

Praxis on War Against Drugs: An Assessment of Community-Based Drug Rehabilitation and Management Program, and Challenges

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Abstract

The current research study focused on identifying the effectiveness of Community-Based Drug Rehabilitation and Management Program (CBDRMP) and challenges encountered among Persons Who Used Drugs (PWUDs) who are enrolled under the CBDRMP. Also, this study investigates the lives of families of PWUDs who were affected by the latest Philippine Government strategy to combat the use of illegal drugs – The War Against Drugs. Further, the methodology of this study employs quantitative, descriptive and correlational research designs utilizing a pre-existing modified research instrument. The study covered 348 PWUDs with age range between 18 to 65 years old, and currently enrolled in CBDRMP between 2022 to 2023 among 31 Local Government Units in the Province of Negros Occidental. Respondents evaluated both the implementers of CBDRMP which include Criminology and Enforcement Personnel; Health and Wellness Personnel; and Social Service Personnel; and CBDRMP service areas which include Screening and Profiling; Psychoeducation and Counselling; and Community Reintegration. Meanwhile, a list of challenges encountered by PWUDs during CBDRMP were enumerated to examine areas for development of CBDRMP. Moreover, to further support the results, in-depth qualitative discussions were made among families of PWUDs who were affected by war against drugs. Lastly, both the CBDRMP implementers and service areas were evaluated as moderately effective, and a proposed strategic intervention plan was developed.

Key Words: CBDRMP, Implementers, Services, Effectiveness, War Against Drugs.

Introduction

Drug Abuse is classified as a global pandemic by the World Health Organization. A total of 296 million drug users were recorded in 2021. The number of drug use and drug-related abuse are continuously increasing by 15 to 20 percent each year globally (WHO, 2021). The World Health Organization has developed various strategy to mitigate the existence of such mental disorder. However, despite the crucial interventions, drug abuse continues to exist and prevail (WHO, 2021).

Gaps on the research study relative to CBDRMP, but not focused on some aspects. Local and international studies. No study is focused on the CBDRMP of the Philippines.

In 2016, the Philippines, through President Rodrigo Duterte, has established the full implementation of War Against Drugs to address the sumitting serious concern on illegal drugs. The DILG (2018) has reported 27,000 drug-related crimes, while DOH (2018) has reported an increase on drug-related illnesses by 66.8 percent from 2017 to 2018. This implies that our function as a nation is experiencing detrimental effects relative to drug use, one of which is the increasing number of crimes.

In the Province of Negros Occidental, PDEA (2022) has reported that out of 601 Barangays, only 471 barangays or 78 percent of which were classified as drug cleared. This implies that despite the aggressive campaign of the local government, drug use and abuse are still apparent.

With that, the Duterte Administration, through the Dangerous Drug Board of the Republic of the Philippines has implemented the Community-Based Drug Rehabilitation and Management Program (CBDRMP) to combat the aforementioned challenges. This program has aims to create hope and change for the betterment of our Country. The CBDRMP has been into business since 2017, challenges and problems were identified and a proposed strategic intervention will be applied.

In general, determining the effectiveness of CBDRMP will be essential to the development of a better implementation of war against drugs. The effectiveness of CBDRMP, the program's challenges and constraints, and the experiences of those affected by war against drugs are necessary evidence to evaluate existing policies and laws relative to illegal drugs, thus help the future of the Philippine Government.

Objectives of the Study

In general, this study aimed to determine the overall effectiveness of Community-Based Drug Rehabilitation and Management Program.

Specifically, this study aimed to determine the profile of Persons Who Used Drugs (PWUDs), the effectiveness of CDBRMP implementers, the effectiveness of CDBRMP service areas, and the challenges encountered during the implementation of CDBRMP. Likewise, this study also presented personal experiences of families of PWUDs affected by the war against drugs. The results of the study were used to examine the existing CDBRMP and proposed a strategy intervention to develop further the program.

Theoretical / Conceptual Framework

The Kirkpatrick's Four-level Evaluation Model served as the backbone for this undertaking. This model presents four tenets to establish a strong support in determining the effectiveness of a program, these tenets include (1) the learner's satisfaction, (2) the learner's attribution, (3) effective novel strategies, (4) overall program effectiveness. According to Bates (2020), the theory provides an academic and pragmatic way of understanding and achieving program effectiveness results, as it relates to the actual client experience. Holton (2022), also discussed that determining the effectiveness of program is reliant to the experiences of clients, based on the designed program work flow and the learning attributions which the clients gained from the program itself. Hence, determining effectiveness is not dependent on the client's satisfaction only, but rather on the shared experiences between the program implementers, the program design, and the learnings gathered by the clients to live on.

It is theorized that the effectiveness of CDBRMP is parallel to the effectiveness of the program implementers and the program design. Enrolling in the CDBRMP program could create a positive impact in the lives of Persons Who Used Drugs and create a peaceful way of war against drugs.

Methodology

The present study utilized a quantitative, descriptive, and correlational research design using an ordinal scale checklist instrument. The respondents of the study were Persons Who Used Drugs enrolled in CDBRMP between the years 2022 to 2023. Out of 2,671 PWUD population registered by PDEA in the Province of Negros Occidental, a sample size of 348 PWUDs were taken, the sample size was proportionally distributed among 31 LGUs in the Province through Stratified Random Sampling. The response rate was 100%.

A modified research questionnaire was used and was subjected to validity testing from a set of validators composed of City Health Officer, Chief of Police, and Social Welfare Officer. A validity test rating of 4.43 was established. Furthermore, the reliability test was conducted using Cronbach Alpha. The result revealed 0.83 interpreted as reliable. The checklist instrument was given personally with the help of CDBRMP coordinators all over the province.

The respondents were informed about their rights and responsibilities during the course of the methodology. In addition, client's confidentiality was observed all the time. Furthermore, 5 participants were purposively selected to be part of the in-depth interview. These participants were selected based on their personal experience on war against drugs under the definition of the Philippine Senate House Bill No. 371 or an Act Defining Extra Judicial Killing Providing for Its Penalty and Other Purposes. A modified interview questionnaire by Collaizi's method as outlined in Morrow et al (2015) was used.

The data gathered were statistically treated and analyzed using ranking, frequency count, percentage distribution, weighted mean, Kruskal Wallis, Mann Whitney, and Spearman Rho statistical tools.

Expected Outputs

Product. The current study aimed to establish a program intervention plan with the goals of developing the knowledge and skills of CDBRMP implementers, and revisit and enhance the existing policies, procedures, guidelines, and manual of operations of the CDBRMP based on the results and challenges identified in this study.

People Services. Beneficiaries of this study include all Persons Who Used Drugs under the management of the Community-based Drug Rehabilitation and Management Program, the CDBRMP implementers, policy makers, government regional directors, Local Chief Executives, and the judicial body.

Places and Partnerships. The current study is in partnership with the Private Drug Rehabilitation institutions in the Province, Government-based Drug Rehabilitation facility, Local Religious Sectors, and a locally based Non-Government Organization.

Policy. The results of the current study were initially reviewed by local legislators in one of the Cities in the Province of Negros Occidental, which served as a basis for a local ordinance and executive order.

Potential Outcomes

The results of this research study can be utilized as basis for novel strategies to enhance the existing policies and laws, whether locally, nationally, or internationally. The current study can also be applied to the latest academic curricula for students pursuing health and legal courses, including research formulation relative to drug-related mental disorders, psychiatry, psychology, and even medicine.

Potential Impacts

Social impact. The results of this study can establish a potential impact most especially for individuals and families who were affected by war against drugs. Those individuals who experienced stress, trauma, and anxiety brought about by extrajudicial killings. The results could assist families by giving them emotional support, emphasizing that they are not alone on this endeavor.

Health Impact. The results of this study can establish potential impact to individuals with wide interest in pursuing medical career. Drug-related mental health disorders are one of the interests on the conduct of this study, considering that some of the related literatures were taken from the researches conducted by Department of Health. The results could assist health researchers in pursuing more opportunities to expand the notions of this study.

Governmental Impact. The results of this study can establish potential impact to the government. The results of this study can be used as basis for developing or enhancing current legislation including the Republic Act 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of the Philippines.

Target Beneficiaries

1. The Local Government Unit
2. Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency
3. Dangerous Drugs Board of the Republic of the Philippines
4. CDRMP Coordinators
5. Regional/Municipal Trial Courts / Probations Program Officers
6. The Philippine National Police
7. The Department of Health
8. The Department of Social Welfare and Development

Gender and Development (GAD) Responsiveness

Drug use prevention is not merely about the addictive qualities of certain drugs. Sexual abuse and violence are a stronger risk factor for drug use among girls and women, likely due to the higher prevalence of these groups being victims of these crimes. UNODC (2016) Guidelines on Drug Prevention and Treatment for Girls and Women highlighted that one out of every three girls and women are victims of violence. As reflected in the guidelines, the percentage of women in drug treatment facilities that were sexually abused as a child is high: 55% to 95%. Youth who misuse alcohol, marijuana, or drugs are at increased risk of becoming victim to these crimes, with girls that use substances at particularly elevated risk of sexual assault. The current study can encourage parents to play an active role in their children's lives as the first step to help them grow healthy and safe. This study could help understand that men are not just the victims of drug use and abuse, but women and children as well.

Limitations of the Project

The current study is limited to Persons Who Used Drugs categorized as mild users who were enrolled in the CDRMP between the years 2022 and 2023 in the Province of Negros Occidental. PWUDs who were categorized as moderate and severe drug users were not included or those who were admitted in a rehabilitation facility. The results of the current study may not be applicable to PWUDs who are detained inside correctional facility during the course of the research study.

List of Risks and Assumptions

The current study could present risks most especially to families with experiences on extrajudicial killings, utmost observation of privacy and confidentiality were implemented to ensure that participants are protected. Furthermore, the researcher assumes that interested personalities and research enthusiast on drug-related literatures could probably misinterpret that the current study could sound as an anti-government propaganda campaign. In contrast, the research study aimed to enhance the CDRMP, observe the motivational force of the implementation of war against drugs to reduce the drug use and abuse in the country, and assist and support the government in helping PWUDs to recover and return to their communities with dignity and acceptance.

Results and Discussion

Profile Characteristics

Table 1. PWUDs Profile Characteristics

Profile	F	%
Age		
18-25	42	12.07
26-35	109	31.32
36-45	69	19.83
46-55	87	25.00
56-65	26	7.47
65-above	25	4.31
Sex		
Male	277	79.60
Female	71	20.40
Civil Status		
Single	189	54.3
Married	149	42.8
Widow(er)	10	2.9
Education		
Elementary	59	16.95
High School	154	44.25
College	135	38.79
DDE Status		
New	278	79.89
Relapse	70	20.11
Monthly Income in Peso		
5000-below	96	27.59
5001-10000	80	22.99
10001-15000	81	23.28
15001-20000	29	8.33
20001-25000	35	10.06
25001-30000	16	4.60
30001-35000	6	1.72
35001-40000	2	0.57
40001-above	3	0.86
TOTAL	348	100.00

Majority of the respondents had an age range between 26-35 years old comprising 31.32% of the total sample population. This implies that most PWUDs are at mid legal age of their life and are considered as working age group.

More than half of the sample population were male comprising 79.60%. This data suggests that male PWUDs dominate the CBDRMP. This also implies that female PWUDs are less likely to be involved in the use of illegal drugs.

Moreover, majority of the respondents are single comprising 54.30%. This means that single PWUDs are most likely to be influenced in the use of drugs as compared to married PWUDs. This is supported by Headson (2022), that marriage has been cited as a protective factor against drug use.

Furthermore, the study also presented that most respondents were high school level completers comprising 44.25% and college level comprising 38.79% of the sample population. This implies that most PWUDs involved had a higher level of understanding at the same time highly exposed in social influences.

As to Drug Dependency Evaluation Status most PWUDs were new to drug use comprising 79.89% of the total sample population. This only means that majority of enrolled under CBRMP were new to the use of illegal drugs.

Finally, in terms of the PWUDs socioeconomic status, most PWUDs were earning a monthly income of 5,000 pesos and below covering 27.59% of the total CBRMP enrolled PWUDs. This means that most of the respondents belonged to the poverty threshold as defined by the National Economic and Development Authority (2019) and technically classified as poor.

Effectiveness of CBRMP Implementers

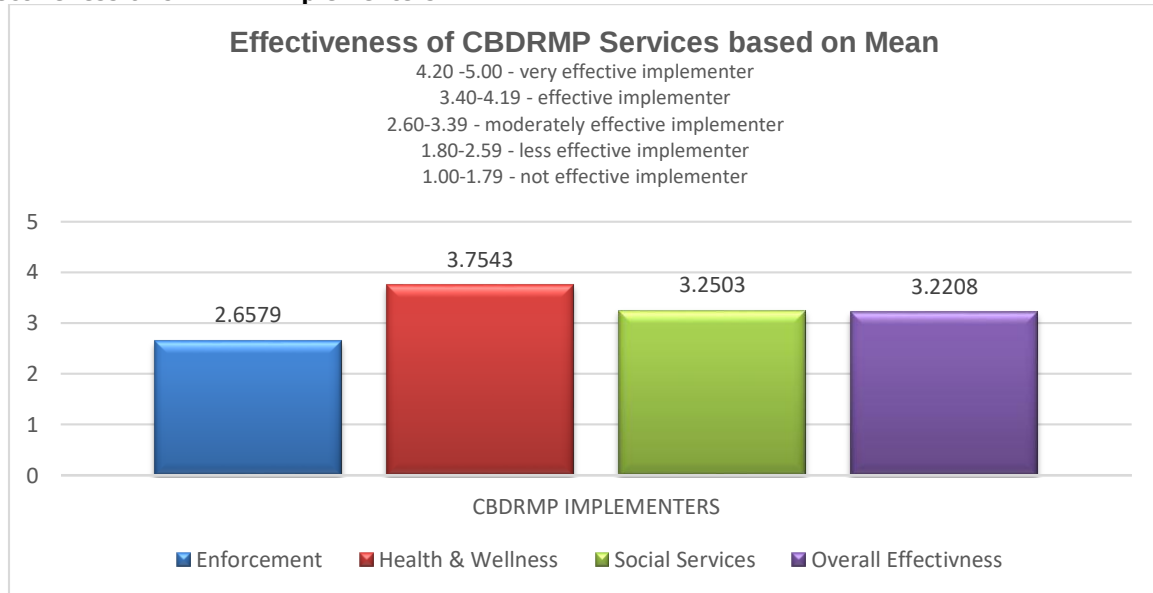


Figure 1. Effectiveness of CBRMP Implementers

All in all, the PWUDs enrolled under CBRMP had evaluated that CBRMP implementers are classified as moderately effective. Respondents believe that the program implementers can do more to fully meet the needs of the PWUDs for a quality PWUD recovery. However, it is notable that personnel under the Health and Wellness are classified as effective in implementing CBRMP in comparison with enforcement and social service personnel. This is most likely due to the performance of health and wellness personnel during the prolonged period of psychoeducation and counselling among PWUDs.

Effectiveness of CBRMP Services

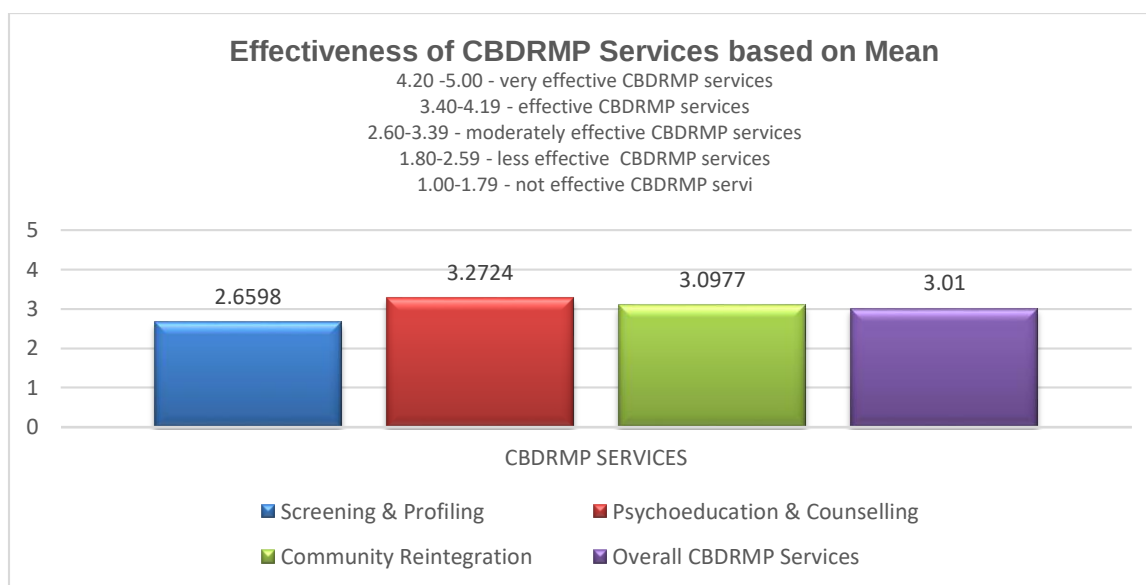


Figure 2. Effectiveness of CBRMP Services

All in all, the PWUDs enrolled under CBRMP had evaluated that CBRMP services are classified as moderately effective. Respondents believe that the program services can be further developed and enhanced fully meet the needs of the PWUDs for a quality PWUD recovery. The moderately effective performance of CBRMP services can be attributed to some extent of challenges encountered by PWUDs during the implementation of CBRMP. This demonstrates that despite how aggressive the campaign on the peaceful way of war against drugs, and its long-term strategic intervention to reduce illegal drug use, the program still needs to be enhanced based on the current trends and situation, as well as the actual experiences of PWUDs and its implementers specifically.

Significant Difference on the Extent of Effectiveness of CBRMP Implementers when grouped according to Profile Characteristics

Table 2. Difference Analysis of Extent of Effectiveness of CBRMP Implementers when grouped according to PWUD's Profile Characteristics

Profile	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Age	0.910	Not Significant	Failed to Reject Ho
Sex	0.529	Not Significant	Failed to Reject Ho
Civil Status	0.238	Not Significant	Failed to Reject Ho
Education	0.356	Not Significant	Failed to Reject Ho
DDE Status	0.935	Not Significant	Failed to Reject Ho
Monthly Income in Peso	0.804	Not Significant	Failed to Reject Ho
AS A WHOLE		Not Significant	Failed to Reject Ho

Notice that the profile characteristics of PWUDs all in all is not significant. This means that the profile characteristics do not affect the extent of effectiveness of CBRMP implementers. Though CBRMP implementers were trained on the disciplines and expectations of CBRMP as mandated by a national policy, skills development trainings are essential to address the demands and needs of PWUDs. Likewise, the result implies that the abovementioned personal characteristics of PWUDs may not be an essential requirement to assess the effectiveness of CBRMP implementers.

Significant Difference on the Extent of Effectiveness of CDRMP Services when grouped according to Profile Characteristics

Table 3. Difference Analysis of Extent of Effectiveness of CDRMP Services when grouped according to PWUD's Profile Characteristics

Profile	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Age	0.005	Significant	Reject Ho
Sex	0.003	Significant	Reject Ho
Civil Status	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho
Education	0.061	Not Significant	Failed to Reject Ho
DDE Status	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho
Monthly Income in Peso	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho
AS A WHOLE		Significant	Reject Ho

Table 3 provides compelling evidence that the profile characteristics of PWUDs all in all is significant. This means that the profile characteristics most likely affect the extent of effectiveness of CDRMP services. Results further implies that respondent's profile characteristics contribute a better analysis in understanding and assessing the services under CDRMP. Likewise, the result implies that the abovementioned personal characteristics of PWUDs may be an essential requirement to assess the effectiveness of CDRMP services. On the other hand, it is notable that the educational attainment provides no significance to the CDRMP services. This means that despite the educational attainment of PWUDs, the concepts and norms under CDRMP services can be easily understood and applied to any levels of educational attainment. The finding is supported by Santiago (2019), that the Philippine government programs and implementation must provide parallel understanding to all individuals despite their educational attainment level.

Significant relationship between extent of effectiveness of CDRMP implementers and level of effectiveness of CDRMP services

Table 4. Correlation Analysis between Extent of Effectiveness of CDRMP Implementers and Effectiveness of CDRMP Services.

CDRMP	Correlation coefficient	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Effectiveness of Implementers Vs Effectiveness of Services	0.121	0.024	Significant	Reject Ho

Respondents indicated that there is a significant relationship between the effectiveness of CDRMP implementers and CDRMP services. This shows that the effectiveness of implementers most likely affects the effectiveness of CDRMP services. This also demonstrates that a well capacitated implementer can enhance the implementation of CDRMP services. Likewise, a well defined and structured CDRMP services can provide a strong fundamental skill for implementers to perform the tasks with effectiveness. The knowledge and skills of CDRMP implementers can serve as a motivation to execute the government program. The finding is supported by Benner (2015), which informs that capacity training is essential to enhance the growth of an advance beginner to reach its maximum potential and achieve work effectiveness. Likewise, the Department of Health (2020) pointed out that the agency continues to develop and initiate learning methodologies to further capacitate workers under the CDRMP.

Challenges encountered by PWDs in the implementation of CDRMP

Table 5. Challenges encountered by PWUDs

Consolidated Challenges	Number of Respondents who answered(n=348)	Rank
(Q5) Increasing incidence of Drug use and selling despite the war against drugs.	118 (34%)	1
(Q3) Financial Burden among PWUDs.	111 (32%)	2
(Q8) Anxiety due to Extrajudicial Killings.	107 (31%)	3
(Q10) Lack of follow-ups to PWUDs after the completion of CBRMP.	101 (29%)	4
(Q1) Other drug personalities were not enlisted for CBRMP	87 (25%)	5
(Q6) Personal biases during the process of drug enlistment	45 (13%)	6
(Q2) Afraid or shy to join CBRMP	29 (8%)	7
(Q9) Feels CBRMP is not important	24 (6%)	8
(Q7) No changes happened after CBRMP	18 (5%)	9
(Q11) Lack of police power	11 (3%)	10
(Q4) Counsellors are not effective	10 (2%)	11

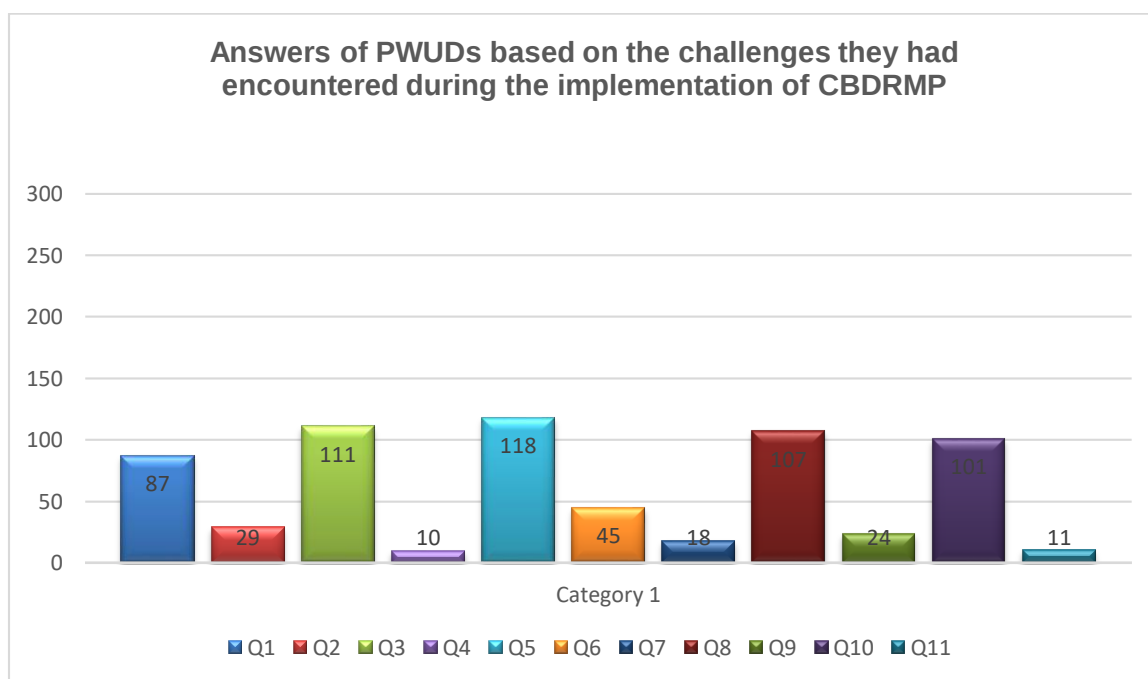


Figure 3. Total number of answers of PWUDs per challenge category

CBDRMP respondents suggest that the number 1 challenge they had encountered during the course of CBRMP implementation is the continuing existence of drug use and selling despite the war against drugs. This challenge is supported by the report of the Philippine National Police (2023) which stated that there is a dramatic increase in the incidence of drug use in the Country from 10% in 2022 to 17% in 2023. This indicates that the program on war against drugs presented some degree of challenge and difficulties to mitigate illegal drug use. Meanwhile, financial

burdens among PWUDs ranked second among the most common challenges. This is due to the fact that most PWUDs are earning a monthly income below 5,000 pesos, and the need to absent on their jobs just to attend the CDRMP. Anxiety due to extrajudicial killings ranked 3rd among the most common challenges. It was notably recorded that in 2016 until 2022 there were a total of 6,252 drug-related individuals who were unlawfully killed, this may include forced disappearances, torture, and inhumane punishment. This implies that most PWUDs developed concern and uneasiness as to their safety and security. The lack of follow-ups after CDRMP became the 4th most common challenge. The lack of community follow-ups became an apparent reason of some PWUDs to relapse in the use of illegal drugs (DOH, 2020), supplemented by current issues of unemployment and underemployment. Lastly, the 5th most common challenge is that there were still identified drug personalities in the community who were not enlisted in the implementation of CDRMP. This implies that despite the aggressive interventions of the government in fighting the increasing incidence of drug use every year, the challenge on the part of enforcement still prevails. Through periodic community monitoring, police surveillance, and community participation, the CDRMP can be a strong government program in implementing a peaceful way of war against drugs.

The challenges and experiences of families of PWUDs affected by war against drugs

There were five participants of the study whose ages ranged from 42 to 53 years old. These participants were chosen due to their unique experience on the war against drugs, particularly on extrajudicial killings. Furthermore, these 5 participants were purposively selected to be part of the in-depth interview through existing PNP records. These participants were selected based on their personal experience on war against drugs under the definition of the Philippine Senate House Bill No. 371 or an Act Defining Extra Judicial Killing Providing for Its Penalty and Other Purposes. A modified interview questionnaire by Collaizi's method as outlined in Morrow et al (2015) was used.

In respect of the experiences of family members of PWUDs affected by war against drugs, all the participants have experienced a devastating life as consequences of having a member who is considered a PWUD. The participants' experiences are unique but relevantly similar as to the manners on how their PWUD member act under the influence of illegal drugs. Consequently, their experiences were also traumatic because of how their PWUD members died extrajudicially. This trauma created a significant impact on their activities of daily living, their family affairs, physical impacts, emotional stresses, and social problems. The war against drugs of the Philippine Government although created a significant impact on the overall drug use especially to PWUDs who voluntarily surrendered because of fear. However, it also made a devastating impact to those who are victims of injustice.

Conclusion

Majority were male, single, high school level completers, new drug users, and were earning a monthly salary of 5,000 pesos and below.

Respondents revealed that both CDRMP implementers and CDRMP services were moderately effective, and only the health and wellness unit personnel had an effective implementation result.

PWUDs profile characteristics most likely do not affect their perceptions of the effectiveness of CDRMP implementers. In contrast, profile characteristics revealed a significant difference to the CDRMP service areas.

Overall, the effectiveness of CDRMP implementers provide a significant relationship with the CDRMP services. Likewise, providing a good opportunity for implementers can result into a better CDRMP service implementation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Dangerous Drugs Board, in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government, together with the Department of Health and other relevant agencies may revisit the contentions of CDRMP to further analyze and provide sustainable solutions to the challenges encountered by PWUDs.

A program intervention plan for CDRMP implementers may be developed to enhance the capacity and skills of in-charge units.

Finally, inclusion of other variables such as determining the effectiveness of CDRMP among PWUDs under in-patient and outpatient facilities may be conducted for monitoring and validation of the results of the study.

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