

Assessing the Role of Counseling in Adjustment Behavior Leading to Parole among Prisoners at Sodo Prison Institution

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Abstract: *The present study examined the role of counseling in adjustment behavior leading to parole among prisoners at sodo prison institution. This researcher based on systematic sampling method, selected a total of 200 (male 125 Female 75) participants aged 18-42. Among this, 100 participants from parole received group with history of counseling service and 100 participants from parole denied with no history of counseling service. Furthermore, bell adjustment inventory, which is the dependent variable, was used to measure the adjustment level of both group in relation with home (family), emotion, social, and health component. Informed consent was taken to protect and respect the privacy of respondent at the time of data collection and pilot test was conducted on 25 participants. The validity co-efficient was found to be very high i.e., 0.834. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 16. The result of dependent t-test indicated that, after administration, participant engaged in counseling group showed statistically significant difference in the level of adjustment compared to non-counseling group (home; t-value 17.512, P=0.001, social; t- value 3.262, P=0.001, health; t- value 28.326, P= 0.001 and emotion t- value 41.502, P=0.001). On the other hand the association between variables (parole and counseling) was seen using chi- square (9.524), (P<0.05). Therefore sodo prison institution needs to incorporate more prisoners in counseling program.*

Keywords: Counseling, Adjustment behavior, Parole, Prisoners and Prison institutions

1. Background of the Study

The scientific study of crime and criminology is a relatively recent development. Criminality has evolved throughout history and criminologists have extensively researched various hypotheses to determine the causes of crime. Consequently, criminal justice agencies have implemented certain strategies targeted at controlling the offender's motivation to commit crime. Incarceration, or incapacitation, served as an appropriate method to deter criminals from further involvement in crime outside of prison (Levitt, 1998). While, for the most part, punishments given have been in line with the retributive view, realizing that the majority of offenders cannot be incarcerated for the remainder of their lifetime, the criminal justice system has over time introduced other sanction programs specifically intended to rehabilitate offenders. Criminal justice agencies using these methods ultimately desire to have the offender rehabilitated while in the criminal justice system so as to decrease the probability that they will re-offend once outside of the system. The main goal of rehabilitation is to have offenders evolve into law-abiding citizens and to not engage in illegal activity in the future. (Aker R.L & Sellers C.S., 2004)

Crime is a violation of societal rules of behavior as interpreted and expressed by the criminal law, which reflects public opinion, traditional values, and the view point of people currently holding social and political power. (Skagan) Individuals who violated these rules are subjects to sanction by state authority, social stigma, and loss of status. (Visher, 2012)

Crime can have a devastating effect both on the community and individual in many ways. The most common problem affecting three quarters of the community includes: fear, weaker attachments of residents, loss local involvement and neighborhood satisfaction. On the other hand because of the stigma attached to criminals, the individual may not exercise freely in the community which affects in turn their day to day activity. Difficulty sleeping, shame, self blame, and anger are other problems associated with criminals. (Ferror, 2003)

Behaviorism assumes that the chief business of man is to secure and maintain a functionally effective integration of his personality, on the one hand, and to secure and maintain an adequate and successful adjustment of his personality or organism to his environment, on the other hand. With this behavioristic assumption as a point of departure, the behaviorist sets about studying the technique of these two processes. He finds that the integration of his personality depends primarily upon the success of his adjustment to his environment, and also that the success of this adjustment is in no small degree dependent upon an effective integration of his personality. Since man appears on the scene at birth as an organism already integrated on a biological level, but with an adjustment to his new environment yet in the main to be established, the behaviorist begins with the study of the technique of this postnatal adjustment process.

This researcher happens to see prisoners complaining a lot about the way how Sodo prison institution offer parole to prisoners. Accordingly, instead of involving in counseling service, artificial behaviors are clearly manifested by prisoners to receive parole. This in turn affects the individual, community and country at large. The importance of counseling psychology is ignored and the number of prisoners

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who receive parole decreased from time to time. There is a gap in literature and needs to be addressed. This situation inspired the present researcher to study the issue.

2. Problem Statement

The Bureau of Justice Statistics has released new information on the rates of parole in the United State prisons. According to the information, the numbers are disturbing. The study was released in 2014 and tracked 404, 638 state prisoners from 30 states that were released in 2005. It found that 67.8 percent of the prisoners were denied the right of parole. The study further shows that most of the prisoners don't like to involve in counseling service.(Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008).

Literature revealed that inmates who participate in counseling programs have 63 percent higher chances of getting parole than those who do not (Kimberly, 2011). Moreover, counseling can be influenced by many factors including dual relationship, unprofessional conduct, mental illness, and drug and alcohol misuse (Stephen, 2012). Despite the presence of counseling professional in the institution, prisoners are not benefiting from it. The main reason is the community at prison is not aware of the importance of counseling psychology (Southern nations, nationalities and people's Prison Commission, 2014). The aim of the present study is to fill the gap in the area by suggesting training or seminars on the importance of counseling.

Research questions

- 1) Is there association between counseling and parole?
- 2) What is the importance of counseling in prison?
- 3) What initiates prisoners to involve in counseling?
- 4) What kinds of prisoners receive parole?
- 5) Whether Counseling is effective in bringing change?

Hypotheses

Ho.1.4.1. There will be no significant difference in the Emotional component score of adjustment scale between those who received counseling and those who do not receive counseling.

Ho.1.4.2. There will be no significant difference in the Home component score of adjustment scale between those who received counseling and those who do not receive counseling.

Ho.1.4.3. There will be no significant difference in the Health component score of adjustment scale between those who received counseling and those who do not receive counseling.

Ho.1.4.4. There will be no significant difference in the Social component score of adjustment scale between those who received counseling and those who do not receive counseling.

Ho.1.4.5. There will be an association between the prisoners who receive parole and participation in counseling program.

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the role of counseling in adjustment behavior leading to parole among prisoners at Sodo prison institution.

Operational Definitions

Adjustment behavior: the behavioral process by which humans maintain equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments.

Counseling: the treatment of emotional or behavioral problems through psychological techniques.

Parole: permission given to a prisoner to leave a prison before the end of a sentence usually as a reward for behaving well.

Prison: buildings where people are kept as punishment for a crime or while they are waiting to go court.

Prisoners: persons who are kept in prison as a punishment or while they are waiting for trial.

Delimitations

The present study officially set only for prisoners who received parole and those who don't get the chance of parole in Sodo Prison Institution. Giving due consideration to available resource of time and money the researcher limited his investigation only to Sodo Prison Institution.

Limitations

The findings of the present study cannot be generalized to prisoners outside Sodo Prison Institution. Due to lack of resources in the area, it was very challenging for the present researcher to access all the necessary documents related to the case under study. Moreover, the researcher is not fortunate enough to find any local studies done in Ethiopia in the area of counseling for prisoners.

3. Methodology

Research is a direct method to the solution of a problem. It gathers new knowledge. The goal of this research is to let prisoners benefit from counseling service. Research can be defined as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic.

Research can also be termed as an inquiry into the nature, the reasons for, and the consequences of any particular set of circumstances, whether these circumstances are experimentally controlled or recorded just as they occur. According to Clifford Woody (2001), research comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solutions; collecting, organizing and evaluating data, making deductions and reaching conclusions; and at last carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis''. This study is concerned with assessing the role of counseling in adjustment behavior leading to parole among prisoners at Sodo prison institution. The reasons for these studies are that there are various factors that affect prisoners because of their environmental, biological and social factors.

Research Design

This study is concerned with investigating the role of counseling in adjustment behavior leading to parole among prisoners at Sodo Prison Institution. To carry out this, the researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Study Site

The study was carried out in Sodo Prison Institution. Wolaita Sodo town is one of the sub zones of Southern Nations, Nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia. The city is organized in to four sub towns "Kifileketema". The town Wolaita Sodo has only one prison institution which is called Sodo prison Institution. According to the source from the institution currently there are 1426 prisoners.

Population Characteristics

According to the data base in Sodo prison institution, currently there are 1426 prisoners. Among this, 1358 are males and 68 are females. Out of this, 221 prisoners received counseling and the rest 385 do not received counseling. The researcher selected 100 participants randomly from each group. The present study has a total of 200 participants from both counseling received group and those who do not received counseling. This is considered as the target population of the study.

Sampling technique

The present study has two groups of participants counseling receiving group and the group which do not receive counseling. This researcher used systematic random sampling technique to obtain 100 participants from each group.

Data Collection

Background information's and Bell Adjustment Scale are data collecting tools used in this study. The questionnaire is prepared both in Amharic and English language. For that matter, language experts and Psychologists were consulted to avoid language problems. Finally, the Amharic version of the questionnaire was distributed to all participants in the study and data was collected.

Sampling frame for the pilot study

The questionnaires considered by the researchers were distributed for four experts in the field for psychology for validation. The main thrust was to determine whether the questionnaires items and dimension adequately reflected by the instruments prescribed by the objectives and were in consistent with the establishment of content validity and the face validity. Few suggestion and remarks were made by the experts on translation to Amharic and they were considered while administering the main study.

The pilot study was carried out by administering the questionnaires to a sample of 25 prisoners from Sodo Prisoner's Institution who were randomly selected. This was done to find the effectiveness of the questionnaire and to restrict the study to the requirement based on the responses given by the respondents.

The pilot study helps to modify the questionnaire by removing certain irrelevant questions and by adding more questions that would fetch related information, which equip the researcher to improve the standard of the questionnaire.

Result of the pilot study

The verbatim records of the transaction that took place in administering the instrument and the response of the respondent of the pilot study to the instrument administered were analyzed with response to the specific objectives of the pilot study. The informal questions comments and discussion which the investigator had with the respondents at the time of administering the instruments revealed that the instrument had adequate stimulus value to elicit genuine responses for each of the statements. The perusal of the transactions lends credibility to the data collected through the instrument. It is concluded that the instrument developed for the study provided necessary data required. The experience in the pilot study showed that at least one hour was needed for the respondent to answer the questions in the instrument. The data collected from the pilot study using the questionnaire was subjected to reliability test. By using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 16, the researcher computed the reliability (Cronbach Alpha) for the instruments used for the study. The computed reliability (Cronbach Alpha) for the instruments used for the study instruments are as follows:

Table 1: Shows instrument reliability after administering by experts.

S.No.	Instruments	Cronbach Alpha
1	Bell Adjustment Scale	0.81

Instruments

In this study, the researcher used two types of questionnaires to collect data. These are Background information and Bell Adjustment Scale.

Background information's includes socio-demographic characteristics such as sex, age, religious background, educational status, economic level and marital status.

1) Bells Adjustment Questionnaire:

Bell's Adjustment inventory (Short) was in English, developed by Dr. Mrs. Lalita Sharma. The inventory consists of 40 statements which are related to 4 areas of adjustment - Home (Family), Social, Emotional and Health. Each area has 10 items which can be answered by yes or no response. The questionnaire was administered individually with the following instructions- "Through this inventory, an attempt has been made to study your adjustment of different areas. Please give your answers without any hesitation, because your answer will be kept strictly confidential. If you agree with the content of question then put a mark "X" in front the column of "Yes" and if you feel disagreement then put a mark (X) in front of "No". You have to answer of all questions. Please try to finish the work as early as possible." The author has given the reliability for inventory by split-half method and by test-retest method. Split-half and test-retest reliabilities are 0.927

and 0.897 respectively. The validity co-efficient was found to be very high i.e., 0.834.

The scoring of this inventory is simple which can be scored simply by counting the number of correct answers in each area of adjustment. High scores on the inventory indicate low adjustment, whereas low scores indicate high adjustment, in different areas of adjustment as well as adjustment taken as a whole.

2) Data Collection Procedures

To conduct and accomplish the research, the following steps were followed in the study:

- The researcher requested a letter of introduction from the School of Psychology, Wolaita Sodo University, to Sodo Prison Institution office.
- Sodo Prison Institution accepted the request and gave permission to collect data.
- After receiving the permission to collect data the researcher moved to contact prisoners face to face.
- Before distributing the questionnaire, every respondent were briefly explained about the purpose of the study.
- Finally, the questionnaires were distributed to all participants in the study and the data collected properly.

Data Analyses

The data is visually checked up, organized, coded in a computer Excel, missing and inappropriate responses were screened and entered into a computer software system (SPSS-16) for analysis. Then, the result is presented in the form of tables, texts, frequencies, percentage and summary statistics such as mean, standard deviation and percentages to describe the study population in relation to relevant variables.

Ethical Consideration

Before distributing the questionnaire, every respondent were briefly explained about the purpose of the study. The study carried out after obtaining consent and confidentiality of responses which was kept throughout the study. Respondents' participation was based on voluntarily and Sodo Prison institution was asked about their permission in a written letter from Wolaita Sodo University. Personal privacy and cultural norms were respected.

4. Results

This chapter examines and discusses the findings from the descriptive and inferential analyses used to answer the research questions posed by the present study. The major purpose of the study was to investigate the role of counseling in adjustment behavior leading to parole among prisoners at Sodo Prison Institution.

Mean difference in home score in the Adjustment scale between counseling group and Non counseling group

S. No.	Groups	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	p-value
1	Non counseling group	100	6.49	1.2101	17.412	0.001
2	Counseling group	100	3.51	1.23212		

In the above table, the t-value 17.412 for the mean difference in the home component score of adjustment scale between prisoners who received counseling and non-counseling group is significant ($P=0.001$) The mean home component score of adjustment scale for counseling group and non-counseling group were 3.51 and 6.49 respectively. It reveals that prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well with the home when compared to non-counseling group. The proposed hypothesis Ho.1.4.1. is rejected.

Mean difference in Social score in the Adjustment scale between counseling group and Non-counseling group

S. No.	Groups	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	p-value
1	Non counseling group	100	5.2500	1.10440	3.262	0.001
2	Counseling group	100	4.7400	1.10664		

In the above table, the t-value 3.262 for the mean difference in the social component score of adjustment scale between counseling group and non-counseling group is significant ($P=0.001$) The mean Emotional component score of adjustment scale for counseling group and non-counseling group were 4.7400 and 5.2500 respectively. It reveals that prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well with socially when compared to prisoners who had non-counseling. The proposed hypothesis Ho.1.4.2. is rejected.

Mean difference in Health score in the Adjustment scale between counseling group and Non-counseling group

S. No.	Groups	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	p-value
1	Non counseling group	100	6.4400	0.97773	28.326	0.001
2	Counseling group	100	2.5200	0.97938		

The above table the t-value 28.326 for the mean difference in the health component score of adjustment scale between counseling group and non-counseling group is significant ($P=0.001$) The mean health component score of adjustment scale for counseling group and non-counseling group were 2.5200 and 6.4400 respectively. It reveals that prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well with health when compared to non-counseling group. The proposed hypothesis Ho.1.4.3. is rejected.

Mean difference in emotional score in the Adjustment scale between counseling group and Non-counseling group

S. No.	Groups	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	p-value
1	Non counseling group	100	8.0600	1.04272	41.502	0.001
2	Counseling group	100	1.9400	1.05261		

The above table the t-value 28.326 for the mean difference in the emotional component score of adjustment scale between counseling group and non-counseling group is significant (P=0.001) The mean health component score of adjustment scale for counseling group and non-counseling group were

1.9400 and 8.0600 respectively. It reveals that the prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well with emotion when compared to prisoners who had non-counseling. The proposed hypothesis Ho.1.4.4. is rejected.

Groups * Parole Cross Tabulation

			Parole		Total
			Did not receive Parole	Received Parole	
Groups	Prisoners received Counseling	Count	76	24	100
		% within Groups	76.0%	24.0%	100.0%
		% within Parole	45.2%	75.0%	50.0%
	Prisoners not willing to receive Counseling	Count	92	8	100
		% within Groups	92.0%	8.0%	100.0%
		% within Parole	54.8%	25.0%	50.0%
Total		Count	168	32	200
		% within Groups	84.0%	16.0%	100.0%
		% within Parole	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In the above table, the chi-square value 9.524 for the association between the prisoners who got parole after receiving counseling and the prisoners who were not willing to receive counseling is significant (P < 0.002). It means that prisoners who were willing and received counseling had more chances of receiving parole when compared to the prisoners who were not willing to receive counseling. The proposed of hypothesis Ho.1.4.5. is accepted.

5. Discussion

The purpose of this section is to see whether the current research hypothesis is approved or not. The finding which is presented in chapter four is interpreted and discussed. Moreover, the major finding of the research is also discussed in relation to previous research findings conducted elsewhere.

The major concern of this study was to examine the role of counseling in adjustment behavior leading to parole among prisoners at Sodo prison institution. In this research, prisoners who obtained parole aged 19-52 years were included. 100 counseling received group and 100 non counseling received groups were selected by using systematic random sampling method, so as to see the role of counseling in adjustment behavior.

The overall result of this study shows that the adjustment score of counseling received group were significant when compared with those of the non-counseling group.

The study revealed that prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well with at home when compared to non-counseling group. This is indicated in table-7. The result was t-value 17.412 and p<0.001. The mean value for counseling group is 3.51, whereas for non-counseling group is 6.49. This indicates that significant change is obtained due to counseling.

This finding is supported by other researchers conducted elsewhere. For instance, a research review by Haizler and Bernaed (2009) on the effectiveness of counseling in adjustment behavior concluded that after counseling prisoners were able to adjust at home compared to non-counseling group. In addition, counseling has been given successfully with prisoners with numerous problems. Among this (Weaver & Matthews, 1993) proved that counseling is effective in adjustment behavior.

Findings with respect to social revealed that prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well compared to prisoners who had no counseling. Table-8 clearly shows that the t-value 3.262 for the mean difference between two groups is significant (P<0.001). The mean value for counseling group is 4.74 where as for non counseling group is 5.25. This proved that counseling is significant to bring change. This finding is similar with the research work done by Bernaed, (2009) on the role of counseling in adjustment behavior. According to this research, those who involved in counseling were able to adjust socially compared to non-counseling group.

The data indicated that in terms of health prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well compared to prisoners who had no counseling. This is indicated in table-10. The result was t-value 28.326 and p<0.001. The mean value for counseling group is 2.5200, whereas for non-counseling group is 6.4400. This obviously indicates the role counseling. This finding is consistence with other researchers conducted elsewhere. For instance, a research review by Haizler and Bernaed (2009) on the effectiveness of counseling in adjustment behavior concluded that after counseling prisoners were able to adjust at health compared to non-counseling group. In addition, a research by (Weaver & Matthews, 1993) revealed that counseling is effective in adjustment behavior.

On the other hand the present study also founded that prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust emotionally compared to prisoners who had no counseling. As it is indicated on table-12, t-value 28.326 for the mean difference in the emotional component score of adjustment scale between counseling group and non-counseling group is significant ($P=0.001$) 17.412 and $p<0.001$. The mean value for counseling group and non-counseling group were 1.9400 and 8.0600 respectively. This also shows the significant role of counseling. This finding is supported by other researchers conducted elsewhere. For instance, a research review by Haizler and Bernaed (2009) on the effectiveness of counseling in adjustment behavior concluded that after counseling, prisoners were able to adjust emotionally compared to non-counseling group. Furthermore, counseling paved the way for prisoners to be emotionally stable.

Looking for association between prisoners who got parole after receiving counseling and the prisoners who were not willing to receive counseling, it is inferred that there is a significant difference existing between counseling group and non-counseling group with respect to adjustment.

Therefore based on the findings of the present research, the researcher accepted that there is significant difference in adjustment between two groups which results due to counseling.

6. Conclusion

This study was aimed to look into the role counseling in adjustment behavior leading to parole among prisoners at Sodo prison institution. Based on the findings, the following conclusions are made:

- Counseling had a statistically significant role in adjustment behavior when compared to non-counseling group.
- Prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well with home when compared to non-counseling group.
- Prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well with socially when compared to prisoners who had non-counseling.
- Prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well with health when compared to non-counseling group.
- Prisoners who had counseling were able to adjust well with emotion when compared to prisoners who had non-counseling.
- Prisoners who were willing and received counseling had more chances of receiving parole when compared to the prisoners who were not willing to receive counseling.

Based on the descriptive data analysis discussed above, one can conclude that counseling is effective in helping the adjustment of prisoners.

7. Recommendations

The researcher having arrived at the above findings, these are the recommendations that are likely to help prisoners benefit from the science of counseling psychology.

- 1) Since the contribution of counseling psychology is feasible, more should be done by professional counselors in the institution to help prisoners benefit from counseling service.
- 2) More prisoners should be included in counseling program which helps them to gain different skills and the right of parole to lead crime free life
- 3) Head of the institution and staff members should be aware of the importance of counseling service, encourage prisoners to involve in counseling service and play their part in making the environment conducive for professional counselors to attain their goals. Which can make them useful individuals, benefit their families in particular and the society and country in general.
- 4) The finding of the current study revealed that counseling is effective in increasing the chance of prisoners to obtain parole. This suggests that involvement in counseling service should be included as one of the requirements to get parole.
- 5) Currently there is only one counseling professional for around 1426 prisoners in the institution. Immediate response is recommended to hire more counseling professionals.
- 6) In the long run different trainings and seminars should be prepared by Sodo prison institution in collaboration with professionals in the area which is aimed at creating awareness about the importance of counseling psychology.
- 7) Little or no research has been done on the role counseling in adjustment behavior leading to parole. There is a need to study more the issue to decrease recidivism in the country.
- 8) Provide linkage to treatment programs outside of prison for released inmates.

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