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Systematic Drug Rehabilitation Efforts for Female Inmates at Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution

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Abstract

Drug trafficking remains a serious challenge for Indonesia's correctional system, particularly due to the high recidivism rate among female inmates. The Class IIA Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution has implemented rehabilitation programs to address addiction and support social reintegration. However, their effectiveness needs evaluation, particularly in reducing relapse rates. Drug rehabilitation programs in correctional institutions are essential for helping inmates overcome addiction and improve their quality of life. This study analyzes the effectiveness of the drug rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution. The research method used a qualitative case study approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with inmates and correctional officers, as well as through rehabilitation program documents. The results indicate that the drug rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution has several weaknesses, such as a lack of resources, inadequate training for officers, and a lack of family support. However, the program also has several strengths, such as counseling, group therapy, and religious activities. This study recommends that the drug rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution needs to be improved by increasing resources, training for officers, and family support.

Keywords

Correctional Institution, Drug Rehabilitation, Female Inmates, Recidivism, Social Reintegration.

1. Introduction

The use and trafficking of narcotics remain critical challenges for Indonesia's criminal justice and correctional systems. Correctional institutions accommodate a substantial proportion of inmates involved in narcotics cases, creating challenges related to rehabilitation, institutional capacity, and social reintegration. In this context, the correctional system has shifted from a predominantly punitive orientation toward rehabilitation and social reintegration. Law Number 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections emphasizes personality and independence development to prepare inmates to return to society as productive individuals. Similarly, Law Number 35 of 2009 concerning Narcotics provides a legal basis for medical and social rehabilitation of narcotics addicts and victims of abuse (Rachman & Arpangi, 2024).

Rehabilitation is therefore a strategic intervention for addressing substance dependence and reducing the risk of repeated offending. Medical rehabilitation focuses on restoring physical and psychological conditions, while social rehabilitation addresses behavioral, social, and functional aspects through counseling, group activities, spiritual development, and skills training (Staton et al., 2023). However, the effectiveness of rehabilitation depends not only on program availability but also on program continuity, professional resources, individual needs, and post-rehabilitation support. Previous research indicates that rehabilitation can produce positive outcomes, but its effectiveness may vary across correctional settings. For example, social rehabilitation has been shown to improve the quality of life of inmates with illicit drug use, although the magnitude of improvement differed between correctional institutions (Andriany & Anggiri, 2025). Similarly, intervention-based rehabilitation has demonstrated potential to reduce relapse risk among narcotics inmates (Mardani & Fakhri, 2023). These findings indicate that program implementation is closely related to behavioral change, psychological recovery, and readiness for reintegration, while institutional resources and continuity of rehabilitation may determine the extent of its effectiveness.

The gender dimension is particularly important in understanding drug rehabilitation among female inmates because women may experience distinct psychological, social, and relational vulnerabilities throughout the recovery and reintegration process. Female prisoners may face stigma, trauma, family-related pressures, limited social support, and gender-specific barriers that can influence their engagement in rehabilitation and their ability to reintegrate into society (Meilya et al., 2020). Research by Edwards et al. (2022) on women with substance-use disorders also indicates that post-release support and continuity of care are important components of successful reintegration. Thus, rehabilitation for female narcotics inmates requires an approach that is not only recovery-oriented but also responsive to their psychosocial and gender-specific needs, particularly in supporting behavioral change, sustained recovery, and successful social reintegration.

The Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution is a relevant context for examining this issue because it implements drug rehabilitation for female inmates involved in narcotics cases. The program is expected to contribute to recovery, behavioral improvement, increased self-awareness, and readiness for social reintegration. Nevertheless, the existence of rehabilitation activities does not necessarily demonstrate their effectiveness. Previous studies have identified continuing obstacles in correctional rehabilitation, including limitations in human resources, infrastructure, program continuity, and evaluation mechanisms (Samsu & Yasin, 2021; Hidayah & Iskandar, 2025). Moreover, the broader reform of the correctional system continues to face challenges in achieving effective social reintegration.

The research gap lies in the limited empirical examination of the effectiveness of drug rehabilitation specifically among female inmates in regional women's

correctional institutions, particularly in relation to behavioral change, readiness for social reintegration, and supporting and inhibiting factors. Existing studies have largely examined narcotics rehabilitation generally, recidivism, or post-release interventions, while the effectiveness of rehabilitation in the specific context of the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution remains insufficiently explored.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the drug rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution. It examines how the rehabilitation program is implemented, its effectiveness in changing the behavior and mindset of narcotics inmates, the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting implementation, and its contribution to inmates' readiness for social reintegration. The study is expected to contribute to the development of correctional rehabilitation research and provide practical recommendations for improving gender-responsive rehabilitation and reducing the risk of relapse and recidivism among female narcotics inmates.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Drug Rehabilitation Programs in Correctional Institutions

Rehabilitation for narcotics inmates in Indonesian correctional institutions is generally understood as a structured process combining medical and social recovery, guided by Law Number 35 of 2009 on Narcotics and reinforced by Law Number 22 of 2022 on Corrections. Mufti and Riyanto (2023) explain that correctional institutions function not only as places of punishment but as agents of social transformation, offering skill training, counseling, and family visitation programs designed to reduce isolation and prepare inmates for reintegration. In a related study, Pamungkas et al. (2023) assess how the 2022 Corrections Law repositions coaching as a rights-based, empowerment-oriented process rather than a purely punitive one, emphasizing officer competence as a determinant of program success. Al Hanif and Jarodi (2025) further highlight structural challenges facing the correctional system, including overcrowding and limited staff capacity, which often hinder the consistent implementation of rehabilitation stages from initial assessment to social reintegration.

At the regulatory level, Chyntia (2022) identifies inconsistencies within Article 54 of the Narcotics Law regarding who qualifies for rehabilitation rights, showing that legal ambiguity can affect equal access to medical and social treatment inside institutions. More recently, Sulubara (2025) proposes a holistic model integrating medical treatment, social guidance, and community-based support as a more sustainable approach to narcotics rehabilitation, moving beyond institution-bound interventions. Together, these studies indicate that rehabilitation programs in correctional institutions are conceived as multidimensional interventions medical, psychosocial, and administrative yet their implementation is frequently constrained by resource limitations, legal gaps, and institutional readiness, underscoring the relevance of examining how such programs are actually carried out in practice.

2.2. Effectiveness of Drug Rehabilitation for Inmates

Effectiveness in drug rehabilitation is commonly measured through behavioral, psychological, and social indicators rather than recidivism alone. Suman et al. (2023) argue that effective rehabilitation programs combine education, vocational training, and substance-abuse treatment, and that participants show measurably better reintegration outcomes than non-participants, benefiting both individuals and the wider criminal justice system (Lapas Pekanbaru, 2025). Focusing on the mechanism of reintegration itself, Putra et al. (2025) examine the role of Special Correctional Police (PolsusPas) in supporting inmates through conditional leave, finding that consistent supervision and gradual exposure to community life are linked to more stable post-release adjustment. At the individual level, Mubarak et al. (2021) profile

former drug users undergoing rehabilitation at a drug center in Aceh, showing that psychological resilience shaped by self-acceptance, social support, and coping strategies is a key predictor of sustained recovery and lower relapse risk.

Complementing this, Angin and Suriadi (2022) evaluate a residential-based social rehabilitation program in Medan, reporting that structured daily activities and therapeutic community methods help residents rebuild self-esteem and restore social functioning that had deteriorated due to addiction. Amaliah et al. (2024) add that the collaborative role of addiction counselors and social workers covering needs assessment, individual and group counseling, and reintegration support significantly shapes how well residents progress through recovery stages. These studies suggest that effectiveness cannot be reduced to a single metric; it reflects a combination of behavioral change, psychological readiness, legal awareness, program continuity, and the individual's perceived preparedness to return to society, all of which are shaped by the quality and consistency of program delivery.

2.3. Social Reintegration of Female Inmates with Drug-Related Cases

Social reintegration for female inmates with drug-related cases involves distinct psychosocial dynamics compared to their male counterparts, largely due to gender-specific vulnerabilities and social stigma. Andayani et al. (2025) conduct a narrative literature review proposing a comprehensive, gender- and trauma-responsive model of community-based rehabilitation, arguing that women who have experienced addiction alongside incarceration often carry compounded trauma that generic reintegration programs fail to address. Septi and Misero (2020) similarly document that women involved in narcotics cases, whether as users, couriers, or dealers, frequently face heightened social vulnerability, including economic dependency and family rejection, which complicates their post-release recovery.

Febrian (2023) extends this discussion through a gender-based policy analysis, finding that narcotics enforcement policies during the Joko Widodo administration disproportionately affected women due to their structural social roles, often overlooking gender-specific needs in rehabilitation and reintegration design. From an institutional perspective, Fernando and Natalis (2026) note that correctional reform efforts aimed at reintegration frequently apply uniform approaches across genders, despite evidence that female inmates require differentiated psychosocial support, including parenting concerns and stigma management. Putra et al. (2025), while not gender-specific, provide relevant insight into how supervised conditional release mechanisms such as *PolsusPas* guidance can be adapted to support gradual, monitored reintegration, a model potentially beneficial for female inmates navigating family and community reacceptance. These sources indicate that successful reintegration for female drug-case inmates depends on addressing trauma, rebuilding family and community support networks, and reducing stigma, alongside the structural and policy barriers that still shape their access to gender-sensitive rehabilitation services.

3. Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with case studies to understand in depth the implementation process and effectiveness of drug rehabilitation programs in specific social and institutional contexts. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 10 inmates and 5 prison officers, as well as rehabilitation program documents. Data analysis used thematic analysis techniques. The research was carried out at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution, Riau Province. The selection of the location was based on the consideration that this institution has a significant number of residents assisted in narcotics cases and has implemented a structured drug rehabilitation program. The research time is adjusted to the schedule of coaching and rehabilitation activities that take place at the institution.

Informants in this study were determined by a purposive sampling technique, which is the deliberate selection of informants based on certain criteria that are relevant to the purpose of the study. Informants include: The Head of the Prison or the official in charge of coaching. Coaching officers and rehabilitation counselors. Correctional-assisted residents (*Warga Binaan Pemasyarakatan*/WBP) in narcotics cases who participate in rehabilitation programs. Related parties (healthcare workers or rehabilitation partners). Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique used is data reduction, which involves sorting and focusing on data that is relevant to the research. Data presentation is in the form of systematic narrative descriptions. Conclusion drawing and verification are used to find patterns, relationships, and meanings related to the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs.

To ensure data validity, this study uses triangulation, namely: source triangulation (comparing data from officers and inmates). Technical triangulation (interviews, observations, and documentation). Time triangulation (retrieval of data at different times). The effectiveness of rehabilitation programs in this study was measured based on several indicators, including the level of participation and sustainability of participating in the program. Per change in behavior and attitude towards drug abuse. Increase legal awareness and readiness for social reintegration. Obstacles and supporting factors for program implementation. With this method, it is hoped that the research will be able to provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of the drug rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution and provide applicable recommendations for improving the quality of coaching in the future.

4. Results

4.1. Implementation of the Drug Rehabilitation Program

The implementation of the drug rehabilitation program for inmates involved in narcotics cases at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution is executed through two primary, integrated approaches: medical rehabilitation and social rehabilitation. Medical rehabilitation focuses on restoring initial physical and psychological conditions through routine health check-ups, dependency level assessments, and continuous monitoring of the inmates' psychological stability. Meanwhile, social rehabilitation aims to restore mental and interpersonal functions through individual counseling, group therapy, spiritual coaching, and life skills training (Yunto, 2025). The integration of these two approaches demonstrates that the institution views drug addiction not merely as a legal violation requiring punitive measures, but as a chronic health disorder demanding holistic treatment to ensure inmates are adequately prepared to re-enter society.

Based on observations and interviews, the participation level of the inmates in these rehabilitation programs is notably favorable. The majority of narcotics inmates demonstrate active engagement, particularly in collaborative activities such as group counseling and religious coaching. This indicates that the inmates more readily embrace interventions of a social and communal nature, as they provide a safe space to share experiences and receive emotional support from peers within a structured and supervised environment. These activities are conducted according to a predetermined schedule with the assistance of correctional officers and counsellors (Hidayah & Iskandar, 2025).

Nevertheless, this study reveals an intriguing motivational dynamic behind the informants' participation. During the initial phase, a significant number of inmates admitted that their primary motivation for joining the program was extrinsic, driven chiefly by administrative obligations or institutional compliance. At this stage, their involvement stemmed from regulatory pressure rather than deep personal

awareness. This phenomenon highlights that the initial adaptation process within a correctional environment requires time for individuals to recognize the profound significance of recovery for their future well-being (Hidayah & Iskandar, 2025).

Remarkably, as the program progressed with consistent intensity, a substantial psychological shift occurred. The majority of inmates gradually demonstrated an enhanced internal (intrinsic) motivation to recover. This behavioral transformation, validated through data triangulation between coaching officers and the inmates' testimonies, indicates that the applied interventions successfully facilitate self-awareness transformation. The internalisation of values embedded within counseling and therapy effectively shifts the inmates' perspective from merely fulfilling a "punitive obligation" to recognizing recovery as a "personal necessity" for change. Triggering this intrinsic motivation serves as a crucial indicator of the long-term effectiveness of the rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution in supporting successful social reintegration for former inmates (Mardani & Fakhri, 2023).

However, the implementation of the program still faces several limitations. The number of professional addiction counselors remains limited, while rehabilitation facilities and supporting equipment are not yet optimal. In addition, limited officer training means that not all officers have adequate competencies to address the psychological, addiction-related, and individual needs of female inmates. These conditions affect how intensively and individually rehabilitation activities can be delivered (Saputra et al., 2025).

4.2. Rehabilitation Program in Changing Behavior and Mindset

The effectiveness of the drug rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution is prominently reflected in the psychological and behavioral transformations experienced by the participating inmates. Based on in-depth interviews and observations, the program has successfully triggered significant shifts across several key dimensions. First, inmates demonstrated a heightened awareness of the detrimental physical and psychological impacts of narcotics. Second, this cognitive awakening correlates directly with a reduced desire to relapse or return to drug use. Third, participants showed measurable improvements in self-control and emotional regulation, allowing them to navigate institutional pressures with greater resilience. Participants also showed a distinct surge in future-oriented motivation, with a strong drive to rebuild their lives productively after release (Al-Zuhriy et al., 2025; Puspitasari & Baroroh, 2025).

These internal changes are evident in tangible behavioral indicators in daily institutional life. Inmates have shown a more open attitude toward staff and peers, greater discipline in adhering to structured rehabilitation schedules, and more proactive engagement during group discussions. Rather than treating their detention as a passive period of punishment, the participants actively utilize these forums to reframe their identities, transitioning away from the stigma of their past narcotics involvement toward a more constructive self-conception (Chainar et al., 2024; Al Hanif & Jarodi, 2025). Furthermore, the study identifies several critical factors driving the overall effectiveness of this rehabilitation process (Al-Zuhriy et al., 2025). The unwavering commitment and empathy demonstrated by coaching officers and professional counselors serve as a primary institutional catalyst. This is reinforced by supportive, rehabilitative-based correctional policies enacted by the leadership, consistent spiritual coaching programs that provide deep emotional grounding, and practical skills training activities designed as concrete provisions for future social reintegration.

Among the implemented modules, inmates overwhelmingly viewed spiritual and group-based activities as most impactful in fostering internal motivation for self-change. The communal nature of group therapy combined with spiritual reflection creates an empathetic environment that fosters mutual accountability and emotional

healing. Ultimately, these findings underscore that a well-structured, multi-dimensional rehabilitation framework can yield profound behavioral and psychological shifts, positioning the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution as an effective agent of offender rehabilitation and social preparedness (Hertina & Muhammad, 2021).

4.3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Program Implementation

The implementation of the drug rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution is shaped by a complex interplay of supporting and inhibiting factors. On the supportive side, the institutional framework benefits significantly from the strong commitment and dedication of correctional officers and counselors. Their close interactions with inmates facilitate the continuity of recovery activities. This is further reinforced by rehabilitation-oriented correctional policies, consistent spiritual development programs, structured counseling, group therapy, and skills training designed for future reintegration, all of which contribute to the program's overall resilience (Fanggidae, 2024).

However, the study also reveals critical structural and operational weaknesses that impede optimal program delivery. A primary obstacle is the severe shortage of professional addiction counselors and specialized training for officers, leaving staff underequipped to handle complex inmate needs. This resource deficit is compounded by inadequate rehabilitation facilities, equipment, and chronic institutional overcapacity, which collectively constrain the effective execution of therapy and skills training. Furthermore, external vulnerabilities such as limited family support and deep-seated social stigma against female narcotics offenders present serious hurdles, complicating both their institutional adjustment and future community re-entry (Syafudin & Subroto, 2023).

Compounding these challenges is the absence of a structured post-rehabilitation framework for individuals who have completed their sentences. This gap poses a significant threat to long-term recovery, as the sustainable maintenance of behavioral changes requires ongoing external reinforcement that abruptly ceases upon release (Subroto & Ramadhan, 2025). Addressing these systemic barriers, particularly through expanded professional training, upgraded infrastructure, and structured aftercare linkages, remains imperative to secure the lasting effectiveness of rehabilitation efforts.

4.4. Contribution of Rehabilitation to Social Reintegration Readiness

The readiness of inmates for social reintegration is deeply tied to the multidimensional transformation they experience throughout the rehabilitation process. While internal shifts such as enhanced self-control and renewed life goals provide a solid psychological foundation, true reintegration extends far beyond the prison walls. As Subroto and Ramadhan (2025) note, the real effectiveness of any correctional rehabilitation must be measured not merely by how well individuals behave while incarcerated, but by how well they can maintain their hard-won recovery, resist relapse triggers, and resume productive, meaningful social roles once they return to society.

Despite these promising internal developments, the pathway to successful social reintegration remains heavily constrained by formidable external barriers. Inmates frequently face a severe lack of family support networks, which are traditionally vital for post-release emotional and logistical stability. Compounding this issue is the heavy social stigma attached to female narcotics offenders, creating an environment of judgment and alienation that complicates community acceptance. Furthermore, the lack of a structured post-rehabilitation or aftercare program leaves former inmates without a safety net during this vulnerable transition phase, exposing a significant gap in continuity of care (Hidayah & Iskandar, 2025).

Ultimately, these findings highlight a complex paradox in the institutional rehabilitation framework. Although the program successfully fosters positive changes in personal mindset, daily discipline, and future orientation during confinement, the long-term sustainability of these achievements remains vulnerable upon release. Bridging this gap requires looking beyond institutional boundaries to ensure that recovery is treated as a continuous, lifelong journey. Strengthening community linkages, fostering family reconciliation programs, and establishing formalized aftercare networks are indispensable steps to turn temporary prison reforms into enduring social reintegration successes (Subroto & Ramadhan, 2025).

5. Discussion

The findings indicate that the drug rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution has been implemented through medical and social rehabilitation approaches. The program includes health monitoring, individual and group counseling, group therapy, spiritual and religious activities, and life skills training. This approach is consistent with Law Number 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections, which emphasizes rehabilitation, development, and social reintegration, as well as Law Number 35 of 2009 concerning Narcotics, which recognizes rehabilitation as an important response for narcotics addicts and victims of abuse. This finding is consistent with Pamungkas et al. (2023) and Rachman and Arpangi (2024), who emphasized that the correctional system under Law Number 22 of 2022 places greater emphasis on guidance and social integration rather than punishment alone. The implementation is also consistent with the holistic rehabilitation approach proposed by Sulubara (2025), which integrates medical, social, and community dimensions.

In terms of effectiveness, the findings show positive changes in inmates' awareness, emotional management, self-control, motivation to change, and readiness to plan their lives after release. Participants perceived group counseling and spiritual activities as particularly helpful in encouraging openness, motivation, and confidence. These findings support Andriany and Anggiri (2025), who found that social rehabilitation can improve the quality of life of inmates with illicit drug use, and Mardani and Fakhri (2023), who demonstrated the potential of rehabilitation interventions to reduce relapse tendencies among narcotics inmates. The findings also correspond with Suman et al. (2023), who identified rehabilitation as an important component of recovery within correctional settings. However, the present findings indicate that effectiveness is not uniform because several participants initially engaged in rehabilitation mainly as an administrative obligation before developing stronger internal motivation. This suggests that sustained participation and individualized approaches are important for achieving bigger behavioral change.

The study further demonstrates that institutional and social factors strongly influence rehabilitation effectiveness. Limited professional counselors, inadequate facilities, insufficient officer training, overcapacity, and limited family support remain significant constraints. Amaliah et al. (2024) highlighted the importance of social workers and addiction counselors in supporting recovery, indicating that professional competence is essential for effective rehabilitation. Similarly, Hidayah and Iskandar (2025), in their study of female inmates in Semarang, identified limitations in rehabilitation implementation and the importance of strengthening institutional resources. These findings are also consistent with Samsu and Yasin (2021), who emphasized the need to optimize correctional guidance for narcotics inmates.

The gender dimension is particularly important in interpreting the findings. Andayani et al. (2025) emphasized that women with histories of substance use may experience trauma, violence, and socioeconomic vulnerability and therefore require gender- and trauma-responsive rehabilitation and community-based reintegration.

The present study supports this perspective because group counseling and spiritual development helped inmates manage emotions and rebuild confidence. Nevertheless, structured trauma-informed interventions have not yet been fully developed. The findings therefore suggest the need to strengthen gender-responsive counseling, train addiction counselors in trauma-informed approaches, and provide more individualized assistance.

The findings demonstrate that rehabilitation contributes to social reintegration through life skills training, future planning, motivation to work or undertake productive activities, and commitment to avoid repeated criminal behavior. However, the absence of structured post-rehabilitation support may weaken the sustainability of these outcomes. This is consistent with Edwards et al. (2022), who emphasized the importance of continuity of care and post-release support for women with substance-use disorders leaving prison. Zulkarnain and Putri (2023) similarly noted that social reintegration remains a major challenge within correctional reform. Therefore, stronger family involvement, post-rehabilitation assistance, cross-sector collaboration, and community-based support are needed to sustain recovery and reduce stigma after release.

6. Conclusion

The drug rehabilitation program at the Pekanbaru Women's Correctional Institution has been implemented through medical and social rehabilitation approaches, including health monitoring, individual and group counseling, group therapy, mental and spiritual development, religious activities, and life skills training. The program is consistent with the rehabilitative and social reintegration principles established under Law Number 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections and Law Number 35 of 2009 concerning Narcotics. The findings indicate that the program has generated positive changes among female inmates, particularly in their awareness of the dangers of narcotics, emotional management, self-control, motivation to change, and readiness to return to society.

The effectiveness of the program is supported by the commitment of correctional officers, consistent spiritual activities, counseling, group therapy, and skills training. However, its implementation remains constrained by the limited number of professional addiction counselors, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, insufficient officer training, overcapacity, social stigma, and limited family support. The lack of structured post-rehabilitation services also challenges recovery maintenance and sustainable social reintegration.

The practical implication of this study is that rehabilitation services should be strengthened through gender-responsive and trauma-informed approaches, improved human resources and rehabilitation facilities, stronger family and community involvement, and continuous post-release assistance. These efforts are expected to strengthen recovery, reduce the risk of relapse and recidivism, and improve the sustainability of social reintegration. This study is limited to a single women's correctional institution, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research should involve multiple correctional institutions and examine long-term outcomes, including relapse, recidivism, family support, and post-release reintegration. Comparative or mixed-method studies may also provide a broader understanding of the effectiveness of gender-responsive drug rehabilitation programs.

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Data Disclosure Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.



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