

## **NEED ASSESSMENT of INMATES of PRISONS THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

To meet the educational needs of inmates, educational scholars of the world have attempted numerous strategies and interventions designs to facilitate learning and to improve achievement. The real function of a prison is to help develop better citizens, not just better inmates.

Therefore, the present study was designed to investigate the educational needs of inmate's prisons. The objective of study was to assess the educational needs of inmates of prisons through distance education. The sample of the study comprised of 57 inmates of graduation/master level available in the jail at the time of survey adopting cluster technique. Data collected through questionnaires was tabulated and descriptively analyzed according to 5 point Likert scale. With the help of summary obtained from Likert scale analysis, mean was calculated. The study revealed that majority of inmates was interested in further education above their obtained level. It was concluded that the inmates give too much importance to education. It was recommended that non-formal wing of Ministry of Education may include prisons while allocating funds for non-formal education and establishment of non-formal basic education schools in prisons. It was further suggested for Allama Iqbal Open University to extend its facilities for prisons to meet his motto "the education at door step".

**Keywords:** Need Assessment, distance education, continuing education

## **INTRODUCTION**

**Education is process through which societies plan their socio-economic development. It enables the people to improve their social, cultural and economies situation (Michal and Lock, 2002, p.91). Education also helps a nation in socio-economic development as UNESCO (2000, p.8) views that education is the principal tool for coping with the increasing problems of complex world as well as achieving sustainable development and a higher quality of life. Education produces a web of inter-related changes with positive effect on population growth, social and economical development. So Education for All is a need of the day. Therefore EFA National Plan for Action (NPA) has been developed. This is a clear expression of 'political will' and government commitment to Education for All.**

**There is little agreement about the identification of basic human needs and how they are ordered. Ryan and Deci (2000) suggested three needs, although they are not necessarily arranged hierarchically: the need for autonomy, the need for competence, and the need for relatedness. Thompson, Grace and Cohen (2001) state the most important needs for children are connection, recognition, and power.**

**Nohria, Lawrence and Wilson (2001) provide evidence from a sociobiology theory of motivation that humans have four basic needs:**

- **acquire objects and experiences;**
- **bond with others in long-term relationships of mutual care and commitment;**
- **learn and make sense of the world and of ourselves; and**
- **to defend ourselves, our loved ones, beliefs and resources from harm.**

**The Institute for Management Excellence (2001) suggests there are nine basic human needs:**

- **security,**
- **adventure,**
- **freedom,**
- **exchange,**
- **power,**
- **expansion,**
- **acceptance,**
- **community, and**
- **expression.**

**Notice that bonding and relatedness are a component of every theory. However, there do not seem to be any others that are mentioned by all theorists. Franken (2001) suggests this lack of accord may be a result of different philosophies of researchers rather than differences among human beings. In addition, he reviews research that shows a person's explanatory or attributional style will modify the list of basic needs.**

Therefore, it seems appropriate to ask people what they want and how their needs could be met rather than relying on an unsupported theory. For example, Waitley (1996) advises having a person imagine what life would be like if time and money was not an object in a person's life. That is, what would the person do this week, this month, next month, if he or she had all the money and time needed to engage in the activities and were secure that both would be available again next year. With some follow-up questions to identify what is keeping the person from engaging in these activities at the present time, this open-ended approach is likely to identify the most important needs of the individual.

There is much work still to be done in this area before we can rely on a theory to be more informative than simply collecting and analyzing data. However, this body of research can be very important to parents, educators, administrators and others concerned with developing and using human potential. It provides an outline of some important issues that must be addressed if human beings are to achieve the levels of character and competencies necessary to be successful in the information/conceptual age (Huitt, 2007). Huitt's (2006) "Becoming a Brilliant Star" framework is intended to provide a framework to discuss the needs of children and youth across three core elements and ten domains.

It is an obligation of a state to provide equal opportunity to all citizens for improving their status in life. (Education in Pakistan A White Paper, Ministry of Education, 2007) It is a matter of fact that target of Education For All cannot be achieved only by formal education system in general and particular for prisons. Although the incarcerated offender population has increased but number and range of rehabilitative programs in adult correctional institutions often decreased (Wolford, 1989, p.358).

#### **THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF INMATE STUDENTS**

According to John Howard Society of Alberta (2002) the inmate student presents significant challenges to educators. Furthermore, learning disabilities pose a challenge to prison education because they are more prevalent among offenders than the general population (Fisher, Bloom, 1995). Finally, offenders often have a history of failure in school, which typically leads offenders to assume that they will not succeed in their present schooling (Mason, 1993). Offenders' beliefs that they will fail in school will seriously limit their ability to learn by ruining their self-confidence and willingness to learn. Therefore, offenders' beliefs about their potential for success in school must be addressed in any inmate education program.

In Pakistan, the Prison Rules set a higher standard for the provision of Education to convicted juveniles than to under trial juveniles. Under the Rules, education is mandatory for juvenile sentenced to a prison term of one year or more. All such convicts "shall be brought under the course of instruction, in reading, writing, and arithmetic for two hours daily and the standard of education will be up to Matric standard as laid down for school by the Education Department. (Pakistan Prison Rules, Rule 298) Post-secondary education in prison is delivered mainly via distance education.

This approach, which is considered to be particularly well suited to the constraints of prison life, is used to supplement the education provided in situ and is essentially aimed at young detainees and those with a low educational level (Fanny Salane, 2008, p.1).

Maguire and Honess (1997) in their study into distance learning in prison were surprised at the dearth of research surrounding prison education in Britain. They found the completion of distance learning educational courses, through a longitudinal study of thirty prisoners. Due to the lack of consistent research, present rehabilitative programmes have not sound foundations. In Pakistan so far few researches have been carried out on need assessment of inmates of prisons for continuing education through distance education. A research was carried out by Haider (2004) who analyzed the factors which effect inmate relations on learning of criminal behavior among juvenile. He found out that the children of broken families fell in crimes and most of the juvenile prisoners are in jails due to minor crimes.

Education of inmates of prisons is neglected area for educational planners in Pakistan. Now, there is need to develop educational programmes of inmates those can play key role in their rehabilitation. This educational programme cannot be developed without the need assessment of inmates. Therefore, this study was designed to carry out need assessment of inmates of prisons for continuing education through distance mode.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Objectives of the study were:

- To asses the educational needs of inmates of prisons.
- To identify the potential clientele of continuing education through distance education.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study was descriptive in nature. Therefore, survey approach was considered appropriate. After the study of related literature, questionnaire as a tool of research was drafted and was validated. There was 21 items in a questionnaire. Different options were available for the respondents in item NO. 1 to 6 and they have to select any one whereas item NO. 6 to 20 were based on five point likert scale. The population of the study was 10595 Inmates of Central Jail Rawalpindi and District Jail Lahore. Out of this population 42 inmates were with BA/ B. Sc level education whereas 15 inmates were with MA/M. Sc level education. The sample of inmates was selected through cluster sampling. Due to constraint of time and resource available to the researcher and securities concern of prison's administration, only two clusters were selected among the available inmates. One cluster was of 42 inmates (100%) with BA/ B. Sc level education while the other cluster was 15 inmates (100%) with MA/ M. Sc level education available at the time of survey.

After getting permission from IG Prisons Punjab the researcher visited Central Jail Rawalpindi and District Jail Lahore to administer the questionnaire personally.

With the help of jail administration, the researcher distributed questionnaire in different cells and blocks of inmates in prisons and received back personally filled questionnaires from inmates of different educational level. This took a couple of month due to specific nature of prisons and security measures.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data collected through questionnaires was tabulated and descriptively analyzed on the basis of different statistical tool i.e. percentage and mean score using SPSS.

**Table: 1**  
**Responses of Inmates regarding Enhancement of Educational level**

Statement	SA	A	U	DA	SD
We have sufficient time in jail for reading	58%	16 (28%)	4 (7%)	4 (7%)	--
The facilities are available in the jail to enhance the educational level	21 (37%)	12 (21%)	7 (12%)	10 (18%)	7 (12%)
There are opportunities in the jail to interact with educated inmates for educational guidance	24 (42%)	9 (16%)	11 (19%)	5 (9%)	8 (14%)
Jail administration motivates us for further education	24 (42%)	8 (14%)	7 (12%)	10 (18%)	8 (14%)
Jail administration cooperates with us for further education.	22 (38%)	10 (18%)	7 (12%)	9 (16%)	9 (16%)

Table: 1 show that 86% of the respondents agreed that they had sufficient time in jail for reading, 7% were undecided while 7% of them disagreed. Mean score 4.30 showed that the high level of agreement. 58% of the respondents agreed that the facilities were available in the jail to enhance the educational level, 12% were undecided while 30% of them dissatisfied.

Mean score 3.45 showed that the tutorial session was effective. 58% of the respondents agreed that there were opportunities in the jail to interact with educated inmates for educational guidance, 19% were undecided while 23% disagreed. Mean score 3.54 showed that the tutors have required knowledge. 56% of the respondents agreed that Jail administration motivates us for further education, 12% of them were undecided while 32% disagreed.

Mean score 3.40 showed that the tutors were able persons. 56% of the respondents agreed that Jail administration cooperates with us for further education, 12% were undecided while 32% of them disagreed. Means score 3.38 showed that the students were satisfied.

**Table: 2**  
**Responses of Inmates regarding Wish for further Education from AIOU**

Statement	SA	A	U	DA	SD	Mean
I wish for further education from Allama Iqbal Open University.	24 (42%)	11(19%)	11 (19%)	3 (6%)	8 (14%)	3.61
We are informed about the admission of AIOU well in time.	23 (41%)	12(21%)	8 (14%)	7(12%)	7 (12%)	3.78
We can easily understand the books of Allama Iqbal Open University.	36(63%)	10(18%)	8 (14%)	2 (3%)	1 (2%)	4.30

Table: 2 indicate that 61% of the respondents agreed that they wish for further education from Allama Iqbal Open University, 19% were undecided while 20% of them disagreed. High mean score 3.61 showed that the workshop schedule were distributed and followed strictly. 62% of the respondents agreed that they were informed about the admission of AIOU well in time, 14% were undecided while 24% of them disagreed. High mean score 3.78 showed that the workshop was fully equipped with instructional media. 81% of the respondents agreed that they could easily understand the books of Allama Iqbal Open University, 14% were undecided while only 5% of them disagreed. Mean score 4.30 showed the high level of agreement of students.

**Table: 3**  
**Responses of Inmates regarding Importance of Education**

Statement	SA	A	U	DA	SD	Mean
There is too much importance education.	53 (93%)	2 (3%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	--	4.83
More education can help me to get a respectable place in the society.	49 (85%)	5 (9%)	--	3 (6%)	--	4.71
More education can help meto get job.	45 (79%)	4 (7%)	4 (7%)	4 (7%)	--	4.61
With the help of more education I can solve my problems in a good manner.	44 (77%)	8 (14%)	2 (3%)	--	3 (6%)	4.59
With the help of more education I can live with other member of the society in a better way.	43 (75%)	7 (12%)	3 (6%)	--	4 (7%)	4.59
With the help of more education I can serve my country and nation in a better way.	46 (80%)	5 (9%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)	2 (3%)	4.69
More education can be helpful for me for rehabilitation after release from the jail.	47 (81%)	4 (7%)	3 (6%)	--	3 (6%)	4.69

**Table: 3 depicts that 96% of the respondents agreed that there was too much importance of education, 2% of the respondents were undecided while 2% of them disagreed in this regard. Mean score 4.83 showed that they give too much importance to education. 94% of the respondents were satisfied that more education could help them to get a respectable place in the society while 6% of them disagreed. High mean score 4.71 showed that the evaluation criterion was better. 86% of the respondents agreed that more education can help them to get job, 7% were undecided while 7% of them disagreed. Mean score 4.61 showed that the regional centre was approachable to them. 91% of the respondents agreed that with the help of more education they could solve their problems in a good manner, 3% were undecided while 6% were disagreed. High mean score 4.59 showed the high agreement of students. 87% of the respondents agreed that with the help of more education they could live with other member of the society in a better way, 6% were undecided while 7% disagreed. High mean score 4.59 showed that the examination centres were free from corruption. 89% of the respondents agreed that with the help of more education they could serve their country and nation in a better way, 6% were undecided while only 5% of them disagreed. High mean score 4.69 showed that the students wanted to continue their studies through AIOU. 88% of the respondents agreed that more education could be helpful for them for rehabilitation after release from the jail, 6% were undecided while only 6% of them disagreed. High mean score 4.69 showed that the students wanted to continue their studies through AIOU.**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

**Regarding the educational needs of inmates of prisons, it was concluded that majority of inmates in prisons interested in further education. They also want technical education. Inmates have sufficient time in prison for reading and they are allowed to interact with each other for educational guidance. It was further concluded that majority of inmates have wish for further education from Allama Iqbal Open University. They are familiar with importance of education and understand that education can help them better to get respectable place in the society. Inmates realized that they can achieve better job through more education. It was general perception of inmates that education provides a solid base for solving everyday problems.**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Allama Iqbal Open University may take initiative for increasing his enrollment in prisons as majority of inmates interested in further education but not enrolled with Allama Iqbal Open University through its Regional Directors. Concerned departments like TEVTA and Social Welfare Departments may provide technical education in prisons as most of the inmates are also eager for technical education.**

**Seminars and workshops on prison education may be arranged by universities and colleges funded by the government for general awareness of issue of prison education. Finally, it is recommended that a research may be carried out on assessment of ratio of spending of money on education of inmates with respect to total budget of prison of Pakistan.**

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