

The Influence of Social Support on Psychological Well-Being on Prisoners of Class II-A Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison

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Abstract— A female prisoner could lose her primary bonds. Primary bond is the relationship with her children and families. Female prisoners who lost her primary bonds would form supporting bonds. Supporting bond is a close relationship with fellow inmates in Class II-A Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison, Medan, to replace the lost and damaged primary relationships. This condition is related to the social supports received by prisoners at Class II-A Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison, Medan. This encouraged the researcher to observe the effect of the relationship between social support and psychological well-being on prisoners in Class II-A Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison, Medan. The purpose of this study is to see the effect of social support on psychological well-being of class II-A Tanjung Gusta prison inmates. This research used quantitative methods. A sample of 315 inmates was studied. Measuring instrument being used was the social support scale, and the psychological well-being scale made by the researcher. Results of this study found a correlation value (R) of .340 which is low and the coefficient of determinant (R) Square of .115. This explains that social support has a positive effect on psychological well-being. The effect of social support on the psychological well-being of prisoners at the Class II-A Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison, Medan, is 11.5%, while the remaining 88.5% shows other factors that were not examined in this study.

Keywords— *social support, psychological well being, female prisoners*

I. INTRODUCTION

Woman prisoners lose some rights to freely choose their time and fulfill their needs. One of the losses that afflict them is the lack of connection with their primary bonds. Loss of primary bond is seen as a significant pain for female prisoners (Baunach, 1985; Pollock-Byrne, 1990). It means that the biggest loss experienced by a female prisoner is the loss of contact with her child and family. This problem becomes a special pressure for a female prisoner.

The social support that female prisoners have comes from family, friends, and fellow inmates. The support from their families is reduced because they cannot meet their families freely. Many female prisoners do not receive visits from their families. This resulted in them not getting emotional support, advice, and money from their families. Inmates who rarely

get visits have to look for works to meet their daily needs, such as toiletries, detergents and others.

From the 627 inmates detained at Class II-A Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison in Medan, 13.6% was visited in January and 14.37% was visited in February 2020. Female prisoners who received family visits feel supported by their families and feel happy, because they have given food and money for their daily needs. Meanwhile, inmates who did not get visits have to look for works in prison to fulfill their daily needs.

Different conditions occurred during Covid-19 pandemic. Prisoners did not get visits and experienced homesickness and loneliness. Some stated that they miss their family, but their longing was relieved by the interactions that occurred with their fellow inmates.

Based on *Women & Criminal Justice*, it is found that female prisoners develop supporting bonds with fellow inmates to replace damaged or lost primary bonds with family or friends outside of prison. This bond is called a supporting bond. This bond is able to influence a person's psychological well-being (Cohen and Syme, 1985 and Linn, 1977; Lin, Dean and Ensel, 1986; Gottlieb, 1981; Lin et al., 1985). This condition was also found in research on *Psychological Well-Being Inmates The Role Of Loneliness And Social Support* conducted by Plip, Mefoh, Odo, Ezech, & Ezeah (2016). Prisoners who experienced loneliness due to the lack of family support would seek support from fellow inmates, so that they could have a good psychological well-being.

This condition also happened to female prisoners at Tanjung Gusta Prison. They replace the missing primary bonds by forming supporting bonds. Prisoners create a close relationship with fellow inmates. Many inmates are being called "sister", "mom", and so on. Some inmates perceive this closeness as emotional ties.

This condition of female prisoners who do not receive social support could cause problems for their psychological well-being. Imprisonment creates psychological impact that is much heavier than the imprisonment itself, so that the inmates were not only punished physically, but also psychologically (Harsono, 1995). Bartollas (in Bartol, 1994) stated in general the impact of life in prison is damaging to psychological conditions.

II. METHOD

The purpose of this study is to see the effect of social support on the psychological well-being of female prisoners in class II-A Tanjung Gusta. This research used quantitative methods. The population in this study amounted to 627 prisoners. Based on the Isac and Michael formula, 315 prisoners were sampled. The 315 prisoners were given a social support research scale and a psychological well-being scale that had been made by the researcher.

III. RESULTS

Hypothetically this study suggests that social support has a positive influence on psychological well-being. Positive influence has the sense that the more social supports received by the subject, the better her psychological well-being is.

Results of this study showed a correlation value (R) of .340. This means that there is low correlation between social support and psychological well-being (Gulford, 1956). The value of the determinant coefficient (R) Square is .115. This means that there is an influence of social support on psychological well-being of prisoners in Class II-A Tanjung

Gusta Women's Prison, Medan, amounting to 11.5%, while the remaining 88.5% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. This also explains that social support has a positive effect on psychological well-being, so the hypothesis is accepted.

The results also showed that inmates at Class II-A Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison in Medan experienced a high level of social support of 75 people (23.80%), 237 people (75.2%) of moderate social support (75.2%) and 3 prisoners had a low level of social support (.95 %). This shows that the highest numbers are of medium and high levels of social support.

IV. DISCUSSION

Results of the study found that social support had a positive and significant effect on psychological-well being. This means that the higher the social support, the better the psychological well-being of the prisoners at the Tanjung Gusta Class II-A Women's Prison in Medan. This result is in line with a research by Philip, Victor, Michael, & Linda (2016), as well as Dzatalina and Endang's (2018) who explained the positive relationship between social support and psychological well-being. Research by Philip, Victor, Michael & Linda (2016) also found that someone who gets high social support tends to lead to greater psychological well-being. Daniel and Elizabet's research (2017) stated that someone who gets social support from fellow inmates also leads to higher psychological well-being.

Results also show that the levels of social supports for prisoners are moderate and high. Even though during Covid-19 pandemic prisoners at Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison were not allowed to be visited by family and friends outside the prison. This condition occurs because inmates at the Class II-A Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison in Medan developed supporting bonds by forming foster families and using nicknames such as 'mom', 'sister', and etcetera to replace their family figure outside of prison. This was also explained in the journal *Women & Criminal Justice*, which suggests that female prisoners, whose primary bonds with families or friends outside of prison are damaged or lost, develop supporting bonds. Van Woemer (2010) also found that female inmates tend to create intimacy, such as fake family, with fellow prisoners. This was also supported by the research of Mefoh, Odo, Ezech & Ezeah (2016), that inmates who experience loneliness will seek support with fellow inmates.

Research by Kruttschnitt, Bijleveld, & Menting (2011) found that complaints of depression, anger, and the risk of self-harm were predicted by two, namely deprivation factors

and importation factors. Deprivation factors are the characteristics of prison environment and the interaction between fellow prisoners and guards. Importation factors are the characters and experiences before incarceration. The results of the study found that deprivation factors showed a greater impact on the psychological well being of prisoners than importation factors.

This is different from the findings by Liu & Chui (2014) that the most important social-need is social supports from family compared to support from officers and fellow prisoners. The need for support from fellow prisoners is not so important for Chinese prisoners. This happened because female inmates in China did not believe in the relationships that were built between fellow prisoners. This could also be concluded from one of the interviews which stated that "*there are no sincere friendships in prison and inmates' relationships are based more on hostility*".

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results it can be concluded that social support has a positive effect on psychological well-being. This positive influence means that the more social support received by subject, the better her psychological well being would be. This study resulted with a low correlation value (R) of .340 and a determinant coefficient value (R) of .115. This explains that social support has a positive influence on psychological well-being. The influence of social support on psychological well-being of prisoners in Class II-A Tanjung Gusta Women's Prison, Medan, was 11.5%, while the remaining 88.5% was influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

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