

Senior High Program in Prison Culture: Its Rehabilitative effect during and after Incarceration

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ABSTRACT

The Senior High Program inside the Leyte Prison in the Philippines has been viewed as a long-term reformatory strategy that allows Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) who passed the Alternative Learning Systems' (ALS) Elementary and Junior High School Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) exam to continue their education inside the prison. Six ex-prisoners who participated and completed the SH program were purposefully chosen for in-depth interviews in order to understand the program's reformatory effects on their lives during and after incarceration. Primary data gathered from the interview were transcribed and categorized manually. Textual generated codes were utilized, and empirical codes based on participants' words were the primary basis for the analysis supported with related studies and theories. The data generated was analyzed using the thematic method in accordance with the hermeneutic approach. With the potential of formal education inside prison seen, expanding the program to other correctional jails throughout the region could be a great solution to the reformation of the country's growing population of offenders and repeat offenders.

KEYWORDS- Prison education, senior high school, incarcerated, reformation, rehabilitation

1. INTRODUCTION

Section 1 of Article XIV of the 1987 Philippine Constitution highlighted that the state shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education available to all. Furthermore, section 2.4 of the same article stated that the state should support non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent, and out-of-school study programs, particularly those that address community needs. This serves as the primary foundation for the establishment of a Senior High School program within the correctional facility of Leyte Regional Prison (LRP) in the Philippine province of Leyte. Along with this, the Department of Education (DepEd) Region VIII, Leyte Division issued Regional Memorandum No. 538, titled "Establishment of Cagbolo Senior High School," as well as Government Permit No. 39, which allows formal senior high school education to be conducted inside the jail. The Bureau of Corrections, which is part of the Department of Interior and Local Government, has prioritized reformation programs within correctional facilities, including education. The agency ensures rehabilitation programs and makes them available to inmates for their physical, intellectual, and spiritual development, as stated in one of its functions.

Education inside correctional facilities is important for incarcerated people, according to studies. Throughout history, it has played roles in the social mission of prisons, and these roles have been shaped by a systematic conflict between security, punishment, and treatment. It also suggests that its almost twice cost-effective as incarceration alone as a crime control policy (Bazos, Hausman, 2004). This means that there are better sustainable community outcomes in investing public funds in correctional education than of building prisons. Prisoners' participation in education and training programs may help to reduce the tensions and episodic violence that are commonly associated with prison overcrowding (United Voice, 2015). When inmates participate in correctional education activities, the likelihood of conflict within the facility decreases.

In the Philippines, the Bureau of Corrections, including Regional Offices, has prioritized education as part of its prison culture rehabilitation strategy. Alternative Learning Systems (ALS), vocational trainings, and tertiary baccalaureate degrees developed in collaboration with public and private institutions are already available in a few correctional facilities throughout the region.

According to Section XIV of Republic Act No. 10533, learners' basic education will be expanded from six years in elementary school, including kindergarten, to four years in secondary school, with an additional two compulsory years in secondary school. Despite the existence of amendments to the education system for basic education, most prison jails in the region only provide alternative learning systems (non-formal). The scope includes basic literacy for those who do not have education experiences or who have difficulty reading and writing, elementary literacy for those who have elementary experience but did not complete the academic curriculum while in free society, and secondary literacy for those who have secondary experience but did not complete the program while in free society. However, in Leyte Regional Prison (LRP), a formal senior high school program inside the correctional facility that aims to continue the learning of those who have passed the ALS Accreditation and Equivalency (A and E) exam has already been in place for several years. Following the establishment of formal basic education, teachers hold daily classes inside the jail and participate in curricular and extra-curricular activities mandated by the department of education. In addition to the daily routines of formal education, teachers are required to follow prison rules for security reasons. In fact, all instructional materials and items carried by the teacher into the prison classroom must be inspected.

The term formal education refers to the actual teaching and learning process that takes place on a daily basis. Teachers facilitate learning processes, and assessments are performed to identify learning gaps and areas of opportunity to focus on improving a specific skill. Learners must attend regular class sessions and participate in classroom activities. Furthermore, senior high school refers to the additional two years of basic secondary education. With the primary goal of preparing students for higher academic pursuits, they will be provided with learning opportunities related to enhancing their academic skills prior to what they have learned in the ALS Secondary curriculum within the correctional jail. Students will be able to participate in enrichment activities to improve their skills in areas such as oral and written communication, advanced mathematics, science, and other languages.

Since 1990, research has shown that prisoners who participated in educational programs while serving their time in prison are less likely to re-enter the system after their release. Furthermore, participation in educational programs results in a less violent and more positive prison environment (Vacca, 2004). According to Tesoro (2013), prison education was once a fledgling program that frequently collided with security concerns. However, there was no other way to carry out the mandate of corrections unless education gained traction and a convincing following in the prison community. Tesoro also emphasized the importance of the program's implementation, stating that education changed the mood of the prison community, for example, in Davao Penal Colony. The program gradually improved the prisoners' outlook from a very depressive and gloomy prison climate. Prison education became the focal point of not only rehabilitation but also security. The type of education provided in correctional facilities works to reduce both recidivism and the level of violence, resulting in a more humane and tolerable prison environment in which to live and work (Newman et al. 1993).

Among the potentials seen in education for prison culture. It is critical to comprehend how formal education, specifically the senior high school program, influenced ex-prisoners who are now living in a free society. While the Bureau of Corrections supervises correctional services, the Department of Education-Leyte Division has professional responsibility for prison education, and approaches to teaching differ in how disciplinary action is strictly imposed inside jail. Classes comparable to education outside of prison have been converted into prisoners' courts in order to improve their academic and social skills. This research looks into the lived experiences of PDLs who have completed the SHS program and are now living in a free society. This paper will go over their involvement with the formal school inside and how it affected them.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Being the only correctional facility in the Philippines that allows a formal senior high school program inside prison culture, initiated by the Department of Education, there were possible changes that it brought to the prison environment as a whole. Although a few studies have discussed few benefits of prison education but it is only limited to vocational or skills training and non-formal education settings. Therefore, there is still a need for a scientific-theoretical perspective to help researchers gain a deeper understanding of prisoners' actual experiences in attending formal senior high school education and how this impacted them after being incarcerated.

Danner (2006)'s hermeneutic perspective was found to be useful in understanding the phenomenon in this descriptive phenomenological study. Its adaptability allows for a broad understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Gadamer, 2004). Six male ex-prisoners aged 30-45 who had completed a senior high school program inside a correctional facility were asked to participate in an in-depth interview for this study.

Participants in this study were purposefully chosen to address the research purpose and questions, based on the premise that the best cases for the study produce the best data (Patton, 2015). (Morse, 2010; Patton, 2015, p.264). Because of the distance between the researchers and the participants, interviews were conducted via phone call. Even in this type of interview, the researcher's ability to communicate through gestures is eliminated, probing questions are used, and verbal markers are observed. Furthermore, each participant is informed that the entire phone interview will be recorded for the purpose of data re-verification and may be used for publication.

Transcribed interviews were analyzed according to textual codes developed using thematic method and hermeneutic approach in data analysis. The coding process was done manually, with researchers playing an important role in the research outcomes, such as the quality of questions they ask, how they code, and how they explore the latent or underlying meaning of texts (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). The codes were empirically derived from what informants actually said, rather than from a theory, themes, questions, or related literature presented (Tjora, 2013). During the coding process, an In vivo coding approach was used to achieve the researcher's goal of obtaining empirical data from what the interviewee said. As a result, it was necessary to use the exact language of the participants when generating codes using this approach (Strauss, 1987). Transcripts of interviews in the local language were used for coding, and after coding, the lines were translated to English and verified by two English language experts who are also native speakers of the used local language. This ensures the accuracy of the translation and avoids problems with interpreting empirical codes provided by participants (Smith, Chen, & Liu, 2008). Codes that have been translated are used for categorizing and theming. Themes are discovered by observing patterns and relationships between codes (Saldaa, 2014).

The data gathered, however, is limited to six male ex-prisoners of Leyte Regional Prison (LRP) in Abuyog, Leyte Philippines who were recipients of the established Cagbolo Senior High School inside correctional facility initiated by the Department of Education Region VIII, specifically in the Division of Leyte, and in collaboration with the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) of the same region.

During the interview, only three major issues were highlighted. PDLs were asked to describe their experiences as in-prison students. They are expected to react to program implementation by participating in senior high education inside. Another factor is the impact of their experiences as a senior high student inside a prison, which they consider useful after being reintegrated into a free society. Finally, their perspective on the program's existence within a correctional facility, whether it is beneficial or will simply add burden to the majority of incarcerated individuals serving their sentence due to conviction. Participants are expected to segment a few reasons for formal classes held inside the jail with actual teaching and learning taking place. In order to answer how formal SH programs inside prison culture impacted ex-prisoners, researchers manually formulated these three major concepts.

To ensure participant anonymity, instead of writing real names, code names are used during transcription. They were also given a consent form via messaging apps. Each is also informed that they can cancel the interview at any time for any reason and that no agencies are obligated to answer or participate in the interview.

Using Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory, this study strongly advocates for learning that involves transformation or simultaneous change in the learner. Putting a strong emphasis on the idea that learning can be something other than the acquisition of pure knowledge or skills (Mezirow, 1991). Transformative learning is the process by which we transform our pre-existing frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective in order to generate beliefs and opinions that are more truthful or justified in order to guide action (Mezirow, 2000).

Critical reflections on one's own experiences are central to the transformative learning process. This can lead to new ideas and a better understanding of oneself and the world around them. Promoting critical reflection is thus the second essential component of transformative learning. It emphasizes reflection on content (meaning perspectives), process (how content is received and processed), and foundation (attention in relation to the underlying conditions that govern the content and the way it is treated). Conversation or dialogue is also an important component—both with oneself and with others. The dialogue is where the experiences and critical reflection take place. To make learning transformative, the dialogue must include direct attention to the participants' attitudes, feelings, personalities, and values (Tonseth and Bergsland, 2019).

Interviews are commonly used to assess transformative learning. Interviews can focus on learners' stories about a specific experience to gain insight into learning processes or outcomes, as well as to track learners' perspective changes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After critically evaluating interview transcripts and codes, formal senior high school education inside prison has had a significant impact on people deprived of liberty in a variety of ways. The outcomes were themed based on how the program affected PDLs, namely (a) a strong sense of gratitude (b) behavioral development (c) knowledge and skill development (d) employment potential (e) motivation, and (f) accountability. Elaborating on these themes, each is thoroughly explained based on actual data gathered from participants and hermeneutically discussed by the researchers, supported by related studies and in light of transformative learning theory.

3.1 Strong sense of gratitude

Since 2018, the existence of a formal senior high program inside a correctional facility in Leyte Regional Prison has allowed PDLs to participate in actual daily face-to-face classes and interact with actual teachers inside the classroom. Interacting with people from outside, without hesitation, and having a strong sense of authority over them increases their appreciation for the teachers, correction officers, and other personnel involved in the implementation of the SH program inside the jail. As PDL, they expected to be treated differently than other students because of their conviction; however, the programs' existence has provided them with opportunities to participate in curricular and extracurricular activities to fulfill the Department of Education's SH academic requirements. According to Schinkel (2014), education and training within prisons are activities that create positive experiences and foster positive emotions, including the expression of gratitude. These positive experiences also instill hope and gradually bring about change in each prisoner learner. Enhancing positive emotions through interactive activities such as the SH program inside prison can help prisoner learners become more motivated to rehabilitate (Gredecki & Turner, 2009) and more prepared for reintegration into free society. Most penal colonies and city jails in the Philippines only provide PDLs with alternative learning systems (ALS) and other vocational skills training. Senior high school program considered formal education, implemented in Leyte Regional Prison and by far the first SH program initiated by the Department of Education inside a correctional facility in the Philippines, continuously supports the Bureau of Corrections' reformatory mission in the country. Learners were able to continue what they had learned in school prior to incarceration, regardless of their age or the number of years since they last attended academic activities until enrollment in senior high. The majority of PDL are elementary and secondary school dropouts, and through an alternative learning system, which is also available inside the jail, they were able to complete their primary education and progress directly to senior high once eligible. This type of intervention inside prison creates a positive rehabilitation structure by generating genuine and caring supervision of prisoner learners (Esperian, 2010), preparing them to become better citizens once released.

The expression of deep gratitude after participating in and completing the senior high program demonstrates the positive outcome of the learning intervention inside the prison. Both adult learners and teachers were greatly challenged by learning in a controlled environment; however, these experiences enabled each of them to become autonomous and responsible for their own learning, as well as more independent thinkers. In this sense, transformative learning emphasizes the importance of adult learners being able to assume responsibility and focus on practical and attainable goals set in learning experiences provided by senior high school as an educational program. Through a coherent body of experience involving curricular and extra-curricular activities, the perception of each adult prisoner learner, their cognition and feelings have greatly shaped and limited their expectation and perception of the life they have inside the jail. Given the possibility of receiving a diploma upon completion of the academic program, PDL students began to reject the notions of suffering and disappointment, replacing them with gratitude, hope, and inspiration.

3.2 Behavioral Development

Participants mentioned the difficulty of being affected by chaos and misunderstanding and being unable to explain themselves when interviewed, owing to their struggles dealing with different personalities inside the jail. Prisoner learners' behavioral patterns were developed through a senior high school program. These experiences honed their public speaking skills through daily face-to-face classes, oral recitation, discussion, and classroom reporting. The ability to freely express their ideas while everyone is listening without judgment has developed their ability to be cautious of what they want to express-the same is true for prisoner learners who attentively listen to the reporter or the one speaking. Listening to others' ideas without rebutting them in the middle of a discussion is good practice for respect and open-mindedness. Because they are considered learners, PDL learners were expected to practice these behaviors in most cases. Furthermore, they claim to engage in these

behaviors even in their dormitories. Since being exposed to the program, most prisoner learners have begun to practice being mindful of their words when conversing with their co-prisoners. As mentioned during the interview, most students become politer and understanding of their co-inmates, as well as more respectful of their dorm mates, classmates, correction officers, and teachers.

PDL experience with a formal SH education inside prison is considered a frame of reference in Mezirow's transformative learning (1991, 1995 and 1996). As adult learners, their beliefs, value judgment, attitude, and feelings were influenced by the meaningful learning experiences provided by the Senior High Program. As a prisoner, they regard people in positions of authority, such as teachers, correction officers, and even those in the free society, as inferior to them. Their long-term agony has been based on their assumptions that these people will no longer treat them with respect as a result of the unlawful act that resulted in conviction. Things have not gone as planned since the establishment of the SH program as a reformatory strategy for them. The actions of the implementers, correction officers, and other people involved in the operation of the SH program were so different that PDL learners realized and recognized the huge bias they have in their minds as they pre-imagine the worst. Because of these false assumptions that they will no longer be given huge opportunities, such as continuing their education, it transformed their belief system and changed their pre-existing point of view of being "unworthy" to "valued."

The change in behavior remained after incarceration and was described by each PDL learner during the interview. As previously stated, knowing that they are from a correctional facility has made it easier for them to adjust to what others have labeled them. In most cases, an ex-convict struggles to adjust after only a few days out of prison. Because of the stigma associated with being a prisoner, they may face discrimination. Nonetheless, the self-confidence they gained through the senior high school program enabled them to overcome these obstacles and remain open to similar encounters in the future. Adult ex-prisoner learners' active participation inside the jail has truly nurtured them to critically think and reflect on others' assumptions, as well as self-reflection. It was assumed in Mezirow's Ten Phases of Transformative Learning (1998a, 1978b) that there is a reintegration into one's life based on conditions dictated by one's perspective. "Personal Transformation," which is facilitated by individual perceptions of experiences, meaningful events, society, and people, is regarded as essential in the holistic development of behavior. PDLs claimed to have had these meaningful experiences upon their reintegration into free society, providing sufficient perspective of oneself and view things in the absence of valuing negative comments or perspectives of others.

3.3 Knowledge and skills development

The senior high school program developed students' knowledge and skills in preparation for higher education courses as part of the K–12 curricula. In this case, the curriculum must allow each student to participate in more diverse learning activities that will assist them in developing specific skills.

According to the interview, participants improved their communication and numeracy skills. Learners are expected to gain general knowledge and skills in a variety of fields by participating in the General Academic Strand (GAS) offered to PDL learners. These fields include language and literature, science and advanced mathematics, social sciences related subjects, and business and economics subjects. Reporting, classroom-friendly debate, oral recitation, essay writing, and spelling activities helped them improve their oral and written communication skills. Solving real-world mathematical problems has improved their numeracy and other related skills. PDLs received the same level of education because the curriculum used to teach them is also used in public schools outside of prison. The participants emphasized that, despite the fact that they never completed their primary education in the free world, they are grateful to be able to continue learning inside the jail, with the same quality of education and skill development as schools outside.

A transformed learner is expected to gain knowledge and skills for putting one's plan into action. An adult learner can responsibly engage in meaningful learning experiences and value meaning on the process and result, as highlighted in Mezirow's Ten Phases Model of Transformative Learning. Through the SH program, which is available inside the prison, each PDL learner actively participated in learning activities with the goal of learning new skills and, more importantly, instilling in their minds the opportunities that would be available to them once they completed the program. It is innate in adult learners, emphasizing what, how, when, where, and why they are learning. The need to understand the value of what they are attempting to utilize their time with is more important for them in the sense that they are hoping to receive something in return for their efforts. Mezirow (1985) identified three types of learning: (a) instrumental, (b) dialogic, and (c) self-reflective. This is based on Habermas' (1971) original three types of learning (technical, practical, and emancipatory).

These types of learning significantly described the transformational perspective of adult learners. As prisoners with prior experiences, their prior experiences assimilate new ones, which meaning scheme constellates concept, belief, judgement, and feeling, which shapes new interpretation and realization.

PDLs' participation in the senior high school program provided them with knowledge and skills that proved useful after they were released from prison. In the interview, the participant stated that pre-employment training such as mock job interviews, project proposals, proper grooming, and preparing pre-employment documents made it easier for them to find better jobs. These activities encouraged critical reflective thought, imaginative problem solving, learner-centered, participatory, interactive learning, and group deliberation and problem solving. These activities are considered meaningful in Mezirow's (1991) transformative learning, and adult students, such as PDLs, will learn new information incorporated with an already well-developed symbolic frame of reference or their experiences prior to incarceration. Learning new skills and information is an active process that involves adults' thoughts, feelings, and dispositions, assisting each of them in transforming and understanding their experience.

3.4 Employment potential

Most PDL learners are likely to have had negative experiences in school prior to incarceration, so prior assistance is essential during the educational process (Manger and Langelid, 2005). Inside the prison, the senior high school program allows prisoners to participate in and complete academic experiences that allow them to improve job-related skills. Given that they were imprisoned while developing their skills, work immersions were implemented for them every second semester of 12th grade as part of the senior high school curricular program. PDLs were assigned to various sections of LRP to assist with office work.

A few of the tasks assigned to all PDL students participating in work immersion were assisting teaching staff and other correction officers in the management of correctional activities. The primary goal of such activity is to prepare for employment once reinstated in a free society. Tonseth and Bergsland (2019) argue, however, that these activities not only prepare for pre-employment but also provide social-relationship support during the educational process. The emphasis here is on the importance of social upbringing and professional education. As a result, education in prison must eliminate things that obstruct each PDL's thoughts and cause them to have problems.

Personal Development, Organization and Management, Applied Economics, and other business-related topics and discussions were deemed beneficial to PDLs in developing their knowledge and skills in business and financial management. These inspire them to pursue better careers in a free society by applying for job opportunities or starting small businesses to supplement their income. Being able to attend actual class sessions on these subjects opened their eyes to the importance of having a sustainable income source and how beneficial it is to have one rather than how bad their situation was prior to incarceration.

The majority of participants in this study also stated that their diploma from senior high school inside the prison was used for job applications. Even though they were stigmatized as a result of their incarceration, the skills they learned and developed while participating in academic curricula inside the jail served as their primary fuel for finding jobs and beginning to live in a free society. It would be easier for a transformed learner to adopt stigmatization if he or she was fully aware of his or her own development. According to transformative learning theory, educational interventions performed on PDL as adult learners improve their disposition, skills, behavior, and awareness, allowing them to evaluate their interaction with negative thoughts against them.

3.5 Motivation

According to the interviewees' responses, the Department of Education's senior high school program inside the Leyte Regional Prison has given them the desire to pursue learning while they are incarcerated. With the presence of Republic Act 10592 or the Good Conduct Time Allowance (GCTA), participants were encouraged to take part in the senior high school program for the chance to reduce their sentences. It is well recognized that the GCTA allows for sentence reductions if they function well and comply with the regulations imposed by authorities. Furthermore, participation in reformation programs can be considered legitimate in receiving GCTA; thus, it encourages every PDL to take part in reformation programs such as education and other activities related set by the said program. They participated in reformatory programs such as education in the hope of returning to a free society as soon as possible. Because these PDLs are housed in a controlled setting, they have plenty of time to complete their schoolwork. They are also barred from using certain devices that allow them to communicate with the outside world. As a result, rather than wasting time in their quarters, they used their free time to learn and develop their skills.

Their learning experiences included culminating activities and monthly celebrations. This is the time for them to show off their hidden talents and skills. According to Kerka (1995), a successful educational program inside a prison creates activities that are participatory and have meaningful contexts that address the needs of the learners. Similarly, Newman et al. (1993) stated that educational activities within prison must take into account PDLs' learning styles, cultural backgrounds, and multiple differences. These will assist learners in being motivated not only to participate, but also to structure their own learning while incarcerated.

Teachers and their roles were thought to be motivating to every PDL learner. As part of a teacher's job, which is to instill them with knowledge and skills required for their holistic development, it has seen learners motivated that they are treated truly as students, and face-to-face classes made them feel they are not prisoners at all. In teaching adult learners, facilitators or teachers gradually remove themselves from the role of co-learner, gradually transferring leadership to the group as they become self-directed and learn more about what they can be or how they can help everyone (Mezirow, 1991).

3.6 Accountability

While the participants juggle competing responsibilities and working for a living after incarceration, they also have obligations to their siblings and relatives. With the current state of education, their education and skills gained inside the prison were mostly beneficial. Printed modular distance learning is almost all learners' preferred mode of instruction today, and these participants have tutored their siblings and even relatives. Even though they barely have enough time to earn a living, they make time and become accountable to assist their siblings and relatives in answering their modules. Although tutoring siblings and younger relatives can be taxing, they enjoy it because it boosts their self-esteem and pride. Earning praise and commendation from their younger siblings and relatives motivates them to participate in the modules' learning activities.

Each adult learner's participation in the process and outcome of education is considered significant from the standpoint of transformative learning. Identifying how each learner achieves this stage of learning is through voluntary behavior on the nature where they feel compelled to help, share, or assist others (Mezirow, 1996). Taking responsibility and practicing appropriate behavioral patterns in accordance with social norms validates the full transformation of each adult learner. As a result, the developed sense of accountability within each PDL learner is a clear manifestation of the rehabilitative effect of the educational program inside prison.

4. Conclusion And Recommendations

Interviews have provided researchers with a clearer and more in-depth understanding of the rehabilitative effect of ex-prisoners who participated in the senior high program inside the prison culture prior to and after their release into free society. This study found that the senior high program inside the prison contributed to ex-prisoners expressing a strong sense of gratitude, behavioral development, knowledge and skill development, employment potential, motivation, and accountability. These effects allow prisoners to become better prepared to begin their lives in a society that is vastly different from prison culture. With all of the program's rehabilitative effects, this study reveals that senior high programs inside prison have a high potential to transform PDLs. From prison culture to post-incarceration, its benefits can influence each prisoner and ex-prisoner to see the individual potential for growth and reflection that there is a better life for them if their participation in the program is prioritized.

Researchers identified that adult education has encouraged each ex-prisoner to fully realize how important it is to value responsible decisions and be able to reflect on their lives, demonstrate new decisions, and think clearly on their decision making process (Mezirow, 1991). Conversation is also seen as beneficial and important in the process of assessing each learner's development as they participate in reformatory activities such as the SH program. It is regarded as a help in creating an environment that is conducive to the learners involved in the process (Tonseth and Bergsland, 2019). This research also wants to exemplify that transformative learning does not occur only after adult learners participate in education programs or after they complete the educational intervention. In the case of PDL learners, this study contends that transformative learning can occur during the process as well, but can only be affirmed through limited activities. Researchers discovered through hermeneutic analysis of the recordings that PDL learners had already demonstrated transformation prior to release through oral or verbal communication activities. It has been observed that the majority of them have already developed moral fortitude and have infused in their minds the potentiality of participating in such activity in order to assist each of them in achieving their future plans once reinstated in the free and open society.

Prisoners are a unique group of adults because the goal of being imprisoned is to change one's mind and behavior (Tonseth and Bergsland, 2019). Lawbreaker careers thought and action patterns differ from what society requires. Improvements in thought and behavior are required for successful rehabilitation and come back. Prisoners who are motivated to change will gain additional benefits in addition to the advantages of transformative learning. We notice a shift in action, new ways of being in the world, a new vision of self, new relationships with others, new attention, and a willingness to try new things. All of the participants have gone through some sort of transformation.

Rehabilitative effects mentioned in this study based on the responses of the participants indicate that formal education like SH program has a great potential for transformation, change and rehabilitation. There still many contexts of how PDLs can learn while inside prison like non-formal education that is also a good avenue to investigate more and understand deeply how these programs can greatly contribute to the holistic change of prisoners while incarcerated.

Senior high as an academic program operating inside prison has seen challenges in implementing some activities because of restricted materials that learners can utilize. Hence, this study highly recommends a more profound study that will create a contextualized curriculum that will consider allowed materials inside the jail, learner's environment and background following the competency of the strand offered inside the correctional jail.

Business-related disciplines and communication skills were mentioned most frequently by participants as being more valuable to most ex-prisoners in resuming their lives outside of prison. In this regard, the study suggests that implementing the Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM) strand of the senior high school program inside prison would be the greatest alternative for exposing students to more in-depth business and management learning experiences.

With the possibility of formal education within prison, such as the senior high program, it is highly recommended that the same program be implemented in other correctional facilities across the regions and countries in collaboration with education department offices nearby. Promoting education as one of several options for dealing with the growing number of offenders and repeat offenders could also be a good investment.

Finally, governments may want to explore sponsoring post-release education and job training for ex-offenders in order to increase the amount of education gained while in jail and ensure that trainees have a good chance of finding work.

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5. COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors declares no competing interest on this study.

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