

THE HISTORICAL PRACTICE OF CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Jonathan E. Messemer, Ed.D.

Assistant Professor

Cleveland State University

College of Education and Human Services

CASAL Department – Julka Hall 265

2121 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2214

United State of America

Abstract

This paper explores the historical practice of correctional education in the U.S. as found through an extensive review of the literature. The paper will discuss practice of correctional education from the colonial period to the present, with respect to the various programs offered to inmates. The writer will describe the current characteristics of inmates in U.S. prisons and discuss the impact the academic programs tend to have upon the lives of inmates. Finally, this paper will briefly discuss some of the issues that challenge many correctional educational programs today, including the need for future research.

Keywords: correctional education, inmates, adult basic education, general education development, college, adult learning gains, recidivism

1. Introduction

There are more than 2 million adults being housed in federal, state, and local correctional facilities in the United States. The U.S. federal and state departments of correction spend approximately 30 billion annually to house the adult inmate population. With the U.S. and global economy headed in a steep decline, governmental agencies tend to look at ways in which they can cut costs. When the economy turns sour, the pendulum of public and governmental opinion regarding the purpose of prison begins to shift from punishment to rehabilitation for those inmates convicted of lesser or non-violent crimes. The shift toward rehabilitation usually results in increased funding toward the retraining of inmates, including academic programs such as adult basic education (ABE), general education development (GED), and college programs. Prison officials tend to evaluate the learning gains of inmates participating in academic programs in prison as another measurement for rehabilitation. These figures give the parole boards the added justification to grant rehabilitated inmates early releases from prison. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the historical practice of correctional education in the U.S. as found through an extensive review of the literature. This paper will discuss the practice of correctional education from the colonial period to the present, with respect to the various programs offered to inmates. The writer will describe the current characteristics of inmates in U.S. prisons and discuss the impact the academic programs tend to have upon the lives of inmates. Finally, this paper will briefly discuss some of the issues that challenge many correctional educational programs today, including the need for future research.

2. Evolution of Correctional Education

The history of correctional education can be traced in the United States as far back as 1789. According to Gehring (1995), the early prison education programs were often referred to as the “Sabbath School.” The purpose of the Sabbath School was to be able to teach the inmates how to read in order that they may be able to read the Bible. The foundation of the correctional education programs in the late 1700s mirrored that of the broader educational framework during the Colonial period. The Puritan’s were obligated to seek salvation which required that literacy be promoted to enable everyone to read the Bible (Stubblefield & Keane, 1994). Therefore, early correctional education programs became literacy driven programs so that the inmate could read and comprehend the Bible. It was hoped the inmate could identify his or her sins, seek forgiveness from God, and thus achieve salvation (Gehring, 1995). During the period of the early prison education system, 1789-1875, a local chaplain who provided the Bibles to the inmates as well as volunteered his time to help them learn to read often represented the adult educator (Gehring, 1995). Therefore, the curriculum primarily involved the reading of Bible verses. The goal of the Puritan version of prison education was to change the heart of the inmate toward a more moral and value centered human being (Gehring, 1995).

Gehring (1995) reported that during 1826-1840 more secular education was introduced into the prison education system. The curriculum during this period of correctional education focused primarily upon the areas of reading, writing, and math. However, in some prison settings, the inmates were provided instruction on history and geography. By the mid-1840's, the field of correctional education began to expand the curriculum offered to inmates. Gehring (1995) stated that in 1844, Sing Sing State Prison in New York expanded its prison education curriculum to include "history, astronomy, geography, physiology, and physical education" (p. 53). According to Wolford (1989), New York in 1847 was "the first state to mandate that correctional education be available in all institutions" (p. 357). The reform movement, which began in Elmira, New York about 1870, spread quickly throughout the U.S. The reform movement mandated some inmates to participate in the educational and vocational programs as part of their prison sentence. Gehring (1995) noted that during the early period of correctional education that the "staff of the Boston Prison Discipline Society observed that prisons without schools had higher annual death rates than those with schools" (p. 55). According to Gehring, McShane, and Eggleston (1998), the two most influential prison systems during the early years of correctional education were the Pennsylvania system (solitary confinement) and the Auburn system (factory model) in New York. Other states would soon pattern their prison systems after both the Pennsylvania and New York models, whereby "cell study was the rule in Pennsylvania facilities, but group learning activities were sometimes allowed in Auburn institutions" (p. 152).

The early 1900s brought to the United States the industrial revolution. As a result of the demand for workers to support the industrial revolution, it became important for both politicians and prison personnel in the United States to adopt the philosophy that inmates can and need to be rehabilitated. "Schools were seen as a solution to the problems of industrialization, urbanization, increased crime rates, social upheaval, the need to Americanize vast numbers of immigrants, and advocacy of the democratic ideal" (Eggleston & Gehring, 1986, p. 88). As the industrial revolution progressed and the demand for labor was at a premium, prisons in the United States developed vocational programs for inmates in order to help meet the demand for skilled laborers (Eggleston & Gehring, 1986). The field's focus toward job skills training is one of the earliest examples whereby the correctional education structure was market driven. One of the early signs that correctional education was established through a political ideology was the development of the Mutual Welfare League from 1895 to the mid-1920s (Davidson, 1996). The Mutual Welfare League was established in prisons in order to develop an inmate self-governing system. According to Davidson (1996), because inmates were engaging in "the practical experience of electing from amongst themselves representatives who legislated and enforced prison rules, prisoners were to learn to become law-abiding citizens" (p. 136). Tannenbaum (1933) suggested that the Mutual Welfare League was essential to providing effective prison management, while Arbenz (1995) identified the prison program as useful for developing the inmates' level of citizenship education.

Ryan (1995) stated, "It took nearly 100 years for the concept of educating prisoners to receive any appreciable support from the public, lawmakers, and the corrections community" (p.60). During the 1960s, the field of correctional education "gained an identity and a place of recognition as an integral part of the total correctional process" (p. 60). During the late 1960s, the "concept of rehabilitation became a dominant factor in planning and implementing correctional systems in the United States" (Ryan, 1995, p. 60). Correctional education soon became a key factor upon which rehabilitation would be based. According to Wolford (1989), the Manpower Development Training Act of 1963, the Adult Education Act of 1966, and the Basic Education Opportunity Grant Program in 1972 played a pivotal role in the rapid expansion of many correctional education programs nationwide. The philosophy of correctional education in the 1970s began to change from that of teaching the typical adult basic education (ABE) skills of reading, writing, and math toward an emphasis on changing the behaviors of inmates (Hobler, 1999). One of the leaders in curriculum development in the field of correctional education was McKee (1966, 1970, & 1971).

At the Draper Prison in Elmore, Alabama, McKee developed an inmate educational programs that was similar to the classical principles of curriculum development (Tyler, 1949) and the behaviorist process of influencing inmate actions using a reward system (Holland & Skinner, 1961; Skinner, 1938, 1953). Hobler (1999) summarizes Ryan's (1995) article in stating that "vocational training alone is not effective rehabilitation. Rather, an educational system must prepare inmates not just to earn a living, but to meet their total needs as well" (p. 102).

As a result, the 1970s witnessed the United States government beginning to support the “holistic” approach to correctional education by increasing the foundational access so that prisons nationally could apply for funding to support their prison education programs (Hobler, 1999; Ryan, 1995). Correctional education programs during the 1970s were typically able to generate enough funds to support a rich curriculum of vocational education, adult basic education, secondary education, post-secondary education, as well as numerous other self-help programs (Eggleston & Gehring, 1986; Gehring, 1997; Hobler, 1999; Ryan, 1995). It was not until after 1970 that most states offered some form of post-secondary education in prison. The first state to offer live college instruction to inmates in prison was the Illinois program in 1962 (Gehring, 1997). However, it was the Texas program, established in 1965, which demonstrated that their college prison program was able to reduce the rate of recidivism (Gehring, 1997).

The “nothing works” indictment began to infiltrate the correctional education world during the 1980s (Martinson, 1974). Ryan (1995) suggested that the rehabilitation model was abandoned in the United States, not because research proved correctional education to be ineffective, but rather the rehabilitation model itself was poorly developed. Ryan stated, “The ‘in’ terms for education in prisons in the 1980s were life skills, cognitive learning, and holistic education,” (p. 62) which were merely “new terms for the same programs that had been developed and implemented widely in the 1970s” (p. 62). The latter part of the 1980s saw the emphasis of correctional education evolving to focus more upon cultural and humanitarian issues as well as developmental education (Gehring, McShane, & Eggleston, 1998).

Prison safety became an important issue for correctional education in the 1990s. A 1995 survey of 823 wardens concluded that administrators evaluated programs, services, and amenities in functional terms (Davidson, 2000). Davidson stated, “If programs contribute to managing a safer, more secure, and more orderly prison, they are supported” (p. 395). The 1990s also brought stiffer legislation for longer prison sentences. This “tough on crime” philosophy increased the costs for housing inmates which subsequently came out of many state correctional education budgets. As a result, the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 saw an end to the inmate’s right to apply for Pell grants in order to pay for college tuition and book fees (Gehring, 1997; Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, 1994).

It was predicted that this particular public law would end many post-secondary education programs in prison. However, in a recent national survey of state correctional education directors, Messemer (2003) found that 24 of the 45 states (53.3%) who responded to the survey still offered in-house college programs for their inmates. Among the twenty-four states offering college programs to inmates, the sources of funding varied from state-to-state. States suggested that they utilized the following funding sources: state government (n=10), federal government (n=17), corporation/organization (n=4), foundation (n=6), college/university (n=3), prison (n=2), and inmate (n=19). Inmates, who had to pay for part of their tuition, did so through family support, educational loans, and/or money earned through prison work programs. One state in the southwestern region of the U.S. had a unique approach to funding its prison college program. They were able to convince their state legislature to fund the college program with the agreement that the college inmates would agree to repay the state the costs of their tuition upon release from prison. If the inmate failed to make a monthly tuition repayment, then this would constitute a violation of his or her parole. Therefore, he or she would be required to serve the remainder of his or her sentence in prison.

Many states are utilizing the Youthful Offender Act as a source of funding. Each state has its own version of the Youthful Offender Act which allows inmates under the age of 25 to receive state funding to participate in college programs in prison. Messemer (2003) suggested that seventeen states were using federal funding to support the inmate college programs through the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1998 (1998). The Carl D. Perkins funds vary from the standard Pell grant funds in the way in which the funding is distributed for educational purposes. For example, Pell grant money is usually distributed directly to the adult learner. In this case, inmates would be the recipients of such funding, but the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (1994) abolished this source to inmates. In contrast, the educational institution applies for the Carl D. Perkins funds. Therefore, the institution receives the funding for offering college programs to adult learners. Any college or university as well as prison offering educational programs to inmates would qualify for Carl D. Perkins funds.

3. Inmate Demographics in the United States

According to the U.S. Department of Justice (2005), in 2003 there were 2,078,570 inmates in state, federal, and private (for-profit) correctional facilities in the United States. Since 1980, the United States prison population has increased nearly 314.2%. Within the U.S. adult prison facilities, just more than 0.4% of the inmates are under the age of 18. A majority of the inmates in U.S. correctional facilities are males (91.7%). However, in recent years, the female inmate population has been increasing at a slightly higher rate than the male inmate population. Between 1995 and 2003, the male inmate population has increased 26.8%, whereas the female inmate population has increased 37.9%. When comparing the U.S. inmate population figures with that of the general population figures, 1.9% of all men and 0.2% of all women are in some type of prison/jail facility.

Persons of color represent 65.3% of the U.S. inmate population, with African-Americans representing 45.0% and Hispanics/Latinos representing 15.6% of the inmates in U.S. correctional facilities. When comparing the U.S. inmate population figures with that of the general population figures, 0.3% of all White persons, 2.7% of all African-American persons, and 0.9% of all Hispanic/Latino persons are in some type of prison/jail facility. Non-U.S. citizens represent 5.0% of the state prison population and 18.3% of the federal prison population. Persons of color represent 64.1% of the state prison population, 73.1% of the federal prison population, and 70% of the private prison (for-profit) population. According to the U.S. Department of Justice (2005), greater than 39.7% of state inmates, 26.5% of federal inmates, and 46.5% of local jail inmates hold less than a high school diploma or GED certificate. No statistical data could be found describing inmate educational attainment concerning inmate race, gender, and age.

4. Purpose of Correctional Education

The purpose of correctional education has evolved over time in accordance to its history. Many of the goals and policies for correctional education have been dependent upon the many differing philosophies concerning the purposes for incarceration. According to Gehring, McShane, and Eggleston (1998):

The American system, in both philosophy and operations, is fraught with controversy and irony. After years of being described as in ‘crisis’ by both outside critics and its own key decision makers, the system has settled into a routine of policies and practices designed to insure its continued, albeit dysfunctional, existence. (p. 148)

There are some scholars who view prisons as a means of strictly punishing the inmate and hold no interest in providing offender service programs (Zimring and Hawkins, 1995). Other scholars suggest that there is sufficient evidence to prove the success of rehabilitation programs and the need for increased government funding toward treatment programs (Gehring, McShane, & Eggleston, 1998; Hamm, 1996; Jones & d’Errico, 1994). Umbreit and Smith (1991) view the role of corrections and treatment programs like correctional education as a means of community restoration.

Currently, the United States prison system “has begun to swing away from being strictly punitive and has started to focus attention on rehabilitation” (Case & Fasenfest, 2004, p. 24). Gehring, McShane, and Eggleston (1998) suggested that correctional educators apply the principle that inmate “attitudes, ideas, and behaviour can be changed – that humans are capable of transforming their lives” (p. 151). Wolford (1989) suggests that the purpose of correctional education can be classified into six key factors:

1. to provide inmates with basic academic and vocational skills;
2. to provide inmates with an opportunity to change their personal behaviors and values;
3. to reduce recidivism;
4. to provide passive control of inmate behavior;
5. to support the operational needs of the correctional institution; and
6. to provide institutional work assignments. (pp. 358-359)

Werner (1990) has adopted a different viewpoint concerning the purpose of correctional education. First, Werner suggests that correctional educators must see the failure in the present prison system which is in turn a reflection upon the failures in prison education. He mentioned that for inmates to have a chance of not returning to prison upon release they need to be able to think and react critically in an ever changing technological society. However, what separates Werner’s philosophy from many other correctional colleagues is that he stands upon the notion that in its current form, (1) prison education does not rehabilitate, (2) prison education does not correct human behavior, and (3) that prison education does not give only basic skills training.

According to Werner (1990), correctional education has a social responsibility to provide the inmate with what he considers as the primary function of a prison education program: *individual empowerment*. Werner states that the “core of empowerment is the recognition that the individual has potential to be much more than he or she is at present” (p. 157). Werner claimed that the “promotion of clear thinking, wise judgment, and effective communication, must be at the heart of an effective correctional or prison education program” (p. 157). Werner is likely one of the early correctional education scholars to adopt and promote a “critical theory” approach to developing educational programs in prison.

5. Evaluating Correctional Education Programs

In the world of correctional education, the academic curriculum can include any of the following areas: Literacy/ABE, general education development (GED) preparation, and college programs. The format of most of the correctional programs is centered on the educational level of each individual inmate. Even though most inmates in the basic skills program attend the correctional education program in a classroom setting of 10-15 inmates, the teacher will typically develop a specific plan of study for each individual inmate in accordance to his or her own current level of achievement (McKee, 1966, 1970, 1971; McKee & Clements, 2000; McKee & Seay, 1968). Most correctional education programs have at least one person at the prison site who serves as the educational program supervisor, often it is a deputy warden.

Nearly all U.S. correctional education programs offer inmates the opportunity to participate in vocational apprenticeships, often ranging among as many as 40-skill areas (Friel, 2006; Pavis, 2002; Sarra & Olcott, 2007; Young & Mattucci, 2006). Correctional education programs also assume the role of providing inmates numerous psycho-social programs, such as: counseling, therapy, and awareness programs (Baba & Hebert, 2004; Tarver, 2001), life skills programs (Cecil, Drapkin, Mackenzie, & Hickman, 2000; Jensen & Reed, 2006), and pre-and-post release programs (Bouffard & Bergeron, 2006; Case, Fasensfest, Sarri, & Phillips, 2005; Shand, 1996). In addition, the correctional education programs often have the responsibility of providing staff development to both the educational and security guard personnel. However, there is little to no literature that pertains to the training and development of educational and security personnel within the prison environment. Because correctional education is dependent upon the amount of funds it receives from state and federal governments, such prison education programs are forced to be accountable for the programs they provide. This has forced correctional education programs to conduct program evaluation studies. For the purpose of this paper, the writer will only focus upon the ABE, GED, and college programs for inmates. The three most common indicators of program evaluation are as follows: (1) the rate of recidivism, (2) the inmates’ level of academic achievement, and (3) the inmates’ level of behavioral change in prison.

5.1. Adult Basic Education

ABE programs are primarily designed for those inmates who read, write, or do math below the 10th grade level. Inmates who are considered functionally illiterate (read below the 6th grade level) are often placed in a remedial program entitled literacy or special education. The curriculum development process often involves the assessment (testing) of the inmate’s learning needs, the development of a plan of study, the teaching and monitoring of the inmate’s process, and the evaluation (retesting) of the inmate’s learning progress. Porporino and Robinson (1992) and Zink (1970), found a negative correlation between inmates who participated in the ABE program and the rate of recidivism. As for the academic achievement studies, McKee and Clements (2000) found that five different correctional education programs demonstrated significant inmate learning gains in reading, math, and language which ranged from 1.7 to 2.3 grade-levels. A recent study of 124 inmates participating in an ABE program in a state prison in the southeast region of the United States found that the inmates had statistically significant learning gains in reading, math, and language (Messemer & Valentine, 2004).

This study also suggested that inmates required varying hours of classroom participation in order to improve equally in reading, math, and language. For example, Messemer and Valentine found that for inmates to increase one grade-level in each of the three subject areas, they needed to participate in approximately 118, 54, and 36 hours of classroom participation in order to meet such learning gains in reading, math, and language respectively. When studying the same inmate sample, Messemer (2007) found that the inmates who participated regularly in the Christian programs at the prison facility had statistically significant higher learning gain scores in the reading and language skill areas than the non-Christian inmates.

Messemer found that the Christian inmates had statistically significant lower rates of disciplinary problems in the prison facility and subsequently statistically significant lower rates of absenteeism from the ABE program than the non-Christian inmates, which proved to be statistically significant predictors for the reading and language learning gain scores.

5.2. General Education Development

The purpose of the GED program is to provide the inmate with enough academic training so that he or she can pass the GED examination, which is the equivalent of a high school diploma. Many of the prison GED programs follow much of the same training format as in the case of the prison ABE programs. However, the GED programs tend to utilize distance-learning programs more frequently. Parker (2010) suggested that a student-centered tutoring program for Washington D.C. inmates participating in the GED programs warranted a 73% passage rate among the program participants. The report also suggests that 68% of the participants passed the GED examination on the first attempt. The New York State Department of Correctional Services (1992), Seigal and Basta (1997), and Walsh (1985) conducted recidivism studies which suggested that inmates who either participated or received their GED while in prison were less likely to return to prison than either the non-participants or non-graduates at a statistically significant rate. More recently, Gordon and Weldon (2003) conducted a study of West Virginia inmates who completed both a GED program and vocational training while in prison had a recidivism rate of 6.71% in comparison to the 26% rate of recidivism among the non-participants.

5.3. College Programs for Inmates

Either a local university or community college oversees most college programs in prison. Most college programs offer at least an associate's degree and many offer a bachelor's degree. As mentioned earlier, some scholars believed that many of the prison systems are forced to eliminate the college programs because of the federal ban on Pell grants for inmates (Gehring, 1997; Werner, 2002; Zook, 1994). However, as mentioned earlier, Messemer (2003) found that a small majority of the states still offered college programs to some inmates in prison.

A few studies track recidivism rates for inmates participating in college programs. In a study of correctional education program graduates released from prison during 1990-1991, Jenkins, Steurer, and Pendry (1995) found that "the higher the level of educational attainment while incarcerated, the more likely the releasee was to have obtained employment upon release" (p. 21). Taylor (1994) reported that between 1974 and 1979 the states of Alabama, Maryland, and New Jersey found statistically significant differences between the rates of recidivism between the college participants and non-participants, in favor of the college inmates. Taylor (1994) also suggested that one of the most comprehensive college prison studies was during 1967-1977 in New Mexico, whereby the college participants only had a 15.5% rate of recidivism in comparison to a 68% rate for the non-participants. According to the Center on Crime, Communities, and Culture (1997), inmates with at least two years of post-secondary education participation in prison have a 10% recidivism rate, compared to a national recidivism rate of approximately 60%. Batiuk (1997) and Batiuk and Moke (1996) conducted a three-year recidivism study of nearly 1,200 ex-offenders in Ohio in which they found that those inmates who completed a college degree in prison were 72% less likely to return to prison than those inmates who did not participate in the college programs.

Wells (2000) found a positive relationship between post-secondary education, social bonding, and recidivism. Lahm (2009) conducted a study of 1,000 inmates in which she found that inmates who were participating in the college programs had fewer rules violations in prison than those inmates participating in other modes of adult learning while in prison. Case and Fasenfest (2004) suggests that inmates with college and vocational training will have lower recidivism rates. However, their study suggests that there was no increase in the employability or the stigmatization of being a post-release inmate. In a meta-analysis of fifteen studies conducted during 1990-1999, Chappell (2004) found a negative correlation between inmate participation in prison college programs and the rate of recidivism. In addition, Chappell suggested that inmates who completed a college program in prison were less likely to return to prison than those inmates who were primarily participants in the college program.

6. Why Inmates Participate in Correctional Education

The reasons why inmates participate in correctional education was previously studied by Boshier (1983). Boshier developed a five factor, forty-item scale to investigate why inmates participate in a basic skills program in prison.

The five factors which Boshier found to be significant in determining the inmates' desire to participate in correctional education were personal control, self assertion, outside contact, self preservation, and cognitive interests. Parsons and Langenbach (1993) revisited Boshier's work in a survey of 350 inmate GED students. In Parsons and Langenbach's study, using a factor analysis, they were able to reduce the Boshier's instrument to a four factor, thirty-item scale. The four factors in Parsons and Langenbach's scale include cognitive control, goal orientation, activity orientation, and avoidance posture. Studying why inmates participate in correctional education also causes one to investigate the opposite phenomenon, such as the barriers to learning in prison. Quigley (1997) suggests that there are three primary barriers to literacy education: dispositional, institutional, and situational. In correctional education, *dispositional barriers* involve the inmate's attitude toward formal learning, which was similar to what Boshier (1983) and Parsons and Langenbach (1993) were studying. The second barrier, *institutional barriers*, represents hindrances to learning that arise within the learning institution. In correctional education, institutional barriers represent the lack of economic funding, educational resources (such as books, handout materials, computers, etc.), classroom space, teaching personnel, and security personnel. The final barrier is *situational barriers*. This represents situations in the adult learner's life, outside of the program environment, that impact the learner's ability to participate. In correctional education, situational barriers to inmates include the parole or release from prison, the transfer to another prison site, and inmate disciplinary problems that result in solitary confinement.

7. Discussion

The field of correctional education has evolved throughout the last three centuries in the United States from that of having solely a religious purpose to that of a multilayered system of academic offerings for adult inmates. Inmates in most states today have the opportunity to participate in the ABE, GED, and/or Vocational programs in prison. In addition, inmates in more than half of the states (Messemer, 2003) have an opportunity to participate in college programs, as long as; the inmates are in a prison facility that has contracted with a local university or community college to provide such academic programs. However, the support from a university or community college is contingent upon whether or not the state department of corrections, prison facilities, colleges/universities, and/or inmates has generated the proper financial recourses necessary to support such an endeavor. Messemer (2003) found that colleges/universities want at least a two year commitment from the prison facilities before they will commit the faculty and staff to teach and manage the college programs within the prison. Colleges/Universities want the two-year commitment so that the inmate will likely receive an associate's degree (two-year degree) or more during this time period. Colleges/Universities need the inmates to complete their degree(s) in order to justify their own creditability to state agencies and college accreditation boards.

This investigation also found that many inmates are succeeding in the classroom at all levels: ABE, GED, and College programs. In addition, the literature review suggests that correctional education programs are having a significant impact upon the recidivism rates of inmates. Also, inmates who participate in the correctional education programs tend to be model citizens while in prison, as they generally make better decisions in prison and less likely to just follow the crowd [inmates]. Therefore, this behavior tends to carry over into their personal and professional life upon release from prison, which in turn decreases the rate of recidivism. While this investigation provides the reader with an excellent overview of the historical practice of correctional education in the U.S., the researcher discovered that there are numerous areas within correctional education whereby the literature base is lacking. First, there is a strong need for research that focuses upon the female inmate population and their participation in correctional education programs. The overwhelming majority of correctional education research is based upon the male inmate perspective.

Some might suggest that this is due to the overwhelming difference regarding the larger number of male inmates in prison verses the smaller number of female inmates in prison. However, Case et al. (2005) and Lahm (2000) illustrate that the female inmate population in the U.S. is currently increasing at a rate twice that of the male inmate population. There is a particular phenomena taking place within the U.S. that is driving the female inmate population to skyrocket. There is a strong need for research to investigate this phenomenon. Lahm (2000) suggests that only 23% of female inmates hold a high school diploma, while Tarver (2001) states that female inmates are far more likely to be single mothers with severe drug addictions. Tarver suggests that most female inmates are convicted on drug charges. Is this spike in the female inmate population solely due to the increase in drug use by women or is there some other underlying factor involved in this case?

Secondly, the researcher found there to be a need for research that studies the inequities of correctional education programs for women as apposed to the male population (e.g., Lahm, 2000; Morash, Haarr, & Rucker, 1994). The researcher also discovered a strong need for educational researchers to study the adult learning gains of female inmates participating in adult literacy programs. In addition, there is a need for researchers to study the progress of women who are participating in self-help, professional development, pre-release, faith-based, and/or college programs in prison. The overwhelming majority of research in these topic areas is based upon the perspective of male inmate programs (Tarver, 2001). Fourthly, the researcher discovered there to be a lack of empirical research pertaining to the post-release programs available for ex-offenders. For example, are inmates able to continue their education upon release from prison or is there a lack of support for ex-offenders? Copenhaver, Edwards-Wiley, and Byers (2007) discuss the stigma ex-offenders have upon release from prison, even for those who complete a college degree while in prison. In addition, Lichtenberger (2006) and Harrison and Schehr (2004) discuss the obstacles facing ex-offenders with respect to employment and they describe the types of jobs ex-offenders tend to receive upon release from prison. However, the researcher found a lack of literature that addressed the ex-offenders' adult learning needs.

Finally, the researcher discovered that there is a lack of literature pertaining to the factors that influence the decisions teachers make in the correctional education classroom. Nearly all of the correctional education literature is focused upon the inmate population, whereas the researcher was not able to find empirical research that studied those who teach within the prison facilities. The researcher also found a lack of research that studied the role paraprofessionals play with respect to the planning, development, and administration of educational programs for inmates in prison. It is the aims of the researcher that this article will serve as a catalyst for adult educators to better understand the nature of current professional practice within correctional education. The researcher is inviting other scholars to focus their research and practice in the area of correctional education, especially among the areas highlighted in this article.

8. References

- Arbenz, R. L. (1995). Book review: Tannenbaum's Osborne of Sing Sing. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 46, 45-47.
- Baba, Y., & Hebert, C. (2004). The effects of participation in a cultural awareness program on jail inmates. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 13, 91-113.
- Batiuk, M. E. (1997). The state of post-secondary correctional education in Ohio. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 48, 70-72.
- Batiuk, M. E., & Moke, P. (1996). *Education in Ohio prisons: An analysis of recidivism rates*. Ohio Penal Education Consortium and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. Wilmington, OH: Wilmington College.
- Boshier, R. (1983). *Education inside: Motives for participation in prison education programmes*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia.
- Bouffard, J. A., & Bergeron, L. E. (2006). Reentry works: The implementation and effectiveness of a serious and violent offender reentry initiative. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 44, 1-29.
- Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998, Pub. L. No. 105-323, § 112 Stat. 3076 (1998).
- Case, P., & Fasnfest, D. (2004). Expectations for opportunities following prison education: A discussion of race and gender. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 55, 24-39.
- Case, P., Fasnfest, D., Sarri, R., & Phillips, A. (2005). Providing educational support for female ex-inmates: Project PROVE as a model for social reintegration. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 56, 146-157.
- Cecil, D. K., Drapkin, D. A., Mackenzie, D. L., & Hickman, L. (2000). The effectiveness of adult basic education and life-skills programs in reducing recidivism: A review and assessment of the research. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 51, 207-226.
- Center on Crime, Communities, and Culture (1997). *Research Brief: Education as Crime Prevention*, Sept, 1997.
- Chappell, C. A. (2004). Post-secondary correctional education and recidivism: A meta-analysis of research conducted 1990-1999. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 55, 148-169.
- Copenhaver, A., Edwards-Wiley, T. L., & Byers, B. D. (2007). Journeys in social stigma: The lives of formerly incarcerated felons in higher education. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 58, 268-283.
- Davidson, H. S. (1996). Political processes in prison education. A history. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 47, 133-137.

- Davidson, H. S. (2000). Control and democracy in adult correctional education. In A. L. Wilson & E. R. Hayes (Eds.), *Handbook of adult and continuing education* (pp. 392-407). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Eggleston, C., & Gehring, T. (1986). Correctional education paradigms in the United States and Canada. *Journal of correctional education*, 37, 86-92.
- Friel, C. S. (2006). A vocational training program that works from beginning to end. *Corrections Today*, 68(7), 62-64.
- Gehring, T. (1997). Post-secondary education for inmates: An historical inquiry. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 48, 46-55.
- Gehring, T. (1995). Characteristics of correctional instruction, 1789-1875. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 46, 52-59.
- Gehring, T., McShane, M., & Eggleston, C. (1998). Then and now: Approaches to correctional education in the United States. In W. Forster (Ed.), *Education behind bars: International comparisons* (pp. 147-166). Leicester, England: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.
- Gordon, H. R. D., & Weldon, B. (2003). The impact of career and technical education programs on adult offenders: Learning behind bars. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 54, 200-209.
- Hamm, M. (1996). Incapacitation: Penal confinement and the restraint of crime, by Franklin E. Zimring and Gordon Hawkins. Book review in *Justice Quarterly*, 13, 525-530.
- Harrison, B., & Schehr, R. C. (2004). Offenders and post-release jobs: Variables influencing success and failure. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 39(3), 35-68.
- Hobler, B. (1999). Correctional education: Now and in the future. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 50, 102-105.
- Holland, J. G., and Skinner, B. F. (1961). *The analysis of behavior: A program for self-instruction*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Jenkins, H. D., Steurer, S. J., & Pendry, J. (1995). A post-release follow-up of correctional education program completers released in 1990-1991. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 46, 20-24.
- Jensen, E. L., & Reed, G. E. (2006). Adult correctional education programs: An update on current status based on recent studies. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 44, 81-98.
- Jones, R. L., & d'Errico, P. (1994). The paradox of higher education in prisons. In M. Williford (Ed.), *Higher education in prison: A contradiction in terms?* (pp. 1-16). Phoenix, AZ: American Council on Education and The Oryx Press.
- Lahm, K. F. (2000). Equal or equitable: An exploration of educational and vocational program availability for male and female offenders. *Federal Probation*, 64(2), 39-46.
- Lahm, K. F. (2009). Educational participation and inmate misconduct. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 48, 37-52.
- Lichtenberger, E. (2006). Where do ex-offenders find jobs? An industrial profile of employers of ex-offenders in Virginia. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 57, 297-311.
- Martinson, R. (1974). What works? - Questions and answers about prison reform. *The Public Interest*, 35(2), 22-54.
- McKee, J. M. (1966). *Adult basic education for the disadvantaged: Procedures used to raise the basic educational level*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 023 978).
- McKee, J. M. (1970). *The use of programmed instruction in correctional institutions*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 059 446).
- McKee, J. M. (1971). *Contingency management in a correctional institution*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 059 464).
- McKee, J. M., & Clements, C. B. (2000). The challenge of individualized instruction in corrections. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 51, 270-281.
- McKee, J. M., & Seay, D. M. (1968). *How to use P.I.: A systematic approach to the use of programmed instruction*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 029 495).
- Messemer, J. E. (2003). College programs for inmates: The post-Pell grant era. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 54, 32-39.
- Messemer, J. E., & Valentine, T. (2004). The learning gains of male inmates participating in a basic skills program. *Adult Basic Education*, 14, 67-89.
- Messemer, J. E. (2007). The influence of Christian programs on the academic achievement of low-literate male inmates. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 58, 222-248.
- Morash, M., Haarr, R. N., & Rucker, L. (1994). A comparison for women and men in U.S. prisons in the 1980s. *Crime and Delinquency*, 40, 197-221.

- New York State Department of Correctional Services (1992). *Overview of department follow-up research on return rates of participants in major programs - 1992*. Albany, NY: Department of Correctional Services.
- Parker, M. H. (2010). Student-centered tutoring program prepares D.C. Inmates for GED. *Corrections Today*, 72(2), 90-93.
- Parsons, M., & Langenbach, M. (1993). The reasons inmates indicate they participate in prison education programs: Another look at Boshier's PEPS. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 44, 38-41.
- Pavis, R. (2002). Preparing federal prison inmates for employment after release: An innovation at the Federal Bureau of Prisons. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 53, 146-149
- Porporino, F. J., & Robinson, R. (1992). The correctional benefits of education: A follow-up of Canadian federal offenders participating in ABE. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 43, 92-98.
- Quigley, B. A. (1997). *Rethinking literacy education: The critical need for practice-based change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Ryan, T. A. (1995). Correctional education: Past is a prologue to the future. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 46, 60-65.
- Sarra, D., & Olcott, L. (2007). A day at Osborne School. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 89(1), 68-70.
- Shand, R. A. S. (1996). Pre-release/transition: Inmate programs and support upon entry, during incarceration and after release. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 47, 20-40.
- Siegal, G. R., & Basta, J. (1997). *The effects of literacy and general education development programs on adult probationers*. Pima, AZ: Adult Probation Department of the Superior Court of Pima County.
- Skinner, B. F. (1938). *The behavior of organisms: An experimental analysis*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company.
- Skinner, B. F. (1953). *Science and human behavior*. New York: Macmillan.
- Stubblefield, H. W., & Keane, P. (1994). *Adult education in the American experience: From the Colonial period to the present*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Tannenbaum, F. (1933). *Osborne of Sing Sing*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Tarver, M. L. (2001). Rehabilitation strategies for diverse inmate populations: Considerations for recreational therapist, counselors and educators. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 52, 167-171.
- Taylor, J. M. (1994). Pell grants for prisoners. In M. Williford (Ed.), *Higher education in prison: A contradiction in terms?* (pp. 167-172). Phoenix, AZ: American Council on Education and The Oryx Press.
- Tyler, R. W. (1949). *Basic principles of curriculum and instruction*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Umbreit, M., & Smith, L. (1991). Minnesota mediation center produces positive results. *Corrections Today*, 53(5), 192.
- U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2005). *Sourcebook of criminal justice statistics: 2003*. Albany, NY: The Hindelang Criminal Justice Research Center, University at Albany, State University of New York.
- Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, Pub. L. No. 103-322, § 108 Stat. 1796 (1994).
- Walsh, A. (1985). The evaluation of the effects of adult basic education on rearrest rates among probationers. *Journal of Offender Counseling Services and Rehabilitation*, 9(4), 69-76.
- Wells, R. E. (2000). *Education as prison reform: A meta-analysis*. Unpublished dissertation, Louisiana State University.
- Werner, D. R. (1990). *Correctional education: Theory and practice*. Danville, IL: Interstate Publishers.
- Werner, D. R. (2002). Post-secondary prison education SIG. *Correctional Education Association: News and Notes*, 24(3), 11.
- Wolford, B. I. (1989). Correctional facilities. In S. B. Merriam & P. M. Cunningham (Eds.), *Handbook of adult and continuing education* (pp. 356-368). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Young, D. S., & Mattucci, R. F. (2006). Enhancing the vocational skills of incarcerated women through a plumbing maintenance program. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 57, 126-140.
- Zimring, F. E., & Hawkins, G. (1995). *Incapacitation: Penal confinement and the restraint of crime*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Zink, T. M. (1970). A study of the effect of prison education on societal adjustment. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 22, 18-20.
- Zook, J. (1994). Ban on Pell grants to inmates crushes prison-education efforts. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 41(11), A32-A33.