

Rainbows Behind Bars: A Phenomenological Inquiry on Gay Filipino Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)

Elmark A. Manaya, RSW and Dr. Ines V. Danao

Lourdes College, Inc.

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.9020320>

Received: 13 February 2025; Accepted: 17 February 2025; Published: 21 March 2025

ABSTRACT

Life inside the jail is challenging for any person especially to members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community. This study explored the lived experiences of gays inside the jail. A phenomenological design was employed specifically the transcendental phenomenology to understand the reality of the five gay Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL). The study observed strict implementations of ethical guidelines to protect the rights of these individuals. Data were collected using in-depth phenomenological interviews. Colaizzi's data analysis framework was utilized to analyze the data. From the narratives of the participants, four themes emerged namely: Inadequacy of Essential Provisions, Social Intimacy, Life-Changing Journey, and Evolving Perceptions of Jail Realities. These themes describe the life of gay PDL inside the facility and their journey towards positive personal transformation. It also describes how gay PDL navigate through different trials and challenges inside the facility, highlighting their resilience and strength. For the gay PDL, the essence of life inside the jail is transformation that supports the theories of Social Identity and Social Constructionism. In essence, the life of gay PDL includes significant shifts in perceptions and expectations of the carceral system. Future research may be conducted to explore the experiences of gay PDL in different facilities.

Keywords: Gay PDL, Transcendental Phenomenology, Social Identity Theory, Social Constructionism

INTRODUCTION

LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) prisoners undergo various forms of challenges during their stay in jails and prisons; however, the literature offers only a limited discussion about these challenges and focuses only on the LGBT prisoners' access to justice, health care and family links, protection from and complaints about sexual abuse and rape (Alarid, 2000; Association the Prevention of Torture [APT], 2013; Dumond, 2000; Harawa et al, 2010, Just Detention International [JDI], 2009; Pintobtang & Bualar, 2012; UNODC, 2009; World Health Organization [WHO], 2007) as well as the perception and attitudes of prison staff and other prisoners toward homosexuality and gender nonconformity in prison (Blackburn et al., 2011; Eigenberg, 2000) (Relis et al., 2016).

In the Philippines, the incarceration rate of lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) people is up to three times that of the general population (Esteban, 2019). This explains that being a member of this group presents more risks of abuse and is more likely to experience hardships inside the facility as part of the sexual minorities. Furthermore, sexual minorities (or people who self-identify as LGB and people who do not identify as LGB but reported a same-sex sexual experience) comprise 9.3 of men in prison, 6.2% of men in jail, 42.1% of women in prison, and 35.7% women in jail (Esteban, 2019).

There is limited information regarding the lived experiences of gay PDL. Their stories are often integrated into the narratives of other groups, such as women in correctional facilities or children in conflict with the law. Less attention is given to them since they are considered "different" by the public eye. In this context, this

study aims to know the conditions of the gay PDL in the current times and what it is like being a gay PDL. Furthermore, this study seeks to understand their experiences and how they give meaning to these experiences.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The conceptual framework of this study will use Social Identity Theory and Social Constructionism to better describe the lived experiences of gay PDL and how the environment and society contribute to them.

Social Identity Theory (SIT)

SIT assumes that peoples' identities are developed through interaction with society and the group they belong to (Drew, 2023). Original crafted by Tajfel and Turner in 1970s, through their association with groups, it will foster self-esteem and confidence. These positive feelings create a positive social identity, thus making the individual more connected to the group. Furthermore, membership in these groups creates the feeling of positive self-distinctiveness, which in turn results in a positive social identity. A person with a maintained positive social identity will do his or her best to highly talk about the group to the extent of protecting it, which creates the tendency to discriminate against other groups. When a group causes a member to experience a negative social identity, that group member tends to disengage from the group or speak negatively about the group. Group members with positive social identities tend to compare their group with other groups. Such comparison sometimes results in dominance and control, in worst cases, even the possibility of genocide (ex. Jews and Germans).

LGBTQIA2S+, gays, in particular, are considered outgroups in many societies. They are categorized through sexual orientation, resulting in the categorization of sexual minorities. As a minority, they are considered an out-group, which is subject to control and discrimination. This results in many biases and discriminations experienced by them at any level of the status quo. Based on their experiences, they are pressured and discriminated against by society, which is the biggest in-group. Due to gays' distinctiveness in actions, behaviors, and thinking, society will not warrant such groups to prosper since they are considered different and are contrary to the conventional beliefs on gender and sex. As a result, this dynamic sometimes leads to undesirable effects like oppression, conflict, and repression.

Inside the jail, these dynamics always come into play. Gays experience discrimination inside the facility because the influence of the in-group is already innate in every PDL. Even inside the facility, group conflicts still exist due to the influence of the world. People inside the jails are just locked up temporarily but the influence during their time before they were incarcerated, where already imprinted on them (ex. influence in religion, beliefs, etc.) bringing them inside the facility. As these groups clash, they are bound to create problems. These group conflicts paved the way for the creation of anti-discriminatory measures being used in jail facilities. Movements in favor of the LGBTQ community (ex. SOGIE Bill), are being pushed in order to protect the interest of the LGBT communities.

In this context, SIT helps us understand how our society was shaped by different groups and their interplay towards its players. Social identity theory can aid us in understanding that gay men are especially likely to be victims of hate-motivated violence. Being a part of a group commonly placed in low regard by society, gay men are most likely to embody a pertinent out-group for all quarters of society, particularly for persons lower in the social system. (Hamner, 1992).

Social Constructionism

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) collaborated in the 1950s and 1960s to create *The Social Construction of Reality*. The two became the next crucial writers of Social Constructionism (Nickerson, 2024). According to *The Construction of Reality*, knowledge is constructed and preserved in societies. They posit that what is real, as we know it, is not intrinsically objective but rather a product of interactions of humanity and socially dictated norms. This means that what we believe might be real or true is the product of beliefs

and practices of the social spectrum that were built and reinforced as time went by (Chen, 2023). In this sense, we can say that what we already know might have been passed onto us through different communication mediums, resulting in our own reality.

One important concept in social constructionism is that knowledge is socially constructed. In this context, social constructionists argue that what we know comes from human interaction. As a result, what we believe might be true and objective is only the product of social activities in the context of culture and history (Viney, 2024). Understanding of race, gender, disability, and ethnicity are just some socially created realities of any given society. As a result, societal norms and practices may be relative and, thus, be perceived as objective reality if they continue to be practiced and passed on.

In the context of gay lived experiences, social constructionism plays an important role in understanding such. Gay PDL had different notions of jail before they were incarcerated. They viewed jail as something unpleasant; people are notoriously bad-tempered, and the possibility of abuse is present if gays were committed in jail. These constructs were created because of the influence of others through media, social interactions, and socially established realities.

As they continued to live inside the facility, these socially established realities were put into question, resulting in changes in social shared knowledge and understanding. As they continued to thrive, gay PDL constructed their own realities based on personal experiences. As a result, they were able to create or even change established social realities because of first-hand experiences. The newly created social realities are unique to the gay PDL since they were the ones who were able to question what was known from shared knowledge. Through direct experiences, gay PDL were able to construct their objective or reality unique to the people outside who were not able to experience such a phenomenon.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Life behind bars is traumatic, more so for LGBTQ prisoners, who are at greater risk for sexual and physical abuse and harassment (Babayan, 2019). According to the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (2018), because of the stigma that is incorporated in society towards the LGBTQI+ community, the BJMP became more sensitive to their condition inside the facility. As a result, these community becomes a target of discrimination, humiliation, and the possibility of harassment in many forms. This prompted the BJMP to release a circular about the proper treatment of LGBTQI+ groups inside the facility to eliminate such eventualities. It is clear that the BJMP recognizes such events exist and thus need to be addressed. In this context, this paper will explore the lived experience of gay PDL and how they gave meaning to these experiences. Through these narratives, we will learn what it is like to live as a gay PDL inside jails in these current times. Despite the efforts of the penal institutions to uphold their rights and enact policies for their protection, we will explore how these measures affect the lives of gay PDL inside the facility.

DATA GATHERING METHODS

Multiple in-depth face-to-face interviews and informal dialogues were used to gather data, strictly in compliance with the COVID-19 protocols. An interview procedure by Seidman (1998) served as a guide in conducting multiple interviews. Three face-to-face interviews were conducted to better understand the study's subject. The first interview will discuss the life history of the participants leading to the phenomenon, followed by the recreating of the actual experience, and the third part is how they gave meaning to this experience.

DATA ANALYSIS

This study utilized the phenomenological framework to explore the lived experiences of gay PDL and formulated a composite description of the participants' experiences. Colaizzi's (1978) descriptive phenomenological method was used to collect and analyze the data. Noteworthy themes and meanings were

construed through rigorous data analysis to frame the composite findings for this research study (adapted from Colaizzi, 1978; Morrow, Rodriguez & King, 2015; & Abu Sosha, 2012).

PARTICIPANTS

The participants of this study were detained in one of the city jails in Northern Mindanao, Philippines. They have been assimilated into the facility for more than two months. Some of them were returnees, but the majority of them were first timers. All of them were incarcerated due to drug-related cases, and some of them even underwent rehab before going back to prison. They vary in age and educational attainments. Some of them were already gay before going into the facility, and some only revealed their gender identity upon incarceration. They were situated in one cell, separate from the general population of the PDL. To protect the participants' identities, the researcher asked them to assign a pseudonym they liked to be used in the interview.

DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

Lived Experience of the Gay PDL

Theme 1. Wanting Essential Provisions

One of the most important services in the jail facility is satisfying the basic needs of the PDL: shelter, food, clothing, and medicine. These are just some essential aspects of jail operation that must be fulfilled. PDL are also human beings; thus, basic needs are important for survival. For the gay PDL, wanting essential provisions is defined as inadequacy of food supply and inadequacy of medical supply and equipment. This definition speaks about their experiences inside the incarceration facilities.

Inadequate supply of food: Most of the participants identified this as an area of concern. They also experienced a lack of food inside the facility. Food quality and preparation may be affected by the sheer amount of PDL. Based on the report by Narag and Jones (2017), the sheer number of PDL resulted in overcrowding, which caused a significant reduction in the quality and quantity of available resources for daily survival, such as nutritious food and clean drinking water. The lack of these resources could cause disagreements and rivalry in retaining and acquiring the said resources. This report reflected the experiences of the gay PDL in terms of the lack of food supply inside the facility. Most of the participants described feeling hungry inside the facility. The lack of food and its quality made them realize the life they had outside. According to them, being a PDL was the most challenging part. The lack of food supply inside the facility can be attributed to congestion.

Inadequate medical supply and equipment: Most participants also saw a lack of medicines and medical equipment as crucial needs inside the facility. Studies conducted in the Philippines described health problems in jails due to many factors, such as overcrowding, poor ventilation, and poor food quality (Alipoyo, 2022). The World Health Organization (WHO) expressed that the level of TB in jails and prisons "has been reported to be up to 100 times higher than that of the civilian population," while "the estimated global HIV prevalence (among) prisoners is 3 percent." (Prisoners' health is public health issue, too: Manila conference, 2019). This study is in line with the participants' concerns about the inadequacies of medical supplies and equipment. Health problems in jails are a big issue concerning not only the PDL but also the society as well.

Theme 2. Social Transactions.

Living inside the jail entails having a good relationship with the different social spectrums encompassing the social cycle. These include having a good relationship with your fellow PDL and your social group. As gays, being romantically involved with their PDL is not out of the question. Furthermore, engaging in sexual activities was not out of the table either. In this section, we will explore the social interplay of the gay PDL in the categories of camaraderie, romantic relationships, and engaging in sexual activities.

Camaraderie: The participants recounted their relationships with one another inside the facility. In this context, we will know how the gay PDL interacted with their fellow PDL and their group. Through mutual trust and friendship, the participants could build harmonious relationships. This finding described the group dynamics, expressing the group's closeness to one another. They inspired one another to survive inside the jail. By helping one another, they expressed solidarity and care. According to Baumeister and Leary (1995), due to the disconnection of prior relationships of the inmates from the outside world, the basic need of an individual to belong comes into play. This element compels the individual to form social connections with other prisoners. The camaraderie experienced by the gay PDL resonated with the study of Baumeister and Leary.

Romantic relationship: As gays, certain relations could inevitably blossom inside the walls of iron bars and concrete cement. These relationships were carefully watched, and certain rules were observed to protect both parties. In this study, we will also learn what kind of romantic relationships our participants have and their dynamics. Some of the participants experienced romantic relationships inside the facility but not all romantic relationships entailed sexual activities. Some male PDL just wanted to express their love without the complexities of sexual connotations. In a study by Carecedo et al. (2011), having an affair inside the facility reduces romantic loneliness with an improved quality of life compared to those who have no romantic relationships inside the facility. In addition, the longing for their families and loved ones outside is a need that must be satisfied. Satisfaction of this longing helped them to be more adaptable inside the facility.

Engaging in sexual activities: Since gay PDL engage in romantic relationships with their fellow male counterparts, the possibility of engaging in sexual activities is always present. In doing so, these may create issues about peace and order and the possible spread of sexually transmitted diseases. According to a study, prisoners have a higher rate of being infected with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and hepatitis than those of the general population (Hammett, 1998; National Commission on Correctional Health Care, 2002; Rohde, 2001). The importance of practicing safe sex plays a vital role in jail health and security. Since it is a basic need, it could happen inside the jail. Furthermore, it is essential to spread awareness of safe sex practices and other sexually transmitted diseases for the protection of those who engage in those practices. Just like eating or sleeping, if this need cannot be satisfied, this creates psychological tension and can affect the behavioral state of the prisoners (Maryani et al., 2002).

Theme 3. Life-changing journey

According to the participants, being incarcerated was a pivotal event in their lives. It represented transitions that shaped their very lives. This life-changing journey was categorized into six (6) parts: heterosexism among gay PDL, strained family relations, adjustment to change, rules promoting support and protection of the gay PDL, and positive treatment from the staff, and participation in developmental activities.

Heterosexism among gay PDL: Despite the strict implementation of the rules to respect the dignity of each PDL, no matter the orientation, some participants were sometimes subjected to being ridiculed or “kantyaw” (being teased). Most attacks were superficial, attacking physical appearance and affecting the mode of the participants. These findings reflect the study of Relis et al. (2016) that Filipino gay prisoners were often subjected to heterosexism because they were considered a minority, which is prone to abuse and other discrimination.

Strained family relations: The facility's confines took its toll in every family since there would be a shift in family dynamics and composition. Furthermore, the lack of family support and encouragement made their stay in the facility harder. Based on UNDC (2009), which reported that one of the inmate's challenges is the lack of support and connection with their families. Incarceration profoundly impacts the different aspects of the family's life. Furthermore, its implications could have a long-term effect, straining the relationships of the family and its interactions, including financial provisions (Lee et al., 2013).

Adjustment to changes: All participants agreed that they had to adjust to the changes in their new environment. As gay persons, they had to adjust the way they behaved and the way they lived inside the facility. According to Hiney (2001), adaptation is complex, demanding, and challenging, especially for first timers inside the facility. Being deprived of privacy, the stigmatizing status, limited essential provisions, strict observance of the rules, and the loss of liberty is very stressful and traumatic to an inmate. Being part of the institution is a gradual process. The longer a person stays in prison, the more institutionalized he will become. As he continues to adapt to his environment, it will become natural for him and sometimes internalized. Sometimes, the process of institutionalization becomes very noticeable, making it hard to know as it happens. Eventually, inmates succumbed to these changes, becoming institutionalized and adaptive (Hiney, 2001).

Rules promoting support and protection of gay PDL: The participants described observing the rules for their safety and fellow PDL inside the facility. In addition, male PDL must strictly observe the rules in dealing with gay PDL since they are considered a vulnerable sector inside the facility. As a result, most of the participants never experienced harassment inside the facility. The narratives of the participants described that jails are already aware of and acknowledge that the LGBT community is one of the vulnerable groups inside the facility and needs to be protected. As a BJMP-manned facility, it adheres to the policy on treating LGBTQI PDL inside the jail. This policy minimized heterosexism inside the facility, and the participants' responses resonated with its effectiveness.

Positive treatment from the staff: According to Liebling and Arnold (2004), when inmates feel respected by the staff, it positively impacts their sense of humanity and affects other aspects of their prison life. Studies also showed that positive attitudes towards inmates help them adjust, making them adaptable, and are critical towards release and reintegration into society (Melvin et al, 1985; Glaser, 1969). In addition, BJMP personnel are professionals who underwent appropriate training in handling various types of PDL, including dealing with gay PDL. With various trainings conducted by the BJMP on gender and equality, this venue provided a better understanding of the life of gay PDL. Gendreau (1996) states that when staff are better trained and knowledgeable, inmate rehabilitation programs are effective and carried out efficiently. Gay PDL never experienced homophobic attitudes from the staff and always maintained professionalism and fairness in dealing with them.

Participation in developmental activities: All of the participants were able to experience the different reformatory programs inside the facility. They could avail themselves of different programs and services, allowing them to practice what they had learned. Furthermore, the programs were not just created to eliminate boredom but also for real-life applications, which were very helpful for PDL reintegration and development. The participants improved their condition inside the facility because of the different programs they attended. Subsequently, they were able to learn new experiences that they can use when they are integrated back into society. According to Mackenzie et al. (1985), with rehabilitation efforts, developmental programs coupled with support reduce the tendencies of recidivism.

Theme 4. Evolving perceptions of jail life

As the gay PDL continued to thrive inside the facility, they reached a particular type of awareness, resulting in the contemplation of their experiences. Before they were incarcerated, they already had a glimpse of what living inside the jail facility was like. These realities were soon challenged after they had experienced what jail is like. With this paradigm comes the realization of the experience. These realizations functioned as a guide, a reminder, a plan, and how they perceive themselves in the near future, for themselves and the people around them. The last theme has four categories: misconceptions of jail realities, realizations about self, realizations about family, and spiritual development.

Misconception of jail realities: Misconceptions about jail realities often result from misinformation, a lack of firsthand experiences, and the over-representation of the media. As a result, people developed bias and prejudice, which resulted in fear of jail or misunderstanding of the penal system. According to the participants, the jail was not what they expected when they were incarcerated. What the participants learned about jails

were from mass media and from friends. These accounts were clarified when they entered the facility, which was not what they had expected. Most of the participants felt that the jail was a very dangerous place, full of thugs and rapists. Most of them expected that they would undergo some kind of sexual abuse inside, which never happened. Yousman's study in 2013 stated that the use of violence and other gruesome narratives were being used by the media, not because they portray actual incidents but rather to gain viewers in a very fragmented media setting. Media tends to overrepresent reality, which may result in misconceptions of its audiences. According to a recent study conducted by Bangeles (2023), gay PDL never experienced being raped or maltreated inside the jail facility. They were treated as princesses and given special attention by male PDL.

Realizations about self: Participants could reflect on their selves and the lessons they had learned inside the facility. These realizations often described the values and learnings gained through the participants' daily interactions and personal reflections. These realizations were more personal and were the products of self-awareness and experience. As a result, they were able to gain a better understanding of their fellow PDL and more insights into the lives of other people around them. With such understanding, it made them appreciate each person's value despite their different backgrounds.

Realizations about family: The participants realized the importance of the family when they were incarcerated. They felt they needed to reconcile with their families when released. They recognized the importance of family in their recovery and getting back on their feet upon release. They missed their families and will do their best to make amends. This realization made him realize how much time they had wasted. As a PDL, the time taken because of the sentences they served will never be returned. That is a reality that every PDL has to face.

Spiritual development: After many months in the facility, the participants learned the importance of acknowledging the Creator. They realized that God played a vital role in their lives, and their faith was one of the things that kept them going. The participants described having faith and holding unto God regarding challenges and trials. They had learned to be closer to God and thus established a relationship with Him. Living in jail entailed many challenges, but with the help of God, the participants could make it through and continued facing everyday challenges because they believed that there was a higher power providing them with love and understanding. This finding agreed with the study of Castro et al. (2009), saying that the challenges that homosexual inmates faced in jail resulted in the renewal of their faith in God. Their belief in God gave them the courage to endure hopelessness and face everyday life. Putting their faith in God encouraged gay PDL to be enthusiastic and hopeful as they lay their heads at night and faced the morning sun soon after.

FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE OF THE EXPERIENCE

The fundamental structure of the lived experiences of the gay PDL under incarceration can be described as **"Transformation."** The struggles they encountered, the development of meaningful relationships, the journey of adaptation and acceptance, and the change of perspectives of jail realities were unique experiences that the gay PDL described. These unique experiences are quintessential in understanding the transformation process in the lives of the gay PDL. Such experiences were unique to them. Taking them away is no longer a transformative experience but rather a theoretical and philosophical assumption of jail realities in consonance with their lived experiences.

SIGNIFICANT SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The significant findings were revealed in the following narratives:

1. The lived experiences of gay PDL can be summarized as the inadequacy of essential provisions, social intimacy, life-changing journeys, and evolving perceptions of jail life.
2. The gay PDL described the jail's provision for basic needs as inadequate, stemming from various jail conditions such as overcrowding, limited budgetary allocations, and limited medical supplies.

3. The jail is a haven for social intimacy, resulting in the establishment of different social transactions of gay PDL. Gay PDL were able to establish meaningful relationships that satisfied their social and personal needs.
4. The gay PDL's jail life experience led them to discover a deeper meaning of life.
5. Their realizations about themselves and their families represented the effectiveness of rehabilitation and development. Their misconception of jail realities was corrected, resulting in a more factual view of jail life. Their realizations about their faith in the Divine represented the attainment of hope for a better tomorrow and courage to change for the better.
6. Lastly, the participants' testaments about the positive way they were treated by their fellow PDL, the personnel, and the BJMP as an institution speak well of how the bureau lives up to its mandate of providing humane and developmental services to the PDL. The participants were able to experience a good reception from the personnel. They were not able to experience homophobic attitudes from the staff. The participants could also avail themselves of the various programs and services needed for self-development and self-reliance. The fact that the participants experienced no sexual harassment and exploitation shows strict compliance with the rules and regulations that respect dignity and human rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations may have been drawn from the findings of this study;

The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology

- 1.1 may intensify gender-sensitive jail programs and services.
- 1.2. may boost its campaign against gender-based violence, especially against PDL in large jails.
- 1.3 may take into consideration the problems of mental health and other mental health concerns of the LGBTQIA2S+ community.
- 1.4. may promote the demarginalization of minority groups such as the LGBTQIA2S+ community.
- 1.5. may ensure proper distribution and acquisition of essential provisions.
- 1.6 continue the monitoring of gay PDL engaging in sexual activities may be implemented.
- 1.7 consider the formulation of different after-care programs and services tailored to the needs of its clientele.
- 1.8 adopting a referral scheme that could link released gay PDL to sustainable employment in companies that are gender-neutral toward their employees may be considered.

The LGBTQIA2S+Communities

- 2.1. may conduct campaigns on the unique risks of LGBTQIA2S+ inside the jail.
- 2.2. may advocate with incarcerated community members' narratives promoting gender equality and social awareness.
- 2.3 may assist in creating after-care programs and services catering to incarcerated members.

Community

- 3.1. may help educate its members about the unique challenges and issues faced by released gay PDL .
- 3.2. may create safe spaces for released gay PDL.

3.3. consider adopting non-discriminatory attitudes and practices.

3.4 may encourage members of the community to engage in mentoring and support of released gay PDL.

Local Government Unit (LGU)

4.1. may help in creating programs and services catering to the needs of released incarcerated gay PDL like livelihood or sustainable employment.

4.2. may formulate destigmatization programs through education and social awareness activities.

Social Workers Employed by BJMP and Local Government Units

5.1. may address social stigma and promote employment and after-care programs for released gay PDL that include community-based support groups.

5.2. consider employment of more social workers in the BJMP may greatly help in the implementation of the different welfare programs and services of PDL, providing in-depth assessments and interventions to different clientele like gay PDL.

Future Researchers

6.1. consider researching different marginalized groups inside the facility, like elderly PDL or PDL with disabilities.

6.2. may conduct research on the effectiveness of the different programs and services in jail facilities.

6.3. maximize PDL participation and become part of the solutions.

6.4 may collaborate between the different disciplines in conducting research in jails promoting a holistic perspective on the jail setting.

LIMITATIONS

The study was only conducted in one of the city jails in Northern Mindanao, Philippines which does not represent the whole jail system. The findings may vary from jail to jail, depending on various circumstances. In addition, the participants were the only ones who presented to participate in the study. More gay PDL did not participate in the study, which might affect the study's findings. Secondly, only gay PDL were chosen as participants, which is only a part of the LGBTQ+ community inside the facility. A more considerable scope could have provided a better understanding of the treatment of minority groups inside the jail. Thirdly, the inclusion of male PDL in the study could have provided another angle into the dynamics of gay and LGBTQ+ groups. It would have been interesting to know their perspective of LGBTQ+ groups inside the facility. Lastly, the perspective of the BJMP personnel should have been included in the study to give a holistic and comprehensive approach to the phenomenon.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

The permission to conduct the research was obtained from the Lourdes College Research Ethics Committee (LCREC) and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology Regional Office 10 (BJMPRO-X). This study also adhered to the principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice in favor of the participants based on the Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research (1979). The researcher obtained the voluntary, informed consent of the participants and assured the voluntary disposition of their involvement was properly informed about the intricacies of the study. Verbal affirmation was also sought from the participants to confirm their commitment to the study. Any data or results collected

from an individual cannot be tracked back to any single participant. All gathered data was subject to a particular code, and a specialized ID was used as a marker so as not to divulge the identity of the participants. The specialized code cannot be recognizable per reference to any vital personal information of the participants, such as initials and age. Subsequently, the researcher should ensure that the benefits of the study, such as knowledge gained, should be more than the risks involved. It is important that the potential benefits of the participants are maximized and the possible risks are minimized. Lastly, the subjects were chosen fairly, both carrying the risks and the benefits equitably. They were selected not due to their availability or position but rather their direct relations to the study. (Belmont Report, 1979) (Nagai et.al., 2022)

The questionnaire used to gather demographic information about the participants did not contain anything that uncovered their identity to the consumers or readers of this study. Research participants were informed that they have the right to stop or not to respond to the interview at any time, or they can withdraw their participation at any point during the research process without any penalty or prejudice (Amdur & Bankert, 2011).

REFERENCES

1. Agnew, R. (2006). General strain theory: Current status and directions for further research. In F. T. Cullen, J. P. Wright, & K. R. Blevins (Eds.), *Taking stock: The status of criminological theory* (pp. 9-43). Transaction Publishers.
2. Alarid, L. F. (2000). Sexual orientation perspectives of incarcerated bisexual and gay men: The county jail protective custody experience. *The Prison Journal*, 80(1), 80-95. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032885500080001007>
3. Alfaro, M. A. (2005). Human rights behind bars: The Manila City Jail experience. *Human Rights Education for Asian Students & Youth*. <https://www.hurights.or.jp/archives/focus/section2/2005/03/human-rights-behind-bars-the-manila-city-jail-experience.html>
4. Alipoyo, V. R. I. (2022). Conditions of correctional facilities in the Philippines: Jail wardens' perspectives and experiences. *Otoritas: Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan*, 12(1), 67-77. <https://doi.org/10.26618/ojip.v12i1.6531>
5. Amdur, R., & Bankert, E. A. (2011). *Institutional review board: Member handbook* (3rd ed.). Jones & Bartlett Publishers.
6. ARC. (2015). *National statement on ethical conduct in human research 2007*. Australian Research Council.
7. Association for the Prevention of Torture & Penal Reform International. (2013). *LGBTI persons deprived of their liberty: A framework for preventive monitoring*. Geneva, Switzerland: Author. <http://www.ap.t.ch/en/resources/lgbti-persons-deprived-of-their-liberty-a-framework-for-preventive-monitoring/?cat=62>
8. Babayan, S. (2019). A new exhibit lets LGBTQ inmates reach out from behind bars. *Los Angeles Magazine*. <https://www.lamag.com/culturefiles/on-the-inside-lgbtq-art/>
9. Bangeles, D. M. (2023). Butterflies behind bars: Untold stories of incarcerated homosexual men. *Journal of Social Science*, 4(6), 694. <https://doi.org/10.46799/jss.v4i6.694>
10. Baker, J., et al. (1992). An experimental approach to making retail store environment decisions. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303166632_An_experimental_approach_to_making_retail_store_environment_decisions
11. Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(3), 497-529. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497>
12. Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*.

13. Blackburn, A., Fowler, S., Mullings, J., & Marquart, J. (2011). Too close for comfort: Exploring gender differences in inmate attitudes toward homosexuality in prison. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 36, 58-72. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-010-9099-6>
14. Buriro, S. A., Birman, N. A., & Shaikh, A. M. (2020). New trematode *Psilochasmus platyrhynchos* (Trematode: Psilochasmiidae) from Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* (Anseriformes: Anatidae) in Sindh Province of Pakistan. *Pure and Applied Biology (PAB)*, 9(1), 1025-1030.
15. Burr, V. (1985). *Social constructionism*.
16. Carecedo, R. J., Perlman, D., Orgaz, M. B., López, F., Fernández-Rouco, N., & Faldowski, R. A. (2011). Heterosexual romantic relationships inside of prison. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 55, 898-924. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735610388754>
17. Castro, J. R., Concepcion, C. A., Imson, K. V., Magdayao, L. R. A., Recto, L. G., Robles, J. F. D., & Tan, R. (2009). Mariposa sa likod ng rehas: Coping mechanisms of homosexual inmates. *FEU Communication Journal*, 5(1), 1-1.
18. Chen, C. (2023). Social construction: Journey through time. *Queer Cultures* 101. <https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/queercultures101/2023/10/28/social-constructionism/>
19. Cohen, L. (1987). *Educational research: A study of methodology*.
20. Cohen, D., & Crabtree, B. (2006). *Qualitative research guidelines project*. Qualitative Research Guidelines Project. <http://www.qualres.org/HomeEval-3664.html>
21. Cox, S., & Gallois, C. (1996). Gay and lesbian identity development: A social identity perspective. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 30(4), 1–30. https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v30n04_01
22. Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Sage Publications.
23. Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*.
24. Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Sage.
25. Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage.
26. Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.
27. Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
28. Crist, C. (2016). LGBT individuals more likely to be incarcerated. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-lgbt-incarceration-usa-idUSKBN14C1ZI>
29. Drew, C. (2023). 8 examples of social identity (race, class, and gender). Helpful Professor. <https://helpfulprofessor.com/social-identity-examples/>
30. De Jonckheere, M., & Vaughn, L. M. (2019). Semi-structured interviewing in primary care research: A balance of relationship and rigor. *Family Medicine and Community Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2019-000102>
31. Dumond, R. W. (2000). Inmate sexual assault: The plague that persists. *The Prison Journal*, 80(3), 157-177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032885500080003002>
32. Ely, M., Anzul, M., Friedman, T., Garner, D., & Steinmetz, A. M. (1991). *Doing qualitative research: Circles within circles*. Falmer Press.
33. Erlandson, D. A., Harris, E. L., Skipper, B. L., & Allen, S. D. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: A guide to methods*. Sage Publications, Inc.
34. Eigenberg, H. (2000). Correctional officers' definitions of rape in male prisons. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 28(5), 435-449. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0047-2352\(00\)00057-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0047-2352(00)00057-X)
35. Esteban, K. L. (2019). Behind the bars on LGBTQIA life in prison. *Outrage Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://outragemag.com/behind-the-bars-on-lgbtqia-life-in-prison/>
36. Gallagher, S., & Francesconi, D. (2015). Teaching phenomenology to qualitative researchers, cognitive scientists, and phenomenologists. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 12, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.2989/IPJP.2012.12.3.4.1112>

37. Gendreau, P. (1996). Offender rehabilitation: What we know and what needs to be done. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 23(1), 144–161. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854896023001010>
38. Glaser, D. (1969). *The effectiveness of a prison and parole system* (Abridged ed.). Bobbs-Merrill.
39. Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. Longman.
40. Gray, D. (2009). *Doing research in the real world*. Sage Publications. Retrieved October 20, 2024, from https://in.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upmbinaries/58626_Gray__Doing_Research_in_the_Real_World.pdf
41. Gray, D. (2004). *Doing research in the real world*. Sage Publications. Retrieved October 23, 2004, from <https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=2528602>
42. Hammett, T. M. (2000, October). Health-related issues in prisoner reentry to the community. Paper presented at The Reentry Roundtable, Justice Policy Center, Washington, DC.
43. Hamner, K. M. (1992). Gay-bashing: A social identity analysis of violence against lesbians and gay men. In G. M. Herek & K. T. Berrill (Eds.), *Hate crimes: Confronting violence against lesbians and gay men* (pp. 179–190). Sage Publications, Inc.
44. Haney, C. (2001). The psychological impact of incarceration: Implications for post-prison adjustment. Retrieved from <https://aspe.hhs.gov/reports/psychological-impact-incarceration-implications-post-prison-adjustment-0>
45. Husserl, E. (1970). *Logical investigations* (J. N. Findlay, Trans.). Humanities Press.
46. Just Detention International. (2009, October). LGBTQ detainees: Chief targets for sexual abuse in detention. Fact sheet. Retrieved from http://www.justdetention.org/en/factsheets/JD_Fact_Sheet_LGBTQ_vD.pdf
47. Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology* (W. R. Boyce Gibson, Trans.). Macmillan. (Original work published 1913)
48. Langdrige, D. (2017). Phenomenology. In B. Gough (Ed.), *The Palgrave handbook of critical social psychology* (pp. 165–183). Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51018-1_9
49. Lavrakas, P. J. (2008). *Encyclopedia of survey research methods* (Vols. 1-0). Sage Publications, Inc.
50. La Vigne, N., Naser, R., Brooks, L., & Yahner, J. (2005). Examining the effect of incarceration and in-prison family contact on prisoners' family relationships. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 21(3), 314–335. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1043986205281727>
51. Lee, R. D., Fang, X., & Luo, F. (2013). The impact of parental incarceration on the physical and mental health of young adults. *Pediatrics*, 131(4), e1188. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2012-0627>
52. Lester, S. (1999). *An introduction to phenomenological research*. Stan Lester Developments. Retrieved from <http://www.sld.demon.co.uk/resmethy.pdf>
53. Lieblich, A., & Arnold, H. (2004). *Prisons and their moral performances: A study of values, quality, and prison life*. Clarendon Press.
54. Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.
55. Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Sage Publications.
56. Lopez, K. A., & Willis, D. G. (2004). Descriptive versus interpretive phenomenology: Their contributions to nursing knowledge. *Qualitative Health Research*, 14(5), 726–735. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732304263638>
57. Mackenzie, S., & others. (1985). *The politics of crime and criminal justice*. Sage.
58. Maryani, D., Fernando, Z. J., & Akbar, M. (2022). Psychological study on the sexual needs of prisoners. In *Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities* (pp. 85–94). https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-23-7_10. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368491230_Psychological_Study_on_the_Sexual_Needs_of_Prisoners on November 3, 2024
59. Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. Harper & Row Publishers.
60. McLeod, S. (2023). Social identity theory in psychology (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). *Simply Psychology*. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/social-identity-theory.html> on September 25, 2024
61. McNamara, C. (1999). *General guidelines for conducting interviews*. Authenticity Consulting, LLC. Retrieved from <http://www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/interview.htm>

61. Mead, M. (1930). Growing up in New Guinea: A comparative study of primitive
62. Melvin, K. B., Gramling, L. K., & Gardner, W. M. (1985). A scale to measure attitudes toward prisoners. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 12(2), 241-253. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854885012002006> William Morrow.
63. Merriam, S. B. (1988). Case study research in education: A qualitative approach. Jossey-Bass.
64. Merriam, S. B. (2013). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation. John Wiley & Sons Inc.
65. Meyer, I. H., Flores, A. R., Stemple, L., Romero, A. P., Wilson, B. D., & Herman, J. L. (2017). Incarceration rates and traits of sexual minorities in the United States: National Inmate Survey, 2011-2012. *American Journal of Public Health*, 107(9), 1479-1485. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27997242/>
66. Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
67. Morrow, R., Rodriguez, A., & King, N. (2015). Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological method. *The Psychologist*, 28(2), 29-32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcin.2015.03.004>
68. Morse, J. M. (1994). Designing funded qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative inquiry* (pp. 220-235). Sage Publications.
69. Moustakas, C. (1994). Phenomenological research methods. Sage Publications.
70. Nagai, H., Nakazawa, E., & Akabayashi, A. (2022). The creation of the Belmont Report and its effect on ethical principles: A historical study. *Monash Bioethics Review*, 40(2), 157-170. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40592-022-00165-5>
71. Narag, R. E., & Jones, C. R. (2017). Understanding prison management in the Philippines. *The Prison Journal*, 97(1), 3-26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032885516679366>
72. National Center for Transgender Equality. (2018). LGBTQ people behind bars: A guide to understanding the issues facing transgender prisoners and their legal rights. Retrieved from <https://transequality.org/transpeoplebehindbars>
73. National Commission on Correctional Health Care. (2002). The health status of soon-to-be-released inmates: A report to Congress. Author.
74. Nkwi, P., Nyamongo, I., & Ryan, G. (2001). Field research into social issues: Methodological guidelines. UNESCO. Retrieved from <https://libguides.library.nd.edu/qualitative-research/overview> on September 25, 2024
75. Nickerson, C. (2024). Social constructionism theory: Definition and examples. Simply Psychology. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/social-constructionism.html> on September 24, 2024
76. Nikolopoulou, K. (2022). What is purposive sampling? Definition and examples. Scribbr. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/purposive-sampling/> on October 23, 2024
77. Norlyk, A., & Harder, I. (2010). What makes a phenomenological study phenomenological? An analysis of peer-reviewed empirical nursing studies. *Qualitative Health Research*, 20(3), 420-431. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732309357435>
78. Pintobtang, S., & Bualar, T. (2012). Gay inmates and sexual intimacy behind bars: Evidence from Thailand. *International Journal of Prisoner Health*, 8(1), 17-29.
79. Patton, M. Q. (2001). Qualitative research and evaluation methods (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
80. Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry: A personal, experiential perspective. *Qualitative Social Work*, 1(2), 211-230.
81. Parkinson, G., & Drislane, R. (2011). Qualitative research. In Online dictionary of the social sciences. Retrieved from <http://bitbucket.icaap.org/dict.pl> on September 20, 2024
82. Policy on the treatment of the LGBTQI PDL in the BJMP. (2018, December 4). BJMP. <https://r5.bjmp.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/22-12.04.2018-POLICY-ON-THE-TREATMENT-OF-LGBTQI-PDL-IN-THE-BJMP.pdf>
83. Punch, K. (1998). Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches.

84. Reiners, G. M. (2012). Understanding the differences between Husserl's (descriptive) and Heidegger's (interpretive) phenomenological research. *Journal of Nursing and Care*, 1, Article ID: 1000119. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2167-1168.1000119>
85. Relis, J., Agustin, Z., & Mercines, I. (2016). Gay and behind bars: Life stories of Filipino gay prisoners in the Leyte Regional Prison. Philippine Association for the Advancement of Science (PAP). Retrieved from <https://www.pap.ph/assets/files/journals/gay-and-behind-bars-life-stories-of-filipino-gay-prisoners-in-the-leyte-regional-prison.pdf>
86. Rohde, D. (2001, August 6). A health danger from a needle becomes a scourge behind bars. *The New York Times*, p. A1.
87. Ristroph, A. (2016). Prison, detention, and correctional institutions. In *Encyclopedia of Sex and Gender* (Vol. 3, pp. 1196-1199). Fedwa Malti-Douglas (Ed.). Macmillan Reference USA.
88. Ritchie, J., & Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Sage Publications Ltd.
89. Sadala, M. A., & Adorno, R. (2002). Phenomenology as a method to investigate the experience lived: A perspective from Husserl and Merleau-Ponty's thought. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 37(3), 282-293. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.2002.02071.x>
90. See, B. A. (2022, December 29). Inside jails, gay men and trans women 'wed' fellow PDL to escape abuse. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. Retrieved from <https://pcij.org/2022/12/29/marriage-gay-men-transgender-women-escape-abuse/> on October 20, 2024
91. Seidman, I. E. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.
92. Seidman, I. E. (2005). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (3rd ed.). Teachers College Press.
93. Schuman, H. (1982). The effects of interviews on the accuracy of survey responses. In J. E. McCarthy & L. R. Jones (Eds.), *Social research: Methods for the study of social relations* (pp. 123-138). Sage.
94. Sosha, G. A. (2012). Employment of Colaizzi's strategy in descriptive phenomenology: A reflection of a researcher. *European Scientific Journal*, 8, ISSN: 1857-7881.
95. Schwandt, T. A. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: Interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructionism. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 189-213). Sage Publications.
96. Stewards, D., & Mickunas, A. (1990). Exploring phenomenology: A guide to field & its literature. Ohio University Press.(Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 7-24). Hall Publishers.
97. Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-47). Brooks / Cole.
98. Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 7-24). Nelson.
99. Tan, M. D. (2015). *Outrage Magazine: "Pink Behind Bars"*. <https://outragemag.com/pink-behind-bars/>
100. Taylor, B., & Francis, K. (2013). *Qualitative research in the health sciences: Methodologies, methods and processes* (1st ed.). Routledge.
101. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2023). Annual reports. https://www.unodc.org/documents/about-unodc/AR09_LORES.pdf
102. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2009). Global report on trafficking in persons. United Nations. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/terrorism/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
103. Vagle, M. D. (2018). *Crafting phenomenological research*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315431451>
104. Van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an*
105. *action sensitive pedagogy*. State University of New York Press.
106. Vinney, C. (2019). Understanding social identity theory and its impact on behavior. Thought Co. Retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/social-identity-theory-4174315> on October 5, 2024
107. Vinney, C. (2024, July 28). Social constructionism: Definition and examples. Thought Co. <https://www.thoughtco.com/social-constructionism-4586374>

108. Walshe, S. (2012). The grim truth of being gay in prison. Retrieved from <https://www.arizonaprisonwatch.org/2012/09/walshe-ordeal-of-being-gay-in-prison.html> on March 7, 2012.
109. Whitehead, D., & Schneider, Z. (2013). Mixed-methods research in nursing and midwifery research: Methods and appraisal for evidence-based practice.
110. Woods, J. B. (2018). LGBT identity and crime. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Identity-and-Crime.pdf>
111. World Health Organization. (2007). A safer future: Global public health security in the 21st century. <https://apps.who.int/iris/rest/bitstreams/51925/retrieve>
112. Yilmaz, K. (2013). Comparison of quantitative and qualitative research traditions Epistemological, theoretical, and methodological differences. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12014>
113. Yousman, B. (2013). Challenging the media-incarceration complex through media education. In S. J. Harnett, E. Novek, & J. K. Wood (Eds.), *Working for justice: A handbook of prison education and activism* (pp. 141–159). University of Illinois Press.