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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## Lives of Former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) during their Rehabilitation under Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP)

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**ABSTRACT**

Over 65 countries worldwide offer Therapeutic Communities (TCs) for the rehabilitation and treatment of Persons Deprived of Liberty, a testament to the prevalence of drug misuse, addiction, and other criminal activity worldwide (Bunt et al., 2008). This study explored the experiences of former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) implemented in the Regional Bureau of Jail Management and Penology 6 (RBJMP6), Province of Iloilo through a qualitative research method. The participants of this study were the selected ten (10) former male PDLs who participated in the TCMP from different jail facilities in Iloilo. All participants were subjected to an individual in-depth interview. The findings of this study are described in emergent themes. Seven (7) emergent themes described the positive and negative experiences of the participants during their participation in the TCMP. For the positive experiences, four (4) emergent themes were developed, namely: *Fostering Personal Growth and Behavior Change*, *Continuing Educational Pursuits*, *Strong Sense of Collectiveness*, and *Acquiring Practical Skills for Livelihood*. For the negative experiences, three (3) emergent themes were also developed: *Emotional Struggles During Adjustment*, *Overcrowding Issues and Limited Facilities*, and *Restrictions and Limitations of TC Rules*. Meanwhile, two (2) emergent themes were formulated to explain how the participants cope with the challenges encountered during their participation in the TCMP, namely, *Seeking Guidance and Support from Peers and Personnel* and *Building Emotional Resilience and Faith*. On the other hand, two (2) emergent themes were formulated to explain the impacts of the TCMP on the lives of the participants, namely, *Enhanced Relationships and Communication Skills* and *Instilling Discipline and Patience*. Finally, two (2) emergent themes were created to express the aspirations of the participants to improve the implementation of TCMP, to wit: *Enhancing Livelihood and Educational Programs* and *Supporting Religious and Spiritual Activities*. Based on the emergent themes identified, it is recommended that the former PDLs be provided with a more comprehensive aftercare program for a more extensive rehabilitation process.

**KEYWORDS**

Therapeutic Community Modality Program, Former Persons Deprived of Liberty, Community-based Corrections, Phenomenology, Iloilo, Philippines.

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**1. Introduction**

Over 65 countries worldwide offer Therapeutic Communities (TCs) for the rehabilitation and treatment of Persons Deprived of Liberty, a testament to the prevalence of drug misuse, addiction, and other criminal activity worldwide (Bunt et al., 2008).

Two primary categories of TCs exist Democratic TCs (DTCs) and Concept TCs (CTCs), which are also referred to as hierarchical TCs. Flattened hierarchies and resident participation in decision-making are hallmarks of DTCs, which have their roots in the UK.

Through a psychodynamic examination of prior events, TC therapy allows patients to analyze the present through a dual perspective of the past and present. CTCs are inspired by the Synanon group, which Charles Dederich founded in 1958 in California with the goal of assisting individuals in altering their substance-use behaviors. Because of the hierarchical framework in which they function, residents will initially join the TC as "juniors" and progressively advance to higher positions as they complete their journey.

As a result, the hierarchy serves as a tool for encouraging change. The work primarily focuses on managing drug usage and assisting individuals in learning to accept frustration or postpone gratification, with a strong emphasis on the role of staff as guides. The success of prison-based treatment centers (TCs) should be scrutinized due to their inherent differences from conventional, "mainstream" prisons and the kind of PDLs they hold (Richardson & Zini, 2021).

In the Philippines, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) core program for PDL rehabilitation, known as the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP), is being used in all jails across the country (BJMP Comprehensive Operations Manual, 2015). The BJMP was established as one of the five pillars of the criminal justice system in response to the growing concern over jail administration and penology issues. Its main clientele consists of accused persons who are being held in these jails while awaiting trial or inquiry, as well as those serving sentences of not more than three years, as imposed by the court (Nicholas et al., 2022).

To address the needs of former persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) in Iloilo Province in terms of rehabilitation and intervention, Iloilo jails, under the management and supervision of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, implemented the Therapeutic Community Modality Program as its core intervention for PDLs rehabilitation.

The purpose of this study is to shed light on the distinct perspectives of former persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in Iloilo Province regarding their experiences with the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP), on how the former PDLs cope the challenges encountered during their participation in the TCMP, exploring its impact on their rehabilitation and determining the informants' aspirations to improve the implementation of the program. This study will serve as the basis for the improvement in the implementation of the agency's therapeutic intervention efforts.

Moreover, the researcher cannot find a study conducted regarding the experiences of former persons deprived of liberty in the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP). Furthermore, the researcher cannot find a study of the variation of the former persons deprived of liberties assessment based on their experiences, which shows that the therapeutic community modality program is helpful in their rehabilitation in the context of an institutional setting.

With seventeen (17) years of experience as a licensed criminologist and fourteen (14) years as a dedicated jail officer, the researcher has cultivated a deep understanding of criminal justice, inmate management, and rehabilitation processes. Throughout his career, the researcher has effectively served in various capacities as an Inmates Welfare and Development Officer (IWDO), Gender and Development (GAD) Officer, Custodial Officer, and Therapeutic Community Modality Program implementer across multiple jails in Iloilo Province.

As an Inmates Welfare and Development Officer, he developed and implemented programs that focused on the holistic rehabilitation of PDLs, ensuring their mental, emotional, and social well-being. As a Gender and Development Officer, he championed gender-sensitive initiatives, fostering an environment of equality and respect within the jail facilities. His tenure as a Custodial Officer has equipped him with the skills to maintain order and security while balancing the needs of both the PDLs and the institution.

As a Therapeutic Community Modality Program implementer, he successfully facilitated the rehabilitation of PDLs through structured, community-based therapeutic approaches. This role has enhanced his ability to guide PDLs through self-reflection, behavior modification, and social reintegration, further contributing to their successful rehabilitation.

His extensive experience in these roles has honed his ability to manage complex situations, lead teams, and implement policies that contribute to the effective and humane management of jail facilities. He is committed to continuous learning and adapting to new challenges in criminology and corrections.

For the past fourteen (14) years that the researcher was assigned as jail personnel in different jails in Iloilo Province, it was observed that some of the released PDLs committed another crime or the same offense previously committed and returned to jail custody even though they previously undergo TCMP during their entire stay in the jail facility. Such observation serves as the motivation of the researcher in conducting this study by looking into the experiences and impact of the therapeutic community modality program on former persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) who are previously undergoing the program. Hopefully, this study will serve

as a basis for the BJMP-TCMP implementers in crafting action plans and modifications on the existing practices to attain the goals in the implementation of the program.

## 2. Literature Review

This study is anchored mainly on Social Learning Theory by Bandura (1977) and supported by the Self-Determination Theory of Deci and Ryan (1985) and the Empowerment Theory by Rappaport (1987).

This study utilizes Social Learning theory, developed by Bandura (1977), as its fundamental theoretical framework. The Social Learning theory suggests that individuals learn new behaviors, skills, and attitudes by observing others in a social setting. This theory diverges from traditional behaviorist theories by emphasizing modeling, imitation, and the cognitive processes that underlie learning rather than solely focusing on direct reinforcement and punishment. This approach is especially pertinent in educational environments, where students frequently acquire knowledge through explicit instruction and observing their peers and teachers.

Attention is a crucial element of Social Learning theory as it is necessary for observational learning. Attention is directing one's focus toward the behavior being demonstrated. This focus can be influenced by various factors, including the characteristics of the person demonstrating the behavior (such as their attractiveness, competence, and similarity to the observer), as well as the cognitive abilities and motivations of the observer (Bandura, 1977). In a classroom environment, students are more inclined to focus on a captivating teacher who exhibits evident mastery of the subject matter. Moreover, the circumstances in which the behavior is witnessed can heighten or reduce the observer's focus.

Retention is the second crucial process, which entails the capacity to store observed behaviors in memory. The cognitive mechanisms of symbolic coding, mental rehearsal, and the organization of observed information significantly impact this process. Retention enables the observer to store and recall the behavior for future utilization. For instance, when a student observes an experiment, they need to encode and retain the steps and techniques demonstrated by the teacher to accurately replicate the experiment later. Efficient retention is essential for converting observed behaviors into future actions (Bandura, 1977).

Both reproduction and motivation hold equal significance in Social Learning theory. Reproduction refers to the capacity to convert stored information into observable actions, necessitating both physical and cognitive abilities (Bandura, 1977). Practice and feedback are crucial for improving and perfecting replicated behavior. For example, students may require multiple attempts and constructive feedback to proficiently acquire a specific skill that was demonstrated. On the contrary, motivation is crucial in deciding whether a person will engage in a particular behavior. It is influenced by the expected results and the rewards observed in others. According to Bandura (1977), when individuals observe positive reinforcement or witness a model being rewarded, they are more likely to imitate the behavior. Conversely, negative consequences serve as a deterrent to the behavior.

In addition, this study incorporates the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan (1985) to investigate the determinants of motivation and behavior. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a comprehensive framework that centers around human motivation and personality. It highlights the significance of humans' innate inner resources for developing personality and regulating behavior. Contrary to conventional theories that heavily depend on external rewards and punishments, SDT proposes that individuals are more motivated and involved when they experience a sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Autonomy pertains to having authority over one's actions and objectives. Individuals who experience a sense of alignment with their authentic identity are more prone to exhibit motivation and active involvement. This phenomenon is evident in educational environments when students can select their learning activities, resulting in heightened intrinsic motivation and improved educational achievements (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Competence encompasses the desire to be competent in one's endeavors and achieve desirable results. This feeling of proficiency is cultivated through completing tasks and acquiring new abilities. When individuals possess a sense of competence, they are more inclined to embrace challenges and persevere in the presence of obstacles (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Offering constructive feedback and opportunities for skill development in the classroom enhances the sense of competence, cultivating a positive attitude.

Relatedness refers to the inherent desire to establish connections with others and experience a sense of belongingness. Humans are inherently social beings, and experiencing a connection with others amplifies motivation and overall well-being. Creating an environment that promotes a supportive and collaborative atmosphere where students feel a sense of belonging can greatly enhance their motivation and involvement (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Teachers can foster a sense of relatedness by facilitating collaborative tasks and peer-to-peer learning and cultivating a classroom environment that prioritizes the inclusion and worth of every student.

This study integrates the Empowerment theory by Rappaport (1987) to investigate how individuals and communities acquire authority over their lives and exert influence over decisions that impact them. Empowerment theory centers around facilitating individuals to assume command over their personal, social, and political existence by equipping them with essential proficiencies, assets, and prospects. This theory is especially applicable when individuals or communities encounter systemic obstacles to their involvement and ability to exert influence.

Empowerment theory posits that empowerment is a multifaceted concept that includes personal, organizational, and community dimensions. Personal empowerment encompasses taking charge of one's life, cultivating a belief in one's ability to succeed, and acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to make well-informed choices. This facet of empowerment is of utmost importance for individuals who have experienced marginalization or disenfranchisement. Personal empowerment can be cultivated within education by encouraging students to establish their learning objectives, exercise autonomy in their educational choices, and assume accountability for their academic achievements (Rappaport, 1987).

Organizational empowerment encompasses the mechanisms and frameworks that allow individuals to participate in decision-making and influence organizational procedures. This aspect of empowerment highlights the significance of establishing inclusive and participatory settings where individuals can actively contribute to and influence the organization's trajectory. School organizational empowerment can be observed through practices that engage students, teachers, and parents in decision-making processes, fostering ownership and collective responsibility for the school's achievements (Rappaport, 1987).

Community empowerment refers to the collaborative endeavors of individuals to tackle shared concerns and enhance the overall welfare of their community. This dimension highlights the significance of collaborative efforts, societal assistance, and active involvement of the community in effecting transformation. Community empowerment can be accomplished by facilitating the organization of the community, encouraging active participation in civic affairs, and providing support for initiatives led by the community. In an educational context, promoting community empowerment entails motivating students to participate in community service endeavors, actively participate in local governance, and collaborate on initiatives to address community needs (Rappaport, 1987).

The passage of the Republic Act. 6975 of 1990, which created the Philippine National Police (PNP) and gave responsibility to the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology for managing and controlling city, district, and municipal jails. It describes what the BJMP is expected to do to safeguard PDLs and ensure their welfare, including their reformation and rehabilitation where the Therapeutic Community Modality Program is being implemented (Patlunag, 2020).

Further, the enactment of Republic Act No. 9165, also known as the "Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, deals with drug dependence prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation, stresses a comprehensive approach to treating drug-related difficulties, and requires the creation of community-based and Institutional based rehabilitation programs for drug offenders (Republic Act No. 9165, 2002).

Additionally, in the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, detained PDLs under custody have the option to submit themselves through their counsel to undergo a rehabilitation program, same as PDLs provided that they will signify their intention in writing in the form of a "Detainees Manifestation" to adhere the rules as stated in section 1 of the Republic Act. No. 10592 of 2013, an act amending Sections 29, 94, 97, 98, and 99, otherwise known as the Revised Penal Code. The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology Therapeutic Community Modality Program is considered the backbone of the rehabilitation intervention of the agency for its clients (Republic Act No. 10592, 2013).

The Philippine prison system adopted two approaches for the treatment of offenders. These are the institutional-based treatment programs and the community-based treatment programs. These programs aim to improve the offender's attitude and philosophy of life. Reformation and rehabilitation of inmates, as well as preparation for reintegration into the community, are the ultimate goals of the programs. Inmates are some of the most disturbed and unstable people in society. Most of the inmates have had too little discipline or too much, come from broken homes, and have no self-esteem. They are very insecure and are at war with themselves as well as with society. Most inmates did not learn moral values or learn to follow everyday norms. In order to rehabilitate criminals, we must do more than just send them to prison (Escabel et al., 2015).

At present, TCMP is recognized as the backbone program of the BJMP for inmate development and is being implemented in the majority of jails nationwide. The Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) is a self-help social learning treatment model that utilizes the community as the primary therapeutic vehicle to foster behavioral and attitudinal change. In this modality, the person learns and practices skills and responsibilities through structured activities that they can transfer to society upon their release (TCMP Manual, 2013). Accordingly, the Therapeutic Community Modality Program was adopted by the Bureau of Jail

Management and Penology (BJMP) in attaining one of its mandates, the "Development of Inmates." however, there are issues and concerns attributed to the program implementation that needs to be addressed to ensure its effectiveness. The TCMP believes that a person needs to have a strong sense of personal and social responsibility in order to live a fully functional, healthy lifestyle (TCMP Manual, 2013).

TCMP has four development aspects; these are Behavioral Management Aspect, Emotional and Psychological Aspect, Intellectual and Spiritual Aspect, and Vocational and Survival Skills. This shows special areas of concern in the individual's personality. Each component has very discrete sets of activities, methodologies and, philosophies, and underlying theories that help promote change in the members of the community, and the use of various behavior shaping tools are interconnected and interrelated with one another.

The TCMP believes that a person needs to have a strong sense of personal and social responsibility in order to live a fully functional, healthy lifestyle (TCMP Manual, 2013). The TCMP provides activities and services that will cater to the particular needs of residents physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually.

For instance, this program could give them a chance to acquire job skills, which will improve the chances that inmates will become productive citizens upon release. The programs must aim to change those who want to change. Those who are taught to produce useful goods and to be productive are likely to develop the self-esteem essential to a normal integrated personality. This kind of program would provide many useful skills and habits and replace the sense of hopelessness that many inmates have. Many of them do not know how to start a new life. Therapeutic Community Programs are the way, and they can enlighten their future life. Consequently, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) adopted the Therapeutic Community Modality Program" as a new approach to inmate management that requires a new glossary of terms relative to felons and the introduction of a new way of life in confinement.

As set by the BJMP, the Therapeutic Community is a self-help social learning treatment model used for clients with problems of drug abuse and other behavioral problems such as alcoholism, stealing, and other anti-social tendencies, as well as working with special groups of individuals like those in jails. As a treatment model, it includes four categories, namely behavior management, intellectual and spiritual aspects, emotional and psychological aspects, and vocational or survival aspects.

The therapeutic community utilizes the "community" as a vehicle to foster behavioral and attitudinal change. In this model, the client receives the information and impetus to change from being part of the community. The expectation that the community places on its individual members reflects not only the needs of the individual but also the social and support needs of the community. This community mode provides social expectations, which are parallel to the social demands that the clients will confront upon discharge from their home community (Perfas, 2012).

As defined by the Bureau of Correction, the Therapeutic Community Program represents an effective, highly structured environment with defined boundaries, both moral and ethical. The primary goal is to foster personal growth. This is accomplished by reshaping an individual's behavior and attitudes through the inmates' community, working together to help themselves and each other, restoring self-confidence, and preparing them for their re-integration into their families and friends as productive members of the community.

On the whole, the legacy of self-reliance or self-help, responsible concern, personal responsibility, social responsibility, and family values has lived on. It has produced a very practical approach to changing human behavior through a process of social learning in a community setting.

As the jail bureaus' core program, the implementation of the Therapeutic Community Modality (TCMP) to manage and modify behaviors of PDLs with the goal of positively changing their thinking and behavior through structured group processes, the program endeavors to teach and model positive thinking, pro-social values, good decision-making, and positive coping. Through the program, PDL are trained on socially acceptable ways of behaving and relating with their fellow PDL and with personnel and visitors, thereby fostering a therapeutic jail environment and maintaining a peaceful communal atmosphere. The agency ensures rehabilitation programs and makes them available to PDLs for their physical, intellectual, and spiritual development, as stated in one of its functions. This endeavor is in compliance with the jail bureau's mandate "Safekeeping and Development" of persons deprived of liberty (BJMP Comprehensive Operations Manual, 2015).

The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology's Therapeutic Community Modality Program is patterned in the Concept TCs, wherein the PDLs are assigned to different departments using the TCMP hierarchical structure. In this paper, we will ask the former

PDLs about their experiences with the program to explore if it helps them to change their perception in life and if their experience in the BJMP Therapeutic Community Modality Program helps them to adjust to the mainstream of society.

Treatment for TC began in specialized units created to care for veterans of World War II who had severe dissociative and hysterical disorders. The previous medical model used in secure facilities, according to the pioneers of the TC approach, was not able to treat veterans humanely and actually made their conditions worse. In the UK, therapeutic communities based in prisons have existed since 1962, when Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Grendon was established as an experimental psychiatric facility. Grendon was designed to hold individuals with complex presents and mental disorders; many of the people living in TCs have committed significant sexual or violent offenses (Richardson & Zini, 2021).

In the BJMP Therapeutic Community Modality Program, residents are encouraged to adopt the concept of TC through programmed unwritten philosophies, which they need to practice in their daily activities as part of their day-to-day rituals. This is in preparation for their upcoming release into the mainstream of society. Through this research we will investigate if the former persons deprived of liberty apply their learnings and experiences inside the jail facility when they go back into the community. The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology is using the Therapeutic Community Modality Program to address the needs of PDLs with drug-related cases. The laws and regulations that oversee the Philippines' correctional and rehabilitation system are designed to support the well-being and successful reintegration of persons deprived of liberty (PDL) into society. These legislative frameworks serve as the cornerstone for the creation and administration of initiatives like the Therapeutic Community Modality Program of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (TCMP Manual, 2013).

The complex relationship between human rights principles and jail rehabilitation approaches should be taken into account in the study of PDLs' experiences in the BJMP Therapeutic Community Modality Program. According to the study by Jewkes (2018), it is critical to use a human rights-based approach to jail rehabilitation that puts the autonomy, respect, and dignity of those who are detained first.

Wexler et al. (1999) explored the usefulness of therapeutic communities (TCs) in jail environments. They noted the effects of TC programs on recidivism rates and successful reintegration of former PDLs. Results showed that participants' favorable outcomes were strongly influenced by TCs using peer support and cognitive-behavioral approaches.

Meanwhile, the result of the study conducted in Iran shows that a number of 378 individuals with a mean ( $\pm$ SD) age of  $32.5 \pm 7.8$  enrolled in the TC program during the study period, 240 individuals of whom completed the 14-week course (69.0%). At the end of the sixth year, 22% of the participants were in abstinence. The physical and mental health of abstainers proved to be in better condition than those of non-abstainers ( $P < 0.05$ ) (Sadir et al., 2013).

On the other hand, based on a study conducted in Indonesia, the Therapeutic Community (TC) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) models are effective at helping residents regain their social function and getting them ready to be welcomed back into their families and communities. This is due to the fact that each model has its limitations and advantages. This is in accordance with Kurlander et al.'s (2021) study, which highlighted that the NA model necessitates that potential residents have a high level of awareness as a result of drug use and a strong desire to recover.

Moreover, in the study conducted in Ghana, most of the participants gave accounts of satisfying encounters that inspired them to stay in the TC program and kick their drug addiction. The primary contributing aspects were the program's structure, the relationships that residents developed there, and the atmosphere that was favorable for care. Human experience includes motivation, and no one lacks motivation. Further, Ewusie et al. (2024) revealed that the program's structure, relationships among residents, and supportive atmosphere for treatment encouraged participants to find hope, which led to their voluntary transformation and eventual recovery. For many of the participants, the sense of motivation gave rise to hope and helped them fully commit to the program.

Leonor (2023) indicated that there are differences in the way rehabilitation programs are implemented at jail facilities; certain programs are executed well, while others need to be improved. Lack of funding and inadequate physical infrastructure are two major obstacles that prevent these projects from being carried out successfully. For rehabilitation initiatives to be successful, it is, therefore, imperative to increase community and governmental support.

Chan (2021) revealed that the development of the modern therapeutic community (TC) for addictions can be seen as a transition from the fringe to the center of the field of drug abuse treatment and social services. Meanwhile, the treatment of patients with various mental disorders and the impact of the first measures taken by the Brazilian therapeutic communities (TCs) in response to COVID-19.

In a research conducted by Teves (2023), the findings revealed that the implementation of a Therapeutic Community Modality program enables PDLs to impart their experiences or thoughts, which allows openness among fellow PDLs and enhances their personalities and perspectives in life that catalyzes their quest for reformation. Themes of recovery from addiction, social support, and personal development emerged from the findings. This study emphasizes the significance of comprehending PDLs' encounters with the BJMP Therapeutic Community Modality Program, as it could provide insightful viewpoints on the program's influence on participants' overall welfare and recovery process.

Haney (2003) examined the idea of prisonization and its effects on the psychological well-being and environment adaptability of PDL. The PDLs' experiences in the BJMP TC Modality Program pinpointed areas for assistance and intervention can be established by having a thorough understanding of the psychological stresses they endure.

A study conducted in New York City finds that in TCs, individuals are classified along gradations of "psychological dysfunction" and "social weaknesses" rather than according to their habits of substance misuse. Numerous residents of TCs also exhibit issues with their occupations and schooling; they either altogether reject or ignore society's norms. These residents frequently come from a socially distressed area. A better word to describe their TC experience is "habilitation," which is the first step in developing a social, fruitful, and "conventional" lifestyle. However, among residents from more privileged backgrounds, the term "rehabilitation" is regarded to be more fitting because it stresses a return to a previously lived and recognized lifestyle that has been rejected (De Leon & Unterrainer, 2020).

Recently, students from the Lyceum of the Philippines conducted a descriptive method of research study on the inmates of Batangas City Jail. It aims to determine the effectiveness of the TCMP implemented in the jail and its significant relationship between the profile of the inmates and their responses to the effectiveness of the program. Accordingly, most of the inmates in Batangas City Jail have demographic profile of 26-33 years old, single, high school graduates with prison sentences of below one year, and mostly involved in drug related cases. The TCMP is perceived by the inmates as effective, specifically the work and educational therapy services, livelihood, skills training, counselling and religious services, and medical services. There are significant relationships between the profile of the inmates in terms of age, civil status and, length of prison sentence, and their responses to the effectiveness of the program implemented.

There was also a study conducted by a student named Jeremy Campaner from Cebu Normal University on the Impact Evaluation of Therapeutic Community Model Approach in a City Jail. The study assessed and determined the effectiveness of the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) approach as a means of inmates' rehabilitation based on their shared experiences, responses, and own perceptions of the different programs implemented in a City Jail.

Exploring PDLs' experiences through this research with the applications of the theories, related literature, and related studies mentioned above can help determine whether the informants benefited by participating in the TCMP. The study explored how they cope with the challenges they encountered as participants of the program and examined their aspirations on how to improve the implementation of the Therapeutic Community Modality Program. Through this lens, the researcher saw that the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology upholds human rights and adheres to the rule of law that includes due process norms and points out areas where informants' concerns and well-being could be better supported and addressed.

The researcher came up with the conclusion that the Therapeutic Community Model is an effective approach towards inmates' reformation. Thus, informants from the chosen locale perceived that the activities provided under the program, such as counseling sessions, morning meetings, and the formation of static groups, significantly contributed to their personal and psychological growth, behavior change, a strong sense of collectiveness, inspire them to continue their educational pursuits and help them acquire practical skills for livelihood. Through their participation in the various activities, they felt a sense of belongingness and support, which helped them rebuild their once shattered self – confidence and of self – worth. Emotional struggles during adjustment, overcrowding issues and limited facilities, and restrictions and limitations of TC rules are some of the negative experiences encountered by the participants, and they cope with these challenges by seeking guidance and support from peers and personnel and building emotional resilience and faith. Meanwhile, the impacts of the TCMP on the lives of the participants are enhanced relationships and communication skills and instilling discipline and patience. Finally, the participants aspire to improve the implementation of TCMP by enhancing livelihood and educational programs and supporting religious and spiritual activities.

### **3. Methodology**

This research utilized a qualitative design with a transcendental phenomenological approach. This phenomenological inquiry explored the experiences of former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in the BJMP-TCMP, focusing on how the participants coped with the challenges encountered during their participation in the program, the impacts of the TCMP on their lives, and their

aspirations for improving the implementation of the TCMP in jails. Phenomenology is defined as a specialized study of experience or consciousness (Gallagher & Sørensen, 2005).

Transcendental phenomenology is based on principles identified by Husserl (1931) and was translated into a qualitative method by Moustakas (1994). Meaning is the core of the transcendental phenomenology of science, a design for acquiring and collecting data that explicates the essence of human experience. Moustakas's (1994) transcendental or psychological phenomenology is focused less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of participants. In addition, Husserl's concept of epoche (or bracketing) is emphasized. Moustakas (1994) includes in the research process identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one's experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon. The researcher then analyzes the data to identify significant statements or quotes and combines the statements into themes. Then, the researcher provides a list of various experiences of the persons (what participants experienced), a structural description of their experiences (how they experienced it in terms of the conditions, situations, or context), and a description that explains the overall essence of the experience.

This study was appropriate for exploring the experiences of former PDLs in the BJMP-TCMP. It involved qualitative analysis and assessment of themes derived from in-depth interviews, observations, and the discovery of the experiences of selected former PDLs. Open-ended questions were utilized to gather data that described the participants' experiences with the TCMP. Phenomenology, a research technique, examines a phenomenon from the viewpoint of those who have experienced it to capture its essence. It sought to explain the significance of these experiences, considering both the experience itself and its mode of experiencing things (Neubauer et al., 2019).

A transmittal letter was sent via email to the Regional Director of BJMP Region VI requesting permission to access former PDLs' information through the jail units' records officers, such as PDLs' names and addresses. The Regional Director approved the request via email. After the approval by the Regional Director of the BJMP, the researcher submitted the research protocol to the ethics review board for ethical review. A protocol approval was issued, and the data collection process commenced. The key participants were identified, and the potential participants were contacted face-to-face to confirm their participation with the assurance of confidentiality.

The researcher sought permission from the former PDLs to serve as participants for this study. Purposive sampling was used to identify key participants, and ten (10) participants were selected based on their experiences to answer the sub-problems. The researcher utilized the profiles gathered during the implementation of the program to find the participants. With the help of some jail officers, a complete tracing of the ten (10) participants was completed.

Before the interviews, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and the interview process to the participants. The participants were asked to sign an informed consent form and were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, which only the researcher would keep in a folder. The researcher gave instructions for the face-to-face interview, explained confidentiality matters, prepared a consent form, and set a comfortable atmosphere for the interview.

The researcher paid careful attention to the interviews, focusing on guiding the conversation in the desired direction. To make the interviewees feel comfortable, the researcher opened with welcoming greetings, demonstrated active listening, and encouraged the interviewees to speak. The researcher asked follow-up questions at the appropriate moments and in a suitable manner, maintaining flexibility, controlling reactions, and showing courtesy throughout. A recorder was used during the interviews. The results of the interviews and the researcher's observations were incorporated into the formulation of significant meanings, sub-themes, and emergent themes.

In conducting this study, the researcher observed proper courtesy and respect when dealing with the participants. The data were gathered through face-to-face interviews facilitated by the researcher's role as organic personnel of the bureau. The participants were asked to answer the questions honestly and completely. The methods utilized in this study were semi-structured interviews, which included open-ended questions directed at the program's beneficiaries. The researcher conducted observations during the interviews to gain additional insights. To ensure proper documentation, a schedule was plotted for the interviews. The researcher created a comfortable venue for the participants to feel at ease, encouraging honest responses during the individual in-depth interviews. The responses of the participants were recorded, transcribed, and coded to generate common themes.

The data were analyzed through coding, categorizing, and interpreting the essential meanings of the responses. The researcher extracted significant statements and formulated core meanings. These core meanings were clustered to develop thematic clusters, which provided a better understanding of the informants' experiences. Emergent themes were read, re-read, and analyzed to answer the sub-problems in this study.

Thematic analysis was utilized to analyze and cluster common themes for interpretation (Bailey et al., 2018). In this research, recorded responses from interviews were analyzed deductively to identify key themes that were relevant and specific to individual categories. The inspection and analysis of the content provided through interviews and focus group discussions revealed underlying messages. Thematic code analysis was used to inspect the themes that emerged during interviews and gauge their frequency. This process ensured that the identified themes accurately represented the informants' experiences and perspectives.

The participants of the study were ten (10) selected former male PDLs who actively participated in the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) coming from Barotac Viejo District Jail, Dumangas District Jail, Guimbal District Jail, Iloilo City District Jail Male Dorm, Iloilo District Jail-Male Dorm, Passi City District Jail, and Pototan District Jail, who were consistent in attending the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) during their stay in the jail facility. Participants were selected through the purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling, according to Tongco (2007), also known as judgment sampling, involves selecting participants on purpose based on their personal attributes. It is a non-random technique that does not require a predetermined number of participants or underlying ideas. In other words, the researcher determined what information was required and then searched for sources willing and able to supply it based on their experience or knowledge.

The participants had voluntarily submitted themselves to undergo the program even before conviction by signing the "Detainees Manifestation" governed by Section 1 of the Republic Act 10592, duly subscribed and signed in the presence of their counsel. These participants were present throughout the full implementation of the program. These former PDLs were given important roles to perform in the implementation of the program, such as mentoring, acting like big brothers, facilitators of the day, and crew members. Participants were subjected to individual interviews.

The researcher asked for permission from the BJMP Regional Office VI through the Regional Legal Division to access the records of the participants from their jail of origin via a transmittal letter addressed to the Regional Director. Once the request was granted, the researcher selected the participants who participated in the individual interviews through the purposive sampling method. This was made possible since the researcher had been an organic member of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology for almost thirteen years.

## **4. Results and Discussions**

### **4.1 Experiences of the Informants during their Participation the TCMP**

#### **4.1.1 Positive Experiences**

##### **4.1.1.1 Fostering Personal Growth and Behavior Change.**

The Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) has had a significant impact on the personal development and behavioral change of its residents. Participants acquired knowledge about moral principles, including distinguishing between right and wrong, as well as developing qualities of humility and self-control. The approach encouraged profound personal transformation, nurtured meaningful relationships, and aided participants in rediscovering religious doctrines.

*(What really helped me in TC was turning back to God because before, I didn't go to church. But in TCMP, I learned about our daily obligations and how to follow them. This helped me to change my behavior). (Participant 3)*

*(So, the impact on me, the change is significant, especially in my behavior, sir. The way I interact with people, I really use it, sir. And in my life, sir, when challenges come, I need to remain steadfast and always stay positive, sir, always. That's it, sir, the way I conduct myself, I really apply it, sir. Like the TC philosophy that says, "understand rather than to be understood," so it's better that you understand rather than be understood, sir. That's one of the things I learned there, which I applied in my life, sir). (Participant 4)*

*(Yes, sir, it was a great help. First of all, in the religious aspect, I was taught to pray properly and have faith in God, which helped me avoid doing wrong. Especially with other activities, it taught us proper behavior inside the jail. It really helped me become a good and productive person who can help others). (Participant 6)*

*(For me, everything that BJMP (Bureau of Jail Management and Penology) taught me, the first was ah working fairly and getting along with my peers, both inside and outside. Because what they implement inside, what they implement in BJMP is for the betterment of everyone. Now that I am out, I apply what I learned inside. Here outside, I do the same good things and tell people not to do wrong because if they end up inside, it is very difficult there. It's true that the rules and regulations of BJMP are good, but it's better outside than doing wrong things that will land you inside). (Participant 8)*

The emergent theme is evident when the former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) noted that the TCMP had a positive impact on their behavioral and personal growth. The residents said that the program helped them comprehend moral principles, learn to distinguish between good and bad and acquire essential qualities like self-control and humility. Former PDLs were able to rebuild

meaningful connections and reaffirm their religious beliefs thanks to the TCMP's organized atmosphere and supportive community, which enabled profound personal breakthroughs. Their reconnection aided in their entire personal development and helped them grow spiritually. It also helped them become more responsible and self-aware persons once they were reintegrated into society.

The emergent theme can be explained by the Social Learning Theory of Bandura (1977), which offers an explanation for comprehending the personal development and behavioral changes seen in TCMP participants. This idea holds that people acquire new behaviors and change old ones through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. Residents of the TCMP may observe good role models, get rewards for appropriate actions, and participate in social learning processes. This supportive environment promotes the learning of moral principles as well as the development of virtues such as humility and self-control, which are consistent with the participants' stated personal changes (Bandura & Walters, 1977).

De Leon (2000) performed research on therapeutic communities that explored the TCMP residents' experiences. The research discovered that therapeutic groups that emphasize holistic development result in considerable personal improvement and behavioral change. Participants often describe learning new moral ideals, improving their self-discipline, and developing meaningful connections. The research highlighted the value of a structured setting and community support in promoting personal development, which is consistent with TCMP participants' experiences.

Mendoza (2015) investigated the efficacy of therapeutic community programs in local rehabilitation facilities. The results revealed that participants in these programs gain significantly in moral knowledge, self-control, and interpersonal connections. The findings also emphasized the importance of religious teachings in the personal growth of participants.

#### ***4.1.1.2 Continuing Educational Pursuits.***

The Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) has made educational opportunities available to its residents with the assistance of TESDA and ALS. This program allows residents to complete their education, even if they had previously discontinued their studies. This provided instruction that influenced a significant number of residents who were out-of-school youth to obtain educational backgrounds despite being imprisoned. Resident facilitators within the program assist other residents in the acquisition of valuable skills that they can subsequently apply outside of the facility.

*(Ah... well, I studied in TESDA or ALS here. I graduated from Senior High School here). (Participant 2)*

*(Inside the BJMP, I proved that many PDLs are out-of-school youth with limited education. Being a facilitator there helped me develop skills that I now use outside). (Participant 5)*

The emergent theme depicted that the educational opportunities that are accessible in the program had influenced them to continue pursuing their educational attainments despite being incarcerated. The TCMP offered them the opportunity to finish their education through the support of ALS and TESDA. Consequently, numerous former out-of-school youth residents have been able to acquire educational credentials in spite of their imprisonment.

A theoretical framework suited for illustrating the educational pursuits and skill acquisition observed in TCMP residents is provided by Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination theory. SDT underscores the significance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the development of intrinsic motivation and personal development. The TCMP provides residents with the autonomy to pursue their educational objectives, cultivate competencies through skill acquisition, and establish relationships with facilitators and peers.

The experiences of TCMP residents are corroborated by Vacca's (2004) research on educational programs in correctional facilities. According to him, the provision of educational opportunities to PDLs results in a substantial enhancement of their skill sets and educational levels. Improved reintegration outcomes post-release are frequently reported by participants in these programs, who frequently report an increased motivation to continue their education and training.

Meanwhile, Guillermo (2016) investigated the influence of educational programs on local correctional facilities. The findings indicated that participants in these programs exhibit significant improvements in skill acquisition and educational attainment through the TCMP in partnership with organizations such as TESDA and ALS in the provision of educational support and resources, which became vital for their post-release means as they reintegrate back into society.

#### ***4.1.1.3 Strong Sense of Collectiveness.***

The participants noted that the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) promotes a strong sense of community among its residents. They appreciate the program's support and camaraderie, which promotes active involvement and support from jail

officers. The approach also promotes mutual trust and resource sharing among PDLs. The uplifting atmosphere of TC meetings and religious activities has a beneficial effect on others. The program's assistance and mentorship keep residents motivated and involved. The program's morning meetings and religious group activities encourage sharing and listening, and the support of both PDLs and BJMP management creates a secure environment for expressing problems and receiving guidance.

*(Inside, the most memorable thing was how everyone, from the PDLs to the BJMP management, supported us. They called us to talk about our problems and offered advice and help. We felt that we could openly share our issues because they were there to assist us). (Participant 8)*

*(What I miss the most from inside is the camaraderie and mutual understanding we had. We really supported each other, and I try to apply that same sense of support and understanding with my family now). (Participant 9)*

Former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) observed that the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) cultivates a strong sense of community among its residents. The residents indicated that the program's camaraderie and support, which fosters active participation and assistance from jail officers, had fostered mutual confidence among PDLs. The participants are positively affected by the uplifting ambiance of TC meetings and religious activities. Furthermore, the morning meetings and religious group activities established by the support of both BJMP management and fellow residents facilitate a positive environment for the expression of concerns and guidance among them.

A relevant theory to explain the sense of collectiveness is Hobfoll's (2001) Communal Mastery Theory, which highlights the importance of communal support and social resources in the development of individual resilience and well-being. Communal Mastery theory posits that individuals attain mastery over their environment not exclusively through personal effort but rather through collective support and shared resources within their community. In the TCMP, the communal environment is fostered by the support of jail officers, mutual trust among residents, and structured group activities, which aligns with the principles of communal mastery and enhances residents' sense of belonging and collective efficacy (Hobfoll, 2001).

Emmerling and Whelan's (2020) revealed that programs that prioritize communal support and shared responsibilities result in improved individual well-being and stronger community bonds. Participants in these programs frequently report increased levels of trust, resource sharing, and mutual support, which contribute to a positive and supportive community environment. The significance of cultivating a communal atmosphere in correctional facilities to facilitate personal development and collective efficacy is stressed by the findings (Emmerling & Whelan, 2020).

Dela Cruz (2019) investigated the influence of community-based rehabilitation programs on local correctional facilities. The results indicated that participants in the rehabilitation programs exhibit substantial enhancements in resource sharing, trust, and communal support. The study also underscored the importance of communal meetings and group activities in cultivating a strong sense of community among residents.

#### **4.1.1.4 Acquiring Practical Skills for Livelihood.**

The theme is strongly reflected in the residents' experiences, emphasizing the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP)'s critical role in delivering significant vocational training. TESDA provided residents with practical skills in electrical troubleshooting, plumbing, construction work, electronics repair, baking, and gardening, which have proven helpful in their post-release employment. The practicality of electrical work abilities acquired via TESDA has offered skills to its residents that are relevant and valuable in today's society.

*(The skills I developed inside, which I still use today, include troubleshooting electrical issues, plumbing, and construction work. Sometimes, we were given tasks to build or repair things, and these skills have been very useful to me outside). (Participant 3)*

*(Inside, there were livelihood programs like making lanterns, baking, and business activities. My first project was making a 'coin bank' from crepe paper and glue. I didn't want to be a burden to my family, so I found ways to be productive. This mindset of being productive has stayed with me outside). (Participant 4)*

*(Yes, sir. I learned a lot, especially in electronics through TESDA. I was taught how to repair appliances, which I now apply at home. I also learned baking, which helps us sell donuts. We learned these skills in BJMP, and now we use them to earn a living. Gardening skills also helped a lot). (Participant 6)*

The theme of acquiring practical skills for livelihood was emphasized by former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) as a significant aspect of their experiences, emphasizing the critical role of the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) in providing

vocational training. The program provided practical training in a variety of disciplines, including electrical troubleshooting, plumbing, construction work, electronics repair, cookery, and horticulture, with the support of TESDA. These abilities have been indispensable in assisting PDLs in obtaining employment following their release. The electrical work skills acquired through TESDA have substantially improved the post-release employment prospects of residents by providing them with pertinent and valuable abilities in the current job market. This is particularly noteworthy.

This emergent theme can be viewed through the lens of Human Capital Theory (1964), which highlights that an individual's productivity and economic value are increased by investments in education and vocational training. The vocational training offered by TESDA in the context of the TCMP provides residents with marketable skills that enhance their employability and potential earnings post-release. This theory is depicted by the training of residents in electrical work, plumbing, and construction. This is viewed as an investment in the human capital of the residents, resulting in enhanced economic outcomes and societal reintegration (Becker, 1964).

Visher et al. (2005) examined the impacts of vocational training programs on PDLs, which revealed that they had substantially resulted in higher employment rates and improved job prospects upon their release. The training offered participants the opportunity to acquire practical skills that were immediately pertinent to the job market, thereby improving their capacity to secure stable employment.

Reyes (2017) noted that participants exhibit substantial enhancements in job readiness and employability. Most PDLs that enrolled or participated in programs of TESDA had acquired vocational training that equips PDLs with practical skills that are pertinent to the local job market. A significant number of former PDLs were noted to build their own bakeries and apply in welding due to the skills acquired in the program.

#### **4.1.2 Negative Experiences**

##### **4.1.2.1 Emotional Struggles during Adjustment.**

The theme is illustrated by the residents' experiences, which included various emotional and psychological challenges during their time in the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP). Residents expressed intense loneliness and pain as a result of being separated from their families, making initial adjustment periods especially difficult due to negative thoughts and worries about family. The repetitive daily sessions were initially frustrating and pointless, but they were eventually recognized for their value. The demanding routine of morning meetings and daily exercises was physically and mentally taxing. Illness in jail facilities, combined with the distance from family, made seeking assistance and care difficult.

*(The hardest part for me in jail, sir, was being far from my family. It was painful and made me feel very lonely as a PDL). (Participant 1)*

*(As a newbie, it was tough at first, especially during the adjustment period. Observing the program, I found it hard to understand initially because my mind was still focused on how to help my family. The first sessions felt negative, but eventually, I saw the positive impact. It was just the adjustment phase that was difficult). (Participant 4)*

The theme of emotional struggles during adjustment was emphasized by former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs), which was indicative of the diverse psychological and emotional obstacles they encountered during their participation in the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP). The initial adjustment periods were particularly challenging for them due to the excruciating loneliness and suffering they experienced as a result of their separation from their families. Negative thoughts and concerns regarding family further exacerbated these emotions. Initially, the repetitious daily sessions were frustrating and appeared to be without purpose; however, they gradually recognized their purpose. The rigorous schedule of daily exercises and morning meetings was both mentally and physically taxing. Furthermore, the distance from family and the difficulty of managing illness in incarceration posed a challenge in obtaining care and support.

Stress and Coping theory may be relevant in understanding the emergent theme such as emotional challenges encountered by TCMP residents. According to this theory, stress is experienced by individuals when they believe that the demands of their environment exceed their ability to manage them. The initial separation from family, the physically and mentally demanding routines, and the experience of illness in jail all serve as substantial stressors for TCMP residents (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Haney (2001) discovered that PDLs frequently undergo severe emotional and psychological distress, particularly during the initial adjustment period. The tension of adapting to a prescribed routine, anxiety about family, and feelings of loneliness are common. This research emphasizes the significance of addressing the emotional and psychological needs of detainees in order to facilitate adjustment and reduce the distress that they may experience during incarceration (Haney, 2001).

Similarly, Gonzales (2016) investigated the emotional and psychological obstacles encountered by detainees and highlighted that the substantial emotional challenges that arose during the initial adjustment period were evident across a number of PDLs. PDLs expressed frustration with the demanding jail traditions, anxiety regarding their families, and feelings of loneliness. The study further observed the challenge of obtaining medical care and support as a result of the distance from family and highlighted the necessity of comprehensive support systems in Philippine correctional facilities to address the emotional and psychological well-being of detainees.

#### **4.1.2.2 Overcrowding Issues and Limited Facilities.**

The residents emphasize the issue, demonstrating the limitations faced by insufficient facilities and resources in the jail environment. One resident mentioned the difficulties of conducting suitable classes due to a lack of appropriate audio equipment, such as microphones, which are required for speaking with a large number of PDLs. Another resident underlined the harsh sleeping arrangements, which required PDLs to assume set positions, often resulting in complicated nights, with some even having to sleep sitting up.

*(The main issue wasn't with the TC program itself but with the lack of equipment. As an instructor and facilitator, it was hard to deliver good lessons without proper audio systems. We needed microphones because there were so many of us, and it was impossible to communicate effectively without them). (Participant 5)*

*(The most challenging part of the jail was the sleeping conditions. It's really difficult to sleep in there. You have to find a position and stick to it, like sleeping on your side, and sometimes you even sleep sitting up until morning. That was the most painful and difficult situation for me). (Participant 10)*

The residents underscore the theme of congestion and limited facilities, emphasizing the substantial obstacles presented by insufficient resources and inadequate infrastructure in the penitentiary environment. A resident observed that the absence of appropriate audio apparatus, such as microphones, made it challenging to conduct appropriate classes for large groups of PDLs. The necessity for enhanced systems is underscored by the ineffectiveness of face-to-face communication, which was exacerbated by the congested conditions. The severe sleeping arrangements, which required PDLs to adopt fixed postures, were emphasized by another resident. This frequently led to complicated evenings, with some individuals being compelled to slumber seated up.

This emergent theme can be elucidated by Environmental Stress Theory by Stokols (1972), which provides the idea that individuals' psychological and physical well-being can be adversely affected by environmental conditions, such as overcrowding and insufficient resources, which contribute to elevated stress levels. Residents are unable to participate in meaningful activities and rest adequately due to the congested jail environment and inadequate facilities, which exacerbate stress. This posits the significance of addressing environmental factors to mitigate tension and enhance the overall well-being of residents in correctional institutions (Stokols, 1972).

Gaes (1994) explored the effects of jail overpopulation, which resulted in increased tension, reduced quality of life, and a more significant challenge in the effective delivery of educational and rehabilitative programs across different institutions. These issues are further exacerbated by the need for more resources, such as adequate lodging arrangements, which makes it difficult to maintain order and conduct effective and sufficient facilities. The findings highlighted the need to allocate resources and alleviate the adverse consequences of congestion, which may hamper the rehabilitation efforts of the state (Gaes, 1994).

Almeda (2018) conducted a study that investigated the effects of overpopulation, which depicted substantial obstacles, such as the ineffectiveness of face-to-face communication during their educational programs. Numerous detainees were required to sleep in inconvenient positions due to the severe jail population. These findings underscored the urgent necessity for enhanced infrastructure and resources in Philippine correctional facilities to improve the well-being of PDLs and the efficacy of its educational programs.

#### **4.1.2.3 Restrictions and Limitations of TC Rules**

The theme is explored through the residents' various experiences, which illustrate both the hardships and advantages of following the TCMP rules and regulations. Due to the strictness of the rules, some residents felt unable to condemn fellow PDLs or communicate their concerns directly. Others reported that tight adherence to program standards improved self-discipline and management. Despite initial problems in getting along with others, many residents stated that the TC program's rules helped avoid confrontations and improve personal behavior, emphasizing the rules' overall good impact on maintaining order and fostering self-improvement.

*(In the TCMP programs, we had to show discipline and follow the rules. It sometimes felt limiting because we had to adhere strictly to the program guidelines). (Participant 4)*

*(Sometimes, the rules were strict, and you felt restricted. For instance, if you had a problem, it was hard to express it because some PDLs wouldn't support you. It was important for the personnel to listen and take action). (Participant 6)*

The various experiences of the residents are used to investigate the theme of restrictions and limitations of TC rules. These experiences demonstrate both the advantages and the hardships of adhering to the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) rules and regulations. The strictness of the regulations caused some residents to feel restricted, making it challenging to express their concerns or disparage their fellow PDLs. Nevertheless, other informants reported that their self-discipline and management abilities were enhanced as a result of their strict adherence to program standards. Many residents reported that the TC program's regulations were instrumental in preventing confrontations and enhancing personal conduct despite the initial challenges they faced in establishing rapport with others. This underscores the program's overall positive influence on the promotion of self-improvement and the preservation of order.

Hirschi's (1969) Social Control Theory illustrated that the prevention of deviant behavior is significantly influenced by social bonds and adherence to societal norms and standards. The stringent regulations serve as a form of social control in the context of TCMP, which motivates residents to adhere to anticipated behaviors and cultivate self-discipline. The principles of Social Control theory are in alignment with the structured environment and explicit expectations, which assist residents in establishing stronger social bonds and enhancing personal behavior.

Gendreau et al. (1997) discovered that detainees' behavior and self-discipline can be enhanced through the implementation of structured programs and stringent adherence to regulations in correctional facilities. The consistent enforcement of rules and the establishment of expectations contribute to the reduction of confrontations and the promotion of a more organized environment. The results emphasized the significance of structured programs in correctional settings for the purpose of promoting self-improvement and maintaining order.

Cruz (2014), on the other hand, indicated that participants' self-discipline and conduct are enhanced as a result of their strict adherence to program regulations. The study also observed that although some residents initially encountered difficulty with the stringency of the regulations, they eventually acknowledged the advantages of the structured environment in terms of preventing conflicts and promoting personal development. It explained that stringent rules and regulations in rehabilitation programs are beneficial to jail control and discipline (Cruz, 2014).

## ***4.2 Coping with the Challenges Encountered by the Informants during their Participation in the TCMP***

### ***4.2.1 Seeking Guidance and Support from Peers and Personnel.***

The theme is mirrored in the residents' experiences, emphasizing the significance of mutual support within the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP). Residents admitted to seeking assistance when they were unable to manage alone, highlighting the inherent need for support. Due to rare family visits, several PDLs relied on fellow PDLs for medical care or sustenance. Others sought guidance and consolation from more experienced PDLs or addressed competent individuals for clarification during morning sessions. The collective spirit of supporting one another provided a method to pass the time and cope with the difficulties of being separated from family.

*(In TC, we helped each other. If someone needed help, we would assist each other. If you needed help, you could always find someone to lend a hand because we didn't have much to do inside, so we treated it as a way to pass the time and help each other out). (Participant 6)*

*(Yes, asking for help was something I often did with my brothers because I couldn't manage everything on my own. Being far from family, I relied on my brothers for support. They were very helpful and never hesitated to assist me, whether it was for understanding my case or for moral support. They were always ready to help and advise me). (Participant 7)*

*(Yes, I did. I sought advice from my fellow PDLs, especially those who had been there longer. I was new at the time, and I needed comfort and guidance on how to deal with my problems). (Participant 10)*

Residents' experiences emphasize the importance of mutual support within the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP), as they reflect the motif of asking for guidance and support from peers and personnel. The inherent necessity for support is underscored by the frequent requests for assistance by residents who were unable to manage independently. Numerous PDLs depended on their fellow detainees for medical care or sustenance as a result of the infrequent visits from their families. During morning sessions, some individuals sought guidance and comfort from more experienced residents, while others sought clarification from competent individuals. The collective atmosphere of mutual support served as a means of coping with the challenges of being separated from family and passing the time.

A significant theory that highlights the emergent theme is the Social Support theory, which argues that social support, which encompasses emotional, informational, and practical support from others, is essential for the well-being of an individual. Within the TCMP, residents receive emotional support from their peers, informational support from more experienced residents, and practical support from fellow PDLs. These practices align with the principles of Social Support Theory, which explains that residents manage stress by seeking support from fellow PDLs and thus fostering a sense of community within them (Cobb, 1976).

Tewksbury and DeMichele (2005) revealed that PDLs who received social support from staff and colleagues were more capable of managing the obstacles of incarceration. The facility's supportive community contributed to the alleviation of tension and feelings of isolation. The influence of peer support programs indicated that PDLs' capacity to manage the emotional and practical obstacles of incarceration is considerably enhanced by peer support. The study observed that PDLs who engaged in peer support programs reported improved mental health outcomes and a stronger sense of community.

#### **4.2.2 Building Emotional Resilience and Faith.**

The theme is depicted by the experiences of the residents, who depended on faith and spiritual practices to confront the obstacles of incarceration. Residents emphasized the significance of prayer and faith in God as a means of overcoming challenges. Faith served as an anchor through wrongful imprisonment, and some found solace in perusing the Bible and noting that holding positions of responsibility and being role models improved their jail experience. Through structured routines and lessons, they were able to cope with missing family by praying and believing in eventual relief.

*(My strategy was to pray to God. I just trusted in Him, and that helped me cope. To cope, you need to hold onto God, not to others. It's important to rely on Him to overcome challenges). (Participant 3)*

*What I did was read the Bible a lot. I would stay up late reading the Bible in my cell. Despite the challenges in life and being in jail, if a PDL holds a position, it somewhat improves their stay. But you need to be a role model and use your position for good. Those challenges were significant in making me stronger. Many trials came my way, and the most painful was being imprisoned for something I didn't do. It's a huge trial, but my faith in God was my anchor, and that helped me cope and grow). (Participant 5)*

*(Missing my family was tough, but I prayed to God and believed that everything would pass and I would overcome it. The daily routines and lessons at BJMP really taught us good behavior and discipline. It was incredibly helpful and has greatly benefited my life now). (Participant 6)*

The residents' experiences illustrate the theme of fostering emotional resilience and faith as they utilized spiritual practices and faith to overcome the challenges of incarceration. Residents underscored the importance of prayer and faith in God as a strategy for surmounting obstacles. Faith served as a pillar during their unlawful imprisonment, and numerous individuals discovered solace in perusing the Bible. They also observed that their jail experience was enhanced by their roles as role models and their responsibilities. They were able to manage the absence of family by praying and believing in the eventual relief that would come through prescribed procedures and teachings.

Pargament's (1997) Theory of Religious Coping is relevant to understanding the emergent theme, which posits the role of faith in the development of emotional resilience among residents. This illustrates that individuals can manage tension and find meaning in challenging situations by engaging in religious activities, seeking spiritual support, and praying. Residents employed religious coping mechanisms to confront the obstacles of incarceration within the TCMP. The spiritual community's reliance on prayer, perusing religious texts, and assuming leadership roles illustrates how faith can be a source of resilience and fortitude.

Koenig et al. (2001) examined individuals who participate in religious coping strategies, including prayer and seeking spiritual support, experience improved mental health outcomes and increased emotional resilience. Correctional facilities offer PDLs a sense of purpose and optimism, which aids them in managing the stresses of incarceration through the implementation of structured routines and spiritual activities. It demonstrated that the PDLs' emotional resilience is substantially influenced by prayer, Bible reading, and spiritual leadership. The research emphasized that detainees who were actively engaged in religious activities reported a higher level of optimism and serenity, which aided them in coping with the obstacles of incarceration.

### **4.3 Impacts of the TCMP to the Lives of the Informants**

#### **4.3.1 Enhanced Relationships and Communication Skills.**

The theme is contemplated in the personal change of the residents. They have developed a more compassionate and transparent relationship with their family and friends, as they no longer suppress their emotions, which previously resulted in tension and depression. As a result, they have established stronger relationships by sharing their burdens with their family. The resident has

developed a greater capacity for patience and understanding, refraining from impulsive arguments and instead participating in thoughtful, well-balanced discussions. The TC and BJMP have significantly enhanced their interactions at home by teaching them good manners and right conduct, which has enabled them to provide their peers with guidance based on their own experiences. This transformation has restored their previously distant relationship with their family and has established a foundation of effective communication and affection.

*I've learned to be more loving towards my family and friends. One major change is that I no longer bottle up my problems. Before, I used to keep my issues to myself, which caused a lot of stress and even depression. Now, I've learned to share my problems with my family. This way, I'm not carrying the burden alone). (Participant 1)*

*(I used to be easily angered and would quickly get into arguments. Now, I've learned to be more patient and understanding. I give and take in conversations, and I don't get easily provoked anymore. This has improved my relationships with my family and friends). (Participant 3)*

*(A lot. At home, I noticed many changes. The TC at BJMP taught us good manners and right conduct, which I brought home with me. In dealing with my family, I've applied what I learned. With my friends outside, if I see them making mistakes, I correct them immediately and advise them to stop. I learned that if you don't address the wrongdoings, no one will benefit. So, I use my experience to guide them, and they listen because they know I've been through a lot). (Participant 6)*

*(Back then, I used to disregard my family and my siblings, and I wasn't close to my mother. But now, there has been a significant change. I've become more loving towards them and have developed a good relationship). (Participant 10)*

The personal changes that the residents have undergone are indicative of the motif of improved communication skills and relationships. They have established more transparent and compassionate relationships with their family and friends by no longer suppressing their emotions, which previously resulted in tension and depression. Consequently, they have fortified their relationships by confiding in their loved ones about their struggles. Additionally, residents have developed a greater capacity for forbearance and understanding, refraining from impetuous arguments and participating in well-reasoned, well-balanced discussions. The Therapeutic Community at BJMP has significantly enhanced their home interactions by instructing them on proper conduct and good decorum, which has allowed them to offer guidance to their peers based on their own experiences. This transformation has reestablished a foundation of effective communication and affection and has restored previously distant relationships with family.

One theory that describes the emergent theme is the Theory of Emotional Intelligence, which argues that emotional intelligence, encompassing self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills, is essential for personal and interpersonal effectiveness. Residents of the TCMP cultivate emotional intelligence by participating in structured programs that prioritize effective communication, empathy, and emotional expression. Residents improve their communication and interpersonal abilities by developing the ability to regulate their emotions and comprehend the viewpoints of others, which is consistent with Goleman's theory of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995).

Schutte et al. (2001) exposed that individuals who underwent emotional intelligence training exhibited enhanced communication skills and interpersonal relationships. Better emotional regulation, increased empathy, and more effective conflict resolution abilities were reported by its participants. Participants reported substantial enhancements in their capacity to communicate effectively with family and peers. Furthermore, the research emphasized the importance of structured communication skills training in the development of empathy, tolerance, and understanding, all of which are essential for the development of more compassionate and robust relationships.

#### ***4.3.2 Instilling Discipline and Patience.***

The theme is apparent in the fact that the resident, who was previously prone to fights and quick to anger, has since learned to be more patient and amicable, thereby developing better self-control and understanding. They are now capable of effectively managing their emotions, even in challenging circumstances. The TC and BJMP were instrumental in the implementation of this discipline, which the resident carried with them upon their release. This discipline improved their interactions with family and aided them in avoiding difficulties. The resident's self-discipline and respect for others were significantly enhanced by the morning meetings in the TCMP, which also instilled a sense of self-worth and confidence in them.

*(I've become less hot-tempered. Before, I was quick to get angry and would often get into fights. Now, I've learned to be patient and more amicable. I've developed better self-control and understanding). (Participant 3)*

*(The morning meetings in the TCMP have been instrumental in changing my attitude and behavior. They teach you self-discipline and respect for others. The program has molded me into a better version of myself, giving me confidence and a sense of self-worth). (Participant 4)*

*(TC has greatly helped me, sir, especially in disciplining myself. I carried that discipline with me even after being released, and it has helped me in how I deal with my family and in avoiding problems). (Participant 9)*

*(Before, I was easily angered and would quickly lash out over small things. But now, I can control myself even in difficult situations. I've learned to manage my emotions better). (Participant 10)*

The personal development of residents who were previously prone to conflicts and fast to wrath is evident in the motif of instilling discipline and forbearance. These individuals have acquired a greater capacity for patience and benevolence, as well as a greater capacity for self-control and comprehension. They are now capable of effectively regulating their emotions, even in the face of adversity. The Therapeutic Community at BJMP was instrumental in the implementation of this discipline, which residents continued to practice upon their discharge. Their interactions with family were enhanced, and obstacles were circumvented as a result of this newfound discipline. The morning meetings substantially improved residents' self-discipline and respect for others in the TCMP, which also fostered a sense of self-worth and confidence.

The emergent theme can be expounded by the Self-Regulation Theory, which asserts that self-regulation is the capacity to manage one's emotions, behaviors, and impulses in order to accomplish long-term objectives. Structured protocols, morning meetings, and community guidelines are the means by which residents acquire self-regulation in the context of TCMP. These activities assist residents in the development of self-control, the regulation of their emotions, and the facilitation of more cordial interactions with others. The experiences of TCMP residents are consistent with the principles of Self-Regulation Theory, as they acquire the ability to approach difficult situations with patience and discipline (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004).

Tangney et al. (2004) documented that individuals who possess greater self-control are more adept at managing their emotions, preventing conflicts, and preserving positive relationships. The research also noted the potential for self-control to be cultivated through consistent practice and structured programs. It further revealed that participants in these programs developed substantial improvements in emotional management and self-discipline. Community support in the development of self-control is evident and one of its essential roles. Upon their release, participants observed that these abilities facilitated their interactions with family members and prevented conflicts, which embodied the efficacy of discipline training in rehabilitation programs.

#### **4.4 Aspirations of the Informants to Improve the Implementation of the TCMP**

##### **4.4.1 Enhancing Livelihood and Educational Programs.**

The participants emphasize the urgent necessity of improving educational programs and livelihoods within the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP). They emphasize that the expansion and enhancement of these programs, with the support and financing of additional sources, will offer PDLs valuable skills and potential income, as well as keep them engaged, reduce boredom, and better prepare them for reintegration into society. PDLs must be provided with practical knowledge and experience through programs such as TESDA, ALS, and various livelihood initiatives, which ultimately improve their rehabilitation process and prospects.

*(If there's more support, especially in terms of livelihood. Sometimes, if there's funding for PDLs to have some income, it would be better. For instance, making wallets or bouquets, if they can get support). (Participant 1)*

*(Well, sir, our livelihood programs. Our livelihood programs, because sometimes we make things that don't get bought, and it's a waste of our capital. Sometimes, we end up just giving things away, and it feels like the capital we used goes to waste. Like the puto-making livelihood we had before and our furniture-making program. However, now, the person in charge of the furniture-making has left. But there are still carpenters left, so it would be better if our livelihood programs were further developed). (Participant 3)*

*(If my suggestions are implemented, I hope it will benefit the PDLs by giving them more activities to keep them busy and engaged. The livelihood programs, for example, would not only help the PDLs but also benefit the personnel by providing knowledge and experience that can be useful. Programs like making products could also help PDLs financially and give them skills they can use once they are out.). (Participant 6)*

The participants emphasize the imperative necessity for improvements within the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) when they discuss the theme of enhancing livelihood and educational programs. They emphasize that the expansion and improvement of these programs, which are supported and financed by supplementary sources, will offer PDLs the opportunity to

acquire valuable skills and potential income. These enhancements will enhance the engagement of PDLs, alleviate tedium, and better equip them for reintegration into society. TESDA, ALS, and other livelihood initiatives are essential for the provision of practical knowledge and experience, which in turn improves the rehabilitation process and the prospects of the detainees.

Expectancy Theory of Motivation provides a useful foundation for appreciating the need to improve livelihood and educational programs within TCMP. According to this theory, people are more likely to act in certain ways when they anticipate that their efforts will result in the intended results. Expanding and enhancing educational and vocational training programs will increase the likelihood that PDLs will be motivated to participate because they will know that their efforts will result in the acquisition of useful skills and perhaps money, which will improve their chances of reintegrating back into society (Vroom, 1964).

Lochner and Moretti (2004) discovered that the recidivism rates and post-release employment outcomes are considerably reduced and improved by enhancing access to education and vocational training. While incarcerated, participants who received education and vocational training were more likely to secure stable employment and less likely to re-offend. This research emphasizes the significance of educational and vocational programs in correctional contexts for improving rehabilitation and reintegration outcomes.

#### **4.4.2 Supporting Religious and Spiritual Activities.**

The informants pointed out the significance of promoting religious and spiritual activities, observing that existing programs are advantageous, but they need to be more adequately funded. They recommended that the music ministry be provided with additional support, such as musical instruments, to increase engagement and maintain participation. The resident observed that certain PDLs initially participate in religious activities but eventually lose interest. Improved support could promote consistent involvement. The resident suggested that the spiritual well-being of the PDLs be further supported by maintaining and enhancing Bible studies and religious programs, which have been successful in cultivating a relationship with God and compassion for fellow PDLs.

*(The religious aspect, sir, seems to lack support. Even though there are existing religious activities, for example, the needs of the religious group, like musical instruments for the music ministry, could be better supported. In TCMP morning meetings, everything seems okay, so there's nothing more to improve or add except what I mentioned earlier. But for religious activities, more support is needed. In my experience, some participants initially participate in religious activities but then lose interest. It would be better if there were instruments or other things that could encourage them to attend). (Participant 4)*

*(The Bible studies and religious programs are particularly successful. These programs help PDLs develop a relationship with God and learn to love their fellow PDLs. Such activities should be maintained and even enhanced). (Participant 7)*

*(Like the religious sessions, it's better if they have those because people can focus on learning things they didn't know before). (Participant 10)*

The participants highlight the significance of fostering religious and spiritual activities within the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP), emphasizing the motif of supporting these activities. They observe that the current programs are beneficial; however, they require more adequate funding. For example, they suggest that the music ministry be provided with supplementary resources, such as musical instruments, in order to enhance engagement and sustain participation. Residents observed that certain detainees initially participate in religious activities but ultimately lose interest. Consistent engagement may be encouraged through enhanced assistance. Furthermore, residents proposed that the maintenance and improvement of Bible studies and religious programs could further strengthen the spiritual well-being of PDLs. This would cultivate a relationship with God and compassion for their fellow detainees.

A widely accepted theory that may be used to elucidate the emergent theme is logotherapy. According to Frankl (1963), people are primarily driven to find purpose in life, even in the face of extreme adversity. According to the hypothesis, engaging in religious and spiritual pursuits may assist PDLs in discovering meaning and purpose, which is beneficial to their mental and emotional health. Supporting these activities, such as music ministry and Bible studies, is consistent with logotherapy since it provides PDLs with opportunities to discover purpose, hope, and spiritual satisfaction while incarcerated (Frankl, 1963).

Allen and Irwin (2011) conducted a study that specifically investigated the role of spiritual and religious activities in the rehabilitation of PDLs. The research revealed that incarcerated individuals who actively engaged in religious activities reported elevated levels of psychological well-being, less stress, and increased optimism for their future. The study highlighted the need of providing continuous assistance and resources to ensure the active participation of PDLs in these programs. The results emphasize

the need of improving assistance for religious and spiritual practices within TCMP to foster PDLs' spiritual development and general welfare (Allen & Irwin, 2011).

Meanwhile, Santos (2018) investigated the influence of religious programs on correctional facilities, indicating that PDLs' emotional resilience and spiritual well-being are considerably enhanced by their participation in religious activities and Bible studies. The study expounded the necessity of increased support and funding for these initiatives to ensure the continued engagement and participation of PDLs.

## 5. Conclusion

This study explored the experiences of former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) implemented in the Regional Bureau of Jail Management and Penology 6 (RBJMP6), Province of Iloilo. This study shows that the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) had a significant impact on the lives of former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in Iloilo. Participants experienced both growth and challenges during their time in the program, finding strength in personal development, education, and a sense of community while also facing emotional struggles and the realities of overcrowded facilities. Their ability to cope and the positive changes they experienced highlight the importance of continued support even after their release. The findings suggest that a more robust aftercare program could help ensure these individuals have the tools they need to rebuild their lives.

The Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) is crucial to the rehabilitation process in the country because it promotes PDLs' overall personal growth. The provision of mental health care, drug addiction treatment, and vocational training to residents ensured the holistic approach to rehabilitation. The program's social support and community engagement created an environment conducive to behavioral adjustments and discipline. Encouraging long-term rehabilitation results, TCMP not only improves community and public safety but also adds to the efficacy of the criminal justice system in addressing criminal behavior.

## 6. Study Limitations and Future Research

One limitation of this study is that it was conducted exclusively in Iloilo City rather than across all provinces in Region VI. This geographic focus means the findings may not fully capture the experiences or challenges of former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in other areas of the region. The insights and recommendations from this study may have limited relevance beyond the specific context of Iloilo City. Another limitation is the study's narrow focus on the local context within Iloilo City, without broadening its scope to include a national perspective.

Future studies should explore the long-term outcomes of TCMP participants to evaluate the sustained impact on recidivism rates, mental health, and successful reintegration into society. Researchers may find relevant factors such as community support and engagement and how they affected their reintegration into society. Understanding how community participation influences rehabilitation plays a crucial role as it is the last pillar of the justice system that could and directly affect the perception regarding former PDLs. Most former PDLs have trouble finding job opportunities post-release. They may return to their old ways as the community may harbor such stigma that often displaces their capabilities and skills developed during the program.

Moreover, one crucial implication for future studies is focused on individual differences. Future research should explore how individual differences such as gender and type of offense affected the outcomes of TCMP since the current study had specifically utilized male participants as its informants. Understanding these differences can help utilize the appropriate measures that are better suited to meet the needs of diverse PDL populations across correctional facilities.

Finally, a comparative analysis of TCMP in different regions and cultures within the Philippines can provide a broader understanding of the efficacy of the rehabilitation approach. This allows policymakers to understand the best practices, successful models, and interventions that can guide future studies that contribute to the standardization and improvement of the Therapeutic Community Modality Program (TCMP) nationwide.

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