



PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT, PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND PERSONAL COPING IN RELATION TO ATTITUDE TOWARDS PERSON DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY: CONTEXT AMONG MALE INMATES

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Abstract:

This study determined the best-fit model of attitude towards prisoners among 402 male inmates in Region 10. Specifically, it sought to examine how these psychosocial factors influence inmates' self-perception and readiness for rehabilitation. A non-experimental, quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design was used. In analyzing the data, the weighted mean, the Pearson correlation coefficient, and the structural equation model were used. Results revealed all variables are rated high and significant correlations among the three predictor variables, perceived social support, psychological well-being, coping mechanisms and inmates' attitudes toward themselves and fellow prisoners. Particularly, inmates who received strong emotional and instrumental support, displayed higher psychological resilience, and employed adaptive coping strategies were more likely to develop positive attitudes essential for successful reintegration. The study underscores the importance of holistic rehabilitation programs that foster supportive networks, mental wellness, and constructive coping among incarcerated individuals. These findings offer critical implications for prison administrators, mental health professionals, and policymakers in designing interventions that reduce recidivism and promote reintegration through psychosocial empowerment.

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1. Introduction

The public's perceptions of incarcerated individuals can exert a substantial impact on the well-being of those serving time. Research has indicated that individuals' public perception of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals remains largely negative. Incarcerated men report unfavorable views of the prison environment, noting issues like hierarchies, lack of space, and limited meaningful activities (Stacer, 2022). Formerly incarcerated individuals' perceptions of stigma are influenced by factors such as parole violations, identification with other ex-prisoners, neighborhood norms, and race/ethnicity. These negative perceptions and experiences of stigma can hinder rehabilitation efforts and successful reintegration, highlighting the need for public education and improved correctional practices to address these challenges (Stacer, 2022; Ikennz *et al.*, 2023)

According to Ikennz, Chimaobi, Sunday, and Chisom (2023), public attitudes towards ex-convicts in Nigeria are similarly negative, with residents viewing them as criminals and unrepentant offenders. Recent studies have continued to highlight the long-term effects of criminal convictions on individuals' ability to reintegrate into society. For example, Sawyer and Wagner (2022) found that formerly incarcerated people in the United States face significant barriers to employment, with many employers reluctant to hire individuals with criminal records. In addition, a report by the Prison Policy Initiative (2022) noted that access to stable housing and social services remains extremely limited for this population, often due to legal restrictions and persistent social stigma. Similarly, research by Muhammad *et al.* (2023) in the Asia-Pacific context revealed that formerly incarcerated individuals frequently experience exclusion and discrimination in their communities, which undermines their sense of belonging and increases the risk of recidivism. These studies collectively emphasize that, even after serving their sentence, individuals continue to struggle with societal rejection and diminished access to basic opportunities. In like manner, they will also feel the negative attitude of the public and the people they interact with toward them.

This study on attitude toward inmates is significant because, once released from prison or jail, it appears that, regardless of factual contradictory evidence, when someone is labeled a criminal, they automatically acquire the bad reputation that comes with that title. Once someone is labeled as a "criminal," they often find it hard to escape the negative stereotypes associated with that label. Contemporary research continues to affirm that internalized stigma among formerly incarcerated individuals has serious

implications for their self-esteem, mental health, and chances of successful reintegration. For instance, Choi and Ryan (2021) found that when former prisoners internalize negative stereotypes and social rejection, they are more likely to experience feelings of shame and low self-worth, which can hinder their confidence and motivation to rebuild their lives. These internal struggles often become barriers to seeking employment, social support, and even participation in rehabilitation programs. Furthermore, in cultures where social hierarchy and conformity are highly valued, the impact of stigma is even more pronounced, making reintegration and rehabilitation especially challenging (Huang *et al.*, 2021). In like manner, the study of Kuehn and Vosgerau (2025) discovered that people tend to exaggerate the moral shortcomings of those who have been incarcerated, which contributes to greater stigma and creates obstacles to their successful reintegration into society.

Recent research has highlighted the strong influences that perceived social support, coping styles, and psychological adjustment all have on the mental health and well-being of people in prison. Langenhoven, Jordaan, and Hesselink (2024) examined 418 men in a South African maximum security prison and found that coping strategies and perceived social support were significant predictors of depressive symptoms. Their analysis revealed that these factors, coupled with individual levels of adjustment, explained a considerable amount of the variance in participants' psychological well-being. Similarly, Solbakken and Wynn (2022) examined self-stories of people incarcerated in Northern Norway, announcing peer support as an essential part of any healthy prisoner adaptation and coping. The findings also noted that familial support and institutional staff support came from mostly unavailable sources, thus reinforcing the importance of inmate-to-inmate support for the maintenance of mental health during incarceration.

Broadening the demographic range, a more recent study published in BMC Public Health (2025) studied the psychological stressors affecting older prisoners. It found that being devoid of an emotional bond, similar to the lack of routine social contact, negatively impacted the psychological resilience of this demographic. Coping responses generally included withdrawing, trying to maintain some dignity and mostly creative or spiritual self-expression (McLennan, *et al.* 2025).

Additional insights are provided by the mixed-method work of Çıvgın (2022) and Baharudin *et al.* (2021), who collectively demonstrated that inmates receiving regular visitation and reporting higher levels of perceived social support tended to exhibit greater resilience, enhanced life satisfaction, and fewer depressive symptoms, indicating that social integration plays a pivotal role in psychological adjustment. Recent research supports the importance of social support and coping strategies for the psychological well-being of incarcerated individuals. A study by Zeng *et al.* (2021) found that inmates who received regular visits or maintained contact with family members reported higher levels of emotional stability and overall psychological health, compared to those with limited family interaction.

Meanwhile, a study by Hidayati *et al.* (2021) emphasized that the coping strategies inmates use—such as seeking social support, practicing acceptance, and engaging in positive activities—play a significant role in reducing feelings of distress and promoting well-being. However, these studies also highlight that while coping and social supports are vital, the overall mental health of inmates is affected by a range of factors, including the quality of available medical and psychological services.

Based on the above literature, the researcher opted to conduct the study dealing with the variables as a paradigm of attitude toward inmates. While there were existing links on each of the mentioned variables, those studies are limited and are mostly conducted abroad by different researchers. The correctional system in the Philippines continues to grapple with longstanding challenges related to overcrowding, inadequate rehabilitation programs, and deep-seated societal stigma against inmates. Despite ongoing reforms, these issues persistently hinder the successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into mainstream society. Central to this struggle is the prevailing public and institutional attitude toward prisoners, which often remains punitive rather than rehabilitative. While international literature has increasingly acknowledged the significance of psychosocial factors such as perceived social support, psychological well-being, and individual coping strategies in shaping attitudes within correctional settings, such insights have yet to be sufficiently explored in the Philippine context.

This study, however, is confined to the Philippine setting, particularly in Region X, covering the four variables in the study, with the hope of determining the best-fit model of attitude towards male prisoners. Further, as a response to this societal concern, this study is an attempt to measure the criminogenic risk factors and specific needs of inmates to predict the likelihood of reoffending in the future using coping styles as an indicator. This study investigates the role of social support from the outside environment in their coping ability and psychological well-being as predicting factors on the attitude towards the male inmates that determines their readiness to face the realities in the outside environment. The likelihood of reoffending and further correctional needs of inmates may be addressed to reduce that likelihood or risks of recidivism or recommitting the same or another crime in the future.

This research undertaking has two variables: exogenous and endogenous constructs: the endogenous variable is attitudes towards Prisoners (ATP) Melvin *et al.* (1985) and exogenous constructs are social support with indicators: Significant other, Family, and Friends (first tool developed by (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988); Psychological Well-being with indicators: Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Purpose in life, and Self-Acceptance (second Instrument developed by Ryff & Keyes, 1995) as Ryff Scale of Psychological Well-being); Personal Coping (third tool developed by Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989 known as Multidimensional Coping Inventory (MCI) with indicators Positive Reinterpretation and Growth, Mental Disengagement, Focus on and Venting of Emotions, Use of Instrumental Social Support, Active Coping, Denial, Religious Coping, Humor, Behavioral Disengagement, Restraint,

Use of Emotional Social Support, Substance Use, Acceptance, Suppression of Competing Activities, and Planning.

The fourth variable is attitude towards prisoners (developed by Melviner *et al.*, 1985) with a 36-item questionnaire used to measure diverse samples of participants' attitudes toward. This study focuses on several key constructs related to perceptions and attitudes toward prisoners with indicators Perceived Prisoner Characteristics (PPC), Perceived Reintegration Potential (PRP), Perceived Potential Distrust (PPD), Perceived Individual Positivity/Trustworthiness (PIP), Perceived Individual Positivity/Trustworthiness (PIP), and Prejudicial Attitude toward Prisoners (PAT).

In conducting this study, the researcher's approach was based on two interactionist theories of the causes of human behavior: the transactional theory written about by Biggs, Brough, and Drummond (2017), and the cybernetic theory written about by Edwards and Baglioni (1999). The researcher wanted to understand the conditions and circumstances encountered during the experience of imprisonment, and how individuals were able to act in ways to control and determine their experiences of imprisonment. Both theories offered explanations of how individuals were able to cope with stress using different levels of coping strategies.

This study was conducted utilizing the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) principles, that is, offenders have criminogenic needs that should be assessed in order to address their criminal behavior. This premise holds that criminogenic needs have to be treated through correctional programs that are matched to the offenders' level of Risk, along with being delivered in a manner and method compatible with the offender's ability and learning style (James, 2018). Furthermore, if these factors are addressed in the corrections process, the probability of the offender engaging in future criminality would be minimized.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

This study seeks to determine the best-fit model of attitude towards male inmates. Specifically, the study aims to achieve the following objectives: (1) to describe the level of perceived social support, psychological well-being, personal coping and attitude toward prisoners; (2) to establish the significance of the relationship between, perceived social support, psychological well-being, coping mechanism and attitude towards prisoner; (3) Determine the singular and combined influence of perceived social support, psychological well-being, coping mechanism and attitude towards prisoner; (4) to recognize the best fit model that predicts attitude toward prisoner.

This study offers a valuable contribution to the existing body of knowledge on recidivism by examining male inmates' coping mechanisms and psychological well-being, with a particular emphasis on the role of perceived social support. A key strength of this research lies in its comprehensive analysis of inmates' personal backgrounds and histories, which provide a nuanced understanding of the factors that influence their ability to cope with incarceration. Exploring these dimensions, the study aims to uncover how individual differences in psychological resilience and support systems shape

behavioral outcomes, ultimately informing the design of more responsive and rehabilitative correctional programs.

In addition, the research investigates the recent behaviors and lifestyle patterns of inmates prior to incarceration, shedding light on the psychological and emotional states that precede criminal behavior. This information is critical in identifying specific coping responses employed by individuals across varying levels of psychosocial need. Insights drawn from these patterns are expected to support the development of holistic correctional initiatives that not only address inmates' immediate psychological needs but also contribute to the broader objective of reducing repeat offenses. The findings may serve as a foundation for implementing more comprehensive and evidence-based rehabilitation strategies within correctional institutions.

1.2 Framework of the Study

This study was conducted utilizing the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) principles - that is, offenders have criminogenic needs that should be assessed in order to address their criminal behavior. This premise holds that criminogenic needs have to be treated through correctional programs that are matched to the offenders' level of Risk, along with being delivered in a manner and method compatible with the offenders' ability and learning style (James, 2018). Furthermore, if these factors are addressed in the corrections process, the probability of the offender engaging in future criminality would be minimized.

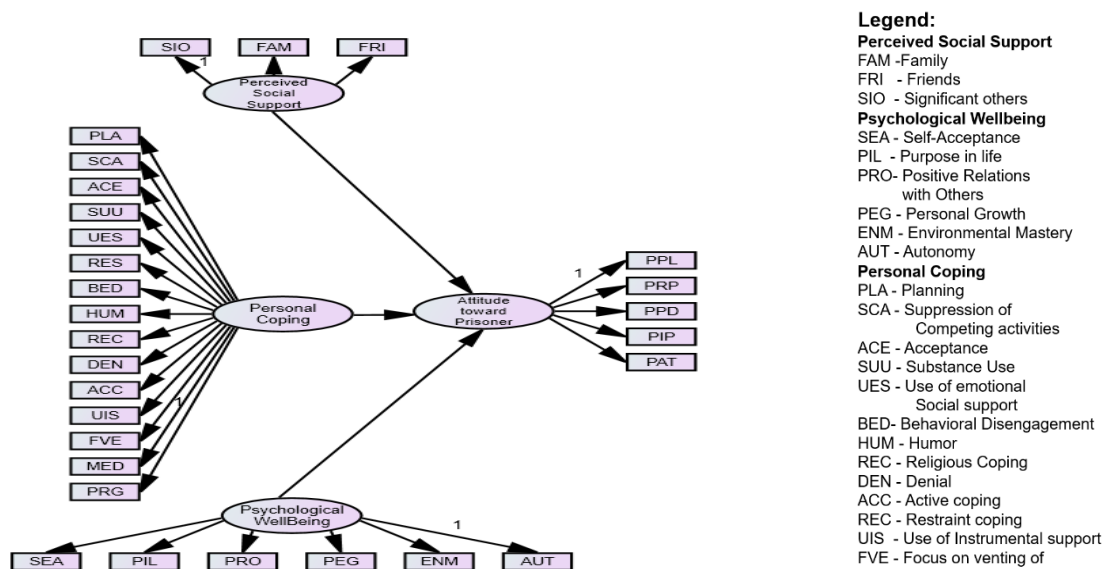


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study

Presented in the figure above is the conceptual paradigm of this research; the model shows the relationships between perceived social support, psychological well-being and personal coping on the attitude towards prisoners of male inmates

2. Methods

2.1 Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were the four hundred two (402) male inmates of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Region X. In quantitative research, calculations on sample size must be made before the adoption of a design plan. Taherdoost (2022) noted that arriving at an appropriate sample size was important to achieve statistical reliability and generalizability to the target population. With larger sample sizes comes more statistical power, which allows researchers to detect no meaningful differences and relationships found in the dependent and independent variables (Althubaiti, 2020). For this reason, it is proposed to use a sample size of 402 male inmates for the study.

2.2 Materials and Instrument

The study's adapted four parts from the following studies: the first tool was developed by (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988), known as Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), the second instrument was developed by (Ryff & Keyes, 1995) as Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being, the third instrument was intended to obtain information on the coping mechanisms/ styles of inmates during their correctional period. This instrument was developed by Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub (1989), known as the Multidimensional Coping Inventory (MCI) and the fourth portion of the survey included the Attitudes towards Prisoners (ATP) scale. The ATP was created by Melvin *et al.* (1985) among male inmates in the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Region 10. The instrument was restructured to make it more appropriate for modern enterprises and the local environment. Five specialists validated it in the domains of construction, human resource management, and even operational supervision to make the instrument more current.

2.3 Design and Procedure

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental design. Non-experimental quantitative research designs remain widely used in the social and behavioral sciences, especially when manipulation of variables or random assignment is impractical or unethical. In addition, the study took a causal research approach.

Several data collection procedures were used during the study, following strict confidentiality protocols at each and every stage. First, free prior informed consent was obtained from the research adviser and the research statistician. Moreover, the researcher also obtained consent from the respondents who were inmates. The selected respondents were also given consent forms written in the local dialect that stated the nature of the study and what their role would be. In addition, the researcher explained to the respondents the aims of the study and outlined the procedures for data collection, emphasizing that all instruments were based on previous studies and demonstrated internal consistency.

After the data collection, the researcher compiled and tabulated the answers. A data screening was followed to reduce possible outliers, and the data was worked through a series of steps to code, tabulate, and statistically analyse. Finally, the data were interpreted in relation to the study aims. In addition, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized to analyze the overall conceptual framework and assess the direct and indirect associations among the hypothesized variables. To summarize, we evaluated model fit using several fundamental indices: The Chi-square/df ratio (CMIN/DF), with considered acceptable values close to 2 and p-values > 0.05.; The Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), with the recommended model fit indices ideally above 0.95; as well as the Goodness of Fit Index, the Normative Fit Index, and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) index, with a decent model fit if it was below .08 (Heck & Thomas, 2020).

The researcher monitored, ensured, and adhered to all ethical requirements in conducting the study. Prior to posting the questionnaire online and sending it to various construction companies, the research proponent submitted the data instrument to the UMEREC for review and approval and adhered to the study requirements, protocol assessments and validated/standardized criteria, particularly in managing the size of the actual population and the data being considered because the study requires human participation. The UMEREC granted a Certificate of Approval (Appendix G) with Protocol Number UMEREC-2024-022. Therefore, the researcher ensured that employees who participated in the study were invited, and consent was obtained. It is a crucial mechanism for ensuring that individuals are shown professional conduct by offering conscientious consent for a voluntary act.

3. Result and Discussion

The data and the analysis of the findings are presented, focusing on the relationship between perceived social support, psychological well-being, and personal coping mechanisms in shaping the attitudes of male inmates toward fellow PDL's in Region X, Philippines.

3.1 Perceived Social Support towards Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Table 1 shows the level of perceived social support among male inmates in terms of three indicators: significant others, family, and friends. Among the indicators, *family* received the highest mean score ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.97$), with a descriptive level of Very High. This means that the items relating to perceived social support of male inmates are always observed, indicating that inmates consistently felt strong support from their families. On the other hand, *friends* obtained the lowest mean score ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.02$), yet still fell under the High descriptive level. The overall mean score of perceived social support was 3.95 ($SD = 0.76$), interpreted as High, suggesting that male inmates generally perceived a significant level of support from their social networks during their incarceration.

Table 1: Perceived Social Support towards Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Significant Others	0.97	4.07	High
Family	0.97	4.27	Very High
Friends	1.02	3.51	High
Overall	0.76	3.95	High

The data revealed that family support was perceived to be the most consistent and dependable form of social support for inmates, while support from friends was perceived as less stable or available. This suggests that familial relationships remained strong and perhaps became more pronounced during incarceration, potentially due to enduring emotional bonds or cultural expectations of kinship responsibilities. In contrast, friendships may have weakened due to physical separation, lack of communication, or shifting social ties. The high overall mean reflects the essential role of social connections in the lives of inmates, but also indicates variation in the type and strength of these relationships.

These findings suggest that correctional rehabilitation programs should be specific about support, focusing on family-living and communication support, such as family counseling, visitation, or communication programs, including letter writing or virtual communication. The lower support perceived from friends may suggest there is a social gap, and if not addressed, there will be an issue with reintegration into society. Programs to create peer-support systems in correctional facilities may fill this gap and promote a sense of belongingness and resilience. If family and social support systems can be increased, this can be a protective factor against recidivism as well as foster mental health and wellness during incarceration and upon release.

Family support is vital for rehabilitation and reentry for individuals who have been incarcerated, and recent research underscores the critical role family support plays in the reintegration process. Specifically, Zeng *et al.* (2021) found that ongoing family contact during incarceration improved prisoners' psychological state and reduced prisoners' feelings of loneliness and hopelessness, both of which are associated with recidivism risk. Along similar lines, Jiang *et al.* (2022) found that individuals with strong family ties while incarcerated and during the period of reentry had positive mental health, better reentry to the community, and were less likely to reoffend. Taken together, these findings suggest that family support can serve as a protective buffer, whereas the absence or mismatch of support from friends or acquaintances may have neutral or even negative effects.

3.2 Psychological Well-being towards Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Table 1.1 presents the level of psychological well-being among male inmates in terms of six indicators, which are: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. Of these, *personal growth* has the highest mean ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 0.77$), which is viewed as High. This would suggest inmates

felt a substantial degree of development and self-improvement whilst in prison. On the other hand, *environmental mastery* had the lowest mean score ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.81$), though still rated as High, indicating relatively lower confidence in managing their surroundings. The overall mean for psychological well-being was 3.79 ($SD = 0.62$), also at the High level, implying a generally positive psychological state among the respondents.

Table 1.1: Psychological Well-being towards Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Autonomy	0.71	3.74	High
Environmental Mastery	0.81	3.55	High
Personal Growth	0.77	4.02	High
Positive Relations with Others	0.78	3.85	High
Purpose in Life	0.78	3.89	High
Self-Acceptance	0.76	3.67	High
Overall	0.62	3.79	High

The findings suggest that male inmates perceived themselves to be undergoing meaningful internal growth while in prison, possibly as a result of reflection, religious activities, or structured rehabilitation programs. However, the lower score in environmental mastery may point to their limited control over prison conditions, routines, and daily choice factors that are often restricted in correctional settings. Although autonomy and self-acceptance were also high, these traits are likely nurtured internally, whereas environmental mastery requires external freedom, which inmates lack.

These results suggest that prisons may create opportunities for internal change and development, but should additionally facilitate inmates' feelings of agency within prison, such as including inmates in decisions regarding their daily routines or providing opportunities to attend programs with structure to promote independence and competence. The potential for personal development as the greatest indicator illustrates a high rehabilitative potential that can lead to greater rehabilitation with counseling, employment and being allowed to reflect on their experiences.

Recent research suggests that while incarceration generally serves the purpose of controlling or containing inmates, in certain situations, the carceral context will provide the opportunity for internal development and personal growth. For instance, in a qualitative study of male prisoners, Ghazanfari *et al.* (2023) discovered that imprisoned men reported substantial personal growth, greater self-acceptance, and increased autonomy from engaging in reflective thinking, religious commitment and positive structured programs within prison. Inmates who had a sense of growth self-report also scored lower on environmental mastery, which reflects the constraints of the correctional system and limits to personal control whenever an inmate is incarcerated. In a related study, Kaap-Deeder *et al.* (2021) also indicate that although prisoners had experience to develop autonomy and self-concepts, their mastery factor was still regulated, largely due to the constraints of the institutional procedures and limits caused by institutional

authority. Thus, the authors recommend rehabilitation programs that encourage active involvement, involvement in decisions and skill-development programs will encourage mandates for inmates to develop both internal and external competencies for their return to society.

3.3 Personal Coping towards Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Table 1.2 shows the level of personal coping among male inmates across fifteen coping strategies. Among all indicators, *religious coping* recorded the highest mean ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.89$), with a descriptive level of Very High, suggesting that inmates frequently turned to religion or spirituality to manage stress. In contrast, *substance use* had the lowest mean score ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.35$), interpreted as Moderate, indicating relatively less reliance on substances as a coping mechanism. The overall mean score for personal coping was 3.71 ($SD = 0.59$), interpreted as High, reflecting that inmates consistently employed various coping strategies during their incarceration.

The results indicate that male inmates most used religious coping, highlighting the importance of faith and spirituality in dealing with confinement. This may be due to the structured routines, moral guidance, and sense of hope that religious practices offer. The lower mean for substance use suggests a conscious or situational limitation in resorting to negative coping behaviors within the correctional environment. Overall, the data suggest a preference for adaptive coping strategies, such as planning, active coping, and acceptance, with spiritual reliance as a central pillar.

Recent studies confirm that religious coping is a prevalent and adaptive strategy among incarcerated populations. Sari *et al.* (2022) found that spiritual practices, such as prayer and religious group participation, provided inmates with comfort, hope, and a sense of purpose, which helped them manage the stress and uncertainty of prison life. Similarly, Hidayati *et al.* (2021) observed that inmates who relied on faith-based coping reported higher levels of psychological well-being and were less likely to engage in negative behaviors like substance use. These findings suggest that, alongside other adaptive strategies such as planning and seeking support, spirituality plays a central role in how prisoners handle the challenges of incarceration.

Table 1.2: Personal Coping towards Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Positive Reinterpretation and Growth	0.78	4.06	High
Mental Disengagement	0.82	3.68	High
Focus on and Venting of Emotions	0.83	3.68	High
Use of Instrumental Social Support	0.81	3.91	High
Active Coping	0.80	3.91	High
Denial	0.93	3.53	High
Religious Coping	0.89	4.21	Very High
Humor	1.04	3.47	High
Behavioral disengagement	1.03	3.40	High
Restraint	0.83	3.71	High
Use of Emotional Social Support	0.98	3.76	High

Substance Use	1.35	2.85	Moderate
Acceptance	0.87	3.77	High
Suppression of Competing Activities	0.88	3.73	High
Planning	0.85	3.90	High
Overall	0.59	3.71	High

3.4 Attitude toward Persons Deprived of Liberty on Male Inmates

Table 1.3 shows the level of attitude toward persons deprived of liberty among male inmates based on five indicators. The indicator with the highest mean was *Perceived Reintegration Potential* ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.77$), which was rated High, indicating that inmates had a generally optimistic view of the possibility for prisoners to reintegrate into society. In contrast, *Perceived Prisoner Characteristics* had the lowest mean ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.94$), interpreted as Moderate, suggesting some skepticism or neutral beliefs about the typical traits or behaviors of prisoners. The overall mean score was 3.49 ($SD = 0.64$), classified as High, reflecting a generally positive attitude toward prisoners among the male inmate respondents.

The data suggest that while inmates view their peers or even themselves as capable of successful reintegration, they may still hold moderate or mixed views regarding the personal characteristics typically associated with prisoners. This ambivalence may stem from internalized stigma or firsthand observation of negative behaviors within the prison system. Despite this, the strong belief in reintegration potential reflects hope and confidence in rehabilitation, change, and societal reentry. Positive scores in other indicators, such as individual trustworthiness and reduced prejudicial attitudes, further reinforce this forward-looking attitude.

Table 1.3: Attitude toward Persons Deprived of Liberty on Male Inmates

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Perceived Prisoner Characteristics	0.94	3.22	Moderate
Perceived Reintegration Potential	0.77	4.03	High
Perceived Potential and Distrust	0.91	3.27	Moderate
Perceived Individual Positivity and Trustworthiness	0.94	3.54	High
Prejudicial Attitude Toward Prisoner	0.94	3.41	High
Overall	0.64	3.49	High

The findings point to a need for correctional institutions to build on the inmates' optimistic perception of reintegration by offering structured post-release planning, vocational training, and psychological counseling. Since inmates themselves see the possibility for change, such a belief can be harnessed to motivate active participation in rehabilitation programs. Addressing the more moderate perceptions of prisoner characteristics through values formation, peer mentoring, and behavioral modeling can also improve overall self-perception and peer respect within prison settings.

Recent research affirms that inmates' attitudes toward their peers significantly influence rehabilitation success. Maier and Ricciardelli (2021) found that inmates often view their prison time as an opportunity for positive transformation, citing increased

patience and self-reflection. Crewe and Liebling (2020) emphasized that correctional environments can foster “narratives of reinvention” when inmates are given supportive conditions. Meanwhile, Kjelsberg *et al.* (2020) reported that perceptions of fellow prisoners' traits are often shaped by institutional dynamics, and interventions that promote dignity and accountability can shift these views positively. These findings support the value of nurturing internal belief in rehabilitation as a mechanism for lowering recidivism and improving prison culture.

3.5 Relationship between Exogenous and Endogenous Variables

Table 2 shows the significance of the relationship between perceived social support and the attitude toward prisoners among male inmates. The overall perceived social support was significantly correlated with all attitude indicators, with the strongest positive correlation found in *Perceived Reintegration Potential* ($r = .470$, $p < .001$), suggesting that inmates who felt more socially supported were more optimistic about reintegration. Among the individual sources, *friends* showed the highest overall correlation with attitude ($r = .243$, $p < .001$), while *significant others* also had notable relationships with indicators such as *Perceived Individual Positivity and Trustworthiness* ($r = .177$, $p < .001$) and *Prejudicial Attitude* ($r = .135$, $p = .007$). On the other hand, *family* had a weaker and more selective influence, with significant correlation only with *Perceived Reintegration Potential* ($r = .424$, $p < .001$) and the overall attitude score ($r = .150$, $p = .003$).

Table 2: Perceived Social Support and Attitude
toward Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Perceived Social Support	Attitude toward Persons Deprived of Liberty					
	Perceived Prisoner Characteristics	Perceived Reintegration Potential	Perceived Potential and Distrust	Perceived Individual Positivity and Trustworthiness	Prejudicial Attitude Toward Prisoners	Overall
Significant Others	-.002 .976	.411** .000	.086 .084	.177** .000	.135** .007	.215** .000
Family	-.016 .743	.424** .000	.004 .934	.091 .069	.082 .099	.150** .003
Friends	.137** .006	.261** .000	.141** .005	.160** .001	.178** .000	.243** .000
Overall	.054 .283	.470** .000	.101* .043	.185** .000	.171** .001	.263** .000

The data suggest that inmates who receive stronger support from friends and significant others tend to have more positive, less prejudicial attitudes toward prisoners, and a greater belief in their capacity to reintegrate. The strong association with *reintegration potential* underscores how external emotional and social encouragement can influence internal beliefs about change. Interestingly, family support, though vital in earlier tables, had a less consistent relationship with attitudes, perhaps reflecting complexities in family

dynamics, such as unresolved conflicts or judgment that could affect perceptions despite emotional closeness.

The findings imply that reinforcing social support networks during incarceration may significantly enhance inmates' positive attitudes, especially their belief in personal and peer rehabilitation. Correctional programs should consider facilitating peer support groups, structured communication with friends and significant others, and family reconciliation initiatives. By doing so, institutions can foster an environment of hope, self-worth, and reduced stigma among inmates, which are essential for effective rehabilitation and reduced recidivism.

Recent research highlights the significant impact of strengthening social support networks within correctional facilities. MacInnes and Kelly (2022) found that inmates who had access to peer support programs, as well as opportunities to maintain communication with family and friends, developed more optimistic attitudes towards rehabilitation and were better able to cope with the stresses of incarceration. These social connections also helped reduce feelings of isolation and stigma, which are often barriers to successful reintegration. Similarly, Evans and Wang (2021) emphasized that structured social support—whether through group counseling or family-focused interventions—was linked to lower rates of recidivism and greater self-worth among inmates.

3.6 Psychological Well-being and Attitude toward Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Table 2.1 presents the significance of the relationship between psychological well-being and attitude toward persons deprived of liberty among male inmates. The highest correlation was found between *overall psychological well-being* and *Perceived Reintegration Potential* ($r = .610, p < .001$), indicating that those with stronger psychological health were more optimistic about the reintegration of prisoners. Among the indicators, *Self-Acceptance* ($r = .471, p < .001$) and *Autonomy* ($r = .485, p < .001$) had strong, positive correlations with overall attitude toward prisoners. Conversely, *Personal Growth* had the weakest correlations with most attitude dimensions, showing no significant relationship with *Perceived Prisoner Characteristics* ($r = .040, p = .420$). Nevertheless, the overall relationship between psychological well-being and attitudes toward prisoners was statistically significant across all variables.

These results suggest that male inmates with higher levels of psychological well-being, especially those who accept themselves and feel autonomous, are more likely to hold positive and non-prejudicial attitudes toward prisoners, including beliefs in their potential to change and reintegrate. Inmates who demonstrate purpose in life, strong interpersonal relationships, and a sense of mastery over their environment also exhibited more favourable perceptions of their fellow prisoners. Interestingly, personal growth, although valuable, did not strongly influence inmates' perceptions of prisoner characteristics, implying that inward development may not always translate to outward empathy or changed social attitudes.

The strong relationship between psychological well-being and positive attitudes toward prisoners emphasizes the importance of mental health interventions and well-being programs in correctional facilities. Fostering autonomy, self-acceptance, and a sense of purpose may help reshape how inmates view themselves and others, promoting a rehabilitative rather than punitive mindset. Correctional programs should include self-reflection workshops, psychological counseling, and structured activities that reinforce self-worth and self-determination. Doing so can contribute not only to inmates' individual growth but also to a more positive and supportive correctional environment. Current research emphasizes the critical role of mental health and well-being programs in promoting positive attitudes and behaviors among incarcerated individuals. Lanciano et al. (2022) found that interventions aimed at enhancing psychological well-being, such as counseling, self-reflection activities, and skills training, contributed to improved self-esteem, autonomy, and overall adjustment to prison life. These programs helped inmates develop a sense of purpose and self-acceptance, which, in turn, encouraged more empathetic and rehabilitative views toward themselves and their peers. Hidayati et al. (2021) further reported that inmates who participated in structured well-being initiatives exhibited greater self-worth and were more likely to support a positive, change-oriented environment within the correctional facility.

Table 2.1: Psychological Well-being and Attitude
toward Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Psychological Well-being	Attitude toward Persons Deprived of Liberty					
	Perceived Prisoner Characteristics	Perceived Reintegration Potential	Perceived Potential and Distrust	Perceived Individual Positivity and Trustworthiness	Prejudicial Attitude toward Prisoner	Overall
Autonomy	.291** .000	.417** .000	.338** .000	.344** .000	.342** .000	.485** .000
Environmental Mastery	.206** .000	.454** .000	.225** .000	.290** .000	.265** .000	.397** .000
Personal Growth	.040 .420	.573** .000	.086 .086	.390** .000	.232** .000	.357** .000
Positive Relations with Others	.143** .004	.491** .000	.161** .001	.348** .000	.274** .000	.390** .000
Purpose in Life	.105* .036	.528** .000	.193** .000	.376** .000	.295** .000	.410** .000
Self-Acceptance	.273** .000	.461** .000	.271** .000	.359** .000	.327** .000	.471** .000
Overall	.218** .000	.610** .000	.264** .000	.439** .000	.360** .000	.521** .000

3.7 Personal Coping and Attitude toward Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Table 2.2 shows the significance of the relationship between personal coping and attitude toward prisoners among male inmates. The strongest overall correlation was found between *overall personal coping* and *overall attitude toward prisoners* ($r = .680$, $p < .001$),

indicating a strong positive relationship. Among the individual coping strategies, *planning* had the highest correlation with *Perceived Reintegration Potential* ($r = .539$, $p < .001$), while *restraint* showed the highest correlation with *overall attitude* ($r = .527$, $p < .001$). Conversely, *religious coping* and *positive reinterpretation and growth* showed weaker or non-significant correlations with *Perceived Prisoner Characteristics* ($p > .05$). Nonetheless, all other coping strategies demonstrated statistically significant positive relationships with various dimensions of prisoner attitudes.

Table 2.2: Personal Coping and Attitude toward
Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Personal Coping	Attitude toward Prisoner					
	Perceived Prisoner Characteristics	Perceived Reintegration Potential	Perceived Potential and Distrust	Perceived Individual Positivity and Trustworthiness	Prejudicial Attitude Toward Prisoner	Overall
Positive Reinterpretation and Growth	.087 .082	.475** .000	.165** .001	.290** .000	.307** .000	.363** .000
Mental Disengagement	.165** .001	.406** .000	.257** .000	.365** .000	.300** .000	.416** .000
Focus on and Venting of Emotions	.167** .001	.409** .000	.309** .000	.274** .000	.320** .000	.411** .000
Use of Instrumental Social Support	.088 .079	.475** .000	.264** .000	.352** .000	.325** .000	.415** .000
Active Coping	.184** .000	.505** .000	.198** .000	.409** .000	.262** .000	.429** .000
Denial	.361** .000	.314** .000	.400** .000	.352** .000	.348** .000	.503** .000
Religious Coping	.013 .798	.533** .000	.025 .616	.304** .000	.163** .001	.277** .000
Humor	.309** .000	.275** .000	.343** .000	.353** .000	.314** .000	.451** .000
Behavioral Disengagement	.421** .000	.190** .000	.447** .000	.234** .000	.392** .000	.482** .000
Restraint	.279** .000	.474** .000	.411** .000	.370** .000	.353** .000	.527** .000
Use of Emotional Social Support	.265** .000	.467** .000	.309** .000	.379** .000	.349** .000	.492** .000
Substance Use	.410** .000	.039 .431	.531** .000	.208** .000	.363** .000	.450** .000
Acceptance	.242** .000	.392** .000	.284** .000	.278** .000	.356** .000	.434** .000
Suppression of Competing Activities	.257** .000	.523** .000	.321** .000	.337** .000	.423** .000	.517** .000
Planning	.145** .004	.539** .000	.192** .000	.336** .000	.297** .000	.413** .000
Overall	.368** .000	.591** .000	.477** .000	.491** .000	.505** .000	.680** .000

The findings suggest that inmates who actively engage in adaptive coping strategies such as planning, restraint, emotional support seeking, and acceptance—tend to hold more positive views about their fellow prisoners, including their potential for reintegration and reform.

These strategies likely reflect a forward-thinking mindset, emotional regulation, and problem-solving orientation, which shape how inmates perceive both themselves and others in the correctional environment. In contrast, higher scores in maladaptive strategies such as *substance use* and *behavioral disengagement* still showed significant correlations, but may reflect attitudes influenced by stress, cynicism, or normalization of incarceration, requiring nuanced interpretation.

Recent research reinforces that adaptive coping strategies among inmates are closely linked to more positive attitudes about rehabilitation and reintegration. Hooshang Ghazanfari *et al.* (2023) observed that prisoners who actively used adaptive coping methods—such as planning, seeking support, and acceptance—reported higher optimism about their future and were more likely to believe in their own and their peers' capacity for change. These strategies supported emotional regulation, future orientation, and constructive problem-solving. On the other hand, maladaptive strategies like substance use or withdrawal were associated with negative or resigned attitudes and higher stress levels. This highlights the importance of promoting healthy coping skills in correctional programs to support positive change.

The results underscore the importance of promoting adaptive coping mechanisms among inmates as a means to foster a rehabilitative mindset and healthier peer relationships. Correctional programs should include structured coping skills training, cognitive-behavioral interventions, and peer mentoring initiatives that help inmates manage stress while building prosocial attitudes. The significant influence of planning, restraint, and support-seeking on positive perceptions suggests these skills are not only beneficial for emotional well-being but also for reducing stigma and fostering reintegration-oriented thinking.

Recent studies highlight the effectiveness of interventions designed to develop adaptive coping skills among incarcerated individuals. Jalil *et al.* (2022) found that structured coping skills training and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) programs led to significant improvements in inmates' emotional regulation, problem-solving abilities, and attitudes toward rehabilitation. These interventions also reduced aggressive behavior and fostered more positive relationships among peers. Similarly, MacInnes and Kelly (2022) reported that peer mentoring initiatives in correctional facilities provided valuable emotional support, strengthened social bonds, and helped reduce the stigma of incarceration, all of which contributed to better reintegration outcomes and overall well-being.

3.8 Influence of Perceived Social Support, Psychological Well-being and Personal Coping on Attitude toward Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Table 3 presents the results of the multiple linear regression analysis examining the influence of perceived social support, psychological well-being, and personal coping on inmates' overall attitude toward persons deprived of liberty. Among the three predictors, *personal coping* showed the strongest and most significant influence on attitudes ($\beta = .651$, $t = 12.294$, $p < .001$), followed by *psychological well-being* ($\beta = .134$, $t = 2.286$, $p = .023$). Interestingly, *perceived social support* demonstrated a statistically significant but negative influence ($\beta = -.140$, $t = -3.018$, $p = .003$). The model accounted for 47.6% of the variance in attitude toward prisoners ($R^2 = .476$, $F = 120.688$, $p < .001$), indicating a moderately strong predictive power.

Table 3: Influence of Perceived Social Support, Psychological Well-being, and Personal Coping on Attitude toward Persons Deprived of Liberty among Male Inmates

Attitude toward Prisoner (Variables)		B	β	T	Sig.
Constant		.824		5.134	.000
Perceived Social Support		-.117	-.140	-3.018	.003
Psychological Well-being		.139	.134	2.286	.023
Personal Coping		.702	.651	12.294	.000
R	.690				
R ²	.476				
ΔR	.471				
F	120.688				
P	.000				

The regression results reveal that personal coping was the most influential factor shaping inmates' attitudes toward persons deprived of liberty, suggesting that inmates who employed more adaptive coping strategies developed more positive, hopeful, and less judgmental perceptions of their peers. Psychological well-being also played a significant, though smaller, role in enhancing these attitudes. Interestingly, the negative beta coefficient for perceived social support implies that increased external support might correlate with slightly more negative attitudes—possibly due to guilt, stigma, or unrealistic external expectations placed upon inmates. This counterintuitive result suggests a need for deeper qualitative insights into how social support is perceived or internalized by inmates.

These findings underscore the importance of integrating personal coping development into correctional rehabilitation programs, as this factor most strongly predicts inmates' positive attitudinal shifts. Mental health and wellness interventions that strengthen self-regulation, planning, emotional expression, and acceptance are essential. Given the unexpected negative effect of perceived social support, correctional institutions should also carefully examine the quality and context of external support systems and offer guidance on how inmates can process and respond to this support constructively. Fostering psychological well-being alongside coping may create a

reinforcing cycle that leads to more reformatory, socially engaged behaviors and attitudes.

Recent research has emphasized the critical value of incorporating coping skills and mental health interventions into correctional rehabilitation. Maschi *et al.* (2020) highlight that programs designed to enhance self-regulation, emotional awareness, and adaptive coping (such as planning and acceptance) are linked to improved attitudes and behavioral outcomes among inmates. Additionally, Clarke *et al.* (2021) caution that not all social support is beneficial—external support that is inconsistent or overbearing can actually contribute to stress or negative self-perceptions. These studies suggest that correctional programs should carefully assess both the content and delivery of social support while simultaneously fostering psychological well-being and positive coping, thus reinforcing a cycle of healthy, reformatory attitudes and behaviors.

4. Summary of Goodness of Fit Measures of the Three Generated Models

Table 4 presents the summary of goodness-of-fit measures for the three generated models assessing the relationships among perceived social support, psychological well-being, personal coping, and attitude toward prisoners among male inmates. Among the three models, Model 3 demonstrated the best fit based on multiple indices: P-value = .089 (acceptable), CMIN/DF = 1.557 (within the ideal range of $0 < \text{value} < 2$), GFI = .989, CFI = .993, NFI = .981, TLI = .680, RMSEA = .037 (acceptable), and P-close = .725. In contrast, Models 1 and 2 had poor fit indices, with high CMIN/DF values (>6), low GFI and CFI scores (<0.70), and high RMSEA values (>0.10), indicating poor model fit.

Table 4: Summary of Goodness of Fit Measures

Model	P-value (>0.05)	CMIN / DF ($0 < \text{value} < 2$)	GFI (>0.95)	CFI (>0.95)	NFI (>0.95)	TLI (>0.95)	RMSEA (<0.05)	P-close (>0.05)
1	.000	7.317	.617	.648	.616	.618	.126	.000
2	.000	6.449	.641	.698	.663	.671	.117	.000
3	.089	1.557	.989	.993	.981	.980	.037	.725

Legend: CMIN/DF - Chi Square/Degrees of Freedom; NFI - Normed Fit Index; GFI - Goodness of Fit Index; TLI - Tucker-Lewis Index; RMSEA - Root Mean Square of Error Approximation; CFI - Comparative Fit Index.

The data confirm that Model 3 provided the most appropriate representation of the relationships between the study variables. This suggests that the structural paths specified in Model 3 best captured the interrelationships among perceived social support, psychological well-being, personal coping, and attitudes toward prisoners. In contrast, the poor goodness-of-fit measures in Models 1 and 2 indicate misspecifications or inadequate path structures.

The excellent fit of Model 3 implies that it can be confidently used as the best-fitting theoretical model for explaining the psychosocial mechanisms influencing inmates' attitudes toward prisoners. This model can serve as a foundation for future

interventions and policy decisions in correctional settings, guiding how institutions address inmate rehabilitation through integrated coping, support, and well-being strategies. The validation of this model also opens opportunities for replication studies and model testing in other prison populations or related psychosocial domains.

Recent methodological literature emphasizes the importance of using well-fitting models, like structural equation models (SEM), to understand complex relationships among psychosocial variables in correctional settings. Jackson *et al.* (2021) recommend that models with excellent fit indices can confidently be used to guide interventions, policy development, and future research. Heck and Thomas (2020) highlight that SEM provides a robust framework for testing theoretical assumptions and evaluating direct and indirect effects among constructs such as coping, social support, and psychological well-being. When validated, these models serve as solid foundations for evidence-based strategies and can be adapted or replicated in other contexts to inform broader correctional policy and practice.

In structural equation modeling, a well-fitting model is crucial for valid interpretation of theoretical constructs. Schreiber *et al.* (2020) emphasize that RMSEA values below .05, along with GFI and CFI values above .95, indicate strong model adequacy criteria clearly met by Model 3. These guidelines support the selection of Model 3 as the most reliable and valid representation of the underlying relationships in this study.

4.1 Best Fit Structural Model

The diagram represents Model 3, which, according to Table 4, achieved the best overall fit among the three generated models. The fit indices support this: P-value = .089 (> 0.05), CMIN/DF = 1.557 (acceptable, < 2), GFI = .989, CFI = .993, NFI = .981, RMSEA = .037, P-close = .725 – all indicating excellent model fit.

The hypothesized model illustrates the structural relationships among perceived social support, psychological well-being, personal coping, and attitude toward prisoners among male inmates. In this model, perceived social support is measured through three observed indicators: support from significant others (SIO), family (FAM), and friends (FRI). Psychological well-being is reflected through six dimensions: self-acceptance (SEA), purpose in life (PIL), positive relations (PRO), personal growth (PEG), environmental mastery (ENM), and autonomy (AUT). Personal coping, a central component of the model, is represented by fifteen coping strategies, including planning (PLA), self-control (SCA), acceptance (ACC), denial (DEN), humor (HUM), and religious coping (REC), among others. These three latent variables are theorized to directly influence the endogenous variable attitude toward prisoners which is measured by five observed indicators: perceived prisoner characteristics (PPL), perceived reintegration potential (PRP), perceived potential and distrust (PPD), perceived individual positivity and trustworthiness (PIP), and prejudicial attitudes toward prisoners (PAT).

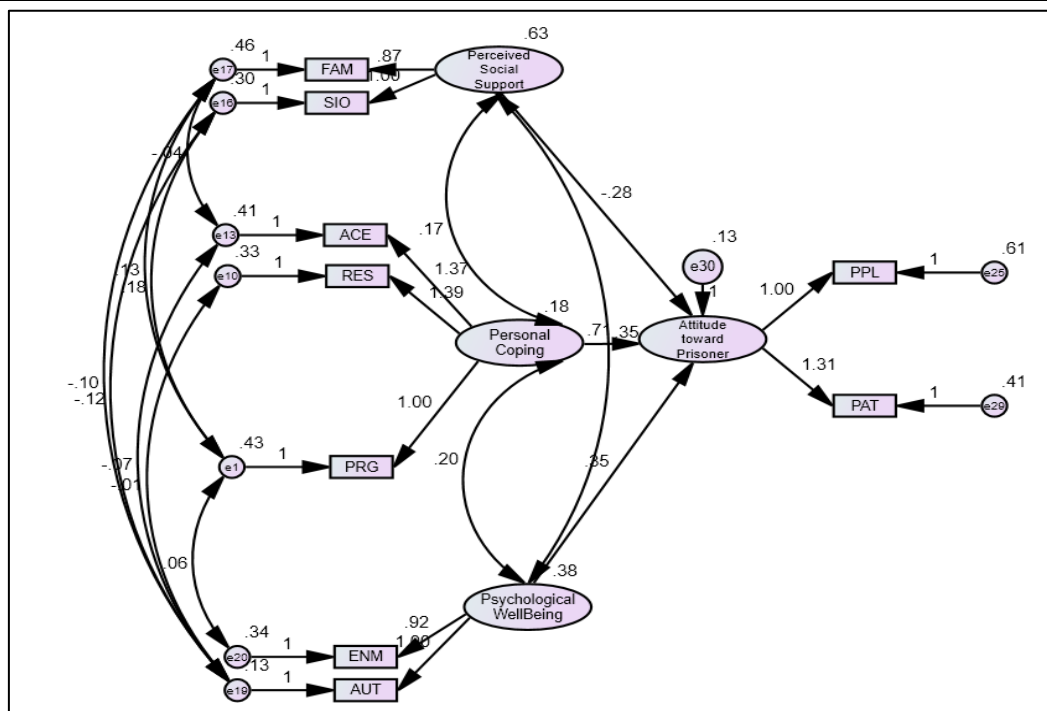


Figure 2: Structural Model 3 in Standardized Solution

The model proposes that perceived social support and psychological well-being may both directly and indirectly influence inmates' attitudes through personal coping mechanisms. This structure aligns with established theories of inmate rehabilitation, suggesting that social and emotional resources contribute to how prisoners view themselves and others within the correctional environment. The placement of personal coping as a mediating variable acknowledges its pivotal role in translating external and internal psychosocial inputs into attitudes that may support or hinder rehabilitation. As such, the model provides a comprehensive framework to examine how individual and environmental factors interact to shape prisoner attitudes, laying the foundation for empirical validation through structural equation modeling.

Recent empirical work in correctional psychology supports the idea that coping mechanisms serve as critical mediators between social resources, psychological well-being, and attitudes or behaviors among inmates. Kaap-Deeder *et al.* (2021) found that prisoners' psychological well-being and social support not only directly improved adjustment but also worked indirectly by enhancing adaptive coping strategies, which then fostered more positive attitudes and increased readiness for rehabilitation. Ghazanfari *et al.* (2023) further demonstrated that coping skills translated both external support and internal resilience into healthier self-perceptions and more hopeful outlooks for reintegration. These findings validate the use of structural equation modeling to untangle these complex pathways and inform comprehensive, evidence-based interventions in correctional settings.

4.2 Regression Weights of the 3 Generated Models

Table 5 presents the regression weights across three generated models analyzing the influence of perceived social support, psychological well-being, and personal coping on inmates' attitudes toward prisoners. In all three models, *personal coping* consistently showed a strong and statistically significant influence (Model 1: $\beta = .914^{***}$, Model 2: $\beta = .992^{***}$, Model 3: $\beta = .711^{***}$). In contrast, *perceived social support* had a consistently negative and significant influence (Model 1: $\beta = -.235^{***}$, Model 2: $\beta = -.250^{***}$, Model 3: $\beta = -.281^{**}$). Meanwhile, *psychological well-being* did not show a statistically significant impact in any of the models ($p > .05$), as denoted by the NS (not significant) marker.

Table 5: Regression Weights of the 3 Generated Models

Model	Exogenous Variables to Endogenous Variables		
	Perceived Social Support	Psychological Well-being	Personal Coping
1	-.235***	.118NS	.914***
2	-.250***	-.033NS	.992***
3	-.281**	.348NS	.711***

The consistent and dominant effect of *personal coping* across all models confirms it as the most powerful predictor of inmates' attitudes toward persons deprived of liberty. This supports the idea that how inmates manage stress and challenges within the prison environment directly influences how they perceive others around them. The negative and significant influence of *perceived social support* suggests that external support, while important for emotional stability, may complicate or challenge inmates' views of their current status or that of fellow inmates, potentially due to internal conflict, dependence, or unrealistic external expectations. The insignificance of psychological well-being in all models could suggest that its effect is indirect or mediated by other factors, such as coping.

These regression results highlight the critical need to focus on strengthening inmates' coping strategies through skills training, emotional regulation programs, and structured daily activities. The powerful influence of coping over both social support and psychological well-being emphasizes its foundational role in shaping inmate perceptions and potential rehabilitation. The consistent negative influence of perceived social support warrants a more in-depth exploration, possibly using qualitative methods, to understand how support is interpreted. Finally, institutions should not rely solely on psychological well-being as a direct intervention but rather see it as a broader outcome of improved coping capacity and supportive correctional environments.

Van Ginneken and Hayes (2020) noted that inmates who possess strong coping resources are more likely to demonstrate empathy and positive attitudes toward rehabilitation, reinforcing the findings in all three models. Maschi *et al.* (2020) also emphasized that while psychological well-being is important, it often acts in conjunction with active coping mechanisms to shape meaningful behavioral outcomes. Meanwhile, recent work by Clarke *et al.* (2021) explored how social support, when perceived as overbearing or conditional, may lead to increased psychological distress rather than

relief—supporting the negative effect of perceived social support seen in this study. These findings align with the regression results and offer direction for prison-based interventions.

5. Conclusion

This study set out to understand what helps or hinders male inmates in Region X has positive attitudes about themselves and others while in prison. The main goals were to describe how much support they feel from family, friends, and others; to measure their psychological well-being and how they cope with stress; and to find out how all these things influence their views about people in jail.

Descriptive analysis of the data revealed that male inmates reported generally high levels of perceived social support, psychological well-being, and personal coping. Among the sources of support, family emerged as the most significant, while personal growth and a sense of purpose in life stood out as key indicators of psychological well-being. Coping strategies most frequently employed included religious engagement and positive reinterpretation, reflecting a reliance on internally directed and constructive responses to stress. Furthermore, attitudes toward fellow inmates, particularly with regard to reintegration potential, were distinctly positive, suggesting a rehabilitative mind set among many of the participants.

Inferential findings demonstrated that psychological well-being specifically the components of self-acceptance and autonomy was the strongest and most consistent predictor of positive attitudes toward fellow inmates. Regression analysis revealed that coping strategies such as planning, acceptance, and restraint also significantly contributed to the perception of reintegration potential. Structural equation modeling (SEM) confirmed a robust path from psychological well-being through personal coping to inmate attitudes, with coping functioning as a partial mediator in this relationship. Particularly, while social support had a positive overall correlation with inmate attitudes, support from family and significant others displayed weaker or even negative associations with some variables, indicating the complex and sometimes conflicted nature of social ties during incarceration.

The results of the study are in strong alignment with the theoretical foundations upon which it was framed. The findings support the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, which posits that individuals' cognitive appraisal of stress and their perceived coping resources play a central role in determining emotional and behavioural outcomes. Additionally, the Cybernetic Theory of Stress, which views coping as an iterative process aimed at reducing discrepancies between current and desired states, is also substantiated. The validated model underscores the importance of psychological well-being and coping as core mediating processes, reinforcing the relevance of these theoretical perspectives in understanding inmate adaptation and rehabilitation potential.

Overall, this study makes it clear that real change comes from helping inmates not just survive prison life, but also build the skills and inner strength they need to see themselves and others in a new and more hopeful light.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered to address identified areas of concern and contribute meaningfully to inmate rehabilitation and reintegration:

- 1) **Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).** Based on the study's findings, the BJMP should prioritize the development and consistent implementation of programs that build adaptive coping skills among inmates. Since coping strategies like planning, emotional management, and seeking support were shown to have the greatest impact on positive attitudes and rehabilitation, the BJMP can organize regular skills-training workshops, counseling sessions, and structured group activities that foster these abilities. Investing in programs that go beyond basic security focusing instead on mental health, emotional resilience, and practical coping can help create a more supportive environment that encourages rehabilitation and reduces repeat offenses.
- 2) **Correctional Staff.** Correctional staff plays a crucial role in the day-to-day experiences of inmates, so ongoing training in mental health awareness, basic counseling, and positive communication techniques is strongly recommended. The results suggest that staffs who understands the importance of psychological well-being and healthy coping can better support inmates, not only by managing behavior but also by guiding them toward positive growth. Staff should be encouraged to facilitate programs that allow inmates some decision-making and involvement in daily routines, helping to increase autonomy and a sense of personal control, which the study identified as areas needing improvement.
- 3) **Rehabilitation Specialists.** For rehabilitation specialists, the results highlight the value of designing interventions that focus on developing both psychological well-being and practical coping skills. Specialists are encouraged to create holistic programs that combine individual counseling, group therapy, and skills-building workshops aimed at self-acceptance, emotional regulation, and future planning. As the study found, these elements are essential for nurturing a rehabilitative mindset and improving attitudes among inmates. Rehabilitation specialists should also tailor their approaches to consider the unique backgrounds and needs of each inmate, ensuring that support systems are meaningful and accessible.
- 4) **Community-Based Support Agencies.** Community-based support agencies have a critical role in the reintegration of released inmates. The study's results suggest that successful reintegration depends on the continuation of strong, positive support networks after release. Agencies should focus on facilitating family reconciliation, peer mentoring, and accessible mental health resources for former inmates. It is also recommended to educate families and communities on how to

offer supportive, non-judgmental help, since the research indicates that not all forms of support are experienced positively. By creating bridge programs and support groups, these agencies can help former inmates maintain the coping and personal growth they developed during incarceration, making a return to society smoother and more sustainable.

- 5) **Future Researchers.** Given the complexity of psychosocial factors affecting inmates' attitudes and rehabilitation, future researchers are encouraged to conduct longitudinal and multi-site studies to further validate and refine the structural model presented in this study. Exploring other variables, such as cultural influences, gender differences, and the role of community attitudes, can offer deeper insights into how support, well-being, and coping interact over time and across different settings. Researchers are also encouraged to use mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with interviews or focus groups, to capture the lived experiences of inmates in greater detail. Such research can help generate more nuanced, evidence-based recommendations for correctional practice and policy, ultimately contributing to more effective and humane rehabilitation strategies.

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