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Research paper

Perspective Transformation Model Among Former Drug Addict in Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

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Abstract

Drug addiction is number one problem in Malaysia. Drug addiction could lead to many problems to the society, community as well to the country. The purpose of this article is to discuss the perspective transformation model among 15 former drug addict. Perspective transformation model is a lifelong learning process. It is self directed and effective learning process for adults. Based on the facts the drug addiction is difficult to recover but it is not impossible. In order to leave the drug addicts individuals need motivation, commitment, spirit and sacrifice. This article is to highlight how the former drug addict managed to escape from the drug addiction after going through a tough process. The former drug addicts share their success story with the researcher during the interview. This study will explore how the former drug addict change the meaning scheme and perspective scheme through transformative learning experience. Through the interaction with others it caused the transformation to the worldview of the former drug addicts. The main theory of this study is transformative learning theory by Mezirow. Qualitative methods was chosen in this study by using the phenomenological and case study method in which to understand the phenomenan comprehensively. Finally, this article will conclude the perspective transformation model among former drug addicts.

Keywords: *Transformative learning; perspective transformation process; trigger event; dialogue; former drug addicts*.

1. Introduction

Transformative learning is associated with adult learning. In adult learning the constructive approach is used where knowledge is not in the individual but it constructed throught interpretation of new experiences [1]. Learning occurs when individual seek alternative perspectives by questioning something that was in the mind habits [2]. In Mezirow [3, 4, 5] and Taylor [6, 7, 8] opinion that transformative learning is a form of learning which accords with the experiences, development and maturity of adults.

2. Drug Addiction Symptom

Drug addiction has become the biggest problem in the world and country. None of the country in this world could escape from a drug problem. Every year the drug production is increasing drastically dan smuggling issues resulted an increasing number of drug addicts [9]. Fiqh scholars agree that the drug is illegal because it is harmful to humans, ancestry and environment. The National Fatwa Council of Malaysia released a fatwa that drug is illegal in Islam [10]. It shows that Islam forbids the use of drugs. When the drug is abused or overdose it showed that the individual lack of guidance, thought, intellect, consideration and do not know themselves [11]. According to Jamaluddin [11], when taking the drug it will harm themselves. The purpose of this study is to explore, understand and identify the perspective transformation process for the former drug users. Through the perspective transformation process, we will understand clearly how the perspective transformation process helps individual to overcome the drug problem and the processes and phases involved in the perspective transformation process.

3. Literature Review

As described by Mezirow, perspective transformation process will leads to transformative learning. Trigger event is the first phase of transformative learning [3, 4, 5]. In 1978, transformative learning theory has been introduced in adult learning [2]. Based on the study by Mezirow (1978) of 83 women found that the perspective transformation process occurs in linear form and it is not easy to get throught all levels and take time to the level ten. Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgatner [12] conclude that perspective transformation process are divided into five phases (i) trigger event (ii) critical reflection (iii) changes in meaning structure (iv) actions (v) integration. Perspective transformation occurs in two situations (i) linear (ii) non linear.

According to Mezirow, perspective transformation process starting with trigger event. Trigger event is an important element in transformative learning which can occur through discussions, book readings, poetry and critical event [37]. Reflection is a cognitive process, thoughts and emotions that involve active thinking process which individual reflect, rethink and revised the experience [5]. Whereas the dialogue plays a role in the occurance of the perspective transformation process [5, 13]. Mezirow mentioned that the dialogue is a process in which individuals actively engage in dialogue with other people in order to understand the meaning experience.

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Mezirow [3] stated that the perspective transformation process occurs in a linear perspective but the process is difficult. A study conducted by Mohd Azhar [2] to the Chinese Muslim in Johor Bahru found the respondents experienced gradual transformation process through four phases with 13 levels. The four phase are confusion, exploration, action and integration. The phase and level divided by two, meaning structure before and after converting to Islam. Perspective transformation process is a journey and exploration of human nature. Roberts [14] in his study found that most individuals experiencing almost 10 phases of perspective transformation process. Spiritual experience is the cause for the transformation of emotional and behavior perspective. Through the perspective transformation process it is giving an impact on the emotions and behavior of individuals. Study by Weinski to the 28 adult students found that all respondents experienced a perspective transformation process on trust and divinity of Jesus. From the results of the study found that perspective transformation occur in a linear perspective through six phase that involves cognitive, emotional, evaluative, social and spiritual.

Taylor [16] and Cranton [13] argued that not all the perspective transformation process happens in a linear perspectives. Cranton [16] also supported that the perspective transformation process not only occured in linear process but also occured in non linear form. Taylor [17] restate that patients who suffering multiple sclerosis experienced five phases in the perspective transformation process that occur in non linear perspectives. It happened recursive, evolving and spiralling to the respondents in all phases of perspective transformation process and it is not clear and difficult to identify. Study by Kairson [18] of 14 minority women who participated in the leadership program in New York found that the perspective transformation process occurs in non linear perspectives. It happens gradually and influenced by elements of culture, politic and class but not all the respondents managed to go through all the perspective transformation process phases.

4. Research Methodology

This research uses fully qualitative design. This research conducted at Cure and Care Service Center (CCSC) Taman Medan, Petaling Jaya under the supervision of Agensi AntiDadah Kebangsaan (AADK, Malaysia). 15 respondent were selected based on purposive sampling method. Respondents are the CCSC occupant where they come voluntarily to seek advice, assistance and counseling for the drug recovery program. In depth interview were used to obtain comprehensive data [19, 20, 21]. It takes about 45 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes to the interview the respondent. The data collection process takes about 3 months from 1 May 2016 to 30 July 2016. Analysis data and roundtable discussion For the data analyzing, researcher using the manual method (Constant Comparative Method and Thematic) [22. Based on researcher view the themes will occur based on transformative learning element. This will gave a clearer direction of perspective transformation process.

5. Findings

5.1. Normal Life

Before involved in the drug addiction, majority of the respondents had a normal life. Respondents do not have a problem with family or friend. For R1 eventhough he is "Chow Kit child" and live in hot spot area. He do not taking drug as his mother often reminded that the drug is dangerous.

"…my relationship with family is ok…I'm the only child in the family..."

5.2. Intrusion of Mind

Most of the respondents having a problem with family, conflict with themselves and no job which caused intrusion to respondent mind. Respondents could not face all the problems by themselves and also think critically how to solve the problem. As indicate by R2;

"…after my father died I have to take care my mother…at that time I've no jobs…how to support my mother…my siblings does not bother about my mother…I really get fed up and upset with my siblings….

5.3. Stress

Most of respondents really stress and fed up with their life. In order to escape from all the problems the best solution is taking drug after seeing their friends is really enjoying and happy when taking. For them drug can solve their problems. R3 states:

"…wow…when take drugs all my problems gone…im a happy person in this world…I felt in my own world…I feel excitement, joy….I don't bother about other people…"

5.4. Trigger Event

Trigger event is the main cause that respondent evaluate their experience as a drug addict and determined to do transformation in their life. For R5 trigger event occurs when he was detained in the lockup. The prison officer touches on the mother issues and really give an impact to him.

"…the prison officer said "are you born to be a drug addict by your mother" I was shocked and give a bad impression to me…"

For R6, family is the causes for the occurence of trigger event. R6 said..

"…my brother died because of HIV/AIDS…he died because of the drug…I'm the one who take care of him…"

Majority of the respondent experienced trigger event more than three times. Respondents still taking drugs after seeing several events that happen in life because respondent think that drug will not harm to them. But when an event involving their family it has an impact to the respondents.

5.5. Critical Reflection

Critical reflection is the heart of transformative learning. Most of the respondents flashback their experience as a drug addict and feel guilty for taking drugs. R6 said during the reflection process, he experiencing problems such as depression and almost went crazy.

"…I suffered from depression…I alone and lock myself in the house…even I did not take any food or drinks…I almost crazy at that time…"

For R11, he had experienced a critical hallucination. Respondent almost did committed suicide as he can't stand with the events.

"…I heard voices whispering to me..ahhh..but no voice actually..i feel like to suicide at that time...i climb up the building because of the voice…it's really disturbing me ok…"

This show that critical reflection is an important element for the perspective transformation process for the respondents.Through

the critical reflection process respondents will try to find a way out of the problem.

5.6. Dialogue

During the critical reflection process most of the respondents participate themselves in the dialogue process. Most of the respondents need help and advice from other parties. Dialogue as the driver for the perspective transformation process to be happen. For R9, he did the dialogue with his mother as he very close to his mother. His mother gave encouragement, advice and confidence that respondent can change.

"…I told my mother about my intention to change…free from drug…she fully support me and confidence that I can change..."

Based on the interview analysis show that dialogue is very important in the perspective transformation process. Dialogue and critical reflection need each other as these two element can change the meaning scheme and built a new meaning scheme for the respondents.

5.7. Meaning Perspectives

Most of the respondents agreed that there is a transformation in their new lives. After facing the difficult and challenges as a drug addicts, the respondents made an effort to change the new meaning perspectives in life. Before this respondents did not perform the prayer, read the Quran and fasting, but after the deeper reflection they decided to do transformation in their life. R12 said that he felt grateful after the transformation and plan to maintain his recovery and did a migration to his new life.

"…I thankful to Allah after free my life from drug…at the beginning I not confidence with myself…but after I learn how to overcome the drug issue I feel confidence…Allah gave me a second chance to live…it's mean Allah still love me…as a Muslim I must do my five time prayer, read Quran, fasting…"

5.8. Support

From the interview analysis also found that most respondents get the support, help and advice to stop taking drugs. For R2, his mother understands the problem faced by him and with the blessing of his mother prayer and support, he managed to leave drugs. R2 is the only child in the family after his brother's died because of drugs. For R2 his mother is the best person because always gave full attention to him.

"..my mother confidence that I could change…my mother knew that I could stay away from drug…she really help and support…"

Unlike R5, he get the support for his friends. Althought respondent friends are drug addict, they still gave support and advice to the respondent.

"…I told my friends that I did not want to take drugs anymore and get out from drug problem…I felt regret and guilt for what I did before…"

To leave out from drug addiction, respondents will need moral support and advice from various parties in order for the respondents to have a better life in the future.

5.9. Improve Worship

Majority of the respondent said that when involved with drugs they forgot about Allah messenger. Respondents failed to carry out the responsibilities and duty as a Muslim to perform prayer, fasting and others. Most of the respondents said drug has caused them not to think to do a good deed. R8 states:

"…to solve my problem I made myself close with Allah…I did the prayer, heared sermon, read Holy Quran…Allah is great…before this I've never done all this…when I did all this I felt calm…"

After the respondents are aware of their mistake, they repentant and regret for what they had done. The respondents starts to do the worship such as prayer, fasting and so on in order to get Allah blessings. Most of the respondents are given the opportunity to correct their mistake and for them Allah is Merciful.

5.10. Self Defense

In order to ensure that respondents determined by their action free from drug, they must have a strong faith. In addressing the drug problem respondents should have the right intention and sincerity. At any times the respondents may take the drug again. For R1, he is committed to his action;

"…I really committed with my changes…no drugs in my life anymore…and promise to myself not to take drug again…"

For R4, he ensures that his life free from drug;

"…I'm more confident and felt calmer now…I'm going to find a new chapter of my life…life without drugs…"

5.11. Maintain Recovery

This is an important level for all respondents in which they need to maintain drug recovery after go through all the challenges. It is quite challenging because they may return back to drug addiction again but with the knowledge and advice from the counselor at the CCSC respondent know how to tackle and avoid drugs. Based on R3 statement;

"…what I want is to maintain my recovery forever…InsyaAllah…most important is do not take drug again…I promise to myself…"

For R7, he was proud with his achievement because before this he had relapse with drugs more than three times as he did not how tackle the drug addiction problem.

"...i really feel good and happy after knowing the way to avoid and overcome drug problems…I'm proud of myself…."

Therefore, the respondent must maintain drug recovery and do not trust their friend who involved in the drug activity as the drug addiction is never ending. For this stage most of the respondents managed to overcome the challenges and obstacles as it is hard to get to this stage but they successfully passed all the stages.

5.12. Self Improvement

Most of the respondents successfully maintained the drug recovery and start a new chapter in their life which is life without drugs. To reach at this final stage, the respondents must be strong and fully committed to their transformation for their own benefit. There are changes in respondents behavior. For R13 and R15, they felt grateful as their family has accepted them back and they did the migration in life as a result of the transformation. R15 states;

"…I have now migrate to the new life with Allah blessed…Alhamdulillah…I'm looking for new friends...mingle with the society…if I had the chance to see my friend who still

taking drug…I might advise them to stop taking drug because of drug our life is terrible…"

Table 1: Perspective transformation Process Against Drug Addiction

Level	Process that Happen
1	Normal Life
2	Instrution of Mind
3	Stress
4	Trigger Event/Integrated
5	Critical Reflection (Meaning Scheme)
6	Dialogue (Meaning Scheme)
7	Meaning Perspectives
8	Support
9	Increase Worship
10	Self Defense
11	Maintain Recovery
12	Self Improvement

6. Discussion

Based on the findings, perspective transformation process occurs in a non linear perspectives. The phase can be classified into three waves confusion, exploration and revival and six phases, peaceful live, drug involvement, searching, transitions, actions and strengthening. Perspective transformation process is a complex, complicated and varied based on the phenomenon experienced by respondents. For each phase occurs it takes time for respondents to reach the next phases. The whole perspective transformation process took more than 10 years as the respondents faced the relapse problem. Due to lack of confidence and exposure respondents experienced a long time for the perspective transformation process [24, 25, 26]. Perspective transformation process for the former drug addicts is holistic, unique process and different from other studies. It is in form of waves which begin with a normal life and end with self improvement. The process explain the difficulties and hardships of respondents to solve the drug issues in their life. Spiritual and emotional elemant have dominate in perspective transformation process.

This study provided a comprehensive overview of how the transformative learning process begins and ends for former drug addiction based on model of TP. Mezirow [3] concluded that transformative learning theory was based on a grounded theory study method against a group of mature women who returned to college. Mezirow [3] states that the process of transformation perspective is linear form but it is not easy to go through all levels and take time to reach the last level. Although the TP process is linear and individual must be able to survive at all level [13]. Mezirow model is the foundation in the development of a perspective transformation model. According to Merriam, Cafarella and Baumgratner TP processes occur in five phases ie i) trigger events ii) critical reflections iii) structural changes in meaning iv) actions and iv) integration.

Studied by Mazalan [23] on 10 educated Malay respondents on the political awareness in Malaysia found that seven levels that occurred in his study. Emotional elements are so dominant in the study of Mazalan [23]. The process of TP that happens starts through a disorientating dilemma and ends with satisfaction. At level three, empathy is influenced by the elements of emotion and empathy in the process of transformation perspective. In a study by Mohd Azhar [2] against Chinese Muslim individuals in Johor, the TP process takes time and place in a complex social environment. Mohd Azhar [2] found that the TP roses were carried out through 13 phases and four phases (disorder, exploration, action and integration). It starts with misunderstanding and ends with preaching. The individual TP process is very critical for Chinese Muslim individuals it is the point of deciding how Chinese Muslim individual changes from 'non-Islamic thinking' to 'Islamic thought'.

Generally the models built by previous researchers are linear form but the elemant transformation perspective that occurs is the same as the model developed by Mezirow in 1978 [3]. The only difference is based on the subject of their study. The subject differences are also based on research phenomena such as drug addicts, AIDS / HIV, cancer and so on. Latest models by Cranton, Taylor, Boyd and others included spiritual elements that are not in the TP model developed by Mezirow.

Transformative learning for former drug addicts is not easy, difficult and full of challenges in dealing with the addiction problem they are experiencing. In this study the researcher found that the meaning scheme derived from the spiritual which is "the consciousness and conviction gained through self-confidence, the determination and patience of life". This study proves that experience is helpful in transforming the old perspective on drug addiction and building new perspectives on individual life.

Critical reflection element is an important element in this study. Through reflection, researchers have succeeded in detecting three different levels: (i) the level of general reflection (ii) the level of self reflection (iii) the level of in-depth reflection. Each level has a direct impact on the individual because it needs to think rationally and evaluate for each level. At the individual self-reflection level it reflecting on the mistakes that have been made. Individuals approaching Allah by repentance and will not repeat any further mistakes.. Before this individuals have never performed prayers, fasting and so forth but due to the neglect and ignorance individual begin to forget Allah command. Individuals believe that God accepts their repentance. Individual repentance is a result of self-awareness that comes within the individual person. Individuals really feel sorry for what has happened to them which causes them to forget the responsibility of being a Muslim to His Creator. This is a disparity in this study which has been seen in the study of Islamic values and which not in the transformative learning theory. Through Islamic perspective, it has successfully changed individual meaning schema to drug addiction. During reflection individual also perform dialogue. Through the dialogue that has taken place he has given a rays to escape from drug addiction. This is because individuals have been given the hope that they can change. The elements of critical reflection and dialogue have a close relationship and are interconnected with each other and successfully alter the individual schema meaning to drug addiction. It is a great challenge for individuals to decide to get out of drug addiction. This shows that critical reflection is the most influential element in transformative learning.

Based on the model of the former drug addicts, there are three waves occurring namely confusion, exploration and resurgence and six main phases namely prosperity, drug trafficking, search, transition, action and consolidation. Former drug addicts have to go through all phases and it is not easy to pass through all phases. This is because at the beginning they are not drug addicts and they go through life like ordinary people. But as a result of life's urges and problems in their lives began to look for alternative ways to solve the problems they face by taking drugs. Drugs are the best solution for themselves. Finally they realize that drugs are not the best way for them. They started to find a way out to counter the drug addiction they experienced. It is not an easy process to remain in drug addiction as they are in a state of the so-called transition which if they were with their actions. But with strong determination and passion individual successfully forget about drug addiction. Based on the drug model of former drug addicts, they experienced important physiology in transformative learning which is triggers event, double reflections, dialogues and monologues and spiritual which were the backbone of the success of former drug addicts. In addition they also managed to control the drug addiction and it was not an easy thing. They prove that they are able to control the drug addiction that is named **JIHAD AL-NAFS**.

6.1. First Wave: Confusion

At the beginning respondents not a drug addict. After having problems and stress in their life respondents and started to take drugs. For respondents drug is the best solution to solve the problem.

6.1.1. Phase One: Peaceful Live

In this phase respondent's life as a normal person and such a happy person. Respondents were close with family and friends. Never though in their mind to take the drug even their family members involved with drugs.

6.1.2. Phase Two: Drug Involment

This is the episode where respondents start to take drugs because of the pressure in their life. Respondents could not control their emotions and the best solution is taking drugs. Respondents felt happy and peaceful when taking drugs. This is the phase the causes why respondents took drugs.

6.2. Second Wave: Exploration

At this point respondents are realising their mistakes that they have been made. Respondents start to find solutions for their drug problem that has been in their live and mind for a long period of time.

6.2.1. Phase three: Searching

Respondents experienced a trigger event (integrated) as this phase. This is which perspective transformation process began. Even respondents faced the trigger event repeatedly but at last it is given an effect to respondents. Respondents also faced critical reflection that is important during the perspective transformation process. It involves emotions where respondents reflect past experience as a drug addict which was painful and challenging. Finally respondents change the meaning scheme which affect their lives. At the same time, respondents also made a dialogue so that it can strengthen their new meaning scheme. After successfully did a critical reflection and dialogue it gave a new meaning scheme to the respondents through perspective transformation process.

6.2.2. Phase Four: Transition

This is the stage where respondents need to maintain their drug recovery. In this phase, respondents are still in the process to find out a new thing in their life and try to adapt to the new life. At this stage it is much easy for respondents to relapse again if they do not have the strength and overcome the problems. Experienced as a drug addicts must be swap away from their mind. In order to avoid the problem with drugs, respondents must be strong and try to find a better solution. The best way is to go to CCSC for their help and advice as respondents did not know the best solution to overcome the drugs problem. At this point, it will give the new meaning perspectives to the respondent's life.

6.3. Third Wave: Revival

At this stage respondents had recovered from drug addiction and they able to handle and solve on drugs problems. Respondents are patience and passion to overcome the drug problem.

6.3.1. Phase Five: Action

At the phase of action, respondents have successfully free from drug after having a long journey as a drug addict. Respondents need support from family and friends in order to maintain their drug recovery. Support from family and friend is important in order for respondents to fight and committed from drugs. Family can influence respondent as they are the closes person to respondents after stuggle from drugs. Respondents also felt that it is time to get to close to Allah. Respondents did their responsibilities as a Muslim by performing prayer, fasting and read Quran and do it consistently. Respondents must committed, confident and consistent in what they do so they will not relapse again. Respondents must be strong in facing the drug problem.

6.3.2. Phase six: Strengthening

This is the last phase of perspective transformation process to respondents after successfully going through all the phases. It is a challenging and difficult process for the drug recovery. Respondents must be strong in order to maintain drug recovery and should be confident with their decisions. Respondents really survived from drug and back to normal life. This indicates that respondents have a strong exhibit in dealing with drug problems.

Based on the three waves and six phases of perspective transformation it shows that most of the former drug addicts can be changed but it will takes time due to the challenges they face and relapse problem. Perspective transformation process of former drug addicts occur in a non linear form as shown in Figure 6.1.

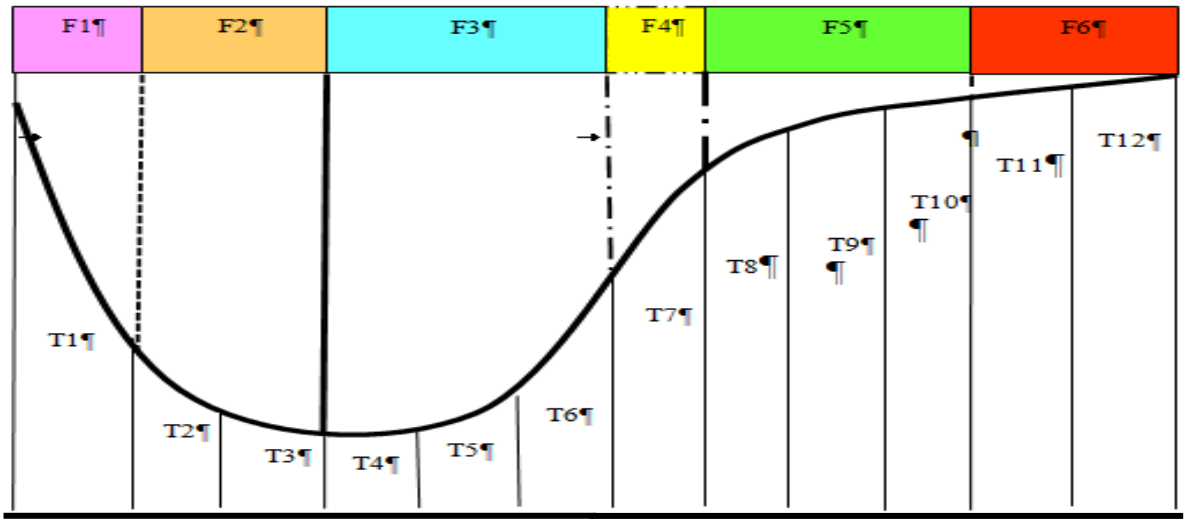


Fig.1: Perspective Transformation Model Against Drug Addicts

INDIKATOR

G1	Confusion	F1	Peaceful Life	T1	Normal Life
G2	Exploration	F2	Drug Involvement	T2	Intrusion of Mind
G3	Revival	F3	Searching	T3	Stressful
		F4	Transition	T4	Trigger Event/Integrated
		F5	Actions	T5	Critical Reflection (Meaning Scheme)
		F6	Strengthening	T6	Dialogue (Meaning Scheme)
				T7	Meaning Perspective
				T8	Support
				T9	Increase Worship
				T10	Self Defense
				T11	Maintain Recovery
				T12	Self Improvement

7. Summary

The perspective transformation modelfor former drug addicts in is non-linear form. Drug rehabilitation process takes a long time and it happens repeatedly to the former drug addict. It is difficult to going through all the levels because it need strength and determination in order to pass for the next level. But individuals made it through all three waves and six different phases. In conclusion, individuals involved with drugs must have strong determination and commitment to leave drugs even though it was a painful journey in their life.

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