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Analysis of Factors Influencing the Psychological Well-Being of Inmates in Correctional Facilities

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ABSTRACT

The well-being of prisoners in correctional facilities is a complex issue influenced by various physical, psychological, and social factors. This literature review identifies consistent factors affecting prisoner well-being based on findings from 10 selected international journals. Key factors identified include poor physical conditions in prison environments, such as high density and inadequate facilities, which negatively impact prisoners' physical and mental health. Additionally, access to education, job training, and rehabilitation programs has proven effective in reducing anxiety levels and enhancing prisoners' future prospects. Psychological aspects such as self-esteem and social support also play a crucial role in improving prisoners' psychological well-being. Interventions like participation in yoga programs and interaction with Field Ministers also provide significant benefits in improving the quality of life for prisoners within prison settings. These findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach in policy development and interventions aimed at enhancing prisoner well-being and preparing them for successful social reintegration post-release..

Keywords: : psychological well-being, inmate, prisoner

1. Introduction

As a vulnerable population, inmates face complex challenges that significantly affect their well-being, particularly their psychological well-being (Rizal & Subroto, 2023). The inadequate conditions of many correctional facilities, such as outdated and poorly maintained infrastructure and overcrowding, often create a stressful and unsupportive environment for psychological well-being (Rizk, 2020). Data from Indonesia's Directorate General of Corrections (Ditjen PAS Kemenkumham) indicates that the current prison overcrowding rate in the country has reached 196% (Resia, 2021). Social isolation also contributes to issues of psychological well-being, as limited interactions among inmates and between inmates and staff often occur within hierarchical or confrontational contexts (Conny Kaari, 2020).

High stress levels are a direct consequence of prison living conditions, as inmates experience the loss of liberty, personal belongings and services, heterosexual relationships, autonomy, and security (Melati & Wibowo, 2023). Moreover, limited access to adequate mental health services and medical care often hampers the treatment of underlying mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, or trauma experienced before incarceration (Pratama & Sebyar, 2024). Consequently, psychological well-being should be prioritized even within correctional settings.

Psychological well-being reflects a state in which individuals can manage themselves, maintain positive relationships, master their environment, find purpose and meaning in life, act autonomously, and continually develop their potential (Ryff, 2014 in Hidayati et al., 2021). It encompasses dimensions such as self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Hidayati et al., 2021). Literature indicates that factors influencing psychological well-being include internal factors such as age and gender, and external factors such as culture, religiosity, and social support (Hidayati et al., 2021; Jang et al., 2021).

Research shows that poor prison conditions significantly impact inmates' well-being (Nurrahman, 2022). High levels of overcrowding exacerbate mental and physical health problems (Imasti & Subroto, 2023; Septianis, 2021) and increase the risk of conflicts among inmates (Jang et al., 2021; Tamimy, 2020). Furthermore, unsupportive prison environments often limit inmates' access to rehabilitation programs (Schaefer et al., 2022) or opportunities to develop skills useful post-release.

Conversely, well-designed correctional environments that provide access to education, job training, or rehabilitation programs have been shown to reduce anxiety and depression levels and improve inmates' future prospects (Irfansyah & Subroto, 2023; Orisu & Wibowo, 2023). Such programs not only prepare inmates for successful reintegration into society but also enhance their well-being during incarceration (Irfansyah & Subroto, 2023).

Psychological factors such as self-esteem and social support also play crucial roles in inmates' well-being. Inmates who feel valued and supported by correctional staff and fellow inmates tend to have higher levels of well-being (Ginneken et al., 2020). Interventions focusing on social skills

development, emotional management, and positive identity restoration have proven effective in enhancing inmates' social and psychological adaptation within the prison environment (Devi & Wibowo, 2023; Rafli, 2023).

This study employs a systematic literature review approach to identify and analyze key factors consistently highlighted in the literature as determinants of inmates' well-being. The goal is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics influencing the psychological well-being of inmates in correctional facilities. The findings aim to serve as a foundation for developing more effective policies and interventions to support inmates' well-being and prepare them for successful reintegration into society upon release.

2. Methodology

This study aims to analyze international journals regarding the factors influencing the psychological well-being of inmates in correctional facilities. The literature search was conducted using three databases: Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and PubMed, targeting publications written in English. The time frame for the research was limited to the period from 2019 to 2024 to ensure the relevance of the findings. Search terms included "inmate," "prisoner," "psychological well-being," "mental health," "correctional facilities," "factor," and "incarceration." The next step involved screening for duplicates among the identified journals using Rayyan software.

Following duplicate screening, the authors applied inclusion criteria to filter the selected journals. Articles were required to report the effects of conditions or programs in correctional facilities that influence inmates' psychological well-being. Only studies written in English were included. Excluded materials comprised books, proceedings, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and studies that did not report the impact of conditions or programs in correctional facilities on inmates' well-being.

Relevance was determined by matching the titles to the research topic, followed by examining the abstract for pertinent data. The inclusion criteria specified that journal articles must be original research rather than reviews, meta-analyses, or systematic literature reviews. Furthermore, data must include statistical findings rather than interview results, and the population and sample must consist of inmates currently in correctional facilities.

This study will adopt an observational study design to analyze the factors influencing the psychological well-being of inmates in correctional facilities.

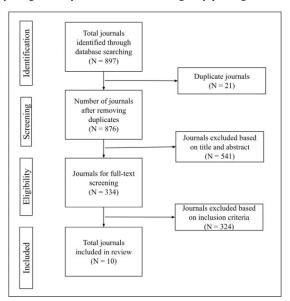


Fig. 1 PRISMA Flow Diagram

During the process, 897 articles were identified from Google Scholar (n=500), ScienceDirect (n=393), and PubMed (n=4). These citations were entered into the review management program using Rayyan, and 21 duplicates were removed. A total of 334 articles were selected for full-text review after the initial screening stage. Ultimately, 10 articles were chosen for the review analysis. Figure 1 illustrates the study selection procedure using the PRISMA diagram.

3. Results & Discussion

3.1 Research Characteristics

A total of 10 studies were included in this literature review. The number of studies published based on different geographic regions is as follows: Australia (Bartels et al., 2019), Ethiopia (Reta et al., 2020; Tadesse et al., 2022; Welu et al., 2021), China (Huang et al., 2020), Italy (D'Aurizio et al., 2020), India (Nanduri & Ram, 2020), and the United States (Flynn et al., 2020; Jang et al., 2020; Moore et al., 2021). All the samples in this review consisted of inmates ranging from adults to the elderly. Further analysis can be found in Table 1

Table 1 - Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Subjects

No	Authors	Location	Sample Size
1.	Reta et al., (2020)	Ethiopia	336 adult inmates
2.	Nanduri & Ram (2020)	India	10 adult inmates
3.	Bartels et al. (2019)	Australia	8 adult inmates
4.	Tadesse et al. (2022)	Ethiopia	368 adult inmates
5.	Flynn et al. (2020)	United States	229 adult inmates
6.	Welu et al. (2021)	Ethiopia	408 adult inmates
7.	Jang et al. (2020)	United States	163 adult inmates
8.	Huang et al. (2020)	China	1106 adult inmates
9.	D'Aurizio et al. (2020)	Italy	129 adult inmates
10.	Moore et al. (2021)	United States	160 adult inmates

3.2 Factors Influencing the Psychological Well-Being of Prisoners in Correctional Facilities

The following are the results of the systematic review analysis from the journals that have been found.

Table 2 - Data Analysis Used and Research Findings

No	Author(s)	Data Collection Method	Factors	Research Findings
1.	Reta et al., (2020)	Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9)	Socio-demographic, highly stressful life events	Becoming widowed, having a higher education, a history of suicide attempts, experiencing highly stressful life events, serving a prison sentence of 5 to 10 years, and having a history of chronic diseases were found to be independently associated with depressive symptoms
2.	Nanduri & Ram (2020)	Interview, Psychological Well-being (PWB) and Criminal Attitude Test (CATS)	Yoga Prana Vidya Program	There was a statistically significant increase in psychological well-being with a decrease in criminal attitudes as a result of the intervention.
3.	Bartels et al. (2019)	Depression, Anxiety, and Stress (DASS-21), Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS), Difficulties with Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS), Rosenberg Self- Esteem Scale (RSES)		Participants showed statistically and clinically significant benefits from the program, indicated by reduced levels of depression, anxiety, negative affect, and non-acceptance, as well as improved self-esteem and sense of purpose.
4.	Tadesse et al (2022)	. Structured Interview	Socio-demographic	Inmates with backgrounds such as employment status, marital status, age, and/or religious behavior showed varying levels of depression.
5.	Flynn et al. (2020)	The Brief Interpersonal Reactivity Index (B-IRI), The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES), and The State/Trait Anxiety Inventory for Adults (STAI-AD)	Dog Training Program	There were no statistically significant differences in self-efficacy between participants and non-participants, but inmates who participated in the dog training program had lower anxiety levels (p = 0.03) and showed near statistical significance for higher empathy (p = 0.09).

No	Author(s)	Data Collection Method	Factors	Research Findings
6.	Welu et al. (2021)	Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9)	Socio-demographic	Unemployment or being a student, lifetime substance use, a history of childhood violence, weight loss in prison, food quality in prison, unhappiness in prison, sentences longer than six years, and poor to moderate social support were significantly associated with depression.
7.	Jang et al. (2020)	Legal Cynicism Scale, Center for Epidemiologic Studies–Depression (CES- D), General Anxiety Disorder–7 (GAD-7), Intended Aggression, Search and Presence of Meaning Scale	Staff from former inmates	Inmates who were more frequently exposed to staff and for longer periods tended to report lower levels of criminal risk factors, depression, and aggression, along with higher levels of virtue, human agency predictors, religiosity, and spirituality.
8.	Huang et al. (2020)	Self-acceptance Questionnaire (SAQ), Perceived Social Support Scale (PSSS), Connor and Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), and General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-20)	Socio-demographic, Psychological Resilience, Perceived Social Support	Multivariate analysis indicated that inmates' mental health status was associated with their family's monthly income, previous employment, length of stay in detention centers, and legal process. Protective factors such as perceived social support, self-acceptance, and psychological resilience were linked to inmates' mental health status.
9.	D'Aurizio et al. (2020)	Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-2), the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI), the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), and the Insomnia Severity Index (ISI)	Sleep Quality	The study findings showed that poor sleep quality was associated with higher levels of anxiety, indicating that sleep disorders like insomnia may significantly worsen anxiety symptoms.
10.	Moore et al. (2021)	Life Events Questionnaire (LEQ), The Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression (HRSD), Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS), Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation (BSI), UCLA Loneliness Scale, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)	Support, Highly Stressful Life Events	Regression analysis showed that stressful life events were associated with loneliness and suicidal tendencies, especially when participants had low social support.

Based on the literature review, the main factors influencing the well-being of inmates in correctional institutions include socio-demographics, life events, interventions and programs, staff, and sleep quality. Four studies indicate that socio-demographic factors, such as marital status, status in the correctional facility, duration of sentence, financial situation, and level of participation in religious activities, are important factors affecting the mental condition of inmates (Huang et al., 2020; Reta et al., 2020; Tadesse et al., 2022a; Welu et al., 2021). Life events, both related to past experiences and those during incarceration, also have a significant impact on the psychological condition of inmates (Moore et al., 2021; Welu et al., 2021).

Interventions and programs implemented in correctional facilities, such as yoga programs or dog training, have been shown to improve the psychological well-being of inmates by reducing depression and anxiety levels, as well as enhancing self-esteem and social adaptation (Bartels et al., 2019a; Flynn et al., 2020; Nanduri & Ram, 2020). Sleep quality, often disrupted in prison environments, also plays an important role in determining the mental health of inmates. Sleep disturbances, such as insomnia, are associated with increased symptoms of anxiety and depression among inmates (D'Aurizio et al., 2020). For a more detailed analysis, refer to Table 2

3.3 Discussion

Research on the psychological well-being of inmates in correctional facilities has revealed several significant factors influencing their mental condition. Reta et al. (2020) found that socio-demographic factors such as marital status and higher education are associated with higher depression levels among inmates. Tadesse et al. (2022) presented data showing that inmates who are unemployed in prison are 6.64 times more likely to experience depression compared to those who work. Inmates aged 18–24 and 25–31 are less likely to experience depression compared to those aged 39 and above. Inmates who have not been sentenced are 7.36 times more likely to experience depression compared to those who have been sentenced. Married or otherwise partnered inmates (divorced, separated, widowed) are less likely to experience depression compared to those who are single. Inmates who do not attend religious services are 3.51 times more likely to experience depression compared to those who regularly attend religious services.

In general, socio-demographic factors such as employment in prison, inmate age, marital status, and participation in religious activities significantly influence their depression levels. Welu et al. (2021) highlighted the importance of socio-demographic factors such as food quality, happiness in prison, and social support in affecting inmates' mental condition, particularly in the context of depression levels. Huang et al. (2020) showed that factors such as family monthly income, previous employment, length of stay in detention centers, as well as social support and psychological resilience, also significantly influence inmates' mental health. The socio-demographic factors mentioned above are in line with several earlier studies (Alves et al., 2024; Araújo et al., 2020; Corbi et al., 2020; Costa et al., 2020; Tweed et al., 2021).

Social support plays a crucial role in improving the psychological well-being of inmates in correctional facilities, as shown by the studies of Huang et al. (2020) and Welu et al. (2021). Huang et al. (2020) found that inmates with strong support from family and friends outside of prison tend to have lower levels of depression and anxiety. Meanwhile, Welu et al. (2021) emphasized that the quality of social interactions within the prison, including support from fellow inmates and staff, can significantly impact inmates' mental condition, especially in reducing their depression levels. Strengthening this social support network not only supports inmates' psychological well-being currently but also has the potential to improve their rehabilitation process for reintegration into society after their sentence ends (Kjellstrand et al., 2022; Richie et al., 2021).

Interventions such as the Yoga Prana Vidya program, as shown by Nanduri & Ram (2020) and the study by Bartels et al. (2019), indicate that participants benefit significantly both statistically and clinically from this program, evidenced by reduced levels of depression, anxiety, negative affect, and non-acceptance, along with improved self-esteem, purpose, flexibility, sleep, relaxation, pain reduction, and increased mental well-being, with participants stating that the program made them feel "calm" and "peaceful." This intervention provides evidence that it can improve the psychological well-being of inmates by reducing depression and anxiety levels and enhancing their self-esteem. Flynn et al. (2020) found that dog training programs can reduce inmates' anxiety levels and improve their empathy. These programs are especially helpful for inmates to break free from the monotonous routine. Based on earlier research, rehabilitation programs and activities like those mentioned have proven effective in improving the psychological well-being of inmates (Villafaina-Domínguez et al., 2020). Other activities such as gardening (Baybutt et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2021), reading (Garner, 2020), or other hobbies that can be done in correctional facilities could also be beneficial. This aligns with Ryff's concept, where psychological well-being improves with self-development.

Jang et al. (2020) explored the role of staff, particularly former inmates, in influencing the levels of criminality, depression, and aggression among inmates, as well as promoting virtue and spirituality within correctional facilities. This research is also consistent with Ryff's concept of psychological well-being, which involves positive relationships with others. The relationship with staff indeed plays a role in the psychological well-being of inmates in correctional facilities (Ginneken et al., 2020).

The study on sleep quality by D'Aurizio et al. (2020) showed that sleep disturbances such as insomnia can worsen symptoms of anxiety and depression among inmates. Moore et al. (2021) investigated the impact of stressful life events on loneliness and suicidal tendencies, particularly in the context of low social support.

By gaining a deeper understanding of the factors affecting inmates' psychological well-being, it is hoped that more effective interventions can be developed to improve their mental condition, reduce depression and anxiety levels, and support their rehabilitation process back into society. These studies provide an important foundation for the development of policies and intervention practices aimed at improving the psychological well-being of inmates...

4. Conclusion

Overall, this study shows that socio-demographic factors such as marital status, higher education, employment in prison, age, and participation in religious activities play a key role in the psychological condition of inmates in correctional facilities. Interventions such as yoga programs and dog training have proven effective in enhancing the psychological well-being of inmates by reducing depression and anxiety levels. The role of staff, particularly those who are former inmates, is also significant in influencing the mental well-being of inmates while promoting virtue and spirituality. Good sleep quality and adequate social support are also crucial in preventing loneliness and the risk of suicide among inmates. By understanding these factors, it is hoped that more effective interventions can be developed to support rehabilitation and improve the mental condition of inmates within the context of corrections.

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