

Social Environmental Education: A Literature Review of Former Drug Users

Edukasi Lingkungan Sosial: Tinjauan Literatur Mantan Pengguna Narkoba

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Abstract

Drug abuse is a complex public health problem characterized by a high risk of relapse among former users after rehabilitation. This study aims to examine the role of social environmental education in supporting recovery and social reintegration of former drug users. A qualitative literature review was conducted by analyzing relevant journal articles, books, and research reports published within the last ten years. The findings indicate that family support, community acceptance, socioeconomic conditions, and stigma management are key determinants of recovery success. Lack of social support and persistent stigma increase psychological stress and vulnerability to relapse. In contrast, supportive social environments enhance motivation, resilience, and adaptive coping among former users. The study highlights that rehabilitation efforts should not focus solely on individuals but must be integrated with family- and community-based social environmental education to reduce relapse risk and promote sustainable recovery.

Keywords: *drug abuse, social environment, environmental education, rehabilitation, relapse.*

Abstrak (Indonesia)

Penyalahgunaan narkoba merupakan permasalahan kesehatan masyarakat yang kompleks dan ditandai oleh tingginya risiko kekambuhan (relapse) pada mantan pengguna pascarehabilitasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran pendidikan lingkungan sosial dalam mendukung proses pemulihan dan reintegrasi sosial mantan pengguna narkoba. Metode yang digunakan adalah kajian literatur dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui analisis artikel ilmiah, buku, dan laporan penelitian relevan dalam sepuluh tahun terakhir. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa dukungan keluarga, penerimaan masyarakat, kondisi sosial ekonomi, serta pengelolaan stigma merupakan faktor kunci dalam keberhasilan pemulihan. Minimnya dukungan sosial dan stigma negatif meningkatkan tekanan psikologis yang berkontribusi pada relapse. Sebaliknya, lingkungan sosial yang suportif mampu meningkatkan motivasi, resiliensi, dan kemampuan adaptasi mantan pengguna. Studi ini menegaskan pentingnya pendekatan rehabilitasi yang terintegrasi dengan pendidikan lingkungan sosial berbasis keluarga dan komunitas.

Kata kunci: *narkoba, lingkungan sosial, pendidikan lingkungan, rehabilitasi, relapse.*

INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse is a serious problem that not only impacts individual health but also has broad social consequences in society (Aeni 2024). This problem causes stress on interpersonal relationships, community disintegration, and an increase in drug-related crime, which ultimately impacts the safety and well-being of society as a whole (Simangunsong et al. 2023). Socioeconomic factors such as household instability, juvenile delinquency, violence against children, and limited access to health services act as catalysts for unhealthy behaviors in society (Agusalim et al. 2023).

The social environment has a fundamental role in shaping individual behavior, so that an educational approach that focuses on strengthening values and norms in the community environment is a key strategy in the prevention and rehabilitation of former drug users (Sulfikah

et al. 2023) . This educational approach aims to change public perception of addiction, reduce stigma, and create an environment that supports the social reintegration process for individuals who have undergone rehabilitation (Agusalim et al. 2023; Alhakim et al. 2024) . Relapse is a major challenge often faced after rehabilitation, where individuals are at risk of returning to drug use due to the influence of individual, family, environmental factors, and lack of knowledge (Olivia et al. 2024) .

in Indonesia shows a worrying increasing trend from year to year, covering various age groups ranging from elementary school-aged children to working adults (Agusalim et al. 2023)

This increase in prevalence shows that drug abuse has become a global problem that urgently needs to be addressed, as reported by the United Nations regarding millions of people who are addicted to drugs worldwide (Rahim 2020) . Various efforts have been made to address drug abuse, but the number of abuse cases in several regions still shows an increase (Aeni 2024) . This shows that drug distribution and abuse in Indonesia still cannot be suppressed optimally, so it requires special attention and seriousness from all parties to overcome its impact on the nation, religion, economy, education, health, and social society.

This problem becomes increasingly complex due to weak social control in the family and community environment, which creates space for individuals to be exposed to negative influences without adequate supervision (Abdi 2025) . This condition is exacerbated by external factors such as unhealthy social relationships and environments, as well as internal factors including personality and economic conditions (Sari et al. 2023) . Social environmental factors are the main cause of why former addicts often experience relapses, especially when they return to socializing with an environment that is directly in contact with drugs after undergoing rehabilitation (Salsabilla et al. 2022; Olivia et al. 2024).

This phenomenon occurs because the potential for relapse remains high even though former addicts have stopped abusing drugs for a long time, while the negative stigma from society becomes a tough test that can trigger emotional disorders and loss of confidence in recovery (Permana 2018).

RESEARCH METHODS

The methods should enable the reader to understand the research methodology used. Provide sufficient detail so that the work can be understood. Methods described must be supported by references: only relevant modifications should be explained. Do not repeat the details of established methods. This section includes the research design or framework conducted. It covers the type of research, research subjects/objects, data collection techniques/instruments, and data analysis. It should be accompanied by illustrations in the form of figures or flowcharts of the design and research steps. (3)

This study uses a literature review method with a qualitative approach to examine in depth the concept of social environmental education for former drug users based on relevant scientific sources (Adiyanti and Rozi 2019; Beni and Aryanie 2019) . Data were collected through searching journal articles, books, and research reports that discuss social environmental factors, rehabilitation strategies, and community-based prevention programs (Simanjuntak et al. 2021; Febiantika et al. 2023)

The inclusion criteria used in source selection included articles published within the last ten years, focusing on drug rehabilitation and social dynamics, and written in Indonesian or English. Sources that did not meet these criteria were excluded to ensure the relevance and accuracy of the findings in this literature review.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the synthesis of the analyzed literature, it was found that the main challenges faced by former drug users during the abstinence period include poor socioeconomic conditions, minimal family and social support, interpersonal conflicts, and stigma and discrimination that lead to exclusion from society (Beni and Aryanie 2019; Revina 2022) .

This stigma and discrimination exacerbates the situation, as seen in the police identity card registration system that identifies individuals as drug users, thus hindering their efforts to stay clean and increasing the likelihood of relapse (Yin and Zakaria 2016) .

In addition, the high relapse rate is also influenced by the implementation of rehabilitation programs that tend to be punitive rather than rehabilitative, so that the psychological needs of addicts do not receive adequate attention (Setyani and Swandi 2019) . Lack of social support from the surrounding environment and family is a critical factor that triggers despair, because the community often cannot accept former addicts back and there is less effective communication within the family (Ratih and Utami 2019) .

This lack of support makes individuals feel belittled by their environment, thus increasing psychological stress and difficulty controlling emotions which ultimately increases the vulnerability to returning to drug use or experiencing relapse (Habibi 2018; Sari et al. 2020) . Empirical data shows that the relapse rate reaches 35% in former prisoners three months after inpatient rehabilitation, while an analysis of eight dimensions of tendencies indicates a high risk of relapse among former drug users (Razali 2017; Suseno et al. 2023) = .

This finding is in line with the research of Maarefvand et al. in Iran which reported a significant relapse rate, ranging from 75 to 95 percent among former drug addicts (Ratih and Utami 2019) . This high relapse rate confirms that the recovery process does not only depend on the individual's ability to quit, but is greatly influenced by the quality of social support and the environment in which they return to live (Azmi et al. 2018; Setyani and Swandi 2019) . This shows that low social support after the rehabilitation period not only increases stress in their lives but also influences psychological problems that can hinder the ability to socialize in a new environment. Negative stigma from society has been proven to be a major obstacle in the recovery process, because it causes former users to feel ashamed to face society and choose to isolate themselves, which ultimately leads to failure in the recovery process (Razali 2017) = .

In addition, other findings indicate that the tendency to return to initial positive behavior patterns or prolapse often occurs because the majority of users are relapse users, so that rehabilitation places alone do not guarantee total recovery without a strong intention from the individual himself (Bahri 2019). However, the individual's intention will not be effective enough without being balanced by the availability of adequate social support from the surrounding environment, especially the family, which has been shown to contribute significantly to the motivation to recover (Suparno 2017; Mindiono 2018) .

The social environment is expected to provide opportunities for former addicts to be accepted back into society and involve them in social activities as part of the reintegration process (Suparno 2017) . Comprehensive social support from the surrounding environment has been proven to be a crucial factor in reducing the tendency to relapse, because harmonious interpersonal relationships and community acceptance can increase self-efficacy and more adaptive coping strategies for former users (Razali 2017) .

Discussion

Based on the literature synthesis that has been conducted, this discussion confirms that the dynamics of the social environment play a fundamental role in determining the success of recovery of former drug users, where the interaction between social support, stigma, and psychological conditions shape the trajectory of the reintegration process (Razali 2017; Suparno 2017) . Adequate social support, especially from family and primary groups, serves as an important buffer that can increase individual self-confidence and optimism to remain abstinent (Suparno 2017; Adiyanti and Rozi 2019) .

On the other hand, the absence of such support or an environment that actually belittles recovery efforts will increase the burden of stress and complicate emotional control, thus making individuals more vulnerable to returning to drug use (Primanda 2015). Research by Isnaini, Hariyono & Utami shows that high family support plays a very important role in the healing

process, because many users whose desire to recover comes from the support of their parents or the surrounding environment (Yunitasari 2018) .

This is in line with the view that enthusiasm and support from the family will help the recovery of addicts, so the rehabilitation process should not be left entirely to the institution alone but rather involve the active role of the family (Primanda 2015; Suseno et al. 2023) . This active role of the family includes emotional support, supervision, and strengthening coping strategies and self-resilience which have been shown to contribute significantly to the motivation to recover inmates undergoing drug rehabilitation (Suseno et al. 2023) .

Furthermore, an effective rehabilitation process must integrate internal risk factor reduction programs to increase the resilience of former addicts when facing dysfunctional environments, including communities and peers who still use drugs. Therefore, post-rehabilitation follow-up programs need to be implemented simultaneously by involving the environment that plays a role in the individual's life, and require further empirical research to compare the effectiveness of existing rehabilitation methods (Adiyanti and Rozi 2019) .

The importance of an individualized approach in rehabilitation is also emphasized, given that each individual's healing process is different, requiring in-depth surveys or research to determine the appropriate method for preventing relapse. The measurement of success in moving from one stage to the next should be carried out more carefully, involving aspects of behavioral change, cognitive aspects, mental and emotional abilities, and social aspects according to the demands of each stage (Adiyanti and Rozi 2019) .

CONCLUSION

Based on the synthesized literature review, it can be concluded that the social environment plays a crucial role in the successful recovery and reintegration of former drug users, where family support, community acceptance, and stigma management serve as key determinants of recovery motivation and individual resilience. Comprehensive family support has been shown to directly correlate with improved psychological well-being and quality of life, such that individuals who receive strong support demonstrate higher levels of resilience in facing recovery challenges.

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