

Abstracts

Weathering Storms for the Little Ones: The Lived Experiences of Single-Parent Families of Divorce

Choe Huiling Jeannette

The aim of the study was to tap on the lived experiences of single-parent families in Singapore to tease out factors that enable these families to weather the crisis of divorce and be resilient for their children's continued development. The focus remains on the children's development post-divorce in the context of the family, from the perspectives of their custodial mother. A qualitative and exploratory approach was taken to allow these mothers a greater first-person voice regarding their situations. The 7 participants were referred from 5 social service agencies in Singapore for a wider spread of findings. The data collected was analysed to identify key concepts about the family's *stressors, resources, coping behaviours* and *perceptions* in line with the conceptual framework that is based on the Double-ABCX Model and the Family Adjustment and Adaptation Response Model. This study bears implications for Social Work practice especially in Singapore with families undergoing divorce, and will hopefully shed some light on how to better equip and empower children of divorce in the future.

How can the family be a resource? An exploratory study on how the family can help the offender return home

Joan Fang Rouyue

Family members of retuning offenders are the people who attend to the offender's re-entry needs. Existing literature asserts that family members have a role in decreasing recidivism rates. However, attending to the offender's needs during the re-entry period can be a highly stressful time for family members.

This study will look at the challenges the family face, how they cope with those challenges, and how they perceive support provided by both informal and formal systems.

This study employed an exploratory and qualitative approach. Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews, this study explores the experiences of nine family members who received recently released offenders.

The appraisal model of coping is used to frame the analysis. The interaction between the influencing factors and coping strategies used by family members are analysed in relation to the final outcome. This analysis framework provides insight into how the influencing factors can be altered to allow family members to deal with their challenges more sufficiently.

The findings from this study will be interesting for social workers and other helping professionals who are keen in learning more about offenders' family members during the offender re-entry process.

Storying by Homeless Adult Individuals: Life Stories, Coping and Hope

Lydia Foo Yu Han

Although homelessness does not appear as a substantial issue in Singapore, there has been an increase in the number of people, identified by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), living on the streets. Conceptualized as individuals found in a public area, with no apparent place of residence, and employing the Narrative approach and Strengths Perspective, this study sought to learn more about the narratives of homeless adult individuals, pertaining to life events, reasons for homelessness, coping, and hopes. 10 individuals (9 males, 1 female), through convenience sampling, participated in one-to-one semi-structured interviews. Thematic Analysis was conducted.

This research found that the reasons for homelessness were often the interplay between structural and personal reasons. Coping efforts commonly involved a combination of problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies. The influence of their perceived controllability of the problem on the type of strategy employed was discussed. Hopes were identified, and possible reasons that influence one's ability to hope were discussed. Possible reasons for the observed shift from problem-saturated stories to that of strengths and hopes were discussed in light of the Narrative beliefs and characteristics. An implication would be the need for a shift in the public perception, to adopt a non-deficit perspective. With this, recommendations for practice and policies were discussed.

However, the small sample size and non-probability sampling method could have compromised the generalizability of the findings.

An Exploration of Factors Affecting Reunification of Compassionate Grounds (CG) cases in Children and Young Persons Homes in Singapore

Lyon Koh Lin Lu

Compassionate Grounds (CG) cases enter Children and Young Persons Homes (CYPH) because of child welfare concerns, primarily of caregiving, with no statutory orders involved. They are community-referred, self-referred or converted from existing statutory cases. This study aims to explore key protective and risk factors affecting successful reunification of CG cases. A resilience-based model will be used and examined for its relevance in local context. This exploratory study employed qualitative interviews with 9 caseworkers and 7 parent(s)/guardian(s) of successfully reunified CG cases that were provided by 3 CYPH - Boys' Town, PERTAPIS Children's Home and The Haven. 32 profile variables were additionally compiled for better understanding.

Findings showed the prominence of family-based reunification factors, related to parental commitment, parent-child relationship, parental absence and parental ability to provide for survival and social needs. Child-based factors and environment-based factors were important too, with the former reinforcing intervention with the child and the latter involving structural factors that concern the child's safety and provide support to parents, especially single parents which were a surprising majority. Findings also showed the relevance of the resilience-based model in various aspects, though modifications were suggested for enhancement. These findings will have implications on local reunification practice in future.