation programs customized to the needs of persons recovering from addiction. These programs should equip people with the skills, tools, and support they need to find and retain employment. This could include assistance in skills training, resume writing, job search guidance, and ongoing workplace support. Rehabilitation institutions under NADA have comprehensive rehabilitation modules encompassing rehabilitation, social support, clinical treatment, pre-discharge preparation, and maintenance. This study suggests that

more emphasis should be placed on vocational training. NADA could form a collaboration with industry leaders to provide skills training for its clients. These skills training would aid recovery personnel by increasing their motivation and confidence in finding and maintaining employment. This is consistent with SAMHSA's (2023) vocational training module.

5.5 Implication for Addiction Counselling Practice

The study's discoveries have significant implications for interventions designed to enhance work readiness among individuals in recovery. The findings indicate that interventions focusing on improving motivation, such as Motivational Enhancement Therapy (MET) using motivational interviewing could also positively influence work readiness (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). MET is an evidence-based, client-centred therapeutic approach aimed at resolving ambivalence about change among substance abusers (SAMHSA, 2021). Research has demonstrated its effectiveness in boosting motivation and enhancing treatment outcomes for individuals with substance use disorders (SAMHSA, 2019; SAMHSA 2021). By integrating MET into rehabilitation programs, counsellors can aid clients in developing the internal motivation and self-efficacy needed to reach their vocational objectives. This is consistent with Ibrahim et al.'s (2010) proposal that counsellors actively use motivational interviewing as a therapeutic technique when dealing with drug abusers.

Furthermore, the study suggests that addiction counsellors could partner with vocational rehabilitation professionals to provide comprehensive assistance to clients. This might involve referring clients to vocational rehabilitation programs, providing

guidance on job search strategies, and advocating for them at work. This aligns with SAMHSA's (2010) concept of Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care, highlighting the importance of teamwork and communication among different care providers to help individuals in their recovery journey. This collaborative approach can ensure that clients receive the necessary support to effectively reintegrate into the workforce. This is consistent with SAMHSA's (2010) idea of Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care, which emphasizes the necessity of collaboration and coordination across various care providers in supporting individuals in recovery.

Lastly, more addiction counsellors should be trained and placed in rehabilitation centres to address the growing needs. This would assist in alleviating the load on existing rehabilitation systems by offering specialized care to individuals who require it. It would also help to reduce the stigma associated with addiction and promote a more sympathetic and understanding approach to treatment. The lives of many individuals and families afflicted by this widespread problem could be improved by investing in the training and placement of addiction counsellors.

5.6 Recommendation for Future Research

Future research in this field should prioritize longitudinal studies to understand the evolving relationship between motivational readiness for change and job readiness over time. Unlike cross-sectional studies, longitudinal designs can track changes in these factors throughout the recovery process, revealing how motivation and job readiness fluctuate and influence each other. By examining their trajectories, researchers can identify predictive factors and determine whether early motivational

readiness forecasts later job success. Longitudinal studies also allow for evaluating the long-term impact of interventions on both motivation and employment outcomes.

While a correlation often exists between motivation and job readiness, future studies need to delve into their causative relationship. By establishing whether improving motivation directly enhances job readiness, researchers can design more effective interventions. Experimental designs, where participants are randomly assigned to different interventions, can help isolate the impact of each factor and provide valuable insights into their causal connection.

Building on existing research, future investigations should focus on the effectiveness of various interventions that target both motivation and job readiness. Motivational interviewing, cognitive-behavioural therapy, job skills training, and combination approaches should be explored to determine their impact on enhancing motivation and improving concrete job outcomes. By rigorously evaluating these interventions, researchers can identify the most effective strategies for individuals returning to work after illness or injury, ultimately aligning with Cebulla et al.'s (2004) recommendations for evidence-based approaches in this domain.

5.7 Conclusion

The study's findings emphasize the importance of motivational readiness for change and job preparation in the context of addiction treatment. The moderate positive connection between these two factors indicates that resolving both issues is critical for successful reintegration into the workforce. The findings underline the need

for rehabilitation programs using a comprehensive strategy that includes job placement, job satisfaction, career development, and ongoing assistance to enable effective and long-term reintegration into the workforce.

