



Living Outside the Bars: Lived Experiences of Family Members of Offenders in Baguio and Benguet, Philippines

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Abstract

This study was conducted to explore the lived experiences of family members of offenders to provide insight and develop an effective and appropriate intervention in dealing with them, which in turn could help enhance family care in the nursing practice. The phenomenological type of descriptive qualitative research design was applied in this study. Data were gathered from five (5) family members of offenders in Baguio City and Benguet from January 19, 2018 to March 6, 2018 using triangulation method. Observation and individual interviews were employed with the participants. To analyze the data gathered, Colaizzi's Seven Steps of Phenomenology was applied. The major findings are: (1) the incarceration was kept secret momentarily to underage family members; (2) the participants presented their own perspectives on the offender and whether they expected the crime to happen or not; (3) the incident affected their relationships within the family and others; and (4) the participants showed positive attitudes towards coping like acceptance and moving on. Based on the findings, the following conclusions were derived: (1) incarceration is deemed negative by society which prompted the hiding of the incident from the children; (2) incarceration can happen to anyone regardless of stature in life (3) stigma is truly present in the society which affects a person's relationship with others, including his family; and (4) a person is able to adapt to changes caused by dramatic events and move on with the help of external support and positive thinking.

KEYWORDS

stigma
crime
offender
incarceration
family members

Introduction

Crime is defined as an act or omission forbidden by law that can be punished by imprisonment or fine (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). In the Philippines, it is defined as an act

or omission that violates Republic Act No. 3815, or the Revised Penal Code, and can be termed as offense (Robles, 1998). When a person becomes an offender, his family members are directly affected. This study aimed to explore the lived experiences of the offender's family members before, during,

and after the incident which may have greatly affected their lives.

The society is truly in the midst of a crime wave and has always been a major concern. A total of 584,809 crimes were recorded by the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the country in 2016 (Kyodo News, 2017), and less than 1%, specifically 0.44% of these crimes were recorded in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR).

Offender is the term used to the person who committed a crime, or violated the Revised Penal Code (Robles, 1998). It could be any individual who is charged with, or convicted of, any criminal offense, may it be a youth offender or a juvenile offender (US Legal Inc., 2016). These crimes could lead into a serious type of offense.

Crimes against persons, a crime category under Title 3 of Criminal Code of the Philippines may include involving harm, against personal liberty and security, or involving marriage. Crimes affecting life and involving harm, as stated in Chapter 1, Title 3, of the Criminal Code of the Philippines, are crimes that induce harm or force to the victim through violence (Robles, 1998). This is often classified as the most serious type of offense. Examples of this crime include homicide, murder, abortion, reckless conduct causing death, rape, molestation, physical assault, and reckless conduct causing injuries. In year 2016, there were 139,462 crimes against persons recorded in the Philippines which accounted to around one-fifth of the total crimes in the country. When one or more of these serious crimes are committed by someone, it usually leads to incarceration from which his family members are directly affected (Bureau of Jail Management and Penology [BJMP], 2017).

Incarceration, as defined by Oxford Living Dictionaries (2017), is the state of being confined in prison. As of January 31, 2017, there are 131,923 prisoners in the Philippines. The National Capital Region (NCR) has the highest jail population with a total of 31,043 offenders, while CAR has the third least number of offenders at 1,274 (BJMP, 2017).

Often times, people downgrade the family of the offender. Social stigma, as defined by Your Dictionary (2017), is the social disapproval of a person on the grounds of a particularly characteristic that distinguishes them from

society. This is one of the things that these offenders and their families often go through. The spouse, parent, child, or sibling of a prisoner may not experience stigma directly until they reveal the incarcerated relatives' status to a child's teacher or to a prospective landlord or until the family moves to a prison town (Fishman, 1990; Koenig, 1985 as cited by Hairston, 2001). Stigma negatively affects individuals as well as the entire family (Park, 2013). Stigma could also lead to maladaptive behaviors and poor mental health, which can be a predisposing factor for the family members of the offender to commit another crime (Inzlicht et al., 2011 as cited by Moore et al., 2016). This research aimed to explore the experiences of family members when their own relative has become the perpetrator of a violent crime, and how stigma affects a person's perception of himself, his feelings, and his thoughts.

Most past research works have studied the experiences of crime offenders, including the factors that have led them to do so, however, little is known from the point of view of family members. Moreover, most of these research works are outdated since these studies were in the late 1990's, or early 2000's. An example of this is the study of Hairston (2001) who concluded that a social investment in prisoners' families and children will require the adoption of more positive views of prisoners' families and family relationships, better understanding of family needs and societal responses, and dedicated attention to changing the prevailing system responses. To contribute to the understanding on this topic where little is known and knowledge is outdated, this study was conducted.

This study concentrated on the perceptions of the family members of an offender, primarily focusing on their experiences before, during and after the situation that caused changes in their lives. It is imperative in nursing care to have knowledge on these matters to be able to address their problems physically, emotionally, socially, and psychologically.

This would also contribute in gaining more information and concepts which will be essential in providing individualized nursing interventions and will let us understand their emotions. Moreover, it will provide new knowledge to the nursing education, specifically psychiatric nursing. With the determination and understanding of the perceptions and experiences of family members



of offenders, untoward changes in their behavior may be avoided, and their self-esteem and self-perception may be improved. Furthermore, this will provide information that will be useful to other people in our society by influencing the perception of the community on the families of offenders if their experiences are shared to the public, thus addressing social stigma. It is hoped that this study will contribute an updated and wider knowledge regarding this topic in the society and in the nursing profession.

Methodology

Descriptive phenomenology design was employed in gathering and analyzing information about the experiences of family members of incarcerated individuals who committed violent crimes. Phenomenology seeks to understand the phenomenon of a lived experience, where there is an essence to a shared experience. Husserl's philosophy of phenomenology was used to describe and explore the lived experiences of family members in the context of individuals who committed felony as uncensored, and pure phenomena. Further, the philosophy emphasizes on the description of human experiences.

Population and Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Baguio City and Benguet for its accessibility and evident connection between the chosen study and the focus. Population involved are the family members of convicted offenders.

Network sampling was utilized in selecting participants. Network sampling is an ideal method when rare populations of interest are to be included (Lavrakas, 2008). We identified participants through social connections and networks.

Selected participants are the adult and minor family members of the convicted offenders. They are related to the offenders by blood, or could be the intimate partner of the offender and are currently residing in Baguio City and Benguet. An intimate partner of the offender could be a wife or husband, married or not, or a live-in partner. They lived in the same area as the offender during

the time of the incident, may it be during the commission of the crime, or the time of arrest. These inclusion criteria were used to consider participants that have different experiences.

Exclusion criteria were also considered. These included family members who are related to the offender only by law. Another is blood relatives who are not currently living in the aforementioned locale of the study.

Data Collection Procedure

As humans were involved as participants, the study followed strict ethical principles. Participants consent were sought and were assured that the information they provided will not be used against them. Their right to confidentiality and anonymity was maintained by assigning numbers and erasing the names that were attached. Pseudonyms were used as an alternative to their names. The data gathered were guarded against unauthorized access.

Personal interviews were conducted to explore responses of participants and gather in-depth information. Similar sets of structured and unstructured questions were used to each family member. Unstructured interview was employed first followed by structured interview. We probed over their answers and asked additional questions if necessary.

Questions were formulated prior to the interview. The researchers played a neutral role and acted casual and friendly, but did not insert any opinion during the interview.

The method used to establish trustworthiness was adopted from Lincoln and Guba (1985), Krefting (1991) and Mouton (2001). Credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability were ensured.

Treatment of Data

There was an immediate debriefing for the participants after each interview by the observer. Debriefing notes were prepared and included comments about the focus group process and the significance of the data. Audio recorded interviews were transcribed into context.

Colaizzi's (1978) seven steps of Phenomenology



was applied to analyze the data collected from the interview. The descriptive data analysis method promotes trustworthiness, reliability and generality. To maintain rigor and trustworthiness of the research process, transcripts generated from the personal interviews were read and reviewed three times.

Results and Discussion

“Living outside the bars” is derived from the phrase “living behind bars” which people would often say to a person who has been incarcerated and is serving his time in prison. Because this study is subjected to the family members of the offender, we used the opposite term to describe the phenomenon.

The results of the study and its implication is graphically presented as an opened handcuff (Figure 1). Handcuffs are stereotypical of crime and criminal offenders. The opened cuff means the future.

Interrogation of the Witnesses

We labeled this broad domain as the ‘Interrogation of the Witnesses’ since it encompasses the experiences of the participants with the offender prior to the incident, and before the knowledge of the crime committed. This encloses the themes, ‘Supporting Alibis’ and ‘Detention of Truth’.

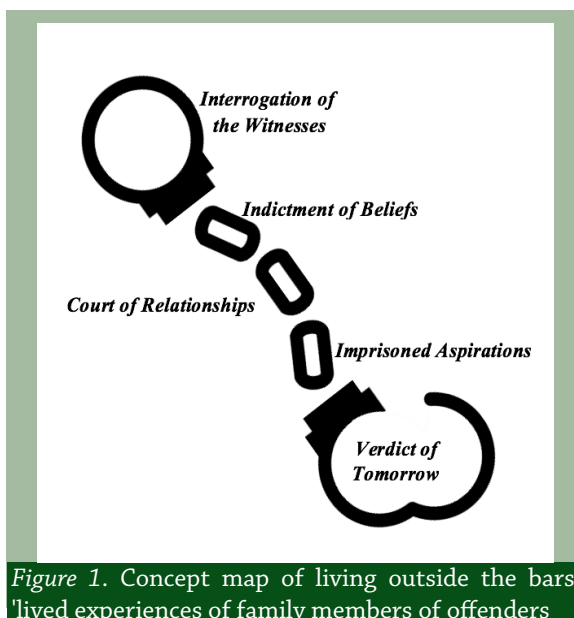


Figure 1. Concept map of living outside the bars: lived experiences of family members of offenders

Supporting alibis. An alibi is a claim that you cannot be guilty of a crime because you were somewhere else when it happened (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2018). We often think of it as an excuse to escape something, like that of an event or a crime. Alibis in this theme refers to the offenders’ attitude and behavior as perceived by their family members. They serve as the witnesses testifying for them.

“Caring, responsible Dad isuna. Responsible ta isuna ti kalla tinmakder nga father ko idi adda ak idiyay Alab nga nag-iskwela.” – Ganda (He is a caring, responsible Dad. Responsible because he was the one who stood as my father when I was at Alab.) (35-37)

Ganda is the niece of Dakim who murdered someone because of excessive jealousy. She is a 17-year-old Grade 12 student residing at La Trinidad. She also said that he did not only care for his children, but also for his nieces and nephews (78-79, 85-86). He is a cheerful person who knows his nieces and nephews’ favorite stuffs, she said (38-50).

“Nakitak nga mayat ti attitude ken ugali ni uncle. Awan ti bisyo na, haan met nga agsigarilyo ken ag-inom. Mayat ti relasyon na ken an-anak na ken dakami nga kaanakan na.” – Mayari (I saw his good attitude and personality. He has no vices, he does not smoke and drink. He has good relations with his children and also to us, his nieces and nephews.) (176-179)

Mayari is the younger sister of Kidlat, and the cousin of Ganda. She is a 19-year-old college student currently living with her brother.

Detention of truth. Why do people lie? Why do people often hide the truth? There are many reasons why we choose not to tell the truth and perhaps the most obvious reason is that we wanted to avoid hurting others (Raouna, 2015). We wanted to detain the truth from our family members, friends and others thinking that the truth may cause them pain. Detention is the act of detaining or holding back someone, especially in custody (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2018). Some children did not know that their parents are imprisoned because relatives would reason out that they are working, or having a vacation (Hairston, 2001). In this theme ‘Detention of Truth’, the truth detained is the crime that the offenders committed.



“Before, ‘di ko pa alam na nakulong siya pero nakakahalata na ako noong Grade 5 na ako.” – Lakas (Before, I did not know that he is imprisoned but I started to take notice when I was in Grade 5.) (1-2)

Lakas is the son of Agos who committed murder under the influence of alcohol. The truth was only revealed to him during his elementary graduation (8-9).

Indictment of Beliefs

‘Indictment of Beliefs’ refers to the statements of the respondents expressing their disbeliefs upon knowledge of the incident. Two themes were put under this broad domain which are ‘Presentation of Evidence’ and ‘Overruled Objections’.

Presentation of evidence. Evidence in this sense is related to the accounts of the participants with regards to the offender’s behavior before the incident that may have led to the offender committing the crime. There are many risk factors influencing criminal behavior such as family issues, psychological or mental characteristics, peer influences, and socioeconomic status (Regis University, 2018).

“Before nga inyat na di ket amruk nga nagugulo di toktok na. Kinarkarit di kakabsat ni asawa na suna, et si duy din nanrugian di depression na. Adi na na-handle din sitwasyon, ket siguro naalan di kabusor ti panunot na.” – Lila (Before he committed the crime, I knew that his mind was in a mess. When he was being provoked by the siblings of his wife, his depression started. He was not able to handle the situation, and maybe the evil got into his mind.) (132-141)

“Palainom na si Papa noon pa. Pero ‘yong time lang na ‘yon ‘yong nakita kong galit siya na kaya niyang makipag-away. Kasi pag umiinom naman siya hindi namin siya nakikitang ganon. Tapos paminsan-minsan din lang siya umuuwi kasi busy siya sa trabaho niya.” – Lakas (My father often drinks even before. But that was the only time I saw him angry- that he was capable of fighting with others because every time he drinks, we never saw him like that. And he only comes home occasionally because he was busy from work.) (285-289)

Overruled objections. Objections in this theme refer to the participants’ disbelief when

they learned of the crime their family member committed. “When an objection is overruled, it means that the evidence is properly admitted to the court, and the trial can proceed (FindLaw, 2018),” which only means that the objection is not accepted. Therefore, overruling of objections in this study would refer to the rejected objections of the participants.

“Ada ti tawag nga inmay ken ni mamak ket kuna na nga kastuy ti inaramid ni manong ko. Sobra nga proud ni mamak kanyana ngem within one day ket ‘Boom!’ pati shak ket naapektaran. Ti panangkitak ken ni uncle ko ket haan na maaramid diyay. Sapay kuma ta haan nangyari daytuy, nga dream lang kuma.” – Ganda (A call came for my mother and she said that, ‘This is what my brother did.’ She was so proud of him but within one day ‘Boom!’, I was also affected. Based on my perception of my uncle, he cannot do that. I hoped that this did not happen- that it was just a dream). (51-55, 59-62)

Ganda shared to us her mother’s sorrow and denial about her uncle Dakim’s action. She told us how her mother cried, and how this affected her (62-64). She also talked about her grandmother, and how this incident would always be their topic (70-72).

Every participant shared to us their disbeliefs when they received the news of their relative’s crime. Their faces were filled with sadness as they told their stories. Avoiding any eye contact, they narrated their own version of their experiences, expressing their feelings while remaining strong.

Court of Relationships

The broad domain, ‘Court of Relationships’ relates to the respondents’ intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships, from their families to the outside world. The court, or a court house, is a place where legal cases are heard (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2018). Offenders and their families experience a tremendous sense of loss on emotional and social aspect when incarceration occurs (Hairston, 2001). It is a court of relationships since it tests the affinity of the participants with the offender, their relatives, friends, and others. It encompasses three themes, namely ‘Trial of Trust’, ‘Jury of Outsiders’ and ‘Affidavit of Repentance’.



Trial of trust. We labeled this theme as the 'Trial of Trust' to emphasize the doubts, conflicts and firmness of the relationships of the participants with the people they trust. Two subthemes were formed from the participants' statements. These are 'Shackles of Kinship' and 'Handcuffs of Amity'.

Shackles of kinship. This subtheme reflects the struggles of the participants with their family members, including the offender, after the traumatic incident. Hairston (2001) concluded that the impact of incarceration on families has been conceptualized as a form of family crises (Fishman, 1990), loss and demoralization (Schneller, 1976) and victimization of children (Bloom & Steinhart, 1993).

Chains of doubt. Shackles are connected together by a series of metallic rings we commonly call as 'chains'. Doubt is the uncertainty about something, whether to believe or not (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2018). When the shackles of kinship are chained with doubt, the family is put to a harder test of trust. This subcategory would then enclose the doubts of the respondents toward their family members, including the offender.

"Ti panang-ammuk ken ni uncle ko ket haan na maaramid diyay, though we don't know nu anya ti adda idiyay mind ti maysa nga tao. Idi hearing na, uray kayat mi nga kitan ket narigat ta madi mi masukatan diyay panangkita mi kenyana, di respect mi. Haan mi kayat nga mabahidan ti pangit." – Ganda (From what I know of my uncle, he cannot do such act, though we don't really know what is in the mind of a person. During his hearing, although we wanted to see him, it was tough because we didn't want to change our perspective and respect for him. We didn't want it to be stained with an ugly image.) (56-57, 64-68)

Keys of support. Providing support is essential when someone is in the abyss of struggles and loneliness. Relating this to our study, support serves as a key in letting a person be free from the shackles and chains that restrain him.

"My uncles and aunts gave me advices like 'Whatever happens, your schooling should not be affected, you should still continue your studies'." – Mayari (234-235)

Handcuffs of amity. Handcuffs of amity are either friendships that secure the family member and someone close together, or restrains that forbid the family member to build a relationship with another person.

Restrained conversations. This subcategory contains the experiences of family members who, after the incident, built barriers in building relationships with other people because of the stigma.

"Damdamagek ti sarilik anya ngata ikastak nga mangsungbat kenyada ta bumabainak ta ti panangkita da kanyak ket the same met lang idiyay inkastan ni uncle ko. Anya ngata ikastak nga ag-approach ti daduma nga tattao ta kalla hushusgahan da kami gapu idiyay nga incident?" – Ganda (I always wonder how I should answer them because I feel shy since their perception of me might be the same as what my uncle did. How should I approach other people when it feels like they are judging us due to that incident?) (202-208)

While Ganda was saying this, her face turned red and she started to cry while looking at the window.

Unlocked hands of interaction. This subcategory contains the experiences of family members who, after the incident, took the opportunity to build relationships with other people.

"Naging friendly ako lalo. Parang mas naging close ako sa mga kaibigan ko. Noon, hindi ako masyadong lumalabas. Hindi parang ngayon na halos araw-araw sila nakikita ko." – Lakas (I became friendlier, like I became closer to my friends. In the past, I did not go out often. Unlike today where almost every day, they are the ones I see.) (190, 291-292)

While Lakas was verbalizing this, he smiled and further explained that he built more relationships through taekwondo trainings and competitions, and in school (191-192). He found the support that he was missing from his family.

Jury of outsiders. This theme is labeled as jury of outsiders because of what the respondents experienced with the stigma they felt from other people after the incident. Nevertheless, there is social stigma among them from many aspects of the society (Hairston, 2001). This theme has three



subthemes which are ‘The Censorious Critics’, ‘The Vengeful Eyes’ and ‘The Unchanging Companions’.

The censorious critics. This subtheme contains experiences of participants with people who judged them and their family, and let them feel isolated.

“*Ag-ibagbaga da ti dakes kanyami. Inbaga da nga binayadan mi kanu diyay abogado tapnu bumaba diyay kaso ni uncle ko. Kunan pay ti daduma nga ‘Uy, adawian tako ta baka iyat na metlang diyay inkastan ni uncle na.’*” – Ganda (They are saying bad things against us. They said that we paid the attorney so that my uncle’s penalties will be lowered. Others would even say, ‘Hey, let’s get away from her. She might do the same thing that her uncle did.’) (241-251)

Ganda mentioned that it was her classmates who were avoiding her when they found out about the offense of her family member (252).

The vengeful eyes. This subtheme contains experiences of respondents who received threats from the victim’s family. This expresses the fear the respondents felt after the incident.

“*Idi nangyari diyay ket adu ti buteng ko nga agbales da kanyami. Mabuteng kami ta dakami ti kakaaruban ti kakasinsin diyay biktima ket narigat ta baka agbales da, isu gamin ti ibagbaga da.*” – Ganda (When that happened, I had a lot of fears that they would seek revenge on us. We were afraid because we are the neighbors of the victim’s cousins and it was difficult because they might seek revenge because it is what they were saying.) (198-202)

Ganda further explained that she doesn’t know how to face the people around her because she is afraid that they would seek revenge on her family. (216-217)

The unchanging companions. This subtheme encompasses the people who did not change their perspective of the offenders’ family members.

“*Hindi naman umiba ‘yong tingin nila sa akin. Sinabihan nila ako na mag-aral ako ng mabuti. Minotivate nila ako.*” – Lakas (Their perspective of me did not change. They advised me to study well. They motivated me.) (238-240)

Affidavit of Repentance. Repentance is the action or process of repenting especially for misdeeds or moral shortcomings (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2018). The theme, ‘Affidavit of Repentance’, showcases the statements of regret and the testimony of trauma that the offenders shared to their family members.

Statement of regret. This subtheme contains statements of regret that the offender said to the participants and how the participants reacted to it.

“*Makitam idiyay rupa na nga permi babawi na. Apan na pabasbasulen din awak na.*” – Lila (You can see on his face that he is in deep regret. He goes on blaming himself.) (159-161)

“*Nakita ko ‘yong pagsisisi niya at kagustuhang bumawi sa amin.*” – Lakas (I saw his feeling of regret and his desire to make it up to us.) (33-34)

Lakas mentioned that every time his father would call, he would notice that his father was having a hard time but he doesn’t want to show it (19-21). While Lakas explained this, there was a long pause, then he looked down and started to sob.

Testimony of trauma. This subtheme contains testimonies of the offender, and the fear that they experienced inside the prison because of the crime that they committed.

“*Idi every week ay um-umay kami yan nan tauli di nemnem na ya. Nu nantauli nemnem na, makisa-on. Ngem nu namaga panunot na, tumatalna ken sabali damdamagen na.*” – Lila (That time when we visited him every week, his sanity came back. When his sanity comes back, he interacts. But when it is gone, he would keep quiet and will ask different things) (154-160)

Lila said that in the prison, no one was helping him. He would not talk to anyone. When they visited him after a long time, he asked them why they only came that time (151-154). This is why, even if she was busy, she visited him every week. She said that every time they visit, he would be very happy as if nothing happened. He would even request for his favorite food to be cooked. She expressed her joy each time she sees him like that (165-168, 173-175).



Imprisoned Aspirations

'Imprisoned Aspirations', as a broad domain, encloses the dreams of the respondents that were trapped after the incident that changed their lives. We included two themes under this domain which are 'Locked-up Dreams' and 'Jailed Hopes and Wishes'.

Locked-up dreams. This theme then reflects the changes in the student participants' education and the hindrances that they faced after the incident that imprisoned their parents and guardians.

"Natuto ako na magbisyo at hindi na ako nag-aral ng maayos." – Lakas (I learned to do vices and I started not to study well.) (27)

Lakas mentioned that before he knew of what happened, his performance in school was great, that he was able to focus on it (283). However, he started coming home late, smoking and drinking alcoholic beverages when he found out that his father was in prison (193-194). He stated earlier that he lacked support from his family. Thus, he started doing vices.

"Kapag kinakausap ako ni Papa, sinasabihan niya ako na ayusin ko buhay ko kasi hindi niya ginawa iyon dati." – Lakas (When my father talks to me, he would tell me to fix my life because he did not do it in the past.) (24-26)

Lakas stated that it took two years before they were able to visit his father (22-23). Upon saying this, he turned to his side and wiped his tears. He continued to sob and he avoided eye contact from us.

Jailed hopes and wishes. Once the offenders are put to jail, the family members would no longer be able to be with them daily, like how they used to be. They would no longer be able to see them in the morning, nor before sleep. Therefore, it is normal for the family members to miss their jailed loved ones (Wildeman, 2009). Their hopes and wishes to be with their loved ones are "jailed".

"Hinihintay ko na sana bukas, paggising ko, nasa tabi ko na siya." – Lakas (I am waiting that tomorrow, when I wake up, he would be by my side.) (28-29)

Lakas shared that every time he sees other people with their fathers or parents, he would feel sad because he cannot be with his own father (213-215). As he said this, he looked down and prevented eye contact from us, not wanting to show his eyes welled-up with tears.

"Nu ap-apan di agew ket ma-miss ko isuna."
– Ganda (As the days pass by, I miss him.) (266-267)

Ganda said that she was not able to spend time with her uncle for a long time. There was a time when she saw her uncle, but they only got together for a few minutes. This happened four years ago when she was in Grade 8 (86-91).

Verdict of Tomorrow

We labeled this domain as the 'Verdict of Tomorrow' to present how the respondents perceive their future and their positive attitude towards coping up. Acceptance is one of the top needs of an offender's family (Prison Fellowship Organization, 2018). The verdict serves as reality for the family members who have been left to continue with life and accept that the incident happened.

"Ngem kanan adi en, 'In all the things, there's a reason.' There's a way met lang nga makaruwar isdi." – Lila (But as one would say, 'In all the things, there's a reason.' There's a way for him to be released from there.) (171-173)

Lila told us that she cannot cope up completely yet until the pain that her family felt would be relieved (278-279). She also asked herself why something like this happened to their family. Although she said this, she puts her faith and trust in God that everything will be alright. She would always pray to Him and rely on Him (167-169, 209-211).

"Ginawa kong motivation na kapag lumabas na siya, ako na 'yong susuporta sa kanya, ako 'yong babawi. Tinanggap ko na lang 'yong nangyari kay Papa kahit ang hirap mag-adjust. Nahirapan akong mag-adjust kasi wala na si Papa na sumusuporta sa akin. Wala akong ginawa, kasi wala rin naman akong magagawa eh." – Lakas (I made it as a motivation that by the time he gets released, I will be the one to support him, I will be the one to make it up to him. I just accepted what happened to my father even



if it was hard to adjust. It was hard for me to adjust because my father, who supports me, is now gone. I did not do anything because I know I cannot do anything.) (30-32, 195-197, 295-296)

Lakas shared that he views this incident as a lesson for them. He said with a smile that he thinks of it in a positive way (258-259). He did not accept it instantly, instead he accepted it gradually until he was able to move on (296-297).

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following inferences were drawn: (1) incarceration is deemed negative by society which prompted the hiding of the incident from the children; (2) incarceration can happen to anyone regardless of anything; (3) stigma is truly present in the society which affects a person's relationship with others, including his family; and (4) a person is able to adapt to changes caused by dramatic events and move on with the help of external support and positive thinking.

Recommendations

Considering the conclusions and findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed: (1) the family members should continue to support each other despite the incident; (2) the family members should be under a support group provided by the government; and (3) the family members are encouraged to join social activities and share their thoughts and feelings about the incident; and (4) more extensive research on family members of offenders needs to be conducted to design and implement appropriate evidence-based nursing care to them.

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