

Effectiveness of Reintegration Program Utilizing Feminist-Phenomenological Approach in Improving Self-esteem among Female Probationers: A Mixed Method Research

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Abstract

This study designed and implemented a Reintegration Program utilizing Feminist-Phenomenological Approaches to determine its effectiveness in improving self-esteem and further explored the insights and benefits gained by Filipino Probationers during the intervention. The researchers employed mixed method research design, particularly the Embedded Design. The study was conducted at South Cotabato Parole and Probation Administration Office, Koronadal City, Philippines. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) was utilized to measure the level of self-esteem of 11 female probationers before and after the intervention. The researchers developed the intervention program dubbed as Eye Freedom Program. Utilizing the Wilcoxon Signed Ranked Test (p -value = .005), there was a significant difference in the participants' level of self-esteem. Using the qualitative method, the participants gained positive insights and benefits throughout the intervention. The themes generated revolve around how the Reintegration Program helped them improve their level of self-esteem. The Reintegration Program was therefore found to be effective in improving the level of Self-esteem of the participants, as shown in the difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention test scores; and qualitative data on the insights and benefits gained by the participants during the intervention program.

Keywords: Reintegration Program, Level of Self-esteem, Female Probationers

Introduction

One Women comprise 6.9% of all prisoners worldwide (Global Prison Trends, 2019). According to statistics, as of June 2020, the United States had 9.8% of its convicts, while Hong Kong had the highest female prisoners at roughly 20.1 percent of its detainees. In contrast, there were 21,349 female inmates in the Philippines in 2018, which is 11% of the entire prison population and a rate of 20.3 percent for every 100,000 people in the country (Statista Research Department, 2020). In rehabilitating female criminals and clearing up the overcrowding in institutional corrections, it will be difficult for government officials, therapists, and other mental health professionals to keep up with the rising number of female offenders.

When female offenders are released from jail, they represent one group whose issues should be properly acknowledged or whose requirements should be encouraged to be met. They are susceptible to a fall in self-esteem after completing their prison sentence. According to Comfort (2016), female probationers frequently have low self-esteem, poor physical health, and greater family conflict and strained family ties. Studies have revealed that female probationers are at a high risk of suicide and mental health issues (Kolb, 2015; Skinner & Farrington, 2020). Given these weaknesses, it is important to develop and encourage a healthy lifestyle in probationers to improve their well-being.

The impact a program has on the experiences of the individual determines its efficacy, claims Mariano (2019). With this, when designing a program tailored to women's unique strengths and needs, it is important that the demographics and history of the female offender community and the effects that different life events have on women's patterns of offending. According to these women who had successfully left prison and returned to their communities, proper assessment and classification and male-centered programming were two contributing factors.

The Therapeutic Community (TC) Modality, which uses the "community" to facilitate behavioral and attitudinal transformation, is adopted by the Parole and Probation Administration under the Department of Justice in Region XII, the Philippines. The client in this model obtains the knowledge and motivation to change (Therapeutic Ladderized Program Implementer's Handbook, Parole and Probation Administration, 2013). This institution-based program, which has a "one size fits all" approach, is used for probationers of both sexes. It supports the argument that the organization lacks a dedicated program for female probationers. Thus, there is a requirement and an opportunity to use expertise from other disciplines besides the Parole and Administration Office to create successful programs for women that aim to improve Self-Esteem.

This study aims to close the gap caused by the lack of government-sponsored reintegration programs specifically for female probationers who want to boost their self-esteem. More precisely, this study sought to develop and implement an intervention to raise the self-esteem of female probationers by using feminist phenomenological methodologies.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

The Sociometer Theory of Self-Esteem (Leary, 2012), Feminist-Phenomenology Advanced (Cosgrove, 2003), and Relational Theory of Women's Psychological Development (Haslam, 2004) are the three theories that serve as the foundation for this study.

According to Leary's (2012) Sociometer hypothesis, people's perceptions of their social and relational worth and acceptance by others can be used as a psychological indicator of self-esteem. Sociometer Theory differs from most other explanations of self-esteem in that it suggests that people are neither required for self-esteem nor motivated to pursue it for its own sake. Instead, it views self-esteem as the result of a system that monitors and reacts to interpersonal acceptance and rejection. The idea contends that people rarely act in ways that appear to be designed to preserve or boost their self-esteem; rather, they frequently do so to preserve and boost their relationship value and, as a result, raise their chances of interpersonal acceptance. Relating this idea to the current study, it can be said that female probationers' self-esteem is an issue they must address and maintain through the reintegration process to be respected and accepted by others. So, a probationer must retain improved self-esteem as a psychological defense against the obstacles of social stigma brought on by their incarceration.

The Feminist Phenomenology presented by Cosgrove (2003) is selected to be the theoretical foundation for the design and implementation of the reintegration program of this study. In the psychological analysis of women, feminism and phenomenology are both significant. Due to their complexity and bulk, presenting an in-depth analysis of these theories here is hard. Instead, the fundamental ideas and presumptions relevant to the present investigation were considered. Consciousness serves as the "channel between a person and the outside world," phenomenological questions should include "What does this kind of experience feel like? What does the experience mean?" Phenomenological research aims to provide a detailed and nuanced description of a specific lived experience (Giorgi, 2012). According to this method, the researcher's job was to "return to the things themselves," where "things" meant to the realm of lived experience. Applying this to the phenomena of female probationers, comprehending their criminal histories and how incarceration affects their self-esteem may help them heal and successfully return to their communities.

The theoretical views used to create and conduct a reintegration program for female probationers are based on the life experiences they have had and the difficulties that are unique to them. Theories that explain the particular elements and forces that affect women's lives and can be used to construct training and interventions for women offenders are already in existence. The Relational Theory of Women's Psychological Development is one of these theories, and it was developed by Miller in 1976. (Haslam, 2004). This hypothesis describes how men and women develop psychologically and morally differently. Feminist criminologists have applied Relational Theory to better understand women, their pathways to criminality, and to provide recommendations for rehabilitating female offenders. According to this view, "connections" are an important part of human growth, but they are especially vital for women. According to the Relational Theory, woman's sense of self-worth is determined by her connections with others, and her growth is represented via her interactions. Because of this, women's positive development and sense of self-worth are compromised, contributing to their illegal activities.

The relational theory paradigm addresses topics like victimization and unhealthy relationships in women's lives. Scholars claim that these abusive relationships and other problematic aspects of women's lives contribute to their lack of empathy, distress, and low self-esteem, which are all linked to criminal activities, including fraud, substance abuse, and abuse, among other things. Hence, according to relational theory, female probationers must be given the tools to reconnect and start resolving their troubled relationships for successful reintegration and the ability to abstain from crime to be realized. Relational theory is crucial to this study in describing how women become criminals (Trotter et al., 2012; Van Voorish, 2013).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study examined the insights and advantages gained by Filipino probationers under the supervision of the South Cotabato Parole and Probation Administration Office, Department of Justice, Koronadal City, Philippines, during the implementation of the intervention. Its goal was to design and implement a reintegration program using feminist-phenomenological approaches to determine its effectiveness in improving the level of self-esteem of female probationers.

The following questions were specifically addressed in this study:

1. Is there a significant difference between the participants' self-esteem levels before and after the Reintegration Program's implementation?

2. How would participants characterize the advantages they experienced from using the Reintegration Program as a strategy to improve their self-esteem?

Literature Review

This section explains the principles of self-esteem, how it connects to self-efficacy and social relationships, and studies that discuss how incarceration affects self-esteem. Programs for reintegration and accompanying research to enhance women's functioning inside and outside of prison are also included. Studies done in the Philippine context, such as those on the life experiences of probationers in therapeutic communities, the influence of therapeutic communities on probationers' perceptions, and the efficacy of therapeutic community modality programs, are also presented to add to the understanding of the topic under study.

2.1 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem, which relates to one's self-evaluation and describes people's belief that they are capable and deserving, is a psychological concept. In other words, self-esteem is people's subjective emotional reaction toward themselves (Logan, 2020). Typically, self-esteem is viewed by psychologists as a lasting personality trait with possible typical short-term changes. A concept of personality is self-esteem. A sense of self-worth is necessary for developing self-esteem, and it can be attained by accepting difficulties that lead to achievement (Sutton & Douglas, 2020).

According to MacCutcheon (2018), self-esteem is the perception of oneself in terms of the worth one sets in her life. And fostering self-esteem entails believing in one's value and cultivating the ability to feel "good enough" as a person, no matter the circumstances of one's life. In addition, a person's level of self-worth greatly influences how they will deal with adversities in life. It enables people to experience either joy and fulfillment or sadness and emptiness in life's circumstances.

A personality quality related to the ideas of self-image and self-conscience is self-esteem. Self-esteem is one personality feature seen as a continuum or a bipolar dimension. The continuum of individual differences covers many grades and levels. Studies found self-esteem as a key factor influencing emotional health (Women and Peterson, 2019). Self-esteem is a crucial component of mental health, according to William James, one of the pioneers of Western psychology, who made this claim as early as 1890. Individuals with high self-esteem are happier, more optimistic, and more motivated than those with low self-esteem; they are also less likely to experience sadness, anxiety, and a bad mood (Vallacher, 2020).

Those with high self-esteem can better embrace happy moments, deal with bad circumstances, overcome problems, form close connections, and develop their strengths. The development of dysfunctional schemata and depressive symptoms in response to the experience of bad life events is also thought to be positively moderated by high self-esteem (Cameron & Granger, 2019).

Several studies have shown that those with high self-esteem are more resilient in the face of failure than people with low self-esteem. High self-esteem individuals also seem to be better at controlling their goal-directed conduct. Self-control and quality of life depend on self-esteem. It contributes to the direction of human conduct and gives it the energy to move. Individuals who lack self-worth have feelings of unworthiness, inferiority, and emotional instability, which makes them unsatisfied with their lot in life. Mackinnon's (2015) research revealed a trend of respondents with low self-esteem scores having a generally negative attitude

toward many things, including others and personal matters. This study could support the hypothesis that low self-esteem affects a person's perspective in life.

2.2 Impacts of Prison on Self-Esteem

Long-held beliefs among theorists are that a person's social connections and sense of self-worth are interconnected. Relationships may influence the development of self-esteem, but the scientific data has been inconsistent, leaving much room for doubt. Harris (2019) conducted a meta-analysis to summarize the longitudinal data on the prospective effects of social relationships on self-esteem among 48 samples, including 46,231 participants, and the prospective effects of self-esteem on social relationships among 35 samples, including 21,995 participants. The findings demonstrated a long-term predictive association between interpersonal connections and self-esteem. The results are consistent with assumptions made by both traditional and modern theories on how social ties affect one's self-esteem and how that affects the relationship domain. In conclusion, the research points to a positive feedback loop between the constructs, indicating that the relationship between a person's social ties and degree of self-esteem is reciprocal across all life stages.

At a few Kenyan prisons, Kamoyo (2018) conducted a study to determine how imprisonment affected the self-esteem of female convicts. Information was gathered from 291 female prisoners and four prison wardens, and data analysis produced the following findings: imprisonment had a significant impact on female prisoners' self-esteem, and, according to the study, prisoners felt depressed because they were cut off from their loved ones, particularly when they were separated from their children and significant others. The open door policy should remain in place at the jail so inmates have more opportunities to visit with their loved ones, perhaps twice or thrice each week, thereby lessen social isolation's impacts. According to the research, incarceration greatly impacts inmates' sense of self. Because of this, it is important for prison administrators, counselors, and other collaborators to be aware of the connection between female convicts' self-esteem and their incarceration. Losing the ability to be a mother is seen as one of the most painful aspects of being imprisoned for women and can cause them to feel lost and undervalued.

Formerly incarcerated people's opinions about how education and incarceration affected their self-stigma were examined by Douglas, Pelletier, and Szkola (2017). According to the findings, incarceration impacts self-stigma, but education increases one's sense of empowerment and motivation to combat its harmful effects. It's critical to lessen the stigmatization of those who have served time in prison because seeing themselves favorably can increase their chances of reentering society and their trajectory in life. The study's findings also show that respondents' prior incarceration has self-stigmatizing effects but that their engagement in higher education while in prison was empowering and lessened that stigma. According to the individual and the circumstances, some people give in to their stigmatized status and suffer from sadness or reduced self-esteem. In contrast, others react with outrage and are empowered to retain self-esteem despite their stigmatized status. This investigation looks at how having a criminal record and receiving an education while incarcerated affect the self-stigmatization and empowerment that people who have served their time in prison experience.

Another study utilizing a pretest-posttest methodology examined the impact of transactional analysis on the sense of self-worth among 76 imprisoned women in Southeast Iran. Before the intervention and one month afterward, each participant was assessed. The results of a demographic survey and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) revealed that group training in Transactional Analysis significantly impacted self-esteem. The study advised

experienced and expert counselors and psychologists to perform group training sessions in transactional analysis (Torkaman, Farokhzadian, Miri & Pouraboli, 2018).

Bruce and Larweh (2017) conducted a study to determine the relationship between self-esteem, needs satisfaction, and the psychological well-being of women prisoners. The study employed the correlation survey design method to solicit information from randomly selected 155 female prisoners from an estimated population of 347 in the James Camp Prison in Accra.

Utilizing the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Basic Psychological Needs Scale, and The Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being as the research instruments, the findings revealed that a significant positive correlation exists between self-esteem, needs satisfaction, and psychological well-being among inmates. The length of a prison sentence has no effect on prisoners' psychological well-being; there was no significant effect of visits by family and friends on prisoners' psychological well-being. Therefore, it is advised that prison counseling be improved to lessen the psychological impacts of incarceration on offenders.

2.3 Female Ex-Offender Reintegration Programs

The reintegration programs, including parole and probation, therapeutic community modalities, and community-based programs, are created to satisfy the demands of the ex-offenders. These programs assist ex-offenders in overcoming obstacles and remaining contributing members of society. A key element of effective reentry programs is understanding the obstacles to integration following incarceration (Burden, 2019).

Berry (2019) claimed in her study that women are marginalized groups in society. The physical and psychological requirements of imprisoned women are still overlooked, along with their motivation, risk, and recidivism rates, even after time has passed. The quantity of women behind bars has increased since the late 1800s. It suggests that there has to be a change in the current system to reduce the number of female offenders and the possibility of repeat offenders. It is necessary to examine various periods to identify what elements have worked and which need to be altered to progress the current system's programs for women. Berry gathered information from the Reformatory Era and examined women's experiences then compared those findings to female jails of today to address problems now. When women were sent to reformatories in the late 1800s, the middle class developed a system whereby women who committed small-time offenses would be institutionalized to change their behavior into "typical" ladies. It required them to perform household duties, including sewing, cooking, and child care as a servant to their husband. There were several problems with the programs and treatments and the idea that women who disobeyed would be labeled as "feeble-minded" and transferred to psychiatric facilities. Even though this doesn't happen anymore, there are still problems with the jail systems of today. For instance, few services exist, such as healthcare or programs for female offenders within and outside the jail system. Also, many female criminals are single mothers, which may be a factor in their criminal conduct since they may be tempted to take items for their kids. Consideration of reforms must take this element into account. This information can teach others how services and treatment for female offenders inside and outside jails are still insufficient. The prison system can be changed in some ways to make sure that female inmates are discouraged from committing additional crimes and are reintegrated into society. Gender-specific training is required due to variances in criminality, the prevalence of victimization experienced by women, and their strong emotional ties to their loved ones. These programs could help women with various issues, including parenting abilities, trauma, abuse, or victimization. They could also build support networks, provide opportunities for women, and offer various treatments.

Also, many programs are designed to enhance women's functioning inside and outside prison. The initiatives focus on the mental and physical health of women. Many programs work to improve women's self-esteem, lessen the symptoms or occurrence of depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and rage, and aid in their emotional healing from prior experiences of abuse. Gobeil (2016) investigated whether gender-informed and gender-neutral interventions differ in efficacy and if interventions for female offenders are beneficial in reducing recidivism.

Women who took part in correctional programs had odds of success in the community that was 22 to 35 percent higher than non-participants across 38 effect sizes between 37 and almost 22,000 female offenders. In other words, women receive correctional interventions that are at least as effective as the rates for men that have been published. Gender-informed and gender-neutral interventions were equally effective across all 38 effect sizes. However, when analyses were restricted to 18 effect sizes linked to studies with higher methodological quality, recidivism reductions were significantly more likely to be associated with gender-informed interventions. Similar results align with other research that shows women are more likely to respond favorably to gender-informed interventions if their backgrounds and pathways to offending are connected to gendered issues.

2.4 Qualitative Research on the Successful Reintegration of Female Ex-Offenders

In a qualitative study, Martilik (2018) conducted semi-structured interviews with eight formerly jailed women to examine the perspectives of these women who had successfully reintegrated into their communities. Each of the women spent nine months behind bars, and for the first three years after their release, they were all free of arrest. Their experiences before, during, and the researcher examined following detention. This study's key takeaway and suggestion was the requirement to introduce gender-specific services and programs for women in prison or recently released. The females' perspectives on what it takes for a female ex-offender to succeed after being released from prison varied, despite their varied life experiences and viewpoints. Additionally, reentry services for women and their families, such as parenting classes, family support groups, and treatment facilities where women and men receive treatment separately rather than together, are necessary for female ex-offenders to succeed when they reenter the community after incarceration.

To comprehend the reintegration experiences of five female ex-offenders better, Brown (2018) performed a qualitative study. The researcher mentioned above examined the women's experiences inside and outside of prison, their interactions with facilitators, obstacles to successful reintegration, and their resilience. All of the study's participants were served by the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan. They faced various difficulties, including a lack of appropriate programming, mental health support, issues related to family reunification such as child custody, mending relationships, and parenting techniques. Brown proposed giving them information on connections to local resources to help female ex-offenders obtain work, locate housing, and overcome mental health and addiction issues before leaving prison or jail. He also offered several services that could better assist female offenders during and after incarceration, including one-on-one services, child advocacy, and concrete release preparation.

Larsen (2017) did a further qualitative study to investigate the successful reintegration of female ex-offenders into their communities. According to Larsen, the gap in the reentry literature is success rather than failure. Larsen interviewed seven female ex-offenders who participated in Exodus Ministries' reentry program. The women discussed what they believed made for successful reentry, including parenthood, goal-setting and achievement, sobriety maintenance, stability in one's job and personal life, and reliance on God. All of the female

participants in the study agreed that reentry programs like Exodus Ministries gave them access to a network of women in similar situations, gave them a sense of security and safety, and promoted spiritual development. According to the study's findings, these program elements were the reasons for their successful reintegration into their communities. The results showed that successful reintroduction into the community after release from prison depends on reentry programs that prepare people for life events, including parenting, religion, significant life changes, identity transformation, and the efficient use of resources.

A phenomenological study was carried out by Janer et al. (2019) to examine the social and emotional backdrop of ex-offenders' families' lives in society. In-depth interviews served as the primary method for gathering the data for this study. Findings showed that after looking into their lives, most were still going about their regular social activities and maintaining tight family ties with the ex-offender. The families were able to socialize successfully within their culture in terms of socialization. While several of the family members were emotionally secure, some of them experienced grief and guilt. People have developed subjective accounts of their social interactions. The family systems theory and the attachment theory substantially support this assertion. According to these views, a person's emotional and physical attachment to them may aid in strengthening the bond between all family members.

2.5 Research carried out in a Philippine environment

The Yangco (2019) study demonstrated that the purpose of a humane criminal justice system is best accomplished when criminals are reintegrated and rehabilitated through methods other than jail. One commonly recognized objective of corrections, whether carried out in institutions or through non-custodial measures, is the reintegration of criminals into their communities and societies. Assistance with a family reunion and reintroduction into the community is necessary to ensure that criminals released from detention facilities, jails, penal institutions, or rehabilitation institutes reclaim their part and function in society. The community-based treatment of ex-offenders is crucial to achieving reintegration and maintaining rehabilitation.

Behavioral management, social and emotional category, intellectual and spiritual category, and vocational and survival category were all examined in a study by Dioses et al. (2019) that sought to learn more about the life experiences of probationers in a therapeutic community in Quirino Province, the Philippines. The findings of a qualitative case study revealed that probationers' life experiences were concentrated on awareness training, social skill improvement, personal hygiene maintenance, and improvement fostering healthy relationships, counseling, spiritual awakening, government agency collaboration, and livelihood training programs. In addition, the participant's life experiences centered around personality development training that would enable them to absorb what they learned by exhibiting positive behaviors that would help them have a positive attitude toward life after attending the Therapeutic Community Modality.

Presado and Ballado (2019) did a study to ascertain the effectiveness of the main thrusts of the Parole and Probation Administration (PPA) in Northern Samar, as seen by parolees and probationers. Dioses et al. To assess the effectiveness of the PPA's main thrusts, they tracked the respondents' age, sex, civil status, educational level, length of incarceration, crime committed, rehabilitation program utilized, and occupation. They also looked at the severity of the problems the respondents were facing. The descriptive-correlational study method was used with 51 parolees and 20 probationers as respondents. Data was gathered via a survey questionnaire.

Statistics tools employed in the responses include frequency counts, percentages, ranking, mean, and multiple regression analysis. Most of those granted parole were older men who had been married, had children, had completed only their elementary education. They had served six to ten years in jail, committed crimes against others, and worked in low-paying occupations. Most of the probationers were young, male, married, obtained only an elementary or college education, had served 0 to 5 years in prison, had broken special laws, and worked in the blue-collar sector. Volunteering, restorative justice, and therapeutic communities were deemed effective. The efficiency of the main PPA thrusts was not significantly correlated with the profile. The parolees and probationers regarded both personal issues and PPA issues as being of a moderately significant nature.

Cuevas conducted a qualitative study on the paradox of being a probationer (stories of joy and grief) (2020). The 17 probationers in Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, Philippines, were the data source for this study. Deliberate sampling techniques were used based on the standards established for this investigation. According to the study's findings, the participants encountered difficult situations as they engaged with the community while on probation. Their battle to survive in their circumstances led to their feelings of joy and grief. These individuals deserve to participate in the probation program's community-based punishment since they are deemed victims of circumstance. They all can transform and start over in life. Instead of prison, where incorrigible convicts might pollute them, they should be on probation. Their happy success stories show the way to their successful recovery. However, the probationers' tragic tales result from their earlier criminal behavior. Acknowledging this unfavorable result might be seen as a positive sign of rehabilitation. It suggests they were still motivated by passion and conscience, which enabled them to confess their sins and make amends. The probation program should also include the probationers' parents, spouse or common-law partner, children, siblings, friends, coworkers, neighbors, or any other significant individual. It was further stated. It should be understood by both the probation officers and these individuals that they will participate in the entire process of the probationers' rehabilitation and reformation. The probation officer should evaluate these people and have conversations with them, highlighting their crucial role in the rehabilitation and reformation of probationers. Activities to improve or develop the bond between probationers' families and other support networks are also relevant.

In criminal justice, reliable means of disseminating information to the entire community should exist. This approach focuses on the community's shared responsibility for deterring and combating crime. The community should know how much they have helped the probationers succeed. If all support systems unite to build a community conducive to rehabilitation and reformation, the difficulties probationers face will reduce.

Method

The research design, research setting, participants, research instrument, statistical processing/data analysis, and ethical considerations are covered in this study section.

3.1 Research Design

This study used a mixed-method research design, particularly the Embedded Design to assess the effectiveness of a reintegration program using feminist-phenomenological in improving the participants' level of self-esteem toward successful reintegration into society. Also, to examine the insights and advantages they gained about the Intervention Program to improve their self-esteem.

Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered for this investigation. The two datasets are individually evaluated.

For quantitative data, repeated measures within-group experimental design was used, in which subjects in a single group underwent all experimental procedures while serving as their controls. The researcher examined the subjects' self-esteem levels before and after the reintegration program was put into place. The researcher acquired the difference in the participants' self-esteem levels before and after the reintegration program as a measure of observation following the administration of the reintegration program.

Questions were posed at each session of the implementation of the reintegration program to collect qualitative data.

3.2 Participants

The study's participants were the South Cotabato Parole and Probation Administration's female probationers in Koronadal City, South Cotabato, Philippines.

Participants in this study had to meet the following criteria: 1) be accused of violating Republic Act 10591: Illegal Drugs Case; and 2) receive a rating of "frequent manifestations" on the Needs and Problems Checklist of the Parole and Probation Administration during Phase 1 of Therapeutic Community Modality (TC).

Eleven (11) female probationers participated in the study based on the inclusion criteria. With proper permission, the participants' profiles were taken from the Parole and Probation Administration Office's current files and used in an anonymous report to describe the participants. Pseudonym was given to protect the confidentiality of their identities.

3.3 Research Instrument

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Reintegration Program, also known as the Eye Freedom Program, were the tools used by the researcher to collect pertinent data for this study. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used to get quantitative data on the participants' levels of self-esteem.

The researchers created the Eye Freedom Program, an intervention program, to raise the self-esteem of study participants. The Sociometer Theory of Self-Esteem, Feminist Phenomenology, and Relational Theory of Women's Psychological Development all impacted the creation of the intervention program.

3.4 Data analysis and statistical processing

The researcher identified the necessary quantitative measures that could explain the changes that occurred after the intervention using non-parametric statistics. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was used to test the significant difference between the participants' self-esteem levels before and after the adoption of the Reintegration Program. Thematic analysis was used to find the pertinent and recurrent themes that would aid in developing integrative interpretations for the study to support the quantitative data.

Results

The findings are discussed in connection to the goals of this study in the results section. The quantitative distinctions between pre-and post-intervention were found. Consistent and pertinent themes were acquired while collecting qualitative data to aid in creating integrative

explanations for the study. The qualitative results demonstrated the learnings and advantages the participants experienced throughout the sessions of the Eye Freedom Program, an intervention designed to improve self-esteem.

4.1 The difference in the level of self-esteem of the Subjects before and after the implementation of the Intervention

As shown in Table 1, ten individuals had low self-esteem before the Eye Freedom Program was put into place (EFP). After completing the program, the individuals' levels of self-esteem increased. Before the intervention, just one (1) individual displayed a level of self-esteem within the normal range, and they consistently received the same rating following the intervention. According to the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test findings, the pre-intervention mean was 13.64 with a standard deviation of 2.15. On the other hand, the calculated post-intervention mean is 19.27 with a 1.48 standard deviation. The test's p-value in this instance (2-tailed) was .005. The difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention self-esteem test scores was confirmed because the significance threshold was less than .05. The test resulted in a statistically significant difference between the subjects' self-esteem test scores following the intervention ($Z = -2.816$, $p = 0.005$).

Table 1. *Test of significant difference between the participants Self-esteem levels before and after the Reintegration Program's implementation."*

	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z(asym p. sig. 2- tailed	p-value	Decision on Ho
Pre-Intervention	1	13.6	2.15	-2.816	.005	Reject Ho
Post-Intervention	1	19.2	1.48			

4.2 Insights and Advantages gained from implementing the Eye Freedom Program utilizing the Feminist-Phenomenological Approach in improving Participants' self-esteem.

In the study's evaluation of the Eye Freedom Program, the phase that assisted the participants in raising their level of self-esteem was discovered. Based on the sessions held throughout the reintegration program's implementation, the qualitative findings of this study were categorized. Specific responses related to the statements were examined and brought up in the discussions to further support and validate the findings. Table 2 summarizes the key themes and contextualized responses derived from the participants' self-esteem increases following the Eye Freedom Program (EFP) implementation. They include positive changes, emotional fulfillment, social network management, and self-reformation techniques.

Self-Reformation Techniques

By learning information useful for their recovery, the participants of the Intervention Program known as the Eye Freedom Program were able to increase their sense of self-worth. To change or better themselves, the participants could acquire self-reformation skills. The intervention was well-received by the participants, resulting from their engagement. They learned from the program and made adjustments. Some participants talked about the technique they had acquired to boost their self-esteem. Mary said,

"This program helped me grow my self-esteem, particularly for the things I couldn't handle previously".

Sheila also gained self-determination, which she believes can help her conquer all her challenges, she added.

"It was useful because I became strong to overcome all the challenges, on how I can face the problems that will come, I became stronger to overcome everything." .

Gina commented similarly to Sheila about how the program increased her self-worth and helped her learn to love herself.

"The things I did help me feel better about myself, in my case. Because you made us feel appreciated, I feel like I gradually started to value myself. It is not because we've done bad things before that makes us less important."

Fe also provided feedback quite similar to Gina; she noted that she learned to accept her flaws while learning to love herself.

"This training was helpful to us in that it made us aware of the respect and value we should have for ourselves. We didn't appear to know some things previously, but thanks to this program, we were aware of them and learned to embrace our weaknesses as a natural part of who we are."

Also, Shirley developed self-care skills, she added.

"I tend to give myself more priority as a result of this program, which is something I enjoy."

She also talked about how she had grown in her ability to accept her flaws and work on building her self-esteem.

"It truly helped me boost my self-confidence. Despite having many flaws and errors, I've learned to accept myself now."

Emotional Fulfillment

Participants in the program report that it provides several advantages relating to emotions. Their feelings were soothed, and they were able to achieve fulfillment.

As Kristine and Jelly put it:

"The sessions were conducted in a way that provided me confidence. I felt satisfied and able to express my emotions after each session. A means of expression is available to us. We no longer felt the ache within."

Social Network Management

After being released from jail, most of the participants found it challenging to reestablish relationships because of the inescapable criticism and condemnation from others. The program's goal is to improve their social network and fix this, thus.

She gained knowledge about the individuals in her life, including Melissa. She stated, "Even in relationships with others, you learn about them and their impact on you." Similarly, Jean answered.

And after that, it was helpful to me in mending my relationships with others, particularly with my family.

Grace added:

"I started to believe that individuals might change, and it altered how I view myself if I would genuinely try."

Positive changes

During the program, the participants' personalities underwent numerous changes. Although the reintegration program aims to promote positive improvements, most of these observed changes have proven to be such.

Rio is referenced,

"I improved my self-assurance and trust."

A few shifts in her thinking noted by Sarah, who remarked

"I used to not believe and value myself because this is the only thing I can do, but that has changed today."

Table 2. Major themes and contextualized responses of the participants' improvements from the Reintegration Program as a strategy to improve their self-esteem."

Major Themes	Contextualized Response
Self-Reformation Techniques	<p>The program allowed participants to develop a higher level of self-esteem. The activities conducted were helpful for them in giving more attention to how they value themselves, which they admitted was often mishandled in the past.</p> <p>The program improved their self-confidence and aided them in looking at their weaknesses more positively.</p>
Emotional Fulfillment	<p>Additionally, they were also taught to have respect for themselves. The program has been useful in providing emotional comfort to participants, for they were able to release unexpressed feelings through the series of sessions.</p> <p>The program made participants realize that putting one's satisfaction as a top priority can help them handle relationships better.</p>
Social Network Management	<p>The program was useful in improving the participants' perspective on relationships. They were taught various ways to better manage them and to fix those relationships that were previously screwed. The way they view others has also improved because of the program.</p> <p>The participants gained an additional understanding of family relationships through the reintegration program. They realized the unconditional love that only family can give, and reconnecting with them will speed up their recovery.</p>
Positive Changes	<p>The program shifted the mindsets of participants. From constantly thinking negatively, they learned to change unhealthy thoughts into healthier ones.</p> <p>Participants developed self-trust throughout the run of the program. They developed an understanding that they still have an opportunity to change but have to trust their capability.</p>

Discussion

The following discussion will diverge from the findings above regarding the effectiveness of the Reintegration Program in improving the self-esteem of Filipino

probationers by applying the feminist-phenomenological approach and the therapeutic effects of the intervention as a potential outcome of this study.

Non-parametric statistics were used to consistently show the individuals' self-esteem levels had significantly improved, as seen by their RSES ratings following the session, which was the initial issue addressed. The findings utilizing the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test indicated that the intervention produced a statistically significant difference in the subjects' results on the self-esteem test. Hence, it can be said that the Reintegration Program, dubbed the Eye Freedom Program (EFP), successfully raised the subjects' self-esteem.

The design of the EFP has an impact on how well it works to raise self-esteem levels. To best meet the needs of the participants, the intervention used feminist-phenomenological approaches. These particular needs of the participants were met throughout the sessions by giving them a chance to develop a precise self-description, discuss their upbringing and relationship with their mothers, recognize the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships, and develop a vision for their personal growth and change. The efficacy of EFP as a strategy for boosting respondents' self-esteem also accords with the study's feminism-phenomenology-based theoretical framework. Feminism and phenomenology are both seen as having an impact on the psychological study of women, according to Cosgrove's 2003 work. Torkaman, Farokhzadian, Miri, and Pouraboli (2018) used a pretest-posttest research design to examine how transactional analysis affected the self-esteem of 76 imprisoned women in Southeast Iran. Their findings further confirmed the effectiveness of intervention to produce favorable results for the participants.

The findings indicated that Transactional Analysis group training substantially impacted self-esteem using a demographic questionnaire and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). The research results by Bruce and Larweh (2017) on the connection between women prisoners' psychological well-being, needs fulfillment, and self-esteem is also compatible with the efficiency of the reintegration program. The results showed a substantial positive link between self-esteem, needs satisfaction, and psychological well-being among prisoners using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Basic Psychological Needs Scale, and The Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being as the research tools.

The second problem posed in the study concerned the gains made by the participants while the Reintegration Program was being implemented. Active participation and affirmation from sharing of insights and benefits were seen from the participants throughout the intervention sessions. The research yielded significant themes such as self-reformation techniques; emotional fulfillment; social network management; and positive changes.

The process of intentionally altering one's behavior or way of life is known as self-reformation. The intervention program's participants learned about self-improvement approaches during the sessions. By providing exercises beneficial for them in paying more attention to how they value themselves, which they recognized was frequently handled incorrectly in the past, the Eye Freedom Program (EFP) enabled participants to create a greater level of self-esteem in line with this goal. The participants claim that the training increased their self-confidence and helped them see their inadequacies more constructively. Despite the poor decisions they had previously made, they have admitted that the program helped them to see their worth and develop a deeper love for themselves. They were also instructed to respect themselves, among other things.

The Eye Freedom Program (EFP) participants learned that one should show themselves and love before extending it to others. As a result of that education, they started to value and look after one another. The program has taught the participants to acknowledge their limitations because everyone has them, and they have learned to accept them rather than trying to hide them.

It is encouraged to note that the program has encouraged participants to cultivate a strong sense of willpower that will make them more resilient in the face of current difficulties and braver in their battles against life's problems.

Self-Reformation Techniques are a theme that fits with the body of existing literature. Butenaite et al. (2016) claim that because existential crises repeat and people constantly try to comprehend their crises, self-change, identity alterations, and subjective sensations, self-transformation is an endless process. Honeywell (2018) investigated higher education's effects on ex-offenders' reintegration paths. It looks at what first sparked their change and how schooling helped them develop new identities and reevaluate their identity. The participants were questioned about their life experiences, such as their upbringings, criminal offenses, time spent in jail, resiliency, career history, and the motivations behind their decision to pursue higher education, using face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Their experiences in prison, where they encountered existential crises brought on by the suffering of imprisonment, how others viewed them, the strengthening of social ties, and the belief and trust afforded by others being willing to give them a second chance were among the catalysts for their change.

According to the participants, the Eye Freedom Program as an intervention has several advantages relating to emotions. It alleviated their emotions and assisted them in finding fulfillment. According to the participants, the program helped them feel emotionally comforted since it allowed them to express feelings holding them back during the series of sessions. According to Meadows (2014), who makes this claim in support of it, emotional fulfillment is a state of satisfaction with one's self-perception. Being content with all that makes "you," including your failures and successes, gives one a sense of completeness.

Participants learned from the program that prioritizing one's happiness can improve one's ability to manage relationships.

Female probationers found it difficult to reintegrate into society after being released from prison because of the stigma, inescapable criticism, and judgment from others. As a result, the intervention known as the Eye Freedom Program helped the participant's viewpoint on relationships. Several management techniques were taught to them, as well as how to mend broken relationships. Because of the training, their perspective of other people has also changed.

The participants in the Eye Freedom Program have the chance to learn more about family dynamics as a result of the program. Reuniting with their family will hasten their healing because they can understand the unwavering love only family can provide. Martilik (2018) examined the experiences of female ex-offenders before, during, and after incarceration as evidence for this claim. The need to create gender-specific programs and services for incarcerated women or recently released from prison emerged as the study's key subject and suggestion. Despite having various life experiences and viewpoints, Martilik noted that participants' impressions of what it needed for a female ex-offender to succeed following release from prison were consistent. Martilik contends that for female ex-offenders to succeed upon their release from prison, reentry services that benefit them and their children are

required, such as family support programs, parenting workshops, and treatment facilities where women and men are treated separately.

Throughout all the sessions, the Eye Freedom Program transformed numerous participants' elements, improving their self-esteem.

The program altered the participants' perspectives. They learned to replace unwholesome thoughts with wholesome ones by continually thinking negatively. They gained confidence in themselves and came to realize that, while there is still time for a change, they must have faith in their capacity.

The literature review and the theme of positive changes did coincide. According to Zortman et al. (2016), participants in the study had a higher likelihood of completing reentry programs when they changed their attitudes and actions and showed more respect for the personnel and programs. Similarly, Nyamathi et al. (2016) hypothesized that a change in perspective is necessary for successful reentry. According to Larsen (2017), programs for female offenders should offer efficient skill development for adjusting to life changes. Participants in this study were assisted by Positive Changes to make decisions and meet obligations that improved their odds of successfully reintegrating into society.

In summary, the themes that emerged from the participant's responses to process-related questions as the Eye Freedom Program was being implemented exhibited positive feelings and outcomes as indicated in the insights and advantages they were able to reap.

The participants' reflections on how the intervention program improved their sense of self-worth also contributed to the development of major themes.

Due to the face-to-face nature of the sessions, group interaction and processing continued from the intervention's initial phase to the post-assessment session. This greatly aided the program's implementation and raised the participants' self-esteem.

Conclusions

One participant had self-esteem within the normal range or level before the Reintegration Program was implemented out of 11. Based on their RSES scores, ten participants have poor levels of self-esteem.

The self-esteem ratings of the ten participants increased once the Reintegration Program was implemented, going from poor to average. Before and after the session, one participant's self-esteem remained within the normal range.

Based on their RSES raw scores, the participants' pre-intervention and post-intervention scores differed significantly.

Throughout the intervention, the participants benefited and obtained useful insights. The Reintegration Program's role in enhancing their sense of self-worth is a common theme that emerges.

The difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention test scores, as well as qualitative information on the insights and advantages attained by the participants throughout the intervention program, all support the conclusion that the reintegration program,

dubbed the Eye Freedom Program, is effective in raising the level of self-esteem of the participants.

The Study's Limitations

Only 11 female probationers from the Department of Justice's South Cotabato Parole and Administration Office in Koronadal City, the Philippines, were subjected to this study's implementation of the Eye Freedom Program (EFP). Hence, more research using a larger population might be conducted. Data collection was originally scheduled to last for around two weeks, but it was cut short due to health limitations induced by the Covid-19 outbreak and instead lasted for four full days. 2022 February 21–23 and March 1 saw the beginning of data collection.

According to the majority of participants' requests, during the administration of the Eye Freedom Program (EFP), the researchers removed Session 7, which was intended to study the impact of unhealthy relationships and domestic abuse experienced by the participants. The participants claimed they did not wish to reflect on their experiences with abusive relationships and domestic violence. The researchers appreciated and acknowledged the participants' choice due to ethical reasons.

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