

Beyond the Bars: Quantifying Criminology Students' Attitudes Towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs

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ABSTRACT

Widespread societal bias against persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs fuels a persistent stigma that hinders their journey to reintegration into the community. In light of the issue, this quantitative research aimed to assess the attitudes of 292 criminology students at UM Digos College towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs. The result revealed a moderate level of attitudes towards PDLs and former PDLs. Moreover, female students, older age groups, and upper-year level students demonstrated more favorable and empathetic attitudes, suggesting that social roles, maturity, and academic exposure may have an influence. Additionally, an awareness program was designed to provide criminology students with direct exposure to experiences of imprisonment and rehabilitation through the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Awareness Seminar and supervised prison visits, aiming to foster empathy and reduce stigma.

Keywords: attitudes, criminology students, persons deprived of liberty (PDLs), former PDLs

INTRODUCTION

Negative societal attitudes towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs continue to create a stigma that significantly affects their reintegration into society. After being released, former PDLs often have a hard time re-entering society. Former PDLs face considerable obstacles during their return to society, including stigmatization, low employment options, inadequate levels of support, and discrimination, all of which present barriers to successful reintegration (Bidola et al., 2024). Some challenges arising from the correctional experience centers on the stigmatization towards PDLs and former PDLs that leads to significant barriers to reintegration (Rachmawati & Hamzah, 2024). Stigmatization, societal labeling, and isolation of PDLs had a significant impact on how frequently they reoffend (Adamu et al., 2023).

The acceptance of PDLs and former PDLs into society is one of the critical keys to successful rehabilitation and reintegration. Policies based on incapacitation and retribution further reinforce the negative societal attitudes towards former PDLs. Most of the population will be unable to surmount both personal and social limits to their reintegration, leading to increased rates of criminal behaviors or being imprisoned again after release from police supervision (Warren, 2023). According to Butts (2021), labeling is a serious issue for reentry and leads to both lower self-esteem and higher rates of reoffending for former PDLs. Studying attitudes towards former PDLs can help create evidence-based strategies to end the cycle of incarceration, lower reoffending rates, and build a more inclusive and supportive community for all. Including former PDLs (Batur & Akbaş, 2023). The importance of accessing and quantifying the attitudes of criminology students towards ex-Prisoners (PDLs) is crucial as they prepare to become future law enforcers, jail officers, probation and parole officers, and correctional officers.

In the Philippines, the prospect of living outside of jail might elicit a range of emotions, including excitement and hope, as well as doubt and concern. PDLs battled to meet their duties to their families while also facing social disapproval and the urge to commit suicide as a means of escape. Despite these obstacles, they maintain faith in God and find meaning in striving to be a better version of themselves (Bersamina & Quero, 2023). One

of the jails in the town of Bayombong is home to the Nueva Vizcaya provincial jail. To keep PDLs occupied and productive during their incarceration, the jail provides a variety of programs (Eusebio, 2019). The government has made an effort to help PDLs and former PDLs improve their lives, even while they are in jail. These studies have just proven that PDLs and former PDLs deserve a second chance and should not be labeled. Pulta (2024) stated that the DOJ holds the view that these PDL are not inherently bad individuals. They are individuals who have made poor choices in their lives. Individuals deserve humane treatment and services that facilitate their reform and reintegration into our communities as productive members.

A study project in Nasipit, Agusan Del Norte, examined the lifestyles of former convicts after their release from jail. Their review discovered that returning to the local region after such outstanding performances is difficult. Finding a job was tough, as was recovering community trust. Furthermore, stigmatization, which is a regional issue, has a substantial influence on ex-offenders' impressions of their lives (Pino et al., 2021). A study conducted by criminology students at the University of Mindanao Main Campus stated that a PDL's life is immediately impacted by their imprisonment. The initial phase in prison is highlighted by a sudden lack of control, uncontrollable behaviors, and chaos, all of which may result in a very heartbreaking circumstance. (Cerbania & Magbojos, 2024). In Mindanao, specifically in Davao de Oro, ex-offenders are regarded as permanently convicted due to neglect and restrictions, as societal stigma persists against individuals incarcerated for habitual offenses (Palgan & Apolinario, 2022). This stigma influences the reintegration effort and causes negative self-perception among other issues. This result supports earlier research showing that most of the problems former PDLs go through are related to the effects of stigma (Pendang & Nabe, 2024).

Despite growing global interest in criminal justice reform and reintegration, the existing body of research reveals a gap in understanding how criminology students perceive PDLs and former PDLs. The researchers have not come across any local studies on this topic. Even while criminal justice reform and the reintegration of PDLs and former PDLs are receiving more attention worldwide, research on how students view these people is still conspicuously lacking. In Reamico's (2022) study, the challenges of reintegration, including social stigma and employment difficulties, are highlighted, but the exploration of how criminology students perceive these issues is not addressed. Moreover, the research of (Sarenas et al. 2024) emphasizes the role of rehabilitation programs in shaping reintegration outcomes. Still, it lacks insight into how future criminal justice professionals, such as criminology students, internalize these findings. The study is deemed essential to pursue, particularly in the local context, as it addresses notable gaps in existing literature. By focusing on the attitudes of criminology students at UM Digos College, this research not only fills a critical void in the literature but also contributes actionable insights for shaping inclusive curricula, reducing stigma, and developing awareness programs. Locally, this could empower educational institutions to cultivate more empathetic and informed practitioners, ultimately supporting smoother reintegration of PDLs and former PDLs into their communities.

This research is based on Howard Becker's Labelling Theory (1963) as cited by Bernburg (2009) which states that labeling Theory is a theory that suggests that while deviant behaviors can have different origins, once individuals are labeled as deviants, they often encounter new challenges due to how they and others react to the negative stereotypes (stigma) associated with the label. This theory states that individuals who are given a label eventually subscribe to that label" (Schultz, 2014). Labeling theory suggests that individuals who are labeled and punished for being deviant may perceive their stigma as their primary identity, which can influence their behavior (Ascani, 2012). By applying labeling theory, the study can assess the effects of such labels on students' attitudes and their impact on the reintegration and social acceptance of former PDLs in general.

Furthermore, Georg Lukács' Standpoint Theory (1971) serves as the foundation of this study, a form of critical realism that focuses on how material conditions shape both group and individual perspectives. That is, perspectives are often central in standpoint theory (Hazelton et al., 2021). Standpoint theory is grounded in and justified by the concept of a just society, which addresses the root of inequality (Renzulli, 2022). Additionally, standpoint can reveal prejudices, presumptions, and flawed reasoning in a scientific field, as well as generate new research directions and more accurate depictions of reality (Friesen & Goldstein, 2022). With respect to the study, standpoint theory demonstrates how student perceptions of PDLs and former PDLs are shaped by their social, educational, and cultural positions. The research, informed by standpoint theory, suggests that people's attitudes are shaped by social structures that either perpetuate or challenge discrimination and prejudice.

The study aimed to measure the attitudes of criminology students towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and their views on former PDLs. The term "Persons Deprived of Liberty" (PDL) describes individuals who have committed crimes and are currently in government custody, either in jail or prison facilities. On the other hand, former PDLs consist of individuals who have spent time in prison or jail but have since completed their sentences and are no longer incarcerated.

The research findings will benefit the following groups: Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs, who will derive the most value from this research. The study reveals the attitudes of criminology students, which will inform the development of rehabilitation programs, decrease social discrimination, and support reentry efforts. The research enables criminology students to understand better their prejudices, which leads to professional development in criminal justice careers. This study provided significant insights for teachers to create educational programs that help criminology students build positive connections with Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs. Moreover, the community will gain a better understanding of reintegration, which will create supportive systems that promote social inclusion and produce enhanced rehabilitation results. Additionally, this study is beneficial for future researchers, as it provides valuable insights and inspires them to develop innovative ideas that can be applied in the future.

Research Objectives

The study seeks to determine and measure the attitudes of UMDC criminology students towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs. This Research was intended to answer the following:

1. To identify the demographic profile of criminology students of UM Digos College in terms of:
 - 1.1 gender;
 - 1.2 age, and
 - 1.3 year level.
2. To assess the level of attitudes of UMDC criminology students towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs.
3. To determine the significant difference in the attitudes of criminology students towards PDLs and former PDLs when analyzed by profile.
4. To design an awareness program based on the results of the study.

METHOD

Respondents

The primary respondents of the study consist of students who are enrolled in criminology at UM Digos College. There were 292 respondents involved. The research employed a stratified random sampling method for participant selection. The sampling technique of stratified random sampling divides large populations into smaller groups called strata before researchers select random samples from each group (Bisht, 2024). The method offers improved accuracy and reduced sampling errors due to its ability to generate representative samples (Luo et al., 2023). According to (Murphy et al., 2024), stratified random sampling produces the most representative sample of the total population because it enhances both the quality and accuracy of the presentation while removing prejudice and bias.

In selecting the respondents, the study followed the following inclusion criteria: (1) the participants must be students from UM Digos College, (2) students must be criminology majors from first to fourth year, and (3) students must be enrolled during the 2024-2025 academic year. On the other hand, the research followed the following exclusions: (1) schools located outside of Digos City, (2) students who study criminology at institutions other than UM Digos College, and (3) students pursuing programs beyond BS Criminology.

Instrument

In this study, the researchers adopted the Attitudes Towards Prisoners (ATP) measure by Melvin et al. (1985), which described the Attitudes Towards Prisoners (ATP) Scale. The instrument was composed of two parts. Part I dealt with the profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age, and year level. Part II addressed the level of criminology students' attitudes towards persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs, which was composed of 36 item statements. These statements were categorized into positive and negative. The positive statements were composed of 17 item statements, and 19 statements were described as negative.

A five-point Likert scale was used to analyze the responses gathered from the data. Table 1 shows this.

Table 1. Interpretation Guide for the level of attitudes of criminology students towards PDLs and former PDLs.

Numerical Scale	Range of Means	Descriptive Levels	Descriptive Meaning
5	4.20 – 5.00	Very High	The attitude of the respondents towards PDLs and former PDLs is always manifested.
4	3.40 – 4.19	High	The attitude of the respondents towards PDLs and former PDLs is oftentimes manifested.
3	2.60 – 3.39	Moderate	The attitude of the respondents towards PDLs and former PDLs is sometimes manifested.
2	1.80 – 2.59	Low	The attitude of the respondents towards PDLs and former PDLs is rarely manifested.
1	1.00 – 1.79	Very Low	The attitude of the respondents towards PDLs and former PDLs is never manifested.

Design and Procedure

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive, and comparative research design. The quantitative research design is employed to describe the features or characteristics of the population being examined through the use of statistics and graphs (Streefkerk, 2020). Descriptive research is a quantitative research technique aiming at gathering measurable data to be applied to population sample statistical analysis. This widely used market research instrument enables the gathering and characterization of demographic segments (Manjunatha, 2019). Additionally, a comparative research design was used to find similarities and differences between two or more groups, organizations, or phenomena. It seeks to comprehend the similarities and differences between these entities, frequently within a particular context (Ragin, 2014). Taking this into account, the researchers aimed to identify significant differences in the attitudes of UMDC criminology students toward PDLs and former PDLs, using this information to inform intervention programs and policy.

The researchers followed the following procedures to collect data from the respondents. First, researchers must obtain formal authorization to conduct the study by submitting a survey to the Dean's Office, accompanied by the endorsement of their adviser. Second, a letter of consent was created to Request authorization for conducting the study, which was communicated to the UM Digos College Criminology Students. Third, execution of the study. It was executed in an appropriate environment contingent upon the respondent's schedule and availability. During the survey, the researchers obtained permission from the respondents to complete the questionnaire before commencing the research study. After the approval, the researchers collected the respondents' responses and compiled the data.

To analyze and interpret the data, the researchers employed various statistical tools. Frequency was used to obtain the demographic profile of the participants, including age, gender, and year level. The mean was employed to evaluate the attitudes of criminology students towards PDLs and Former PDLs. The frequency of

a given value is the number of times it appears in the data (Statistics Canada, 2021). The mean is the average or most common number in a group of numbers. It shows the central tendency of a probability distribution (Taylor, 2023). Moreover, researchers employed the Kruskal-Wallis Test. This non-parametric statistical analysis was used to determine the significant differences in the attitudes of UMD C criminology students towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs, when analyzed by gender, age, and year level. The Kruskal-Wallis test determines whether there is a statistically significant difference in the medians of three or more independent groups (Bobbitt, 2022).

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in full compliance with the ethical standards and guidelines set forth by the Research and Production Center of UM Digos College. Before collecting the data, the researchers obtained formal permission from the institution's officials to ensure proper authorization. Additionally, informed consent was obtained from all respondents, ensuring they were fully aware of the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks. Respondents were assured that their participation would be voluntary, their responses would be confidential, and their rights would be fully safeguarded throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

Table 2 presents the profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age, and year level. The total number of respondents is 292. Most of the respondents are male, aged between 17 and 20 years old, and from the third-year level.

Table 2. Profile of the Respondents (n=292)

Profile	f	%
Gender		
Male	183	62.7
Female	97	33.2
LGBTQIA+	12	4.1
Age		
17-20 years old	154	52.7
21-24 years old	133	45.5
25 years old and above	5	1.7
Year Level		
First Year	80	27.4
Second Year	79	27.1
Third Year	83	28.4
Fourth Year	50	17.1

Gender. As shown in the table, males have a frequency of 183, which accounts for 62.7% of the total, the highest frequency. Females have a frequency of 97, accounting for 33.2%, and LGBTQIA+ individuals have a frequency of 12, accounting for 4.1%. The data revealed that most respondents are male. Given that the study was done among students studying criminology, it can be noted that males outnumber females and LGBTQIA+ individuals. This implies that most of the respondents are male.

Age. As presented in the table, individuals aged 17-20 years had the highest frequency, at 154, or 52.7% of the total population. Those aged 21-24 years had a frequency of 133, which accounts for 45.5% of the total population. Individuals aged 25 years and above had a frequency of 5, which accounts for 1.7% of the total population. The data show that the majority of respondents are between 17 and 20 years of age.

Year level. As shown in the table, the first year has the frequency of 80, which takes 27.4%, the second year has the frequency of 79, which takes 27.1%, the third year has the frequency of 83, which takes 28.4%, and the fourth year has the frequency of 50, which takes 17.1%. The data suggest that most respondents are third-year criminology students, as they comprise the most significant number of students enrolled in the criminology department.

Levels of Attitudes of UMD C Criminology Students Towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs

Table 3 presents the attitudes of UMD C criminology students towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs. The overall mean score obtained in assessing the levels of attitudes of UMD C Criminology students towards PDLs and former PDLs is 3.14, with a standard deviation of 0.60, indicating a moderate level of description. This means that the level of attitude towards PDLs and former PDLs is sometimes practiced. This suggests that societal acceptance for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs remains inconsistent.

Table 3. Level of attitudes of UMD C criminology students towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs, n = 292

Items	Mean	SD
1. Prisoners have feelings like the rest of us.	3.97	1.02
2. Most prisoners can be rehabilitated.	3.70	1.07
3. Most prisoners have the capacity to love.	3.69	1.04
4. Most prisoners are victims of circumstances and deserve to be helped.	3.59	1.02
5. Some prisoners are pretty nice people.	3.58	1.04
6. If you give a prisoner respect, he'll give you the same.	3.57	1.01
7. Only a few prisoners are really dangerous.	3.52	0.94
8. If a person does well in prison, he should be let out on parole.	3.50	1.06
9. Trying to rehabilitate prisoners is a waste of time and money.**	3.43	1.22
10. Prisoners need affection and praise just like anybody else.	3.37	1.06
11. Prisoners will listen to reason.	3.37	0.88
12. Prisoners never change.**	3.36	1.15
13. Bad prison conditions just make a prisoner more bitter.	3.36	1.05
14. The values of most prisoners are about the same as the rest of us.	3.33	0.97
15. There are some prisoners I would trust with my life.	3.15	1.05
16. Most prisoners are stupid.**	3.13	1.18
17. I would like associating with some prisoners.	3.11	1.00
18. Prisoners are no better or worse than other people.	3.11	0.99
19. I wouldn't mind living next door to an ex-prisoner.	3.08	1.08
20. In general, prisoners are basically bad people.**	3.07	1.17
21. Prisoners respect only brute force.**	3.02	1.04
22. Prisoners are just plain immoral.**	2.97	1.05
23. Prisoners only think about themselves.**	2.94	1.01
24. Prisoners are just plain mean at heart.**	2.94	0.94
25. You should not expect too much from a prisoner.**	2.91	1.05
26. It is not wise to trust a prisoner too far. **	2.91	0.97
27. Prisoners should be under strict, harsh discipline.**	2.84	1.11
28. In general, prisoners think and act alike.**	2.84	0.98
29. Most prisoners are too lazy to earn an honest living.**	2.80	1.06
30. Give a prisoner an inch and he'll take a mile.**	2.79	0.94

31. I think I would like a lot of prisoners.	2.76	1.11
32. Prisoners are always trying to get something out of somebody.**	2.72	0.97
33. You never know when a prisoner is telling the truth.**	2.64	0.98
34. I would never want one of my children dating an ex- prisoner.**	2.62	1.12
35. You have to be constantly on your guard with prisoners.**	2.62	0.97
36. Prisoners are different from most people.**	2.61	1.02
Overall	3.14	0.30

Item 1 received the highest mean score of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 1.02, considered high, which suggests that "Prisoners have feelings like the rest of us." Items 2 to 9 also obtained a high mean score, ranging from 3.43 to 3.70. On the other hand, items 10 to 36 received a mean score ranging from 2.61 to 3.37, indicating a moderate level of agreement. This result implies that a moderate attitude level among criminology students suggests that their supportive behaviors or fair treatment towards PDLs and former PDLs are Inconsistent and indicate mixed perspectives. This likely means that, although students may acknowledge the rights and potential for rehabilitation of PDLs and former PDLs, they could also harbor concerns shaped by societal stigma, personal beliefs, or insufficient exposure to rehabilitation programs.

It has been found that students tend to balance positive and negative perceptions, acknowledging the value of rehabilitation and reintegration, while also harboring concerns influenced by security concerns, societal stigma, and perceptions of criminal behavior (Sarenas et al., 2024). Their education equips them with knowledge about the policies of the justice system, theories of crime prevention, and rehabilitation programs, making them more informed (Cerbania & Magbojos, 2024). However, outside factors, such as social influence, the media's portrayal of things, and personal experiences, can evoke both empathy and cautious skepticism in people. This highlights the importance of ongoing learning and community engagement in ensuring the success of reintegration efforts, addressing concerns, and promoting inclusivity and support for former PDLs (Labarrete & Tiopes, 2025). This illustrates the importance of connecting what you learn in school with real-world applications to correct misconceptions.

Significant Difference in the Attitudes of Criminology Students Towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs when Analyzed by Gender

Table 4 presents the significant differences in the attitudes of criminology students towards PDLs and former PDLs, as analyzed by gender. Data shows a significant difference in the attitudes of male ($M = 130.45$, $N = 183$), female ($M = 176.64$, $N = 97$), and LGBTQIA+ ($M = 147.54$, $N = 12$) students, $\chi^2(2) =$

19.006, $p < .05$. This implies that different genders have different attitudes towards PDLs and former PDLs. The mean ranks indicate female respondents were less likely than their male and LGBTQIA+ student counterparts to hold negative attitudes toward PDLs and former PDLs. Gender was shown to be an essential characteristic in determining attitudes toward PDLs and former PDLs among criminology students.

Table 4. Significant Difference in the Attitudes of Criminology Students Towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs when Analyzed by Gender

Group	N	Mean Rank	Chi- Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
Male	183	130.45	19.006	2	.000*
Female	97	176.64			
LGBTQIA+	12	147.54			
Total	292				

* $p < 0.05$

Research has shown that women are more likely to participate in programs designed to develop empathy, rehabilitation, and social reintegration (Allen, 2018). Alice Eagly's Social Role Theory provides a framework

for understanding this finding; social roles and expectations can drive some of the thoughts and behaviors exhibited by men and women. Women likely support the reintegration of PDLs and former PDLs because, as girls, they are socialized to be empathetic and sympathetic (Eagly & Sczesny, 2019). On the other hand, responses from men and LGBTQIA+ students can differ based on their own experiences and their exposure to narratives related to crime that relate to cultural norms. In addition, labeling theory examines how social labels influence the way individuals interact with one another and perceive the world. Since PDLs and former PDLs are often associated with negative labels, some groups may internalize and legitimize such biases. Moreover, women are more likely to challenge and raise questions about these assumptions and tend to be more optimistic about reintegration, as they often engage in advocacy or caregiving roles (Eagly & Koenig, 2021).

Significant Difference in the Attitudes of Criminology Students Towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs when Analyzed by Age

Table 5 presents the Kruskal-Wallis test results for different age groups. The data revealed there is a significant difference in attitudes among age groups, $\chi^2(2) = 9.847$, $p = .007$. Specifically, students aged 21-24 years ($M = 162.84$, $N = 133$) and those aged 25 years and above ($M = 163.50$, $N = 5$) showed higher mean ranks compared to students aged 17-20 years ($M = 131.83$, $N = 154$). These findings suggest that age group is a significant factor in shaping attitudes towards PDLs and Former PDLs among UMD C criminology students.

Group	N	Mean Rank	Chi- Square	df	Asymp.Sig.
17-20 years old	154	131.83	9.847	2	.007*
21-24 years old	133	162.84			
25 years old and above	5	163.50			
Total	292				

* $p < 0.05$

This aligns with studies that directly investigate age as a demographic factor influencing attitudes towards ex-PDLs (Mosser, 2022). Raza et al. (2024) conducted an extensive research demonstrating how demographic factors such as age might affect university students' perceptions of the reintegration of PDLs. Moreover, according to Ike et al. (2023), understanding these age-related differences is essential, as public views and attitudes significantly influence successful reintegration and serve as barriers to society's reentry.

Significant Difference in the Attitudes of Criminology Students Towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs when Analyzed by Year Level

Table 6 presents the significant differences in the attitudes of criminology Students towards PDLs and former PDLs, analyzed by year level. The Kruskal- Wallis Test was utilize to analyze the difference in the attitudes of UMD C criminology students towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs. The results indicated a significant difference in attitudes across the year levels, $\chi^2(3) = 9.887$, $p = .020$. Specifically, third-year ($M = 155.89$, $N = 83$), second- year ($M = 154.28$, $N = 79$), and fourth-year ($M = 158.86$, $N = 50$) students had higher mean ranks compared to first-year students ($M = 121.34$, $N = 80$). This implies that students in higher year levels exhibited more positive and compassionate views, which could be because they had more academic experience, were more emotionally mature, or were in different roles in society. The results show that year level significantly influences the attitudes of criminology students towards PDLs and former PDLs at UMD C.

Table 6. Significant Difference in the Attitudes of Criminology Students Towards Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and Former PDLs when Analyzed by Year Level

Group	N	Mean Rank	Chi- Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
First Year	80	121.34	9.887	3	.020*
Second Year	79	154.28			
Third Year	83	155.89			

Fourth Year	50	158.86	
Total	292		

*p<0.05

This trend aligns with research indicating that attitudes toward individuals involved in the criminal justice system can be influenced by their education and diverse perspectives, particularly among college students (Petersen, 2022). Studies show that higher-educated individuals have more positive attitudes toward former PDLs (Ceylan-Batur & Akbaş, 2023), and improved interactions can result in more positive explicit and implicit attitudes toward PDLs (Peka, 2021). All of this information suggests that students in criminology will develop more favorable attitudes towards PDLs and former PDLs as they progress further in their studies.

An awareness program was designed to instill necessary empathy, knowledge, and advocacy skills among criminology students for the rehabilitation and reintegration of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). The specific target audience of this awareness program is first-year to fourth-year college criminology students. The two activities that make up this program are the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Awareness Seminar and the Supervised Prison Visits. The Rehabilitation and Reintegration Awareness Seminar is designed to inform and educate students on the reality of PDLs and challenge Misconceptions and bias against PDLs and former PDLs. Meanwhile, Supervised Prison Visits are intended to foster empathy, inclusivity, and advocacy for rehabilitation efforts, while also emphasizing the role of criminology professionals in promoting fair treatment and reintegration opportunities.

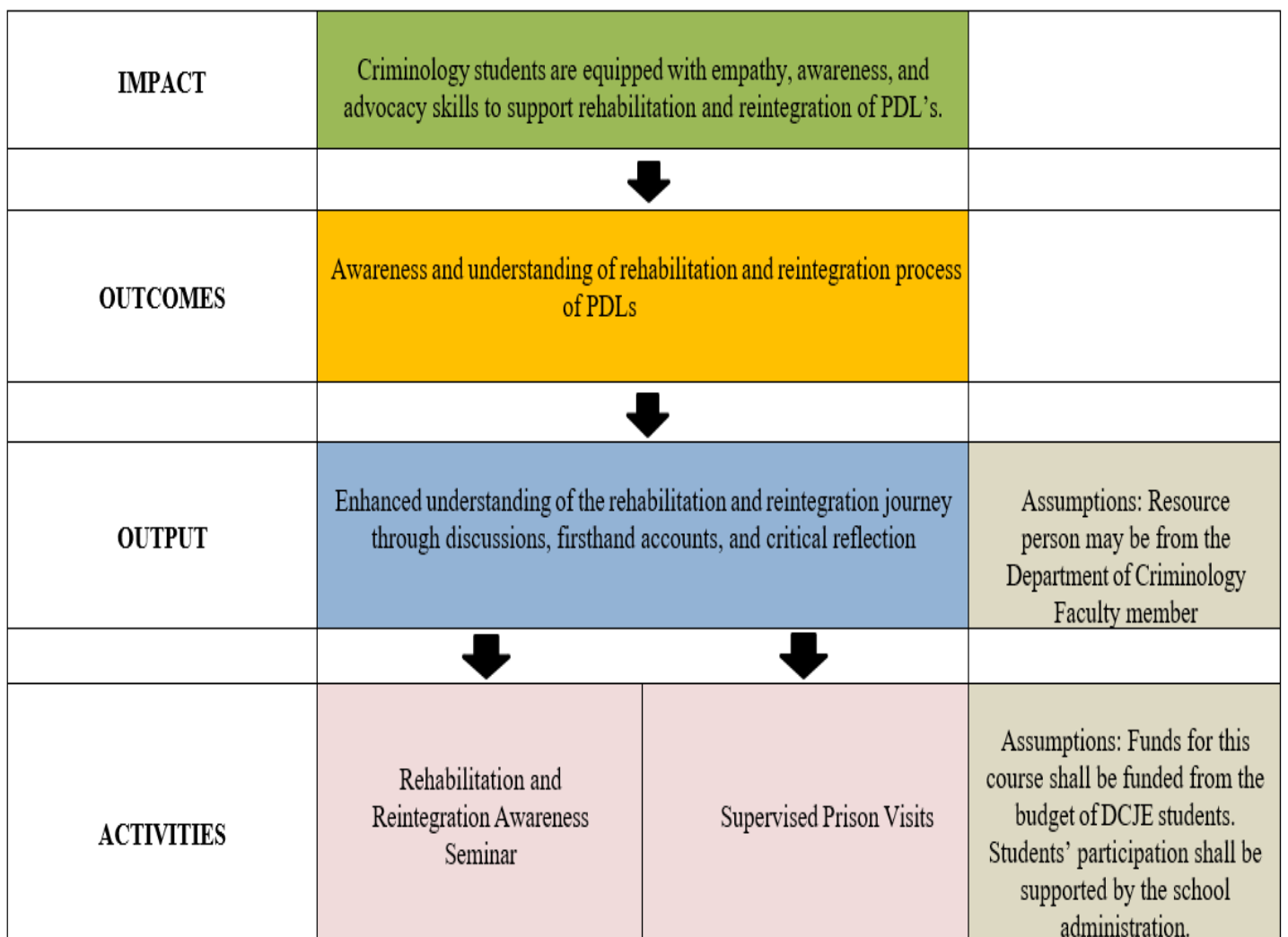


Figure 1. Awareness Program

Table 7. Awareness Program Activity Plan

GOALS/ OBJECTIVE	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PERSONS	BUDGET	EXPECTED OUTCOME
To increase knowledge towards rehabilitation and reintegration	To educate students on the realities of PDLs and the reintegration process	Rehabilitation and Reintegration Awareness Seminar	1 day (8:00AM - 4:00PM)	- Teachers handling correctional administration courses - Criminology students - Resource speakers	₱15,000	Enhanced understanding of rehabilitation and reintegration processes, greater empathy and awareness of PDLs and former PDLs' experiences, strengthened knowledge of advocacy principles, and developed skills to promote equity and societal acceptance
	To address misconceptions and biases regarding PDLs and former PDLs					
To insight into the experience of PDL's in the prison	To encourage empathy, inclusivity, and advocacy for rehabilitation efforts	Supervised Prison Visits	1 day (8:00 AM – 4:00PM)	- Teachers handling correctional administration courses - Criminology students	₱40,000	Increased empathy and reduced stigmatizing attitudes and gained stronger connection between theoretical criminology concepts and real-world rehabilitation practices
	To highlight the role of criminology professionals in ensuring fair treatment and reintegration opportunities.					

CONCLUSION

The study quantifies the attitudes of criminology students toward Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and former PDLs. In terms of the respondents' profile, most are male, aged between 17 and 20 years old, and from the third- year level. The level of attitudes among criminology students is moderate, which means that the respondents' attitudes towards PDLs and former PDLs. Are sometimes practiced. This reflects a mix of perspectives regarding rehabilitation and reintegration. It has been found that there is a significant difference in terms of gender, age, and year level. Based on the results, an awareness program was developed to provide criminology students with a first hand understanding of the realities of imprisonment, rehabilitation, and reintegration through activities such as rehabilitation and reintegration awareness seminars and supervised prison visits, which aim to reduce stigma and promote empathy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the study's findings, the researchers came out with the following recommendations:

PDLs and former PDLs may be given opportunities to tell their stories through forums, seminars, or peer mentorship programs. Their voices are crucial for influencing how people think and making decisions. Giving them the power to speak out not only makes their experience more real, but it also makes them more important in shaping a more humane and helpful justice system.

Criminology students are encouraged to join in awareness-raising initiatives or talk with PDLs and former PDLs. These activities enable students to understand better the challenges associated with rehabilitation and reintegration processes. The addition of reflective assignments to the curriculum allows for students to overcome their biases and social prejudices, ultimately becoming fair and just professionals.

Teachers may also educate students on emotional intelligence through classroom instruction, sharing PDL rehabilitation success stories, and presenting evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of reformative

programs. The teaching approach helps students overcome stereotypes while creating an environment that welcomes diversity. The faculty may also participate in development programs that teach the necessary teaching competencies.

Communities, including NGOs and barangay leaders, can collaborate with schools to support individuals in their reintegration by implementing awareness campaigns and community-based programs. The programs help eliminate negative perceptions about former PDLs while creating secure environments for them to rebuild their lives. The involvement of community members in rehabilitation work demonstrates that rehabilitation requires community participation, rather than relying solely on criminal justice systems. Future researchers may use this study as a starting point for further investigation. The research provides a starting point for studying current social beliefs, which researchers can analyze through comparisons of time-based, location-based, or educational settings. This study can help make intervention methods better and lead to more focused and evidence-based policies and reforms for reintegration.

Awareness Program Activity 1

- I. Title: Rehabilitation and Reintegration Awareness Seminar
- II. Date and Venue: June 14, 2026/ UMD C Gymnasium
- III. Participants: Criminology students
- IV. Rationale:

The goal of the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Awareness Seminar is to teach people how important it is to help people who are going through rehabilitation and reintegration back into society, like former PDLs or people who are quitting drugs. In order to get rid of the negative stereotypes that surround recovery, this program promotes understanding, acceptance, and active participation in the community. By teaching students about the problems and needs of these groups, the seminar encouraged teamwork between stakeholder families, schools, and communities. In order to help people heal and successfully reintegrate, this helps create a more welcoming and supportive environment.

Objectives

1. To educate student on the realities of PDLs and the reintegration process
2. To address misconceptions and biases regarding PDLs and former PDLs

Budgetary Requirements

Budget will rely on what the Department of Criminal Justice Education gives us. The department may make sure that the funding is set aside for resource speaker's honorarium, training, materials, and logistics.

Training Staff

Experts in the field of Correctional Administration and Therapeutic Modalities teaching.

Program Matrix Day 1:

TIME	TOPIC/ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Preliminaries	Event Committee
9:01AM – 11:00 AM	Introduction to understanding the rehabilitation process	Speaker 1
11:01 AM – 12:00 PM	Assessment on understanding the rehabilitation process	Speaker 1
12:01 NN – 1:00 PM	Lunch Break	
1:01 PM – 3:00 PM	Overcoming Stigma and Discrimination	Speaker 2

3:01 PM – 3:39 PM	Reflection Session	Speaker 2
3:40 PM – 4:00 PM	Closing Program	Event Committee

Awareness Program Activity 2

- I. Title: Supervised Prison Visits
- II. Date and Venue: July 14, 2026/ Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP)
- III. Participants: Criminology students
- IV. Rationale:

The Supervised Prison Visits in Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) aims to give participants with a better understanding of what prison life is like and how correctional facilities are attempting to assist individuals in changing. This activity allows students to interact with people who are in jail (PDLs) under supervision, which helps dispel stigma and stereotypes associated with being incarcerated. Additionally, it promotes social responsibility, empathy, and awareness. It also allows you to observe directly the issue that PDLs and prison staff face, as well as the importance of reintegration programs, restorative justice, and community support in preparing PDLs for reintegration into society.

Objectives

This supervised prison visit aims to:

1. To encourage empathy, inclusivity, and advocacy for rehabilitation efforts
2. To highlight the role of criminology professional in ensuring fair treatment and reintegration opportunities.

Budgetary Requirements

Budget will rely on what the Department of Criminal Justice Education gives us. The department may make sure that the funding is set aside for resource speaker's honorarium, training, materials, and logistics.

Training Staff

Experts in the field of Correctional Administration and Therapeutic Modalities teaching.

Program Matrix Day 1:

TIME	TOPIC/ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Preliminaries	Event Committee
9:01 AM – 11:00 AM	Facility Tour (Supervised)	Teacher 1
11:01 AM – 12:00 PM	Dialogue or Interaction with PDLs (Supervised and Pre-approved)	Teacher 1
12:01 PM – 1:00 PM	Lunch Break	
1:01 PM – 3:00 PM	Educational or Moral Formation Sessions for PDLs	Teacher
3:01 PM – 3:39 PM	Donation (Distribute hygiene kits, books, or learning materials that support the well-being and development of inmates)	Teacher 1 and Criminology students
3:40 PM – 4:00 PM	Closing Program	Event Committee

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SPSS Outputs

GENDER					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	183	62.7	62.7	62.7
	Female	97	33.2	33.2	95.9
	LGBTQIA+	12	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	292	100.0	100.0	

AGE					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	17-20 years old	154	52.7	52.7	52.7
	21-24 years old	133	45.5	45.5	98.3
	25 years old and above	5	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	292	100.0	100.0	

YEAR LEVEL					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	First Year	80	27.4	27.4	27.4
	Second Year	79	27.1	27.1	54.5
	Third Year	83	28.4	28.4	82.9
	Fourth Year	50	17.1	17.1	100.0
	Total	292	100.0	100.0	

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
overall	.145	292	.000	.940	292	.000
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	
Q1	292	1.00	5.00	2.61	1.02	
Q2	292	1.00	5.00	3.52	0.94	
Q3	292	1.00	5.00	3.36	1.15	

Q4	292	1.00	5.00	3.59	1.02
Q5	292	1.00	5.00	3.97	1.02
Q6	292	1.00	5.00	2.91	0.97
Q7	292	1.00	5.00	2.76	1.11
Q8	292	1.00	5.00	3.36	1.05
Q9	292	1.00	5.00	2.79	0.94
Q10	292	1.00	5.00	3.13	1.18
Q11	292	1.00	5.00	3.37	1.06
Q12	292	1.00	5.00	2.91	1.05
Q13	292	1.00	5.00	3.43	1.22
Q14	292	1.00	5.00	2.64	0.98
Q15	292	1.00	5.00	3.11	0.99
Q16	292	1.00	5.00	2.62	0.97
Q17	292	1.00	5.00	2.84	0.98
Q18	292	1.00	5.00	3.57	1.01
Q19	292	1.00	5.00	2.94	1.01
Q20	292	1.00	5.00	3.15	1.05
Q21	292	1.00	5.00	3.37	0.88
Q22	292	1.00	5.00	2.80	1.06
Q23	292	1.00	5.00	3.08	1.08
Q24	292	1.00	5.00	2.94	0.94
Q25	292	1.00	5.00	2.72	0.97
Q26	292	1.00	5.00	3.33	0.97
Q27	292	1.00	5.00	2.62	1.12
Q28	292	1.00	5.00	3.69	1.04
Q29	292	1.00	5.00	2.97	1.05
Q30	292	1.00	5.00	2.84	1.11
Q31	292	1.00	5.00	3.07	1.17
Q32	292	1.00	5.00	3.70	1.07
Q33	292	1.00	5.00	3.58	1.04
Q34	292	1.00	5.00	3.11	1.00
Q35	292	1.00	5.00	3.02	1.04
Q36	292	1.00	5.00	3.50	1.06
overall	292	2.33	4.25	3.14	0.30
Valid N (listwise)	292				

Ranks			
GENDER		N	Mean Rank
overall	Male	183	130.45
	Female	97	176.64
	LGBTQIA+	12	147.54
	Total	292	
Test Statistics ^{a,b}			
		overall	
Chi-Square		19.006	
df		2	
Asymp. Sig.		.000	
a. Kruskal Wallis Test			

b. Grouping Variable: GENDER

Ranks

AGE		N	Mean Rank
overall	17-20 years old	154	131.83
	21-24 years old	133	162.84
	25 years old and above	5	163.50
	Total	292	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	overall
Chi-Square	9.847
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.007
a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
b. Grouping Variable: AGE	

Ranks

YEAR LEVEL		N	Mean Rank
overall	First Year	80	121.34
	Second Year	79	154.28
	Third Year	83	155.89
	Fourth Year	50	158.86
	Total	292	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	overall
Chi-Square	9.887
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.020
a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
b. Grouping Variable: YEAR LEVEL	