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ANALYSIS OF MENTAL HEALTH OF INMATES IN CLASS 1 PRISON CIREBON FACTORS AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

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Abstract:

Background. The health of prisoners and inmates is one of the basic rights that must be guaranteed; those who serve sentences still have human rights. The state and relevant institutions should be accountable to prisoners, and prisoners should be able to obtain adequate health services.

Aims. The purpose of this study is to analyze the factors that affect the mental health of prisoners in the Cirebon Class 1 Prison and the recovery strategies applied.

Methods. Using qualitative methods, this study included interviews with nursing staff from the Rutan Clinic and an analysis of related documents.

Result. The results of the study showed that the mental illness experienced by prisoners was mostly present before entering the detention camp. Of the 554 detainees and detainees, four of them suffered from mental disorders: bipolar, schizophrenia, and severe insomnia. There are no cases of mental health problems caused by illnesses in the detention center. The recovery strategy at the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center prioritizes non-medical approaches such as mental guidance, religious activities (reading), social therapy, education and social activities (foreign language learning, scouting, art). This approach aims to avoid dependence on medications such as antidepressants that other prisoners may abuse. Regular surveillance is carried out to ensure positive development without drug addiction. However, the main challenge is that there is no professional or psychological consultation services available in this prison.

Conclusion. This study highlights the importance of special attention to mental health in Cirebon Class 1 Prison as part of rehabilitation efforts. The non-medical approach used in the Class 1 Cirebon concentration camp will be a model for other detention centers.

Implementation. However, more comprehensive treatment requires improvements in mental health facilities, such as the provision of specialized psychologists. The right strategy allows the prisoner to not only recover mentally but also make a positive contribution during detention.

Keywords: mental health, incarceration, non-medical approaches, rehabilitation, detention

INTRODUCTION

A detention center or detention center is a temporary correctional institution intended to temporarily detain suspects, defendants, and inmates who are still awaiting trial or examination from the court.¹

While in prisons, prisoners and inmates lose freedom of movement and the accompanying suffering, such as loss of opportunities for sexual intercourse, loss of personal rights, loss of access to kindness and help, loss of confidentiality due to prejudice from society, and pain from the process of infantilization or infantilization of adults. The treatment of prisoners and inmates is regulated in Law Number 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections. Prisoners and inmates must also carry out their obligations, conform, comply with, and obey the regulations of the correctional institution, and any regulations formed in secret that apply between fellow inmates beyond the reach of the officers. This condition can cause inmates to experience psychological burdens so that they sometimes display unnatural behaviors and thoughts about themselves

The health of prisoners and inmates is one of the basic rights that must be guaranteed; those who serve sentences still have human rights. The state and relevant institutions should be accountable to prisoners, and prisoners should be able to obtain adequate health services. Mental health or mental health is an important aspect in realizing holistic health. Mental health is also important to pay attention to, like physical health. Mental health is a fundamental component of the definition of health. Good mental health allows people to realize their potential, cope with normal life pressures, work productively, and contribute to their communities.²

A healthy mental state in each individual cannot be equated. This condition makes the discussion of mental health even more urgent, which leads to how to empower individuals, families, and communities to be able to find, maintain, and optimize their mental health conditions in facing daily life. Mental health problems in prisoners and inmates facing their prison term are a situation where they feel unable to balance the demanding situation with their feelings. And thinks that he is in the worst situation and sees the worst situation as a burden beyond his ability.³

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), poor mental health in prisons can lead to an increased risk of violence, bullying between inmates, and deviant behavior such as self-harm. In addition, inmates with mental disorders who do not receive treatment tend to have difficulty adapting to a stressful prison environment.

¹ The Difference Between Prison and Prison: Definition, Function and Conditions of Prisoners - Localstartupfest.id

² WHO. Mental Health Action Plan 2013 2020. Geneva: World Health Organization. 2013.

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In the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center, some prisoners or inmates are known to have mental disorders that they have experienced even before they entered the prison, not because of the conditions during their time in the prison. The mental health experienced by prisoners and inmates varies. Data taken at the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Clinic in 2025 shows that there are 554 prisoners and inmates, 4 of whom have mental health disorders, one prisoner and 3 inmates are known. There are various types of disorders suffered, including:

Bipolar

Bipolar disorder is a mental disorder characterized by drastic changes in mood. People with this disorder can feel very happy or euphoric, then turn very sad.⁴ Symptoms experienced by bipolar sufferers include mania and then continue to severe depression.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a severe mental disorder that can affect behavior, emotions, and communication. People with schizophrenia can experience hallucinations, delusions, thought disorders, and behavioral changes.⁵ This symptom is divided into two: positive and negative. Positive symptoms are marked by changes in perception that cause the sufferer to experience abnormal behavior, and negative symptoms are marked by an inability to socialize.

Both bipolar disorder and schizophrenia are serious mental disorders that can affect a person's feelings, thoughts, and the way they interact with others. Bipolar disorder causes extreme mood swings, whereas schizophrenia affects the way a person thinks and understands reality. Despite their differences, both require proper diagnosis and appropriate treatment, such as therapy, medication, and support from family. With proper treatment, sufferers can better manage their symptoms and live a more stable life

Prisoner and Prisoner are two terms given to criminal behavior. However, the two terms have different meanings, as stated in the Regulation of the Minister of Law and Human Rights (Permenkumham) of the Republic of Indonesia No. 6 of 2013. A prisoner is an individual who is undergoing legal proceedings as a suspect or defendant. They are detained at the State Detention Center (Rutan) during the investigation, prosecution, and trial process, the status of the prisoner has not been considered guilty until there is a permanent legal decision from the court. Meanwhile, the definition of Prisoner In Law No. 12/1995 concerning Corrections, the definition of a prisoner is a convict who has lost his independence in a correctional institution (LAPAS). Meanwhile, the definition of convict is a person who is convicted based on a court decision that has obtained permanent legal force They lose their liberty as a form of punishment for criminal acts that have been committed.⁶

The mental health disorders experienced by prisoners and inmates in the Cirebon Class 1 Prison are certainly due to several factors. Therefore, this study was made to find out what are the factors that cause them to be affected by these health problems and how to recover in the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center.

Problem Formulation

⁴ [Bipolar Disorder - Symptoms, Causes, and Treatment - Alodokter](#) accessed on March 17, 2025

⁵ [Schizophrenia - Symptoms, Causes and Treatment - Alodokter](#) accessed on March 17, 2025

⁶ The Difference Between Prisoners and Prisoners in the Law - Legal Info

1. What causes Inmates to develop mental health disorders?
2. How to recover inmates affected by mental health disorders?

Research Objectives

1. Knowing the causes of inmates with mental health disorders
2. Analyze how prisoners affected by mental health disorders recover

RESEARCH METHODS

The qualitative method is the method we used in this study. Qualitative research methods are research methods that use methods, steps, and procedures that involve data and information obtained through respondents as subjects who can provide their own answers and feelings to get a holistic overview of a subject being researched.

This research lasted for ± three days and involved interviews and document studies. The interview was conducted with the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Clinic's nursing Staff to clarify information. In addition to interviews, document studies were conducted to obtain objective data and support the results of the interviews.

DISCUSSION

From the results of interviews with nursing staff at the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center clinic, the mental health disorders experienced by inmates already existed before they entered the prison and there have been no cases of inmates experiencing mental health disorders due to factors in the prison. Based on the data, there are four people out of 544 prisoners and inmates or around 0.74% of the total inmates with a history of mental disorders, namely Fatih (Bipolar), Sudiyanto (Suicide attempt suicide), Hadirudin (Schizophrenia) and Endang (Schizophrenia). This shows that prisoners and inmates in Cirebon Class 1 Prison have relatively low mental health problems which means that on average they have good mental health. This is because the prison implements a number of fostered programs that aim to provide a better experience for their inmates so that they not only serve their sentences, but also get the opportunity to learn and develop, as stated in Law Number 22 of 2022 Article 1 Number 10, article 38, and article 39.

One of the main activities carried out in the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center is *Bimgiat* or Activity Guidance. The program provides a space for prisoners to explore themselves, understand their feelings, and learn how to manage their emotions better. These mentoring sessions teach them the importance of mental health and how to keep a positive mind even in difficult situations. This *Bimgiat activity* is routinely held every working day of the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center.

Scouting activities are also one of the flagship programs in Cirebon Class 1 Prison. These activities not only teach practical skills but also build a sense of community and leadership among the prisoners. By participating in scouting, they learn to work together, support each other, and build much-needed confidence when they return to society. Scouts in the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center also often actively participate in scouting coaching events throughout Ciayumajakuning.

The prison also provides language classes (English and Chinese) and scripts for prisoners and inmates. Education is one of the keys to opening up new opportunities in life. Learning a

language can improve their communication skills and broaden their horizons. Literacy classes help those who cannot yet read and write to gain basic skills that are very important in daily life. The schedule for English class activities is held on Wednesdays and Thursdays, as well as Chinese and Scripting classes on Mondays and Tuesdays, which are routinely held weekly.

More than just formal education, the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center also offers practical skills training such as salon classes, sewing, hydroponic planting, furniture art, and catfish cultivation. These trainings are designed to provide skills that can be used once free. For example, salon training teaches beauty techniques and gives them confidence when interacting with others. Similarly, sewing training can open up job opportunities in the textile industry, hydroponic cultivation provides knowledge of modern agriculture, but also contributes to food security and the environment for them,

Furniture art and catfish cultivation increase creativity and can be one of the sources of income in the future when they are free. With these various positive activities, the main goal of the Cirebon Class 1 Prison is to ensure that prisoners and inmates who have completed their sentences can return to society with a better and productive attitude. They are expected to not only be able to adapt to life outside of prison but also have skills that can help them get jobs and build a better life. Thus, mental health in the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center reflects every individual's expectations and human potential.

The mental health of life sentence inmates is very susceptible to disruption, because previously they had freedom and independence. Still, after being sentenced to life, they could not accept the circumstances. Many are mentally disturbed, lack peace of mind, and suffer from many diseases that stem from their inability to accept their current state of life, serving life sentences in penitentiaries. Life convicts are more under pressure because the punishment they are serving is heavier, so they are vulnerable to psychological and mental disturbance due to the pressure they face.⁷

With such circumstances, it can trigger disturbances in the mental health of inmates. Especially with inmates with life sentences, there is a risk of mental disorders or mental health issues. Some factors cause mental health disorders that are influenced by various factors, such as a history of mental health disorders before hospitalization, life pressure, and lack of social support. This shows that their life experiences greatly influence the psychological condition of maintenance and well-being before being in the prison environment.

As recognized in Law Number 12 of 1995 concerning Mental Health Correctional Institutions, prisons are not therapeutic environments (something directed to the process of facilitating the healing of patients), strict security controls make prisons a vulnerable place for the emergence of mental illness. The most important thing is people's concern to build a positive relationship with them. Isolation and contact with strangers will also be a problem for their mental health. Their activity becomes reduced. Prisons must also provide sufficient space for inmate activities. Staff roles and regular care will also be required so that their mental condition is well-

⁷ From the journal entitled "Family Support with Stress Levels of Inmates in Correctional Institutions" written by Jek Amidos Pardede, Taruli Rohana Sinaga, Novita Sinuhaji was written on March 19, 2025

maintained. *Overcapacity* that causes overcrowding in prisons can be seen as a condition of dissonance or imbalance between the interaction of inmates with the environment, environmental demands that will be considered excessive, or the achievement of needs that are not met by the environmental situation. In this case, continuous adaptation to the conditions being faced is needed. The possibilities are two: inmates will be resistant to conditions of overcapacity or become increasingly disturbed because they fail to adapt to the situation. The more often the stimulus is present, the more psychic habituation there will be called adaptation.

Some of the psychological concepts of crowding in environmental psychology theory can be used to analyze why the (dense) environment can affect the internal conditions of humans.

Environment Load Theory

The basic premise of this theory is that humans have a limited capacity for information processing. According to Cohen (Fisher, 1985; in Veitch & Arkkelin, 1995), there are 4 fundamental assumptions of this theory, namely:

1. Humans have limited capacity for information processing.
2. When environmental stimuli exceed the information processing capacity, the attention process does not function optimally.
3. When a stimulus is present, an adaptive response is needed. This means that the significance of the stimulus will be evaluated through a monitoring process, and decisions are made based on the response to the problem. If the stimulus is a predictable and controllable stimulus, it has more meaning to be processed further. But if the incoming stimulus is unpredictable or uncontrollable, little attention or perhaps neglect of attention will be made. As a result, the processing of information will not take place.
4. The amount of attention a person gives is not constant all the time, but according to the needs

Environmental Stress Theory

Environmental stress theory is an application of stress theory in the environment. Based on the input-process-output model, there are three approaches to stress: stress as a stressor, stress as a response/reaction, and stress as a process. Therefore, stress consists of 3 components: stressors, processes, and responses. Stressors are sources or stimuli that threaten a person's well-being, such as noise, heat, and high density. Stress response is a reaction that involves emotional, mental, physiological, and behavioral components. The process is a transaction process between the stressor and the self. Therefore, the term stress refers to the source of stress, the response to the source of stress, and the relationship between the three (Prawitasari, 1989). This means there is a transaction between the source of stress and the capacity to determine the stress reaction. If the source of stress is more significant than one's capacity, negative stress will appear; on the other hand, if the source of stress is equal to or less than one's capacity, then positive stress will appear. Concerning environmental stress, there is a transaction between environmental and individual characteristics that determines whether the stressful situation causes stress.

In the case of *overcapacity* in Correctional Institutions, it appears that overcrowding as a stressor can potentially cause stress in prisoners and inmates, when their response results from the

relationship between the source of stress, the response to stress, and the individual's capacity, becomes negative. How a person responds to the source of stress due to overcrowding is determined mainly by one's capacity, so how a person processes the source of stress can produce a negative or positive response. In our discussion of the characteristics or psychological condition of prisoners when carrying out their punishment above, it can be concluded that their capacity is also in a condition that is not functioning properly. They experience psychological problems that can reduce their capacity to overcome the obstacles encountered in correctional institutions. With these conditions, *overcapacity* can also be a situation that is not easy to see as a good situation. So the stress experienced by inmates due to the density of space is inevitable.⁸ Those who receive a long sentence are also one of the causes of stress, due to their isolated personal life or in conjunction with the pressures around their new environment, and they have to be separated from their families for longer.

The recovery of inmates with mental health disorders in the prison is carried out gradually, adjusting to the severity of their condition. Suppose the disorder experienced is still in the active phase—such as the case of Fatih who suffers from bipolar and experiences severe insomnia to the point of not sleeping for two days in a row. In that case, the first step taken by the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center Clinic is usually in the form of social therapy and mental guidance. However, if the method is less effective, medication can be a last resort to help stabilize the condition.

The condition of prisoners and inmates is monitored regularly. Suppose they show good development without dependence on drugs. In that case, recovery focuses more on mental guidance, religious activities such as reciting, and educational activities, namely learning foreign languages, scouting, and art. The goal is to help them develop skills while building a more positive routine during custody. If this approach is not practical enough, administering medication becomes the last option with strict supervision; This supervision is carried out for the prevention of abuse of drugs such as antidepressants.

In addition, family support has a significant influence on the mental health of inmates. Family support is the family's attitude, actions, and acceptance towards its members. Family members believe that supportive people are always ready to help and assist if needed. Families can provide assessment support in making decisions, informational support, instrumental support, and emotional support to inmates. Adequate support is associated with decreased mortality, easier recovery from illness, and improved cognitive, physical, and emotional health functions.

The Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center Clinic prioritizes a non-medical approach and minimizes the use of drugs regularly to prevent dependence and potential abuse. A type of drug that is often abused, such as antidepressants, is often traded or contested by other inmates because of its sleep-inducing effects. Given the large number of inmates who have trouble sleeping, the risk of abuse of this drug is quite high. Therefore, the approach applied includes mental guidance, religious activities such as reciting, and building social interaction with the clinic officers or staff.

Due to the unavailability of counseling services or professional psychologists in the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center, the approach applied is more collective through mental

⁸ from the journal entitled "THE IMPACT OF OVER CAPACITY IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH OF INMATES" written by Ike Herdiana
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guidance that is carried out together. From the results of the observations made, most prisoners and inmates with mental health disorders showed positive development during the period of detention.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals the importance of attention to the mental health of prisoners and inmates in the Cirebon Class 1 Prison, especially in the context of rehabilitation and recovery. Based on the results of interviews with nursing staff and document studies, it was found that the mental disorders experienced by prisoners and inmates that they already had mental health disorders since before they entered the prison. Of the total 554 prisoners and inmates, four individuals have mental disorders such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and suicide attempts. There were no cases of mental disorders caused by conditions in the detention center.

This study shows that various factors influence mental health disorders in prisoners in Cirebon Class 1 Prison. The first factor is a history of mental health before entering the detention center; most inmates who experience mental disorders already have a history of the disease before being detained. Second, loss of freedom, social stigma, and psychological distress due to severe punishment are the main factors that worsen their mental condition. The last factor is social support; the lack of positive interaction with family or the outside community makes inmates feel isolated and lonely.

Cirebon Class 1 Prison applies a non-medical approach as a recovery strategy for inmates with mental health disorders. The approach is through mental guidance, religious activities, social therapy, and education provided by the prison. It was also found that the challenges found in this study were limited facilities, such as the absence of professional psychologist services for people with mental health disorders. One of these challenges is the *Overcapacity* of prisoners and inmates in Cirebon Class 1 Prison, which can trigger additional stress that can worsen mental conditions for them. Finally, the lack of a therapeutic environment is problematic. The prison is not an ideal place for the recovery of people with mental health disorders, because the prison has stringent security and lacks space for free activities for prisoners and inmates in it.

In this study, we conclude that mental health is an important aspect in the rehabilitation of prisoners. The non-medical healing carried out by the Cirebon Class 1 Detention Center can be a model for other correctional institutions. However, to achieve more optimal results, it is necessary to improve other health facilities, such as the provision of special psychologists and adequate therapy rooms. Reducing *overcapacity* and improving the quality of social interaction in the prison environment must also be done. With the right recovery strategies, prisoners and inmates can not only recover mentally but also have the opportunity to contribute positively during their time in custody. This research provides valuable insights into how a humanitarian-based approach can help address mental health challenges in correctional institutions while driving systemic change to support long-term rehabilitation for prisoners and inmates.

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