

Review Article:

A Scoping Review of Hope on Female Prisoners

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Abstract:

Prisoners are pressured from inside or outside the correctional facility, triggering psychological problems such as stress, anxiety, and depression. Meanwhile, hope is a positive psychology that helps inmates overcome psychological problems in correctional facilities. This study further aims to determine female prisoners' hope in correctional facilities. The scoping review approach was used, starting with the article search through, EBSCO (CINAHL and Academic Search), ProQuest, and Google Scholar databases, using keywords such as female, hope, prisoners, and prison. The articles were sorted based on inclusion criteria, involving the availability of full texts, 2010-2021 publications, primary research results, population and research samples involving female prisoners, qualitative study, and the hope of female prisoners in prison. The results showed that female prisoners have hopes for life during their sentence and after being released from prison. As a conclusion, all the articles provided an overview of the hopes to be achieved ranging from career, family, education, desire to be free from crime, and the desire for revenge. Several articles demonstrated that the source of hope comes from social support while in prison, as well as religious, and self-development activities.

Keywords: Female; Hope; Prisoners; Prison

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Introduction:

Female prisoners are a vulnerable population to mental health problems and are more prone to stress than male prisoners. This is due to the hormonal differences between men and women¹. Furthermore, women serving time in prison are prone to psychiatric morbidity compared to men in prison and women in the community. The morbidity level is due to a history of trauma, drug abuse, separation from children, and untreated mental illness². These inmates experience problems such as trauma, sadness, stress, and loss, during their time in prison. The trauma felt is due

to experiences before entering the prison such as divorce, loss of a loved one, violence, or harassment. These events cause trauma, which develops into a source of stress while serving a sentence³, hence the inmates need mental health services.

There are few health services in prisons that focus on psychological problems, rather they are more focused on physical health services⁴. Therefore, an individual needs to develop positive psychology to become a hopeful, future-oriented individual and form positive coping, to deal with these psychological problems⁵. Positive psychology is a discipline that

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focuses on the optimal functioning of the individual and the importance of being a meaningful member of society ⁶. A positive psychology that prisoners need to develop is hope, which is a thought process that leads to goals (goals) with motivation (agency) as a driver and ways or paths (pathways) to achieve goals ⁷. In addition, hope involves motivation within an individual and it affects their ability to plan for attainable goals ^{8,9}.

Hope predicts a person's mental health and psychological well-being, as well as indirectly preventing mental illness ¹⁰. Furthermore, with the predicted level of mental health, the prison was hoped to provide mental health services for inmates. The prisoners need mental health services, support, and counseling, especially for female prisoners, who have high levels of emotional and psychological distress, associated with past experiences such as abuse and exacerbated by feelings of being away from home and children ¹¹. Additionally, the hopes of female prisoners require further studies, because they can be used to predict and prevent repeated criminal acts. According to Law & Guo ¹², higher hopes were associated with a lower estimated risk of repeated crime.

Methods:

The methodology described by Arksey and O'Malley was used to conduct a scoping review ¹³, involving five stages, identifying the study question, identifying relevant studies, study selection, charting the data, collecting, summarizing, and analyzing the included literature. Furthermore, the PRISMA diagram showed the article search process.

Identifying the research question

The study question was 'what are the hopes of female prisoners?'

Identifying relevant studies

Article searches were conducted using, EBSCOhost (CINAHL and Academic Search), ProQuest, and Google Scholar databases, with publications ranging from 2010 to 2021, and using the keywords "Hope", "Prisoners", "Female".

Study selection

The articles were selected by reading abstracts and titles, then sorted by inclusion criteria which includes articles from primary research, the population and study sample were female prisoners, discussing the hopes of female prisoners, qualitative research, and full texts. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria involved

female prisoners with comorbidities.

Charting, collecting, summarizing, and analyzing the data

The data was mapped by three authors (HPA, BIF, LR) and an extraction table was created consisting of authors, year of publication, country, methods, sample size, and results. In addition, two authors (SY and NOH) reviewed and refined the results of the analysis.

Results:

About 4,139 articles were obtained from three databases and sorted, where 20 articles were obtained based on the inclusion criteria. The articles were reprocessed based on the focus and content of articles related to the topic until 5 articles were reviewed.

Study Characteristics

The hopes of female prisoners were discussed in 5 articles. Furthermore, the study was conducted in several countries, where two were conducted in Indonesia, two in the USA, and one in New Zealand. The study used qualitative methods and was conducted between 2010 and 2019.

Participants Characteristics

The total participants in the scoping review include 75 female prisoners. In a study by Sandoval et al ¹⁴, the participants involved 13 people with several characteristics. The mean age of the participants was between 19 and 46 years, consisting of ethnic African-American, black skin and Indian, half American and half black, and whites and blacks ¹, Caucasian, Hispanic, Mexicans, and whites ². Furthermore, out of the thirteen female prisoners, nine have children within the age range of 10 months to 27 years, and a participant lives in prison with their child. The level of education varies from elementary school to undergraduate. Meanwhile, a total of 19 participants were involved in the study by Murdoch et al ¹⁵, with an age range of 17 to 58 years and an average age of 27 years. About 19 participants were of European New Zealand descent ⁶, New Zealand Maori ¹¹, Cook Island descent ². Also, the participants had several criminal cases including murder, theft, humiliation, and kidnapping. According to Feoh et al ¹⁶, the characteristics of five participants includes being married, having a sentence of more than 6 months, and going to prison for the first time. In Ardilla & Herdiana ¹⁷, it was stated that the criteria for six participants included the first time they went to prison. Additionally, 74 female inmates are mothers

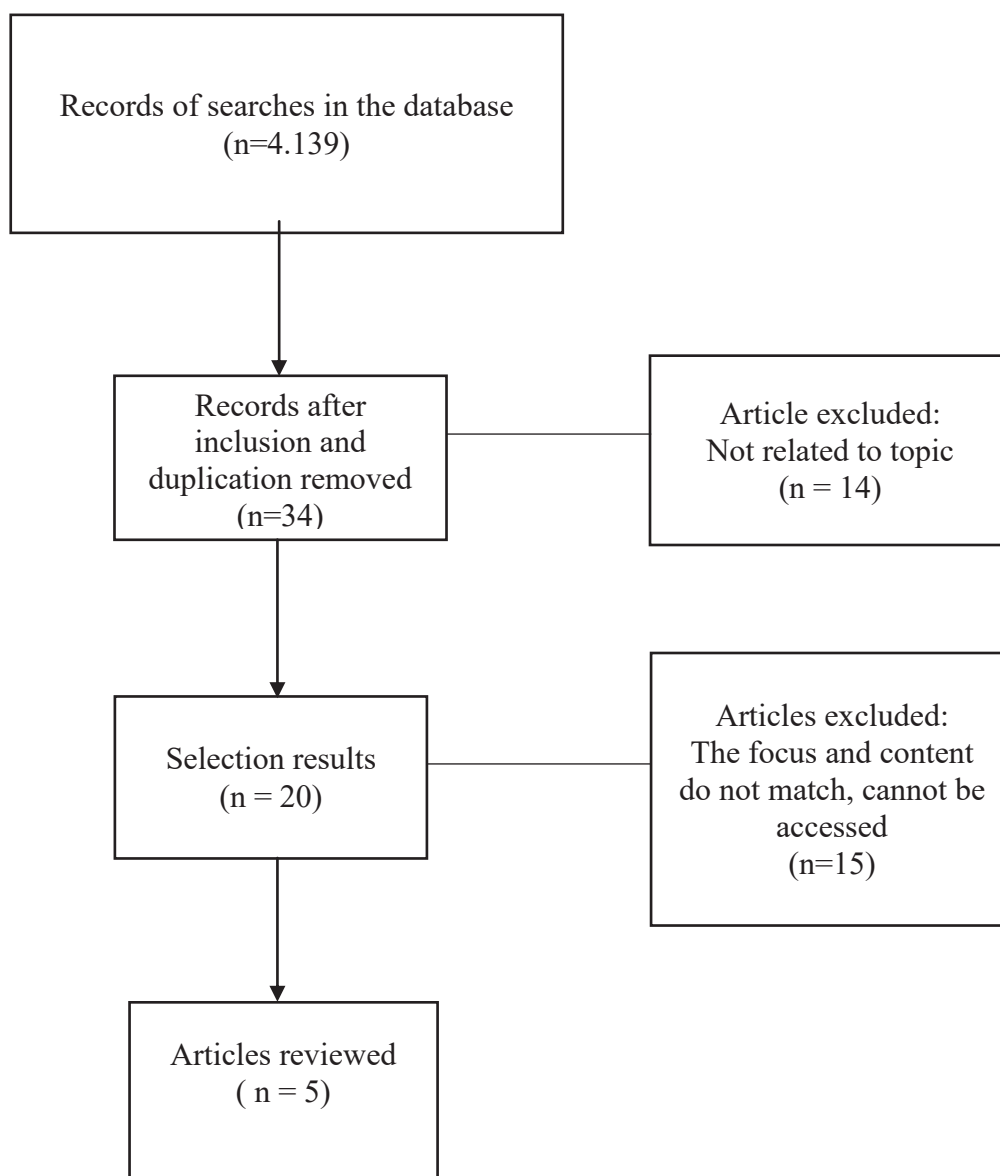


Fig 1. PRISMA flow diagram of the study selection process

aged between 23 and 51 years with an average age of 34 years. They include white (26%), and black races (74%) and an education level starting from junior high school and several colleges, entangled in several criminal cases including drug and alcohol abuse, theft, humiliation, and robbery¹⁸.

Hopes of Female Prisoners

Hope is a thought process that leads to goals and identifies several key dimensions such as past experiences, goals, self-motivation, internal and external control, and religious beliefs⁷. Furthermore,

it protects against mental and physical health problems because goal-setting provides positive feedback and impact. Also, hope facilitates motivation and coping strategies for mental health problems¹⁹ we used multigroup structural equation modeling in a sample of college students (N = 2,461). It is influenced by the goals to be achieved, a person's thought about the strategies in achieving goals, and his beliefs about his ability to maintain motivation²⁰. In addition, social support, religious beliefs, and self-control are factors that affect one's hopes. According to the five articles obtained, the hopes of female prisoners were:

Realistic hopes of female prisoner's life in the future

Two of the five articles discussed how female prisoners have realistic hopes for their future. These hopes are formed through future assessments and judgments about what can and cannot be changed, and it is based on achievable and realistic forms of desire²¹. According to Ardilla & Herdina¹⁷, the participants had realistic hopes for their lives, and this is influenced by acceptance and good self-understanding. Hence, female prisoners determine the hopes to be achieved based on their shortcomings, strengths, and abilities, rather than being influenced by others.

According to Feoh et al¹⁶, social support factors, especially family and moral support influence the realistic hopes of female prisoners. Close relations have traditionally been seen as a source of social support²². Furthermore, religious and counseling activities held in prisons provides moral support for prisoners.

Hope to be a better and positive person

Sandoval and Baumgartner¹⁴ showed that female prisoners found new hope after participating in activities such as self-development. An inmate finds hope after doing work in a prison and this increases his self-esteem, giving him purpose and motivation to love and credit himself. This is for the prisoners to accept and respect themselves and avoid the stigma that exists in society. According to Ardilla & Herdiana¹⁷ the participants hope to be better people when released from prison.

Hope not to get involved in the world of crime again

Female inmates hope for a better life after prison, one example is not to be involved in crimes again after release. According to Feoh et al¹⁶ on human-trafficking convicts, the participants do not want to be involved in illegal work again. They are willing to quit and do not participate in sending workers to unlawful procedures. The female prisoners' hope to avoid the criminal world is for themselves and their families, especially children. Celinska & Siegel¹⁸ stated that participants had hopes that their children will not commit crimes like them.

Hope to gather with family

Female prisoners have hopes and prioritized goals, including returning to their families or getting married, and the first goal addressed after release

is their family²³. This is in line with the study by Celinska & Siegel¹⁸, where prisoners hope to reunite with their families and need support from their children. Also, these prisoners hope to continue their role as mothers who were delayed while serving.

Hope to find a new job, start a business or have a career

According to Celinska & Siegel¹⁸, the participants had the hope of finding a job and a decent place to live after release, though it was uncertain. Meanwhile, finding a job is the second priority after returning and taking care of the family. Sandoval & Baumgartner¹⁴ demonstrated that participants had hopes of returning to work and careers. They showed strong agency by taking control of their lives and seeking resources to advance their careers. Also, they seek a way (pathway) to open a joint business by communicating with friends who were ex-convicts.

Hope for revenge

The prisoners hope for revenge against those who did evil to them¹⁴. This includes the people who have used violence against them or who have thrown them into prison. Furthermore, the form of vengeance to be conducted is similar to stealing from the person who once beat them.

No hope and goals

According to Murdoch et al¹⁵, female prisoners had no hope and goals after being released. This is because they have a negative perception of the outside world and feel they have no control over the negative events in their lives. In addition, they feel they have no place to return to after being released due to the lack of social support received while serving their sentence. Consequently, planning their destination after release from prison is a waste of time.

Discussion:

This study aimed to determine the hopes of female prisoners. The results showed that there were various forms of hope held by the female prisoners. Furthermore, all articles provided an overview of the form of hope to be achieved in terms of career, family, education, the desire to be free from crime, and the desire for revenge. In addition, the hopes of female prisoners are influenced by some factors.

The effect of social support on the hopes of female prisoners was discussed in three articles, which gave different results. According to the first article, the inmates hoped to reunite and establish friendship with their families because they felt they had problems due

to the lack of social support received while in prison¹⁸. The second article stated that participants who lack social support from family or friends have realistic hopes after being released from prison¹⁶. Meanwhile, the third article showed that the participants had no hope or goals after being released from prison due to the lack of social support received from anyone during their sentence¹⁵. Therefore, further research on the effect of social support on the hopes of female prisoners is required.

Additionally, a number of articles discussed other factors that affect hopes, which include moral support that comes from religious activities in prison, self-control over the situation being experienced, and individual belief in achieving the set goals. Therefore, an in-depth study on the influence of these factors on female prisoners or whether there are other factors that can influence hopes is needed.

The articles provided results about the goals set by the female prisoners. Generally, hope provides many positive benefits for life, and high hopes is positively associated with better adjustment and elicited positive emotions than negative. The individuals gain confidence, excitement, and feel challenged by the life events being faced and there is an increase in self-esteem, life satisfaction, and lower levels of depression²⁴. Also, hope plays a role in character strength, which facilitates effective coping, improves social functioning, self-development, and goal

Table 1. Hopes on Female Prisoners

Authors, Year	Country	Methods	Sample Size	Results
Ardilla & Herdiana (2013) ¹⁷	Indonesia	Descriptive and Phenomenological	6	The form of hope that you have when you are free from prison: All participants have hopes of becoming a better person when they are released from prison.
Murdoch et al (2010) ¹⁵	New Zealand	Grounded theory	19	Hopes for the future after release from prison: Participants do not have hopes or goals for the future because of the absence of social support. Participants feel they have no goals and expectations because of the negative stigma that exists in the society.
Celinska & Siegel (2010) ¹⁸	USA	Semistructured interviews	74	Forms of expectations of prisoners with children after being released from prison: Get back together with children and improve relationships. Participants hope their children do not commit crimes like them. Looking for a job and a place to live. Continue to live positively. "Go home, see my mom and my daughter. I want to continue to be positive and live a positive life. Be a better mother and a better daughter. Focus on mef, my mom, my daughter, and my sister. Stay away from negativity."
Sandoval & Baumgartner (2017) ¹⁴	USA	A feminist qualitative methodology: life history	13	Expectations after release from prison: Participants had strong agency when they thought about taking revenge on people who did bad things to them such as their pimp or abusive partner. A participant has a strong agency to create new opportunities and advance his career.
Feoh et al (2019) ¹⁶	Indonesia	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis	5	The form of hope that female prisoners have in this study: Female prisoners hope not to re-engage in work related to illegal labor. Female prisoners have realistic expectations for their lives in the future.

attainment²⁵. Higher levels of hope are associated with greater life satisfaction and social well-being²⁴. However, people with high hopes turn to those they trust, when dealing with stress. They are less lonely and feel more social support due to their positive view on interpersonal relationships with other people.

According to Snyder, individuals imagine and think about their goals in the future²⁶. These articles do not explain the pathways or agencies the female prisoners have in achieving these hopes. Hence, this analysis does not examine how the sequence of plans or strategies (pathway) in achieving goals works, or how much agency the female prisoners own in achieving their goal. Meanwhile, hope has 3 components which include goals, pathways, and agency. The individuals with good hopes are confident that they can achieve their goals by developing strategies and determination²⁶. These components play an important role in determining the high or low hopes of a person.

The results of this analysis depicted that the female prisoners have hope during their sentence or after being released. In addition, several articles showed that the source of hope was social support while in prison, as well as religious activities, and self-development activities held in prison. Meanwhile,

due to the lack of literature discussing the components of these hopes, the pathways and agencies owned by female prisoners were not studied in detail.

Conclusion:

According to the result, there is little study on female prisoners, hence analysis and discussion relating to the problems of female prisoners are limited. The results of the analysis showed that female prisoners have hope during their sentence and for their future after being released. Furthermore, all the articles provided an overview of the hopes to be achieved ranging from career, family, education, desire to be free from crime, and the desire for revenge. Several articles demonstrated that the source of hope comes from social support while in prison, as well as religious, and self-development activities. However, some factors influence the hopes of these prisoners.

The results can be used to conduct further studies on the factors that influence the hopes of female prisoners, as well as the agency and pathways they own. Subsequently, further studies can be carried out to obtain the best intervention for prisoners in maintaining their belief in their hopes during their sentence or after being released. According to the results, prisons can provide activities that increase or maintain the hopes of the prisoners.



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