

Effects of Chess Training on the Psychological Well-Being of Children in Conflict with the Law

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Introduction. Children in conflict with the law (CICL) experience psychological distress during detention. Psychological well-being is about CICL feeling better and functioning effectively. The ability to manage negative emotions that come with their failures and disappointments is essential for the long-term well-being of CICL, especially when negative emotions interfere with their daily functions. It is reasonable that CICL should participate in activities that will promote their well-being, such as chess. Chess is a non-threatening board game that has a positive influence not only on auditory memory function, working memory, problem-solving, concentration, cognitive skills, academic skills, and scholastic achievement but also on socio-emotional enrichment of children and adolescents. The present study deals with positive psychology and recreational therapy, which is

concerned with improving well-being and utilizing recreation and other activity-based interventions as a means of physical health, psychological recovery, and well-being, respectively. This study aimed to determine the effect of chess training on the psychological well-being of CICL. It was hypothesized that chess training increases the levels of resiliency and flourishing of CICL. The study also aimed to determine whether a significant relationship exists between resiliency and flourishing.

Methods. The experimental research design, specifically the pretest-posttest control group design, and the correlational research design, were utilized. The respondents were the CICL currently rehabilitated at the Social Development Center, the only government-run rehabilitation for CICL in Bacolod City. The Flourishing Scale (FS) and the Brief Resiliency Scale (BRS) were administered to the participants. The researcher matched the CICL by age and assigned one participant from each matched set to the experimental group and the control group, with nine participants and 12 participants, respectively. The intervention was the chess training in ten sessions covering the 12 basic chess lessons for two hours every session, twice a week. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, Pearson-Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation r_{xy} , the Welch's *t*-test, which is a variant of the Independent *t*-test for unequal variances, and the Dependent *t*-test.

Results. There was a low positive relationship between the level of resiliency and the level of flourishing of the CICL; however, it was not statistically significant. As the CICL learn to cope and adapt to new situations, they become more flourishing. Positive emotions are the key components of their flourishing. These could be attributed to activities and the familial relationship formed at the center between foster parents and fellow CICL, which significantly contribute to the positive emotions of these CICL. The results of the study indicated that there were improvements in the flourishing level and level of resiliency of the CICL after the chess training; however, the improvements were not statistically significant. The chess training paved the way for these CICL to experience intense positive emotions. The social and emotional learning (SEL) of these CICL was improved through chess. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions.

Conclusion. The chess training is patterned from the step-by-step learning system of the basic chess game and conducted to the CICL as a form of intervention to improve their psychological well-being. Based on the results of the study, chess training improved the psychological well-being of the CICL, but it was not statistically significant. The sense of community at the Social Development Center in

Bacolod City experienced by these CICL helped them maintain their social connectedness, which plays a crucial role in flourishing and helps them cope and adapt to their situation while waiting for their sentences. Playing games and having fun are essential in the SEL of these CICL. Through chess training, these CICL can increase their levels of SEL, which can increase feelings of well-being, improve coping abilities, enhance psychosocial functioning, and increase social connectedness. Chess training can be an effective additional fun activity for these CICL for further SEL for better coping, leading to increased flourishing.

Practical Value of the Paper. This study contributes to the existing literature on the positive influence of games on the psychological well-being of children and adolescents. Based on the results of the study, chess training can be a promising program in the improvement of the psychological well-being of the resident CICL by promoting positive emotions through play. This study provided the basis of a proposed program to develop the SEL competencies and skills of CICL, such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision making through chess training.

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