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Use of a group work programme to improve the educational adjustment of ex-detainees

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The students were afraid of torture and of the police coming to their cells during the night. One student said he was afraid of being killed by the police because they had made so many threats against him. Others were frightened of the charges which might be laid against them. Another was afraid of what might happened to a parent while he was detained. One student said he was anxious that he would not get back to school on time and also that his girl friend would jilt him.

For an evaluation of the Experimental group process, see Chapter 3.

4. Control Group expectations

Group goals and programmes were discussed with the control group. They were asked to comment on what they envisaged as the purpose of the group. Some commented that ex-detainees needed help to put their detention into perspective. One student felt the group could help to prevent youths from using drugs and alcohol to solve their problems. It was envisaged that the differing perspectives people brought would enable them to help one another. Another student saw the purpose as providing moral support and the opportunity to share painful experiences. He felt the group would understand the depression which occurs as a result of detention. A number of the control group interviewees asked to discuss relationships with family, friends and girl friends.

5. Conclusion

From the available data it can be seen that ex-detainees have a wide range of practical and emotional difficulties which impinge on their interpersonal and cognitive functioning. Some of these difficulties are beyond the scope of the group work intervention but many are amenable to change.

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