

Emotional Resilience, Social Support, and Coping Mechanisms among Persons Deprived of Liberty Dealing with Grief: A Multiple Case Study

Celeste Faith R. Almanon, Kris Hanley M. Dalan
Lyceum of the Philippines University - Batangas

Abstract

This study investigates emotional resilience, social support, and coping mechanisms among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) experiencing grief in a District Jail in the province of Surigao del Sur, Philippines. Three male detainees, with different backgrounds, provided insights into their grieving processes while incarcerated. Employing a multiple case study approach, data was gathered through in-depth interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. The data was analyzed through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021) involving complete coding, with-in case and cross-case analysis. The key themes that emerged were individual adaptive response, impact of interpersonal connections, and grief management techniques. Common manifestations of grief emerged, including somatic, emotional, and behavioral symptoms. Incarceration compounded the grieving process with limited resources, isolation, and loss of autonomy. Participants showed emotional resilience, shaped by their personality characteristics and previous experiences demonstrating adaptability, emotional regulation, and acceptance of the loss. Participants received social support, including informational, instrumental, and emotional assistance from family and jail staff. However, they also faced barriers such as perceived stigma, lack of awareness of available services, and environmental constraints. Coping mechanisms included problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies. Differences in specific methods, such as using humor, turning to religion or engaging in purposeful pursuits, underscored the need for individualized support. The study proposes a psychological intervention program grounded on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) for PDLs dealing with grief. Recommendations include longitudinal studies, comparative analyses, and evaluation of existing jail programs to better support PDLs experiencing grief.

Keywords: coping mechanisms, emotional resilience, grief, Persons Deprived of Liberty, social support