

PREDICTORS OF INCEST SURVIVORS' IN THE EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL COMPETENCIES

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ABSTRACT--*The study aimed to find out the predictors of incest survivors' emotional and behavioral competencies. Employing the descriptive-correlational design and case study method, the research involved the fifteen incest survivors who stayed at the Women and Children Protection Center for temporary custody. It also utilized the standardized psychological examinations, the Problem Behavior Inventory and the Social Emotional Assets Scales, which were translated in Filipino for better understanding. Data were analyzed using the frequency and percentage, arithmetic mean, Pearson r, and stepwise multiple regression. In view of the findings of the research, the study concludes that majority of incest survivors are 6 to 15 years old, eldest and middle child, living with their father, parents and relatives, with parents' marital status as living together and separated. Majority of respondents' fathers are engaged in tricycle driving and farming; their mothers as vendor, laundry woman, housewife and Overseas Filipino Workers. Most incest survivors' families belong to the Food Threshold Level with monthly earning of 6,125.00 and work location in the rural areas. Most of them are with ages 6-15 onset of sexual abuse perpetrated by their biological fathers; who have on-going status of litigation. The most common psychological distresses of incest survivors were somatic disorder, mood disorder, anxiety disorder, sleep disorder, and parent-child problem. The level of respondents' emotional and behavioral competencies is average to high functioning, while the level of empathy, self-competence and total emotional and behavioral competencies is at risk. Those incest survivors with fathers who worked as tricycle drivers and farmers and mothers serving as housekeepers, laundry women and vendor with parents' place of occupation located in rural areas tended to perform higher in their emotional and behavioral competencies. The more the incest survivors experience eating disorder and academic problem as psychological distresses, they tend to have lower level of self-regulation in the emotional and behavioral competencies; the greater is the respondents' mood disorder, the lesser is the level of social competence and responsibility; and the greater is the conduct disorder, the lower is the incest survivors' total emotional and behavioral competencies. Father's occupation, academic problem and conduct disorder as psychological distresses of the incest survivors explain self-regulation; young incest survivors with parents living together and the occurrence of more psychological distresses explain the incest survivors' social competence; fathers' low income with blue collar job and conduct disorder explain the incest survivors' responsibility; while the incest survivors' age determined empathy; and finally, mood disorder of respondents explains their emotional and behavioral competencies.*

Keywords-- *Predictors, psychological distresses, emotional and behavioral competencies, and incest survivors*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Unfortunately, it is undoubtedly observed that in the Philippines, the occurrence of incest is underreported. Victims of sexual abuse or the so-called incest survivors suffer its consequence in silence and little is known on the probable long-term effects of their psychological adjustments to the traumatic experience. The idea of protecting the image of their family, conserving their close ties with significant others and the fear that they have nowhere else to go can be complex reasons for the unrecorded cases. Research studies conducted confirm that after sexual abuse, children who are victim/survivors experience psychological distress in different degrees and in diverse situations. Having limited verbal skills to express their distressing emotions brought about by the incest, children may display adverse demeanors and increased negative behaviors as well as physiological reactions in various events.

Internalizing behaviors displayed in withdrawal and anxiety as well as externalizing behaviors overtly shown in aggressiveness or delinquency are the most common effects of incest in children. How do the incest victim survivors counteract or adapt their responses to sexual abuse? Their emotional and behavioral competencies in terms of social competence, self-regulation, responsibility and empathy determines the incest survivors' individual characteristics as well as their external factors. These factors make them unique in their response to incest. Those who possess strong social protective support and the child's good internal resources are significant determinants in coping with psychological distresses. Further, those who do not have internal resources, positive conditions and protective factors will experience difficulty in all life aspects. Alvord (2005) emphasized that it is remarkably significant to understand the factors that can place individuals at risk of negative outcomes.

While certain factors have been found to increase the likelihood of emotional and behavioral competence in individuals at risk of negative outcomes associated with adversity; protective factors shield at-risk individuals from developing the associated negative outcomes, promoting resilient outcomes instead (Carbonell et al., 2002). Individual characteristics as factors in this study would be determined as predictors of the respondents' emotional and behavioral competencies. Analyzing the veracity of the aforementioned premise, it is along this line that the study was prepared to find out possible predictors of the incest survivors in their emotional and behavioral competencies. Hence, the study.

II. MOTIVATION AND OBJECTIVE

The study generally aimed to find out the predictors of incest survivors in the emotional and behavioral competencies at Women and Children Protection Center, City of Ilagan. It specifically sought answers of the following objectives:

1. To determine the profile of the respondents in terms of the following: age, ordinal position in the family, who the respondents live with, marital status of parents, parents' occupation, parents' place of occupation, category of parents' monthly family income, place of residence, role relationship between the incest survivor and the offender, age at onset of sexual abuse, and status of the perpetrator's case;
2. To identify the most common psychological distresses experienced by the incest survivors;
3. To determine the prevalence of the psychological distresses manifested by the incest survivors;

4. To determine the level of emotional and behavioral competencies of incest survivors with respect to social competence, self-regulation, empathy, and responsibility;
5. To find out whether or not there is a significant relationship between the respondents' profile and their emotional and behavioral competencies;
6. To find out whether or not there is a significant relationship between the respondents' psychological distresses and emotional and behavioral competencies; and
7. To find out which among the variables either taken singly or in combination, are predictors of incest survivors in the emotional and behavioral competencies.

III. STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION

The study would contribute to the development of an intervention program for children who are incest victim/survivors, temporarily housed at the Women and Children Protection Center. The information derived from the study would become a reference for the DSWD staff composed of the social workers, psychologists, center house parents, and volunteers, especially those advocates of human rights and protection for children. Through this study, they would acquire captured collective information about their ward, which will give them light in handling the cases of incest survivors, and would help them determine appropriate intervention path towards the recovery of the victim/survivors. Thus, this would help the children/survivors, especially those at risk, build their emotional and behavioral competence as an adaptive response to incest experience.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive-correlational design was utilized in the study. It also employed the standardized psychological examinations, the Problem Behavior Inventory and the Emotional and Behavioral Competencies Scales, which were translated in Filipino to describe the predictors of incest survivors in the emotional and behavioral competencies. Data were analyzed using the frequency and percentage, arithmetic mean, Pearson r , and stepwise multiple regression.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Profile of Incest Survivors

Majority of the incest survivors are 6 to 15 years old, eldest and middle child, living with their father, parents and relatives, with the parents' marital status as living together and separated. Majority of respondents' fathers are engaged in tricycle driving and farming; respondents' mothers as vendor, laundry woman, housewife and Overseas Filipino Workers. Most incest survivors' families belong to the Food Threshold Level with a monthly earning of 6,125 Php; with place of residence located in the rural areas. The onset of sexual abuse is 6-15 years old, having their biological fathers as most of the perpetrators, with an on-going litigation status.

2. Most Common Psychological Distresses

In Table 1, findings show that the most common incest survivors' psychological distresses were the somatic disorder (15 or 100.00), mood disorder (14 or 93.30), anxiety disorder (14 or 93.30), sleep disorder (13 or 86.70), and parent-child problem (13 or 86.70). In addition, the incest survivors disclosed that they experienced multiple psychological distresses, and its manifestations significantly interfered with their daily living. Hence, findings conclude that the most common psychological distresses the incest survivors experienced after the incident of rape were the somatic disorder, mood disorder, anxiety disorder, sleep disorder, and parent-child problem.

Results of the study conformed with the study of Levin (2004), which described psychological distresses as common physical and emotional responses to trauma. These physical and emotional reactions include aches and pains like head, back, and/or stomach aches, sudden sweating and/or heart palpitations (fluttering), changes in sleep patterns, appetite, interest in sex, constipation or diarrhea, easily startled by noises or unexpected touch, and more susceptible to colds or illnesses.

Table 1: Most Common Psychological Distresses Experienced by the incest Survivors

Psychological Distress	Frequency (n=15)	Percentage	Rank
1. Somatic Disorder	15	100.00	1
2. Mood Disorder	14	93.30	2.5
3. Anxiety Disorder	14	93.30	2.5
4. Sleep Disorder	13	86.70	4.5
5. Parent-Child Problem	13	86.70	4.5
6. Conduct Disorder	10	66.70	6.5
7. Eating Disorder	10	66.70	6.5
8. Phase of Life Problem	7	46.70	8
9. Communication Disorder	6	40.00	9
10. Identity Problem	4	26.70	10
11. Academic Problem	3	20.00	11
12. Personality Disorder	2	13.30	12
13. Oppositional Defiant Disorder	1	6.70	13
14. Attention Deficiency and Hyperactivity Disorder	1	6.70	14

3. Prevalence of Psychological Distresses

The prevalence of psychological distresses experienced by the incest survivors is revealed in Table 2. Table shows that 8 or 53.30% respondents experienced seven psychological distresses; 3 or 20.00 percent manifested 8 psychological distresses; 2 or 10.30% incest survivors displayed 10 psychological distresses; and 1 or 6.70% incest survivor experienced 5 and 9 psychological distresses, respectively.

Findings of the research conclude that victim survivors experienced multiple psychological distresses and manifestations of these may seriously interfere with their everyday lives. This means that the emergence of multiplicity of psychological distresses the incest survivors is manifested after having been sexually abused. Results of the study was indeed confirmed by a study conducted by Burgess and Holmstrom (2011), which

described that rape syndrome consisted of two stages, an immediate or acute phase and a long-term reorganization phase. In the acute phase, victims are described as experiencing considerable disorganization of behavior manifested in denial, outburst of anger, rage, emotional numbing and restricted range of feelings and disruption in lifestyle. Burgess and Holmstrom (2011) confirmed further that rape is a crisis that causes physical reactions, emotional reactions, that disturb thoughts as comprising a crisis state that allows the victim to suffer. He emphasized that the multiple psychological distresses may hinder normal social-emotional development if not given proper intervention.

Table 2: Prevalence of Psychological Distresses Manifested by the Incest Survivors

Number of Psychological Distress Manifested	Frequency	Percentage
5	1	6.70
7	8	53.30
8	3	20.00
9	1	6.70
10	2	13.30

4. Level of Emotional and Behavioral Competencies

The level of emotional and behavioral competencies of incest survivors, presented in Table 3, reveals that self-regulation and responsibility fall on average to high functioning while the respondents' level of empathy, self-competence and total emotional and behavioral competencies is at risk. This implies that when the respondents exhibit high functioning in their social emotional assets, their level and number of their psychological distresses decrease. Despite the respondents' psychological distresses brought about by incest, they still possess emotional and behavioral competencies which were positive adaptive mechanism used to survive a threatening situation.

Findings of the study conformed with the study made by Styron and Bulman (2007) affirming that abused children are more likely to be insecurely attached, which is connected to many psychological concerns, including hostility, lack of empathy, impulsivity, passivity, anti-social behavior and helplessness. Such finding was strengthened by the study of Colman and Widom (2004) which stated that child sexual abuse can result to interpersonal sensitivity, adult attachment issues, feelings of isolation and stigma, social alienation, difficulty trusting others, child social relationship problems, relational imbalances, intimacy, tendencies toward re-victimization, personality, unstable personal relationships, the victim-perpetrator cycle, social introversion, and violence. These lead to detachment in interpersonal relations, not having an intact ability to empathize with other people because they are struggling to understand what they are experiencing.

Table 3: Level of Emotional and Behavioral Competencies of Incest Survivors

Emotional and Behavioral Competencies	Mean	SD	Tier	Descriptive Value
Self- Regulation	44.07	5.96	1	Average to High Functioning

Social Competence	39.33	7.89	2	At risk
Empathy	39.87	9.95	2	At risk
Responsibility	41.73	7.73	1	Average to High Functioning
Total Emotional and Behavioral Competencies	38.47	6.73	3	At Risk

5. *Test of Relationship Between the Emotional and Behavioral Competencies and Profile Variables*

Insofar as test of relationship between the respondents' emotional and behavioral competencies and their profile variable, findings with father's occupation, mother's place of occupation and role relationship of the respondents to the perpetrator have significant relationship with self-regulation.

In terms of domain of social competence, age was negatively correlated and marital status was significantly related, while in the domain of empathy, age was found to be negatively correlated and family income was also found to be significantly correlated with the respondents' responsibility competency. The respondents' total emotional and behavioral competencies were also found to be significantly related with their father's place of occupation. Such findings can be confirmed by the study of K. Josen (2016) which stated that the total emotional and behavioral competencies were significantly related with father's place of occupation. Given this family set up, the child's social emotional assets on dimensions of responsibility, self-regulation, empathy and social competence may be honed by being relied upon by her parents by acting as an adult in the household. The incest survivor may have had to assume family responsibilities, such as household chores, family budgeting and child care, well beyond the responsibilities associated with her chronological age, caring for both parents and her siblings. Her family role may substitute a sense of importance and power for the nurturance that she is lacking. This will give the child the feeling of having responsibility and social competence.

5. *Correlation Between the Respondents' Psychological Distresses and Emotional and Behavioral Competencies*

Table 4: Test of Relationship Between the Emotional and Behavioral Competencies and Profile Variable

Findings in Table 5 on correlation between the respondents' psychological distresses and social emotional assets imply that Eating disorder and academic problem have been found to be negatively correlated with the respondents' self-regulation while academic problem has shown positive correlation with the respondents' self-regulation and empathy. Mood disorder was found to have a significant negative relationship with the respondents' level of social competence and responsibility. In the domain of responsibility, conduct disorder and number of

psychological distresses were negatively correlated. In the total social emotional assets, mood disorder was found to be negatively correlated, while academic problem was positively correlated.

This implies that the higher the incest survivors experience psychological distresses, they tended to have lower emotional and behavioral competencies. Such finding is strengthened by Herbers, et al. (2014) believing that the amount of adversity experience has been found to predict the number of both emotional and behavioral problems, demonstrating a dose-response relationship, in which an increased number of adverse experiences create

Profile Variable	Self-Regulation		Social Competence		Empathy		Responsibility		Total EBC	
	r	Prob.	r	Prob.	r	Prob.	R	Prob.	R	Prob.
Age	-.352	.198	-.569*	.027	-	.029	.196	.485	-.442	.099
Age of Onset	.057	.839	.269	.333	.029	.919	-	.671	.108	.701
Ordinal Position	.245	.380	.134	.633	-.098	.728	.194	.488	.138	.623
Whom They Live With	-.450	.092	-.495	.061	-.211	.451	.309	.262	-.225	.420
Parents' Marital Status	.406	.134	.567*	.028	.265	.340	-	.856	.334	.223
Fathers' Occupation	.696*	.006	.473	.088	.187	.522	.410	.145	.443	.113
Mothers' Occupation	-.401	.138	-.216	.438	-.064	.821	.025	.929	-.225	.420
Fathers' Place of Occupation	-.410	.146	-.525	.054	-.343	.230	-	.054	-	.007
Mothers' Place of Occupation	-.523*	.045	-.240	.390	-.291	.293	-	.758	-.467	.079
Family Income	.033	.908	-.266	.338	-.260	.349	.562	.029	.007	.980
Place of Residence	-.124	.660	-.033	.907	-.071	.801	.301	.275	.113	.689
Role Relationship	-.544*	.036	-.197	.482	.010	.971	-	.143	-.349	.203

an increase in negative outcomes in individuals with low resilience. (Shevlin et al., 2009)

This finding is negated by the study conducted by Seery (2011; Siery et al, 2010) which emphasized that the well documented negative effects of adverse experiences may also have potential positive effects, in relation to increasing an individual's level of resilience or emotional and behavioral competencies.

6. Predictors of Incest Survivors in the Emotional and Behavioral Competencies

The result of regression analyses of self-regulation, social competence, empathy, responsibility, and emotional and behavioral competencies is found in Table 6. Findings imply that fathers' occupation, academic problem and eating disorder are the significant predictors of self-regulation. Age, parents' marital status and number of psychological distresses surfaced as significant predictors of the incest; income, fathers' occupation and conduct disorder emerged as the significant explanatory variables for respondents' responsibility; Age was the only significant explanatory variable for respondents' empathy.; and lastly, mood disorder was found to be the only predictor of emotional and behavioral competencies. This means that those incest survivors' fathers with

Variables	Self - Regulation		Social Competence		Empathy		Responsibility		Total EBC	
	r	Prob.	r	Prob.	r	Prob.	r	Prob.	R	Prob.
Mood Disorder	-.415	.124	-.514*	.050	-.337	.219	.510	.052	-.680*	.005
Oppositional Defiant Disorder	.136	.628	-.047	.869	-.024	.932	.098	.729	-.019	.946
ADHD	-.375	.169	-.117	.678	-.219	.433	.098	.729	-.307	.266
Conduct Disorder	-.016	.954	-.192	.494	-.407	.132	.574*	.025	-.471	.076
Eating Disorder	.655*	.008	-.155	.582	-.010	.972	.290	.294	-.341	.214
Anxiety Disorder	.375	.169	.117	.678	.219	.433	.098	.729	.307	.266
Cluster A Personality Disorder	-.039	.891	.034	.903	.026	.927	.354	.196	-.149	.596
Sleep Disorder	-.200	.475	.043	.879	-.230	.410	.250	.368	-.213	.445
Communication Disorder	.251	.368	.071	.800	.351	.199	.302	.273	.255	.358
Somatic Disorder	.544*	.036	.241	.388	.336	.220	.464	.081	.579*	.024
Academic Problem	.544*	.036	.241	.388	.336	.220	.464	.081	.579*	.024
Parent-Child Problem	-.336	.221	.043	.879	.015	.958	.408	.131	-.153	.586
Phase of Life Problem	.036	.900	.029	.918	-.001	.997	.360	.187	-.108	.701
Identity Problem	.491	.063	.092	.744	.118	.675	.143	.612	.305	.270
Respondents' Number of distress	-.042	.881	-.042	.882	.018	.950	.623*	.013	-.271	.328

blue collar job, and psychological distresses like academic and eating disorder explain self- regulation;

Those incest survivors' fathers with blue collar job, with academic problem and eating disorder as psychological distresses explain self- regulation; Younger incest survivors with parents living together and separated and more psychological distresses explain the incest survivors' social competence; Fathers' low income

with blue collar job and conduct disorder as incest survivors emerged as the significant explanatory variables for respondents' responsibility; Younger incest survivors determined the respondents' empathy; and mood disorder of respondents explains their emotional and behavioral competencies. Such findings can be confirmed by a study in which age is a predictor of resiliency, which can be equivalent to emotional and behavioral competencies based from Davidson resiliency scale and the WHOQOL BREF Questionnaire. Moreover, we illustrated several demographic variables. The results were analyzed using the SPSS version 19.0 and means, descriptive correlation and regression were calculated. Data revealed that resilience and age could significantly anticipate the QOL and physical aspect. In psychological, social and environmental domains resilience but not the age could not significantly predict these domains. (T. Edwarch, J.C. Calling, & E. Perry, 2005).

Researchers or practitioners should take cognizance of the multidimensional nature of resilience. Evidence that at-risk children excel within particular adjustment domains should not obscure the possibility of significant problems in other spheres. For example, survivors have illustrated that they may be functioning adequately in the working environment while being impaired in the social domain. Thus, clinical psychologists and researchers should look beyond external achievements towards intrapsychic impairments. Therefore, resiliency or emotional and behavioral competencies in incest survivors is an adjustment to a new situation by putting things together in their proper perspective (Tshljme, Nobom, 2005).

7. Predictors of Incest Survivors in the Emotional and Behavioral Competencies

Regression of Self-Regulation	Adjusted R Square	Regression Coefficient	t-Value
Constant		44.296	
Fathers' Occupation	.441	4.683	2.753**
Academic Problem	.598	6.789	3.660**
Eating Disorder	.790	-5.810	-3.322*
Regression of Social Competence			
Constant		60.325	
Age	.261	-9.816	-3.366**
Parents' Marital Status	.472	9.167	3.309*
Number of Psychological Distresses	.625	-2.997	-2.337*
Regression of Empathy			
Constant		43.889	
Ge	.261	-11.689	-2.366*
Regression of Responsibility			
Constant		35.554	
Family Income	-.447	10.313	5.370**
Fathers' Occupation	.716	6.661	3.691*
Conduct Disorder	.805	-4.689	-2.441*
Regression of Emotional Behavioral Competencies on selected variables			
Constant		55.000	

Legend: ** = Significant at .01 level

* = Significant at .05 level

VI. CONCLUSIONS

In view of the findings of the study, the research conclude that majority of the female children incest survivors are 6 to 15 years old, eldest and middle child, living with their father, parents and relatives, with parents' marital status as living together and separated. Majority of respondents' fathers are engaged in tricycle driving and farming; their mothers as vendor, laundry woman, housewife and Overseas Filipino Workers. Most of the survivors' female children incest families belong to the Food Threshold Level with a monthly earning of 6, 125.00 Php; with place of residence located in the rural areas, and onset of sexual abuse is 6-15 perpetrated by their biological fathers; Most of them are with ages 6-15 onset of sexual abuse perpetrated by their biological fathers who have an on-going status of litigation.

The most common psychological distresses felt by female children incest survivors after being raped by the perpetrators were the somatic disorder, mood disorder, anxiety disorder, sleep disorder, and parent-child problem. The level of the emotional assets of the female children incest survivors is average to high functioning, while the level of respondents' empathy, self-competence and total emotional assets is at risk. Those survivors of incest with fathers who worked as tricycle drivers and farmers while respondents' mothers serving as housekeepers, laundry women and vendor with parents' place of occupation found in the barrio tended to perform higher level of social emotional and behavioral competencies. The more the female children survivors of incest have eating disorder and academic problem as psychological distresses, the lesser is the level of their self-regulation as social emotional assets; the greater is the respondents' mood disorder as psychological distress, the lesser is the level of social competence and responsibility as emotional and behavioral competencies; and the greater is the conduct disorder psychological distress of the children survivors of incest, the lower is their total emotional and behavioral competencies. This implies further that more the female children survivors of incest experience psychological distress, they are more likely to manifest lower emotional and behavioral competencies.

Those incest survivors' fathers with blue collar job, with academic problem and eating disorder as psychological distresses explain self-regulation; Younger incest survivors with parents living together and separated and have more psychological distresses explain the incest survivors' social competence; Fathers' low income with blue collar job and conduct disorder explain the incest survivors' responsibility; while younger incest survivors determined empathy; and finally, mood disorder of respondents explains their emotional and behavioral competencies.

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