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Federal Probation

Choosing the Future of American Corrections: Punishment or Reform? *James Byrne*
Mary Brewster

The Impact of Critical Incident Stress: Is Your Office Prepared to Respond? *Mark Maggio*
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Probation Officer Safety and Mental Conditioning *Paul W. Brown*

Federal Detention: The United States Marshals Service's Management of a Challenging Program *Linda S. Caudell-Feagan*

Total Quality Management: Can It Work in Federal Probation? *Richard W. Janes*

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to Women's Prisons in California: An Exploratory Study *Lisa G. Fuller*

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turing Justice in Russia: A New Era of Challenges *G. Frederick Allen*

'the Future—Carving Out New Territory for American actions *J. Michael Quinlan*

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Federal Probation

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This Issue in Brief

ACQUISITIONS

Choosing the Future of American Corrections: Punishment or Reform?—What does the future hold for criminal justice and corrections in this country? Authors James Byrne and Mary Brewster examine the four most important predictions of John DiIulio, Princeton University professor and author of *No Escape—The Future of American Corrections*, and offer some suggestions to those state and local corrections policy-makers who believe the United States is moving in the wrong direction.

The Impact of Critical Incident Stress: Is Your Office Prepared to Respond?—Physical assault of an officer while on duty, unexpected death of a co-worker, a natural disaster—all can be considered critical incidents which affect not only the individuals involved but the organization as a whole. Authors Mark Maggio and Elaine Terenzi define critical incidents, explain the importance of providing stress education before such crises occur, and offer suggestions as to what administrator and managers can do to respond effectively and maintain a healthy and productive workforce.

Probation Officer Safety and Mental Conditioning.—Author Paul W. Brown discusses mental conditioning as a component of officer safety that is all too often overlooked or minimized in training programs. He focuses on five areas of mental conditioning: the color code of awareness, crisis rehearsal, the continuum of force, kinesics, and positive self-talk.

Federal Detention: The United States Marshals Service's Management of a Challenging Program.—Focusing on the detention of Federal prisoners, author Linda S. Caudell-Feagan discusses the work of the United States Marshals Service. She explains how detention beds are acquired, how the Marshals Service administers funds to pay the costs of housing Federal detainees, what the ramifications of increased detention costs are, and what actions the Marshals Service has taken to address detention problems.

Total Quality Management: Can It Work in Federal Probation?—Author Richard W. Janes outlines the principles of total quality management and their

application to Federal probation work. The article is based not only on a review of the literature but also on the author's experience in a Federal probation agency where these concepts are being implemented.

College Education in Prisons: The Inmates' Perspectives.—Author Ahmad Tootoonchi reports on a study to determine the impact of college education on the attitudes of inmates toward life and their future. The results reveal that a significant number of the inmates surveyed believe that their behavior can change for the better through college education.

Visitors to Women's Prisons in California: An Exploratory Study.—Author Lisa G. Fuller describes a study which focuses on visitors to California's three state women's prisons. The study, designed to

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College Education in Prisons: The Inmates' Perspectives

BY AHMAD TOOTOONCHI*

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Introduction

IT WAS the end of August 1990. I had just come back from a long summer vacation. I received a telephone call from my department chair asking me if I would be willing to teach an organizational behavior course at the Maryland Correctional Institution. My immediate response was "yes." "I want you to know that it is a medium to maximum security prison," he said. "It does not really matter to me," I replied. It did not matter to me because I was more interested in seeing what a group of inmates would have to share with me in class than concerned for security. They are generally considered to be the "bad guys" of society, and I was eager to see their attitudes as students in an organizational behavior class.

The course was scheduled, and I started teaching the class in the first week of September 1990. I had 25 students in my class whom I found to be enthusiastic, eager to learn, hard working, knowledgeable, and very participative in class discussion about organizational, social, and human issues. Their attitudes toward the course and class activities were so positive that, most of the time, I had to remind myself that I was teaching in a prison and that the students were all prisoners. Weeks passed by, and by the end of the semester I had become so close to my students that I began to think very seriously about the effects of college education on the inmates' lives after they completed their sentences. I got to know a group of individuals with tremendous potential to become positive forces in society, but their talents and energies had been used in a wrong direction which led them to where they were now—prison.

This study is focused on college education that is offered in correctional institutions to redirect inmates' attitudes, talents, and energy toward a more meaningful purpose in the future. Though few of us on the outside have much of an understanding about the context in which prison education functions, it is widely acknowledged that modern prisons (especially

maximum security institutions) constitute an anomic, dangerous, and hostile environment (Collins, 1988). The FBI's annual Uniform Crime Reports document the grim statistics which give the U.S. by far the highest crime rate in the western world. The U.S. also sentences more people to prison, and for longer periods, than almost any other country (Clark & Lehrman, 1980).

According to the *Corrections Year Book*, on January 1, 1990, there were a total of 747,991 inmates in Federal and state prisons, jails, and other facilities in the United States. Of this number, 24 percent were serving life sentences or sentences of 20 years or more. Less than one percent (0.3 percent) were sentenced to death, which leaves about 66 percent serving sentences of 20 years or less. The average age of inmates admitted to adult institutions in 1989 was 29.6 years. This means that 66 percent of the inmates will have a big portion of their lives to live in society after being released from prison.

What will they do in order to begin a new life? Will they be able to survive or compete in a highly competitive environment without going back to their old ways of living that sent them to prison in the first place? How can they be prevented from returning to prison? There are no easy answers to these questions, but some behaviorists and social scientists believe that educating prisoners is one of the best ways, if not the only way, to prepare inmates for life after prison.

Inmates of today's prisons are not only offenders serving a judicial punishment specified in their sentences, they are also delinquents marked out for treatment and correction within the penal system. The penalties imposed do not simply punish offenders for what they have done by depriving them of their liberty; the purpose is also to correct what they are and prepare them for eventual return to "normal" society (Collins, 1988).

Advocates and practitioners of education behind bars operate within the purview of the rehabilitative approach to incarceration, which stresses that the function of prisons is to induce criminals to turn their backs on crime (through education, vocational training, counseling, drug treatment, etc.) and reenter society "cured" (Corcoran, 1985).

To build new, decent lives after serving years in prison requires some abilities and skills without which released individuals will not be able to cope with the

*The author wishes to thank the following for their contributions in completing this research paper: Nazanin Tootoonchi, his wife; Elizabeth Barker, professor of English, Boston University; Carolyn Suman, educational director, Maryland Correctional Training Center; Calvin Hubbard, an inmate at the Maryland Correctional Training Center who graduated with a bachelor's of science degree in business administration from Frostburg State University; and Jerry Chesser, the author's friend and colleague.

outside world. Educational programs in prisons seem to be the best way through which inmates can improve their abilities and develop their skills in order to be prepared for life after prison. Elizabeth Barker, a professor of English at Boston University who has been teaching inmates at Massachusetts correctional institutions in Boston since 1972, commented on this issue in an interview with CBS's *60 Minutes*: "Prisoners are human beings like you and me and like everybody else who would like to make their lives better to overcome the errors that they have made, and the problems they have in their heads, to make restitution for what they have done." She adds that by simply warehousing inmates in prisons and not giving them the possibility and means to change their lives and their views of the world, we are going to have people coming out to commit offenses more serious than the ones that put them in prison to begin with.

Prison reform was legitimized during the 1960's when opinion polls revealed that the majority of Americans accepted rehabilitation as the purpose of imprisonment (Jacobs, 1977). Then, educational institutions paid more attention to prison, prisoners, and education in prison. As Corcoran (1985) stated, universities and junior colleges across the Nation began to offer degree programs in criminology, and academic journals on the subject proliferated. Civilian teachers began to enter prisons in greater numbers, and many states organized their prison schools into a single school district under the authority of a governor-appointed school board. Universities became increasingly involved in prison life in both their research and their teaching functions.

On the other hand, there are some people who believe that taxpayers' money should not be spent to provide prisoners with free college education. Even today, media stories about criminals who receive college degrees behind bars sometimes create the impression that prisons have become "country clubs" and that prisoners are being given opportunities not open to the general public (Corcoran, 1985). William Weld, governor of Massachusetts, who is known for his toughness on criminals, in an interview with *60 Minutes* commented that prisoners are in prison to be punished, not to receive free education. In other words, he believes that there are other individuals in society who deserve free education more than prisoners do.

Such beliefs by some public officials have been the main cause for the failure of prison systems in transforming criminals into normal citizens. As Foucault (1980) stated, the failure of prison transformative projects has been apparent since early in this century when "it was already understood that the prisons, far from transforming criminals into honest citizens, serve only to manufacture new criminals and to drive

existing criminals even deeper into criminality." According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Report, the number of violent crimes (murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) jumped from 738,820 in 1970 to 1,344,520 in 1980 and to 1,807,644 in 1990 (*Cumberland-Times*, Sept. 8, 1991).

Some people believe that the negative influence of government officials, the media, and/or the public will result in reduced government dollars spent on prison education, and consequently the number of prisoners will increase and so will the number of prisons. American society does not need more cells and more prisoners. What it needs is to improve prisoners' potential and to help them develop their minds so that they may become more socially responsible citizens. A study by Collins (1986) indicated that interviews conducted with inmates reveal how they themselves readily use the argot of criminology, psychiatry, and modern psychology in describing what they have come to characterize as their own delinquency and in identifying what is needed in the way of correction to transform them into model citizens. There are also some people who find it difficult to believe that teaching college courses to inmates can make positive changes in their behaviors.

The purpose of this study is to investigate inmates' attitudes toward college education in correctional institutions. To guide such investigation, the following objectives were developed:

1. to determine the effectiveness of college education in changing inmates' attitudes toward life in general.
2. to explore inmates' attitudes toward the role of such educational programs in preventing inmates from returning to prison if they are released.

Research Method and Design

The method used in this study was based on a survey approach. The survey instruments were self-administered questionnaires composed of three sections. The first section consisted of demographic characteristics of the individual respondents. The second section was divided into two parts: part one consisted of 12 statements to measure objective number one, and part two consisted of 8 statements to measure objective number two. A five-point scale was used as the measurement tool for this section. The scale ranged from one (representing strongly disagree) to five (representing strongly agree). Section three consisted of an open-ended question to solicit inmates' opinions concerning education in prisons. It was optional and aimed at determining if there were a con-

sistency between the participants' numerical and written responses.

The data for this research have been collected from correctional institutions in two states: the Maryland Correctional Institution in Hagerstown and the Massachusetts Correctional Institutions in Pondville, Norfolk, Shirley, and Walpole.

The respondents were selected from all of the male inmates who have been enrolled in college education in the above mentioned institutions. The program director of each institution was contacted in advance, and arrangements were made for the researcher to meet with the inmates. The inmates then received a brief explanation about the purpose and the importance of the study and were told that their participation in the research was optional. Those who participated then were asked to respond to the questionnaires to the best of their ability. To ensure the confidentiality of the responses, the questionnaires did not ask the inmates' names. The inmates were given between 15 and 20 minutes to complete the questionnaires, and the researcher collected the completed questionnaires, inserted them in a manila envelope, and sealed them in front of the participants.

Results and Discussions

One hundred fifty-eight usable questionnaires were included in the final analysis of this study.

Section I: The breakdown of the demographic composition of the individual respondents was as follows:

- a) **Age:** 27 (17 percent) of the respondents were younger than 25 years of age; 79 (50 percent) were 25-35 years of age; 43 (27 percent) were 36-45 years of age; and 9 (6 percent) were 45 years of age or older.
- b) **Race:** 3 (2 percent) of the respondents identified themselves as Native American (American Indian); 3 (2 percent) as Asian; 62 (40 percent) as black; 4 (2 percent) as Hispanic; 82 (52 percent) as white; and 4 (2 percent) as other (unspecified).
- c) **Correctional Institution:** 121 (77 percent) of the respondents were stationed in the Hagerstown (Maryland) center; 5 (3 percent) in the Pondville (Massachusetts) center; 23 (15 percent) in the Norfolk (Massachusetts) center; 4 (2 percent) in the Shirley (Massachusetts) center; and 5 (3 percent) in the Walpole (Massachusetts) center.
- d) **Years of Sentence:** 6 (4 percent) of the respondents were sentenced to less than 5 years; 54 (34 percent) to 5-10 years; 30 (19 percent) to 11-15 years; 21 (13 percent) to 16-20 years; and 47 (30 percent) to more than 20 years.
- e) **First Time in Prison:** 101 (63 percent) of the respondents were sentenced to imprisonment for

the first time, and 57 (37 percent) indicated that it was not their first time. In other words, 37 percent of the respondents were sentenced to imprisonment before, were released after serving their first term, but were later convicted and sent to jail again.

- f) **Number of Times Released and Returned:** Out of 57 inmates who were released before but returned to prison again, 30 (53 percent) of them said that this was their first time to return; 18 (32 percent) said this was their second time; 4 (7 percent) said this was their third time; and 5 (8 percent) said that this was their fourth time.
- g) **Expected Release Time:** 27 (17 percent) of the respondents expected to be released in less than 1 year; 103 (67 percent) expected to be released in 2-10 years; 6 (4 percent) expected to be released in 10-20 years; 4 (3 percent) expected to be released in more than 30 years; 14 (9 percent) were in prison for life (with no expected release date).
- h) **Nationality:** 61 (39 percent) of the respondents were African-American; 2 (1 percent) were Italian; 86 (54 percent) were white; 5 (3 percent) were Asian; 3 (2 percent) were Hispanic; and 1 (1 percent) was American Indian.

Section II: To measure objective one, 12 statements were used. They are presented in table 1. As indicated in table 1, the inmates strongly believed that college education was changing their attitudes toward life in general. Impressively, 97 percent of the respondents said that by taking college courses, their intention was not to kill time, but to actually learn (mean=1.17). Eighty-one percent felt that without education, prison would not make any positive changes in their attitudes and behavior (mean=4.23).

According to CBS News (June 30, 1993), 62 percent of prisoners released on parole commit another crime and return to prison. This indicates that a big percentage of inmates do not receive adequate education to change their attitudes before they are sent back to society. Correctional institutions should live up to their name and help the inmates correct their attitudes and behavior before they are released. Interestingly, according to the survey results reported in table 1, 96 percent of the respondents believed that a person's behavior can change for the better through proper education (mean=4.64), and the same percentage of inmates indicated that they thought learning in prison would make them better persons (mean=4.78).

Generally, the respondents disagreed with the statement that a person in nature is either good or bad. In other words, they felt that learning can make a differ-

TABLE 1. INMATES' ATTITUDES TOWARD LIFE

Objective One: Determine the effectiveness of college education in changing inmates' attitudes toward life in general (n=158)

Statements	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	MEAN*	STAN DEV
1. By taking college courses, my intention is just to kill some time, not to learn.	2	-	1	7	90	1.17	.63
2. I would rather have better recreational facilities than educational programs.	1	-	3	24	72	1.33	.60
3. A person in nature is either good or bad, education will make no difference.	1	3	4	24	68	1.44	.79
4. I will never be considered a good person by others, with or without education—once a bad guy, always a bad guy.	1	8	10	23	58	1.71	1.01
5. Prison is prison with or without educational programs.	4	6	7	25	58	1.73	1.08
6. The problems I have in my life cannot be resolved by taking college courses in prison.	1	4	11	37	47	1.75	.88
7. I am taking courses because I believe learning will make me a better person.	83	13	3	1	-	4.78	.52
8. Taking college courses is increasing my self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-esteem.	80	18	1	1	-	4.77	.48
9. A person's behavior can change for the better through proper education.	70	26	2	-	1	4.64	.64
10. Without education, prison would only be a cage that makes a person more frustrated, angry, and aggressive.	69	21	6	3	1	4.55	.77
11. Education in prison has taught me that to get what you want, you do not have to be violent.	50	37	9	2	2	4.29	.89
12. Without education, prison by itself will not make any positive changes in my attitudes toward life.	59	22	7	7	5	4.23	1.16

*For statements 1-6, a lower mean, and for statements 7-12, a higher mean, represents a more favorable response.

The results in the table are based on a 5-point scale: 5 representing strongly agree (SA); 4 representing agree (A); 3 representing neutral (N); 2 representing disagree (D); and 1 representing strongly disagree (SD).

ence (mean=1.44). To support this view, 96 percent of the respondents preferred a better educational program over a better recreational facility (mean=1.33).

Schoonover (1986), in relation to teaching prisoners art skills, maintained that "inmates themselves speak of increased self-awareness and heightened self-esteem. It makes doing the time a little more bearable. It adds another counterweight against the forces that might send them back to do more time." Her statement is strongly supported by 98 percent of the survey respondents, who felt that taking college courses helped increase their self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-esteem (mean=4.77). More importantly, 87 percent of the respondents believed that through education in prison, they learned that to get what they want, they do not have to act violently (mean=4.29).

Would college education help the inmates resolve some of the problems they faced in life? According to 84 percent of the participants in this study, the answer is yes (mean=1.75). About the same percentage of the respondents disagreed that "prison is the same, with

or without education" (mean=1.73). Fortunately, 81 percent of the inmates disagreed with the statement that "once a bad guy, always a bad guy" (mean=1.71), but unfortunately about 9 percent agreed with the statement and 10 percent were undecided. Anyway, it is encouraging to know that a number of them believed that the label "bad guy" does not have to remain forever.

Finally, 90 percent of the participants believed that without education, prison would only increase their anger, frustration, and aggression (mean=4.55). Luthans (1992) maintained that "more recently aggression has come to be viewed as only one possible reaction to frustration." Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that what the inmates need is to learn how to increase their self-control, and that cannot be done unless through a proper education.

To measure objective two, eight statements were used. They are presented in table 2. As indicated in table 2, the participants strongly believed that learning in prison would help them to change their lifestyles

TABLE 2. INMATES' ATTITUDES TOWARD COLLEGE EDUCATION

Objective Two: Explore inmates' attitudes toward the role of college education in preventing them from returning to prison after they are released (n=158)

Statements	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	MEAN*	STAN DEV
1. What I am learning now will help me to change my lifestyle for the better in the future.	68	29	3	-	-	4.64	.54
2. I believe what I am learning now will help me to stay out of trouble when I am released.	70	23	6	-	1	4.62	.66
3. Receiving education now will help me to start a decent occupation in the future, so I will not have to get involved with what put me in prison to begin with.	58	30	8	3	1	4.43	.80
4. I am learning because it will help me to resist forces that may send me back to prison to do more time.	52	40	4	3	1	4.41	.74
5. I wish I had this opportunity before I got into prison.	58	24	17	1	-	4.39	.80
6. If I knew before what I know now, I would not have done what put me in prison in the first place.	54	28	11	4	3	4.26	1.01
7. Education in prison gives me what was missing in my life before.	42	39	12	6	1	4.15	.91
8. Taking courses in prison to me is just doing something positive in a negative environment; I do not think about its future impact.	1	3	11	46	39	1.81	.84

*For statements 1-7, a higher mean, and for statement 8, a lower mean, represents a more favorable response.

The results in the table are based on a 5-point scale: 5 representing strongly agree (SA); 4 representing agree (A); 3 representing neutral (N); 2 representing disagree (D); and 1 representing strongly disagree (SD).

for the better in the future (mean=4.64). Further, the inmates indicated (almost with the same strength) that education in prison would help them to stay out of trouble after they are released (mean=4.62).

One of the significant reasons why people get involved in illegal activities and end up in prison is their inability to find a decent well paying job because they lack appropriate skills. Educational programs in prisons should attempt to eliminate this problem. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents supported this view by agreeing with the statement that receiving education in prison will help them to find a decent job, so they will not have to get involved in unlawful activities (mean=4.43).

Impressively, 92 percent of the respondents revealed that prison education will help them resist forces that may send them back to jail (mean=4.41), and 82 percent wished that they had the same opportunity before they got in prison (mean=4.39). Consistent with their previous responses, the same number of inmates expressed that if they had known what they know now, they would not have done the things that led them to jail (mean=4.26).

According to 81 percent of the participants, education in prison provided them with what was missing in their lives in the past (mean=4.15). This reaction shows that a great number of inmates recognized the important role of education as a determinant factor in their lives.

Finally a great majority of the respondents (85 percent) expressed that they are concerned with the impact of education on their future. This could explain that the participants of this study get enrolled in the college education program with a purpose in mind and probably a vision of their future.

Section III. This section asked the participants to write a short essay describing their personal reactions toward college education in correctional institutions. Almost the entire research population responded to this part. With no exception, all of the essays revealed a strongly favorable view toward the college education programs in prisons. It is beyond the capacity of this paper to reflect all responses; therefore, only some of them which were better structured and more expressive will be disclosed below.

In regard to the impact of college education on inmates' attitudes toward life in general, below are statements made by some of the respondents:

In May of this year I will graduate from HDC with an AA degree in Business Management . . . and a 4.00 GPA. For the first time in my life I recognize in myself the potential to become something that both myself and my family can be proud of. Words cannot describe the degree of positive impact that this program has had on how I define who and what I am. College education provided me with a forum in which to both build my strengths and recognize/correct my shortcomings. Where once my focus in life was destructive and irresponsible, I now have goals and a philosophy of living which I believe will continue to the overall good of mankind.

* * *

The college program shows that society has not given up on us and makes one want to show the world that there is hope for an ex-convict. I for one am proud to be given this honor to better myself by changing my outlook on life.

* * *

I am a high school dropout who will be receiving a BA with honors. I believe that the educational system failed me in my youth, as it has failed countless others. I was dismissed as "uneducable." I believe that my graduation lays waste that theory. Through a liberal arts degree program, I have gained a valuable understanding of myself and my responsibilities to society. Education allows me to eventually put something back after years of just taking.

* * *

Study brings learning. Learning brings understanding. Understanding destroys bias, bigotry, prejudice, and brings to life faith, awareness of others as individual fellow human beings, an acceptance of our mortality, a joy in the realization that we can help others and that there can be changes in our society that are truly beneficial to all with true equality.

* * *

When I first came to prison, I had the biggest I don't care attitude. Through time, I learned that I still have one more chance. My whole train of thought changed when I began the process of entering college. Since my entrance to the college program, I have a higher level of maturity. I hate to think of how my attitude would be if I were never given a chance.

* * *

Education has been the best form of rehabilitation I have experienced during my incarceration. I have learned to focus my mind and ideas on bettering myself to my full potential compared to how I focused my mind and ideas prior to my arrest. Education has helped me to rebuild my self-esteem and change my picture of life as a whole. I have begun to see how an education can benefit my future finances through commitment and education. I never understood the knowledgeable wealth I could obtain from a college education.

* * *

Before getting into the college program my cell-mate and I used to talk about hooking up when we get out and go back into the drug business. Since getting into college, I no longer think about getting back into the drug business, I am focusing on getting a good job.

Finally, in response to the role of college education in preventing released inmates from returning to jail, some of the participants expressed themselves through the following statements:

Many inmates including myself committed their crimes in ignorance. It costs society \$20,000 a year to imprison an inmate. Not half of that money would have fully educated me in the prevention of my crime. Those inmates who have already entered the doors of prison stand a higher risk of returning to society (if released) in the same state of mind (ignorance) they came in with.

* * *

A 1986 graduate of Hagerstown Junior College, I am now pursuing my BA from Frostburg State University. Hopefully, I am approximately two years from a release. I am extremely hopeful that obtaining my BA will assist me with reentering society. After 17 years in prison, it is my only real tool and positive asset that I have to offer. Many studies have been done which indicate that college education greatly reduces the chance of recidivism. Unfortunately, many public officials usually refuse to consider the

impact of these studies. They would rather have one remain in prison until all odds of successful societal reintegration are next to impossible. Punishment, to them, is more important than any other factor—the past is more important than the future. I believe it is this philosophy which really needs to be changed.

* * *

Up until now, I have not been one who cared about being positive except in ways of learning how to benefit from destructive behavior. I must admit that I was quite a terrible person. Recently, new doors of knowledge have been opened to me. I find myself with great confidence, and despite incarceration I can see myself obtaining a career in the business world in the future. Therefore, if this is a correction center, and we are to be corrected, college education is the proper way of doing it.

* * *

I believe college education within a penal environment is not only a valuable tool for the prisoner in gaining self-esteem and confidence, as well as future employment, but it is advantageous to society at large. A college educated prisoner has a greater capacity to function within a social context. Once integrated, the ex-convict, educated at taxpayers' expense, becomes a taxpayer instead of being a burden on society (police investigation, prosecution, incarceration, parole supervision, and in many cases, recidivism). He/she now can function as a productive member of the community. Education is one of the best investments a society can make within a penal setting.

* * *

Some people believe that education alone will reduce the rate of recidivism. I don't! Even though you are educated, society still will place roadblocks in your path because of your conviction record. However, getting an education in prison will allow you to confront these roadblocks more rationally and construct more feasible alternatives. Without education in prison, a released inmate would probably resort to destroying the roadblock and returning to his/her old methods of operating, and ultimately return to prison.

Conclusion and Recommendations

What is the purpose of sending to jail individuals who break the law? Is it only to punish them for their undesirable behavior? If yes, the society as a whole is in big trouble because "although punishment may be necessary to discourage an undesirable behavior, it has certain limitations. A major one is that punishment only discourages an undesirable behavior; it does not encourage any kind of desirable behavior" (Davis & Newstrom, 1985). Therefore, individuals who are sentenced to jail are punished for their undesirable behavior but return to society without learning how to behave correctly. Rationally, the purpose of prisons should be to punish the lawbreakers for their incorrect behavior and, at the same time, to teach them a desirable way of behaving, a new way of life, and the skills to become fully functioning human beings who can survive in the outside world.

To be taught effectively, a person must be willing to learn. If the learner does not have the intention to learn, the teacher's efforts will be entirely wasted. Fortunately, the result of this study revealed that a great number of the inmates possessed a strong intention to learn. Not only that, they believed that their

behavior can change for the better through training and education. In addition, they expressed a strong feeling that education will have a positive impact on their lives when they become free again.

Until now, the government has funded some college education programs, and some colleges/universities have been actively involved in offering a variety of courses in correctional institutions. Based on the review of literature and the findings of this research, it is strongly recommended that, for the sake of society as a whole, government continue its financial contributions and colleges/universities increase their involvement in offering educational programs in prisons, simply because it truly pays off. In a letter to me, Professor Elizabeth Barker, who has been heavily involved in teaching the inmates at Massachusetts correctional institutions, stated:

It is important for the public to learn that the education of prisoners is of benefit to the entire population—that it is *not* just a “coddling of criminals.” Our program, now twenty years old, has produced a virtually zero recidivism rate. There have been a few minor parole violations on the part of our now-released students, but no returns to crime. A number, furthermore, are now engaged in social work careers helping others to avoid the errors and wrong-doing that led to their own incarceration.

The institutions of higher education should be more concerned with this highly important segment of society—the prisoners. They should get more involved and offer more creative and innovative programs that can teach the inmates to develop a sense of social responsibility through a better understanding of the true meaning of life and teach them how to become more socially responsible persons for themselves, their families, and society.

Corcoran (1985) concluded that:

The current spending of scarce government dollars on prisons is adding more cells rather than more educational programs It is widely believed that the decivilizing influence of prison will impair, rather than improve, a person's potential for a crime-free adjustment to society. The longer people stay in prison, the more

likely it is they will recidivate. . . . In spite of this depressing picture, however, universities have a role to play in the prison reform movement by encouraging more academic interest in corrections.

A combination of government financial contributions and increasing involvement of colleges/universities in proper training and education of inmates will result in a mutual benefit for both released inmates (through a positive change in their behavior and developing a sense of pride within themselves as persons) and society (through an increase in the number of socially responsible citizens and a reduction in costs of investigation, arrest, prosecution, and maintenance of prisons.)

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