

# ANALYSIS OF REMANDED AND SENTENCED INMATES ON THE BASIS OF AGGRESSION, DEPRESSION, AND ABILITY CHANGES

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**ABSTRACT**--*The objective of the research was to understand the relationship between aggression, depression, and ability changes. Another objective was to identify the differences between level of aggression, depression, and ability change on remanded and punished inmates. The Aggression Questionnaire, Beck Depression Inventory and University of Rhode Island Changes Assessment were applied as core tools to understand inmate's aggression, depression, and ability changes. The employed research methodology was quantitative. Survey method was used for data collection from 140 young prison inmates in a prison in north Malaysia. The analysis of Levene's test for equality of variances and t-test for equality of means showed significant differences in aggression, depression, and ability change between remanded and sentenced inmates. Results of the study has shown a significant difference between aggression, depression, and ability change among remanded and sentenced inmates.*

**Keywords**--*Ability Changes, Aggression, Depression, Prison Inmates, Malaysia*

## I. INTRODUCTION

According to Malaysian Home Ministry inmates are aged between 18-21 years (KDN. S. 171/1355 KITZ: PN (PU) 163/11.1.). These inmates get depressed and aggressive because of stay at prison. The purpose of prison is to improve the mind-set by keeping them in prison and to enhance the ability to make them positive. Saralah (2016) found out that inmates have certain issues like aggression, depression and ability change. She further argued that because of high level of aggression and depression change ability is low. This study covers three aspect of young inmates; aggression, depression, and ability change.

Specifically, aggression is defined as a hard physical act which hurt another individual (Koeswore, 1998). Koeswore (1998) categorized aggression into two different categories which are physical and verbal. High level of aggression is caused due to long stay in imprisonment. Aggression has a negative impact on the inmates. Several studies have found that inmates have high level of aggression (Susnan, 1985; Saralah, 2010; Christina, 2008; Michael, 1997). Despite this, very few studies on aggression have been conducted in Malaysia (Saralah, 2013). High level of aggression restricts ability change. For example, Bahrke (1997) said that aggression happens in every individual because of the high and low test-Ronen hormone. Bahrke (1997) further argued that a high

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level of test-Ronen hormone produces great level of aggression, and because of the great level of aggression; the individual will feel depressed as well.

Depression is a sensation of being dejected, depressed, and anxiety and it can also be segregated as verbal and non-verbal (Aeron-Beck, 1996). Depression is the opposite of aggression. In aggression people become reactive while in depression people become low and sad and have a high feeling of self-pity (Saralah, 2016). This feeling of self-pity reduces the ability change of the inmates.

Ability change was also linked to inmates' behavior. Ability change is the ability to change ones behavior towards society or things (Mariamdarani & Ishak, 2014). Senin (2010) said that ability change of an individual must initially come from internal and then external. He categorized change ability into six categories which are: 1- A feeling of not being satisfied with current situations which lead to desire for changes. 2- Realization of lacking of the society, individual him/her self want to amend it. 3- New changes might have certain requirements, therefore, the individual need to accept those requirements. 4- There might be some problems with adoption of new system, so individual must find away to solve those problems. 5- An individual will feel frustrated with the needs of changes so a preparation for facing the frustration should be created (Senin, 2010).

Research findings from the field of psychology (Azlina, 2010; Saralah, 2010; Howard, 1999) and training programs (Edens, 1999) provide evidence of relationship among aggression, depression, and ability change. For example, Howard (1999) highlighted high rate of suicide in depression lead inmates. In another study, Saralah (2010) found a strong linkage between aggression, depression, and ability change. She argued that because of previous aggression they feel depression while in prison and there is no ability change, as the person has repeated the offenses more than three times. So it seems that there seems a difference between remanded and sentenced prisoners. The two extremes; committing a suicide or doing crimes again, both the extremes are very serious issues. The study on differences in ability change between remanded and sentenced inmates has not gain any attention in Malaysia. At the same time, scarce literature over the world has analyzed the relationship between aggression, depression, and ability to change among inmates. Thus, the current study is an attempt to identify the relationship between the observed variables along with exploring the differences between remanded and sentenced inmates in their aggression, depression, and ability change.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Literature review was conducted to understand depression, aggression, and ability change and the reason behind choosing these for the study. The literature review covers the understanding, and reasoning for using these constructs in the study. The literature review covered aggression, depression, and ability change. All the constructs have been discussed in order to understand their impact and influence because of remand and sentence.

## **III. AGGRESSION**

Aggression is a reflection of human being towards an act that aggravate some belligerence behaviors. Therefore, it's unfair for such a summarization like physically or verbally explicit aggressive behaviors are more

violent or aggressive, comparatively aggression could be a negative attitude towards their service in prison/correctional counselors, probabilities of problematic behaviors/recidivism, or deceitful manners during incarceration. Researcher managed to investigate the relationship between utilization of Malaysian-IPPP with correctional officers' evaluations on prison inmates

#### **IV. DEPRESSION**

High level of hopelessness and sadness which are experienced over a longer period of time are the synonym of depression. Beck (1978) and Beck, Rush, Shaw, and Emery (1979) introduced most powerful, dominant, controlling, strong, authoritative, persuasive, important theories of depression. The explanation continuous by summarizing, people who become the victim of depression already had experienced because of creation of dysfunctional pattern regarding the world around them. Recent theories on psychology and counseling have been developed on the similar ideas (e.g Saralah, 2010), and experiential agents have analyzed that either depressed adult actually have differences over the controls in their remembrance for expressive material. Researches have highlighted that depressed have a biased remembrance for adverse material in contrast with non-depressed adults (e.g. Berry & Kuiper, 1981; Kuiper & Pery, 1982; Bradley & Mathews, 1983).

#### **V. ABILITY CHANGES**

Vic Pomeroy (2003) highlighted that the imprisonment is to educate the criminals to stay away from criminal activities. People in jails have issues like usage of drugs, issues regarding high level of anger, issues in the relationships, destitution, joblessness and an attitude of short ambition. Thus, improvement in the ability change might prove in reduction of committing offence. Most would consider such statement with a mark, will just be a part of great shortfall. Thus, there are multiple factors which need to be catered to make a substantial change in the life of prisoners. Thus, there is no harm in saying that criminal activity is a consequence of several factors, any intervention needs to be taken in to account of this should be realistic in aims.

#### **VI. RELATED WORK**

Many researchers have shown that within the realm of aggression, depression, and ability change, there is scarcity of research over these kind of variables that have been tested empirically (Saralah, 2010). Despite the fact that this study failed to found a sole devoted research that has studied these variables collectively on inmates. Such studies are very rare, only Howard (1999), Azlina (2010) and Saralah (2010) have evidenced the relationship between these variables. Thus, the objective of current research is to identify the relationship between aggression, depression, and ability change variables along with investigating the different levels on aggression, depression, and ability change between remanded and sentenced.

#### **VII. HYPOTHESES**

On the basis of the issue discussed and literature review following hypothesis have been developed which were tested through statistical analysis:

- 1- Aggression and depression among inmates are independent.
- 2- Aggression and ability change among inmates are independent.
- 3- Depression and ability change among inmates are independent.
- 4- The differences between remanded and sentencing on the level of aggression are insignificant.
- 5- The differences between remanded and sentencing on the level of depression are insignificant.
- 6- The differences between remanded and sentencing on the level of ability change are insignificant.

## VIII. METHODOLOGY

The research is based in identifying the relationships among the three variables under discussion; Aggression, depression, and ability change. This study is a cross sectional correlational study. The second thing was to find out differences among remanded and sentenced inmates. The study used primary data for analysis and adopted the questionnaires that have previously been used several times.

## IX. SUBJECTS

A sample of 140 prisoners in north Malaysia were selected as respondents. For the purpose of conducting this study 70 males and 70 females were chosen as respondents. Purposive sampling was applied on population depending on their crimes. Respondents were categorized in two different sectors; remanded 72 (51.4%) and sentenced 68 (48.6). The permission from the authority of respondents was taken by the researcher. The names of the respondents have not been shown so there was no ethical concern involved secondly, they will not be asked with any penetrating question.

## X. PROCEDURES AND INSTRUMENTS

All respondents completed the research survey which was used for assessing their aggression, depression, and ability change. SPSS 20 was used to compute the results. For measuring the reliability of the instrument Cronbach's alpha has been calculated. The criterion for Cronbach's alpha is that if the value increases above 0.7 then the instrument is considered as reliable. Even some authors say that if the value is above 0.6 even then the instrument can be used. In this study three instruments have been used for the collection of data from the respondents who were prisoners. The instruments are as follows:

*Aggression Questionnaire.* The questionnaire on aggression was uni-dimensional which was adapted from Buss and Perry (1992). The scale comprised of 29 questions ranging from 1- strongly disagree to 5- strongly agree. For the current research, the reliability coefficient of aggression questionnaire was indicated as very good because the value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.98.

**Beck Depression Inventory.** The questionnaire used for the measurement of depression contains 21 questions which were adapted from Aaron T. Beck (1996). The questions ranging from 0- not sad to 3- very sad were asked. The value of reliability coefficient of beck depression inventory indicated acceptable scale reliability with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.98.

**URICA Scale.** The questionnaire used to measure ability change among inmates was adapted from (University of Rhode Island Changes Assessment, 1993). The scale consists of four dimensions and 32 items. The four dimensions are; (1) Precontemplation which consists of 8 questions, (2) Contemplation which is consists of 8 questions, (3) Action which consists of 8 questions, (4) Maintenance which consists of 8 questions.

A reliability coefficient indicated acceptable scale reliability with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.998. Reason behind getting such a high value was repetitive usage of the same instrument, as this instrument is commonly used by the imprisonment staff to measure aggression, depression, and ability change.

All the three instruments were translated and had been using by Prison Department of Malaysia as first entry screening when ones ordered to place in jailed. However these tools are also taken from Saralah, 2016.

## **XI. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

For the purpose of analysis on the basis of the objectives of the study correlation analysis was employed to measure the correlation among aggression, depression, and ability change. For analysing the differences among the same variables based on remanded and imprisoned independent sample t test was employed.

## **XII. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGGRESSION DEPRESSION AND ABILITY CHANGE VARIABLES**

The study is based on observing the difference between three variables which are aggression, depression, and ability change on the basis of remanded and sentenced inmates. Leven's test has been applied to find the actual differences if any exists between remanded and sentenced inmates. Table one shows the descriptive analysis of the three variables for which the change has been seen. The table shows that the mean values of remanded in aggression and depression is higher as compared to sentenced whereas, the mean value for ability change in lesser in remanded as compared to sentenced. Furthermore, the standard deviation also shows that the deviation in remanded inmates is higher as compared to the sentenced inmates. This shows that remanded inmates get aggressive in remand and several went into depression as well on the other hand the chances of ability change are lesser as compared to sentenced. The descriptive statistics are further exposed to Levene's test for equality of variances which will further guide the analysis to find the real differences between the remanded and sentenced inmates on the basis of aggression, depression, and ability change.

**Table 1 Descriptive Results for Domains Investigated**

| Indicators     | Group     | N  | Mean | SD    |
|----------------|-----------|----|------|-------|
| Aggression     | Remanded  | 72 | 2.87 | 1.829 |
|                | Sentenced | 68 | 1.97 | 1.235 |
| Depression     | Remanded  | 72 | 3.01 | 1.763 |
|                | Sentenced | 68 | 2.03 | 1.329 |
| Ability Change | Remanded  | 72 | 1.97 | 2.013 |
|                | Sentenced | 68 | 3.21 | 1.543 |

**Table 2 Levene's test for equality of variances for Domains investigated**

| Indicators     | F-Value | N     |
|----------------|---------|-------|
| Aggression     | 1.576   | 0.110 |
| Depression     | 1.399   | 0.231 |
| Ability Change | 1.185   | 0.141 |

**Table 3 t-test for equality of means for Domains investigated**

| Indicators     | Assumption of variance assumed | t-value | df | Sig.  | Mean diff. | SE diff |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---------|----|-------|------------|---------|
| Aggression     | Equal variances assumed        | 3.41    | 72 | 0.001 | 0.792      | 0.232   |
|                | Equal variances not assumed    | 3.33    | 68 | 0.001 | 0.792      | 0.238   |
| Depression     | Equal variances assumed        | 2.75    | 72 | 0.006 | 0.521      | 0.189   |
|                | Equal variances not assumed    | 2.71    | 68 | 0.005 | 0.521      | 0.189   |
| Ability Change | Equal variances assumed        | 3.12    | 72 | 0.002 | 0.213      | 0.216   |
|                | Equal variances not assumed    | 3.22    | 68 | 0.003 | 0.213      | 0.216   |

Table 2 and table three presents the findings of the data analysis. In order to find the differences among inmates who have been remanded or sentenced have analyzed by using Leven's test for equality of variances. The findings are presented in table 2. The findings revealed all the sig. values above 0.05 which shows that all the null hypothesis have to be rejected that the variances are equal.

In table 3 the test for equality of means has been applied. This test is applied to find whether there were significant differences among values of aggression, depression, and ability change among the remanded and sentenced inmates. The calculated values for the indicators revealed that the significance values for aggression, depression, and ability change were less that 0.05 showing significant differences between the two groups.

### **XIII. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The findings of the analyzed data with the help of Pearson correlation support that there is a strong relationship between; aggression, depression, and ability change. The results have also shown that there are significant differences in aggression, depression, and ability change among remanded and sentenced groups. Thus, the objective of the study to examine the relationships among aggression, depression, and ability change, which were not examined by previous researchers has been fulfilled. Therefore, the results of this study indicate significant correlation between these variables. Furthermore, hardly any study has been conducted to explore the differences in level of aggression, depression, and ability change among remanded and sentenced inmates. Thus, the second set of objectives to check the differences between remanded and sentenced inmates has also been established. The findings of this study would be very helpful for further studies, for observing interventions for the reduction in aggression, depression as well as to increase the ability change among inmates.

Finally, this study is similar to previous researches in the observed field and certainly has few limitations. First, limitation is the use of quantitative data which has been collected through self-report measures; thus, there are significant possibilities that responses may not be based on their original opinion (Creswell, 1994). Therefore, this study recommends that future researchers should use qualitative method. Another limitation was application of purposive sampling for collecting the data, which may not be true representative for the entire population. Future researches are recommended to analyze the relationships among these variables between inmates over a large sample and also by applying a different sampling technique.

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