

Responding to the Challenges of Living in Peace and Harmony among Female Inmates thru Psycho-Education

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ABSTRACT

This study determined effects of the psycho-education for aggression of female inmates at Metro Bacolod District Jail, Brgy Handumanan, Bacolod City. Researcher used pretest-posttest control group experimental design survey method utilizing the Buss – Perry Aggression Questionnaires (BPAQ). The sampling technique employed was the non-probability purposive sampling. Eligibility criterion was a BPAQ score of greater than 100. Thirty participants were randomly selected from those eligible. These respondents were then randomly assigned to the experimental group and the control group, with 15 participants in each group. Findings revealed that the profile of the female inmates in MBDJ – FD were the following: the mean age of the female inmates is 37; more than half of the female inmates were single; majority of the female inmates attended high school and also majority of them are from the lower income group with none belonging to the upper income group. The aggression of the female inmates as a whole was moderately aggressive. The results of the study show no significant relationships among age, marital status, educational attainment, economic status, and religion, and aggression of the female inmates. Further, regarding the significant differences between the aggression of the experimental group and the control group, the test results indicated that there is no significant difference in the aggression between the experimental group and the control group before the intervention. However, the aggression after the intervention between the experimental group and the control group demonstrated a significant difference. This suggests that psycho-education decreased the aggression of the female inmates which helped them in living harmoniously in the correctional institution.

KEYWORDS: Female Inmates, Psycho-Education, aggression, Bacolod City, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The dynamism of learning to live in peace and harmony considers several factors such as quality of relationship, human rights, democracy and social justice in an ecological sustainable environment (UNESCO, 1998). This study

is anchored with ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner that focused on the human development and socialization that are influenced by different types of environmental systems (Härkönen, 2007). The World Health Organization utilized the socio-ecological model to examine the roots of aggression for appropriate psycho-social intervention, in order for one to systematically adjust behavior for harmonious relationship with others (Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg, & B Zwi, 2002). The Philippine Criminal Justice System serves as the organization which enforces the rules of conduct necessary to protect life and property, maintain peace and order, and is concerned with the rehabilitation and reintegration of law offenders into the mainstream of the society (Virola, 2011).

The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) articulates the goal of its institution through four major areas of rehabilitation program, namely: livelihood projects,

educational and vocational training, recreation and sports, and religious activities. These were continuously implemented to eliminate the offenders' pattern of criminal behavior and to reform them to become law-abiding and productive citizens (BJMP, 2010). The program is adopted to maintain balance between egocentric and ecocentric considerations in order to promote peace and educate inmates to learn to live in harmony with others together (Perelman, Miller, Rodriguez, Allen, & Cavanaugh, 2012) and in working for a better community Goenka, (nd). This study is focused on the context of female inmates awaiting trial and are not yet convicted by the state.

Phenomenon is happening in a correctional institution where most who are living are experiencing multiple injustice, insult, or wrongdoing. Research has shown that as many as 89% of convicted prisons are full of aggressive behavior and that about half of the prisoners' aggressive behaviors are towards each other (Levett, 2014).

One way of addressing aggression as a challenge inside the prison is through psycho-education while accused are in inmate status (Kubiak, Jong Kim, Fedock, & Bybee, 2012).

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This study is anchored with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory which emphasize that human development and socialization are influenced by different types of environmental systems (Härkönen, 2007). Clearly, the child is the center of this ecological model and development results from experiences with his immediate environment where competency indicates successful acquisition of new knowledge and dysfunction indicates difficulties of adjusting behavior (Härkönen, 2007). It proposes that environment consists of different size entities that may influence behavior in varying degrees and with bi-directional interactions or reciprocal relationships. The systems include the micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chronosystem (Härkönen, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the effects of the socio-ecological model of intervention on the aggression level of the female inmates of the Metro Bacolod District Jail – Female Dorm in Brgy. Handumanan, Bacolod City.

Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

What is the profile of the female inmates of the Metro Bacolod District Jail – Female Dorm (MBDJ-FD) in Brgy. Handumanan, Bacolod City in terms of:

- Age
- Marital Status
- Educational Attainment
- Economic Status
- Religion

What is the aggression level of the female inmates of the MBDJ-FD when the following variables are taken into consideration:

- Age
- Marital Status
- Educational Attainment
- Economic Status
- Religion

Are there significant relationships among the selected variables and the aggression level of the female inmates of the MBDJ-FD?

Are there significant differences between the aggression levels of the experimental group and the control group before and after intervention?

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses were drawn based on the objectives of the study:

There are no significant relationships among the selected variables and the aggression level of the female inmates of the MBDJ-FD.

There are no significant differences between the aggression levels of the experimental group and the control group before and after intervention.

Significance of the Study

This study is valuable to the respondents, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), school administrators of criminology education, social workers and other mental health professionals, Philippine National Police (PNP), Local Government Units (LGUs), the general public, and present and future researchers.

Scope of the Study

The respondents of the study were the female inmates of the Metro Bacolod District Jail, Brgy. Handumanan, Bacolod City. This district jail has a total population of 468 with 356 male inmates and 112 female inmates. This correctional institution was selected due to its female inmate population.

Eligibility was based only a Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ) score above 100. Generalizations were made only on the experimental group which is the female inmates are included in the study.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilized pretest-posttest control group experimental design survey method utilizing the Buss – Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ). The BPAQ Buss and Perry (1992) is a widely used measure of aggression. It has been translated into multiple languages and has been used with multiple populations including offenders (Ashford & Gallagher, 2019). It was based on the Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory. The BPAQ according to Peralta, Pedrero, Bravo, and Giráldez (2014) is a self-report questionnaire, which comprises of 29 items grouped into four factors: physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and hostility. It examines the general client level of aggressive tendencies and specific dimensions of aggression using the four sub-scales. In order to accommodate the comprehension of the female inmates the BPAQ instrument was translated to Hiligaynon, in order for them to answer the questions in vernacular. The “forward-backward” procedure was applied to translate the BPAQ from English into Hiligaynon. A bilingual individual who is engaged in speaking English and Hiligaynon and is exposed in the correctional institution translated the original BPAQ from English into Hiligaynon. The Hiligaynon version was validated by three authentic speakers, who are engage in writing local papers and radio reporting in Negros Occidental, and two university professors in the fields of social sciences and criminology, a native of Negros Island who are Hiligaynon speakers. Another bilingual individual translated this Hiligaynon version back into English. The validity utilized a rubric of criteria of the Hiligaynon instrument and resulted to 3.3, which means “good”. The reliability of the Hiligaynon version was established using the test-retest method conducted in Negros Occidental Provincial Jail in Bago City. The reliability of the Hiligaynon version is 0.82 which means very high reliability.

The intervention program was approved by the jail wardress after the deliberation with the other officers at MBDJ. An accomplished written consent form was formally obtained from the jail wardress during the researcher's initial visit and from each participant during the opening session. The researcher used the Socio-Ecological Model Intervention Program for Aggression (SEMIPA) adapted from the World Health Organization (WHO) and was modified for the female inmates (Krug E. G., Mercy, Dahlberg, & Zwi). SEMIPA involves 12 sessions with 90 minutes per session and conducted three times a week. It includes the four levels of the socio-ecological model, namely: the individual, the relationship, the community and the society. During the conduct of the SEMIPA, in level 1 the participants are empowered to respect others and to value the feelings of others. In Level 2, the participants were able to appreciate values such as building rapport and respect for the person, sensitivity, commitment to evolving growth and change, mutuality of shared goals, and self-control. In the course of

Level 3, SEMIPA taught the participants to value, build, and actively participate in the community and helped connect them with others, build and maintain friendships, as well as empowered them to be responsible and contributing citizens. While in level 4, participants explored the different ways people respond to stress. They discussed about the different adaptive responses that promote healing and decrease emotional arousal.

Statistical Treatment

The statistical tests used were determined by the analytical schemes.

For Objective 1, the percentage and frequency was used. These are appropriate for nominal variables.

For Objective 2, the mean as a measure for central tendency was used. Aggression is an interval variable and the mean is appropriate for interval and ratio variables.

For the purpose of the study, the aggression levels are high, moderate, and low (eCOVE, 2014). The lowest possible BPAQ score is 29 and the highest possible score is 145, with a range of 116. The range was divided by three to come up with the levels. The BPAQ scores for aggression were interpreted using the following guide:

| Score Range | Interpretation |
|-------------|----------------|
| 107- 145 | High |
| 68 - 106 | Moderate |
| 29 -67 | Low |

For Objective 3, the Pearson-Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation r was used. It is appropriate to determine the level of correlation between at least interval variables such as age. The Chi-Square test for Association was used to determine relationship between nominal variables such as marital status, educational attainment, economic status, and religion.

For Objective 4, the independent t -test and the dependent t -test were utilized. The t -test is used to determine the differences between two samples and for n observations less than or equal to 30 ($n \leq 30$) (Deauna, 1996). Aggression is an interval variable and the t -test is appropriate for interval and ratio variables.

The independent t -test is used for a between-subjects design while the dependent t -test is used for a within-subjects design. In a between-subjects design, the independent variable is manipulated between separate groups of participants, where each participant is assigned to only one experimental condition, while in a within-subjects design, the independent variable is manipulated within one group of participants where each participant is assigned to all experimental conditions, such as in a pre-post (before-after) design (Arkkelin, 2007).

RESULT AND IMPLICATION

Result

Findings revealed that the profile of the female inmates were the following: the average age of the female inmates is 37 years old; 49% of the female inmates were single; 42% of the female inmates attended high school and also majority 86% of them are from the lower income group and 0% belonging to the upper income group. There is a predominance (90%) of Roman Catholics in the female inmate population. The aggression of the female inmates as a whole was moderately

aggressive ($M=81.29$). The results of the study show no significant relationships among age, marital status, educational attainment, economic status, and religion, and aggression level of the female inmates since the computed p -value is greater than .05. Furthermore, the second research hypothesis was confirmed, it revealed that there is no significant difference in the aggression between the experimental group and the control group before the intervention since the computed p -value is greater than .05. However, the aggression after the intervention between the experimental group and the control group demonstrated a significant difference since the computed p -value is less than .05. This shows that the intervention program influenced the reduction or modification of aggression levels among female inmates.

The results of the present investigation are supported by the study of (Normantaite & Perminas, (2013); Parreño, (2013); (Rahmati, Akbari, & Faghirpoor, 2013). According to Normantaite and Perminas (2013), cognitive behavioral interventions are effective in anger management, which target the individual's thought, feeling, behavior, and physiology. Rahmati, Akbari, and Faghirpoor (2013) showed that there was a reduction of aggressiveness in people suffering from substance abuse after an anger management training program. Parreño (2013) reported that the female inmates of the same jail had moderate aggression and tend to be non-violent, and implied the importance of a rehabilitation program. Contrary to the study, the Kubiak et al. (2012) illustrated that a socio-ecological model intervention program may reduce anxiety, it lacked a significant change in anger and hostility.

Akbari et al. (2011) validates the outcome of the present study. According to their study, an anger management skills training was effective in reducing aggression. However, DeVincentis (2010) showed that a drama-based intervention program on relation aggression of adolescents though it decreased relational aggression, it was approximately the same as in the group without the intervention. Then again, DiBlase (2010) corroborates the results of the study. DiBlase established that even though a psycho educational prevention program did not show significant difference in changes in anger, nevertheless, it showed reduction in antisocial behavior and self-serving cognitive distortions.

Implication

This study implies that, the moderated aggression of female inmates was due to the capacity of the female inmates to manage or control their aggressive behavior because they engage in recreational and religion activities. One of the most common explanations for having religion in their lives enable them to have peace within and help inmates to adjust in prison. According to Romans 8:28 "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose". Dependent on verse concept of Matthew 6:26, "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?" (Knowing-Jesus.com, 1995). This spiritual activity cope their difficulties making them productive citizen of the country. The psycho-spirituality works towards a greater understanding of the self in the context of the greater whole (Okpalaenwe, 2016). Also, according to Liu (2011) female inmates generally cope with anger and frustration in less violent ways since women mask their aggression through manipulation, silence, and

exaggerated sweetness. Further, since all of the participants are wait for their final sentence, most of them are cautious, careful and are trying to evade from heated arguments. Triandis (2000) supported that the Filipino sample rate themselves lower in aggression than other sample since they who are collectivist are attentive, respectful, humble, and cooperative.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The study concluded that, aggressive behavior in detention institution is a form of aggression that do not threaten or inflict harm on others, but instead are aimed to protect and preserve the individual inmate. In this context, it is clear that inmates if given psycho-education are capable to modify their aggression due to psycho-social change of views in life, making them more productive citizens and ready to be integrated in the community. Further, it is concluded that living in peace inside the correctional institution among the female inmates requires values about relationships that include respect, honesty, empathy, compassion, humanity, fairness and a belief that inmates can change. Importantly, the female inmates are able to balance the thoughts and feelings and manage their aggressive behavior through psycho-education utilizing the SEMIPA. That SEMIPA can make female inmates capable and abreast with the norms of living in harmony with others even with the dimensions of their role inside the jail. Through psycho-education, female inmates are helped to avoid recommission of crime because the intervention allows the modification of their aggressive behavior. Furthermore, the mind and behavior can shift or change from aggressive to less aggressive behavior and are capable of responding to the challenges of living in peace and harmony behind bars.

Recommendation

The utilization of the findings, is the significant effect of the intervention program using socio-ecological model for aggression in the penal system as a strategy in the reintegration of inmates, as well as the reduction of recidivism or recurring of commission of crime. The SEMIPA maintains the focus on how the different levels of the environment influenced the development of antisocial behaviors such as aggression and violence utilizing a developmental approach. Future researches should include early prevention programs as well as intervention programs, focusing on the early stages of development. It should also include a diversity of participants such as male inmates and juvenile delinquents, both children and adolescents and include more variables.

This study served as working model into the intervention of aggression in the penal system as a strategy in the reintegration of inmates, as well as the reduction of recidivism. This socio-ecological model of intervention for aggression focused on how the different levels of the environment influenced the development of antisocial behaviors such as aggression and violence utilizing a developmental approach. Future researches should include early prevention programs as well as intervention programs, focusing on the early stages of development. It should also include a diversity of participants such as male inmates and juvenile delinquents, both children and adolescents; include more variables such as family structure and processes, psychological and physiological disorders, social experiences, and other crucial social and environmental factors; utilize other approaches in intervention such as brief

therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, solution-focused, and replacement aggression training; have a longer time frame with more sessions; and incorporate more locations such as halfway houses, rehabilitation centers, community centers, and schools.

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