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Research Article

Food Budget of Inmates and Their Body Mass Index

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to evaluate the food budget allowance of inmates in Dapitan and Dipolog City jail and determine the inmates body mass index as one of the indicators in assessing the nutrition of person whether he/she is malnourished or not. The study employed a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches in carrying out the results of the study. Quantitative method was used to describe the inmate's profile as to age, gender, number of years in jail, types of food served and body mass index. While qualitative method was used to determine the budget allocation of inmates and medical records of inmates. An information sheet was created and distributed to the inmates who were the primary respondents in order to gather quantitative data. In addition, unstructured interview was also conducted to the warden during site visit. Random sampling method was used. Descriptive statistics were used in presenting, analyzing and interpreting the data of the study. Most of the inmates incarcerated are within the age ranging from 42-51 years old, while most of the inmates are incarcerated for a period ranging from 2 to 4 years. There are very few inmates with medical history like ulcer, diabetes, mayoma and high blood. Beef or pork tinola with sayote and rice is the commonly meals serve to the inmates. Majority of the inmates are within normal weight. Monitoring of those inmates with medical history to prevent from any possible complications.

Keywords: *Food budget, inmates, body mass index*

Background

The right to food of prisoners is embodied in the guidelines of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor). The BJMP of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) handles provincial, city, district, and

municipal jails where inmates sentenced 3 years below and those undergoing trial are confined. The inmates in jails are called detainees. Bureau of Corrections under the Department of Justice (DOJ) oversees the national prisons and penal farms like New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City. The prisoners confined in

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this prison and penal farms are those serving more than 3 years and are called prisoners (Gavilan, 2017).

Further, Republic Act No. 10575 or the Bureau of Corrections Act of 2013 mandates that the safekeeping of inmates shall include decent provision of quarters, food, water and clothing in compliance with established United Nations standards. But in the Philippines, the budget for food allocation per inmate only php30.00 per day, though in 2015 the budget increases to fifty pesos (Php50.00) wherein the amount is divided into three meals Php20.00 for breakfast, Php20.00 for lunch, and Php10.00 for dinner.

The daily food guide developed by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), said that a nutritious meal consists of one cup of rice, one cup of vegetables, one portion of meat, and one fruit. However, P439 is needed each day to feed 5 people. If divided, it means that Php87.8 should be allotted each day for 3 nutritious meals of one person. The UN Council on Human Rights contends that food provided should be adequate to maintain health and strength, should be of decent quality, and be properly prepared and served (United nation Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, 2000). With the current situation above, one can ask if the food budget allocation for every inmate is

enough for them to attain the required nutritional value mandated by the United Nations, the BJMP and the BOC?

This paper aims to evaluate the food budget allocation of inmates in Dapitan City Jail and determine the inmate’s body mass index. The Body Mass Index (BMI) is one of the indicators in assessing the nutrition of person whether he/she is malnourished or not. Moreover, the study will describe the type of food serve to know the nutritional value and inmates’ medical history.

Methods

The study employed a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches in carrying out the results of the study. Quantitative method was used to describe the inmate’s profile as to age, gender, number of years in jail, types of food served and body mass index. While qualitative method was used to determine the budget allocation of inmates and medical records of inmates. An information sheet was created and distributed to the inmates who were the primary respondents in order to gather quantitative data. In addition, unstructured interview was also conducted to the warden during site visit. Random sampling method was used. Descriptive statistics were used in presenting, analyzing and interpreting the data of the study.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Age and Number of Years in Jail

Age Bracket	Number of Years in Jail				Total
	1 year and Below	2 to 4 years	5 to 7 years	8 years and Above	
22 – 31 years old	12 (10%)	8 (6.7%)	5 (4.2%)	5 (4.2%)	30 (25.0%)
32 – 41 years old	5 (4.2%)	8 (6.7%)	5 (4.2%)	8 (6.7%)	26 (21.7%)
42 – 51 years old	13 (10.8%)	22 (18.3%)	5 (4.2%)	9 (7.5%)	49 (40.8%)
52 – 61 years old	3 (2.5%)	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.8%)	5 (4.2%)	10 (8.3%)
62 – 71 years old	3 (2.5%)	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.8%)	-	5 (4.2%)
Total	36 (30.0%)	40 (33.3%)	17 (14.2%)	27 (22.5%)	120 (100.0%)

Table 1 show that 40.8% of the inmates are within 42-51 years old and this is followed by 25% inmates within 22-31 years old while 21.7% of the inmates are 32-41 years old and followed by 52-61 and 62-71 years old with 8.3 and 4.2% respectively. 33.3% of the total

inmates are already 2-4 years inside the reformatory and rehabilitation center, while 30% are 1 year and below. This is followed by 8 years and above with 22% while 14% of inmates are in jail for 5 to 7 years.

Dapitan City reformatory and rehabilitation center is one of the city jails in the country that is tasked to accept and incarcerate inmates with term of imprisonment not more than 3 years. They also house detainees whose cases are still in court while waiting for final disposition. City jails is like provincial jails and district jails whose authority is confined prisoners who are charged of a crime and those sentence with shorter sentence of not more than 3 years. But there are inmates who are already inside the jail for more than 8 years. This is because there are inmates whose case is not yet decided by the court even if they are already inside the reformatory and rehabilitation center for more than 3 years.

It could be seen that on the total result, the majority of the inmates were within the age range 42 years old to 51 years old. This means that the inmates in this reformatory and rehabilitation are mostly are in their adulthood stage. This implies that their age, they are still actively engaged in all kinds of activities and are still capable to perform various roles.

The finding is corroborated in study of Aranjuez (2017) that revealed inmates in Dapitan City jail were within the 36-45 years old bracket. Further the finding is confirmed by Engdal (2017) crime commission experiences and situations in adult life influence the onset of criminality.

Table 2. Gender and Medical History of Respondents

Gender	Medical History		Total
	With	Without	
Male	8 (6.7%)	102(85%)	110(91.7%)
Female	3(2.5%)	7(5.8%)	10(8.3%)
	11(9.2%)	109(90.8%)	120(100.0%)

Table 2 shows inmates with and without medical history. There are 8 out of 102 males inmates with medical history while 3 out of female inmates have medical history. Medical history like ulcer, diabetes, mayoma and high blood. According to the jail personnel they have a nurse inside the reformatory and rehabilitation center that conduct regular medical check-up to the inmates. In addition, Dr. Jose Rizal Memorial Hospital is also conducting medical and dental check-up to the inmates and there are

also private individuals and politicians who also provide medical and dental check-up to the inmates.

The result was supported by Kouyoumdjian et al. (2017) which states that most common health problems encountered by inmates in federal correctional facilities in Canada are mental health problems like schizophrenia, cognitive impairment, also communicable diseases like Tuberculosis, sexual and reproductive health like chlamydia and gonorrhoea.

Table 3. Types of Food Served to the Inmates

Types of Food	Frequency	Percent
Aroma Coffee with Pandesal, Rice	3	2.5%
Adobo, Ass. Vegetables, Rice	4	3.3%
Aroma coffee, hotdog with rice	3	2.5%
Aroma Coffee, Beef Loaf, Rice	12	10.0%
Aroma Coffee, dried fish, rice	2	1.7%
Beef (internal organs) sayote, rice	2	1.7%
Beef/pork tinola with sayote, rice	67	55.8%
Fish paksiw, rice	5	4.2%
Fish tinola with leafy vegetables, rice	14	11.7%
Ginataang mongo with ass. Vegetables, rice	1	0.8%
Pansitlomi, rice	7	5.8%
Total	120	100.0%

Table 3 shows the kinds of food served to the inmates and the number of times it was served to them. It shows in the data that Beef/pork tinola with sayote, and rice was served 67 times in a month, while fish tinola with leafy vegetables and rice was serve for 14 times in a month. Aroma coffee, beef loaf and rice were served 12 times in month while pancit lomi and rice, fish paksiw and rice, adobo,

ass. Vegetables and rice follow with 7, 5 and 4 serve each month.

The result was supported by Gavilan (2017) which states that meals of correctional facilities in the Philippines is usually consist of a cup of rice, porridge for breakfast, a cup full of water boiled with squash or sayote, half a can of sardines for lunch, and an egg or a small fish, and a cup of rice for dinner.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage of Respondents According to their BMI Category

BMI Category	Frequency	Percent
Underweight	12	10.0%
Normal Weight	67	55.8%
Overweight	36	30.0%
Obesity Class 1	1	0.8%
Obesity Class 2	-	-
Obesity Class 3	4	3.3%
Total	120	100.0%

Note: Average BMI = 23.56 (Normal Weight)

Table 4 shows the different body mass index (BMI) of the different inmates of Dapitan City Jail. It shows in the table that out of 120 inmates 12 of them or 10% are underweight and 67 of 120 inmates are within normal weight or 55.8%. The table shows that majority of the inmates are within normal weight. It disproves the presumption that inmates are under nourished because of the limited budget for food allotted by the national government. It was found out that the city government of Dapitan provide sacks of rice per quarter which is part of their annual budget. There are also non-government organization, politicians, religious sectors and private individual individuals who provide food to the inmates.

The result was supported by Cornelsen et al (2017). They said that agencies will resort in food subsidies in order to reduce levels of under nutrition. This food subsidy is helpful in the event of budget shortage. These are the reasons that despite of the limited budget provided by the national government to the inmates still the jail personnel manage to maintain their proper weight and health by initiating programs that is very helpful in the reformation and rehabilitation of the inmates. According to the jail authority, there are inmates who are already underweight when they arrive at the city jail. Daily

activities are already part of the prison's life inside the institution. This includes morning exercises, sunning and dancing. They also played basketball and tennis. They have nurse inside the institution to monitor and check inmate's physical condition. There are medical and dental mission conducted by some private groups and the city health office which is also include de-worming of the inmates.

There are inmates who are overweight and are obese. According the jail authority these are prisoners who are already overweight at the time they were admitted inside the institution. Some of them does not actively participate their daily exercise instead most of the time they watch television, sleep inside the cell and eat. That is why they did not lose their weight. Family status is also a factor according to the jail personnel, because inmates who are from a wealthy family who always conduct visits and give the inmates the much-needed food.

Conclusion

The problem on prisoners' malnutrition caused by the limited budgetary allocation by the national government is apparently solved. But without the subsidy from the local government, non-government organizations and

other private individual problems of malnutrition will be prevalent in all jails, prison and penal farms across the country.

Recommendation

1. Improve paralegal program because this will help in monitoring cases of inmates that will result to early resolution of the case.
2. Close monitoring of those inmates with medical history to prevent from any possible complications.
3. Inmates who are underweight, overweight and obese maybe

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