

## **The Role of Vocational Education in Prison for Inmate Corrections**

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### **Abstract**

The Prison Vocational Education Training program has no set curriculum. The program was introduced to rehabilitate the prisoners in prison. The philosophy of correctional and reformation of the prisoner is addressed with this program. But only IGNOU is the agency addressing prison education in India. This research paper attempted to generate the need for a prison vocational education plan for prison in India. It has pulled the focus of respective stakeholders to generate a plan of vocational education program for prisoners in prison under the New Education Policy, 2020. This research study has incorporated the recommendations and suggestions regarding prison vocational education programs for prisoners in India.

### **Introduction**

Society tends to grow dynamically and it's growing day by day. The dynamic concept of society reveals the fact that it's going to change and going to change gradually (Rutter, M. 2012). The process of development is changing society dynamically. In the crowd of development, the format of education is also changing. The New Education Policy, 2020 has given a total extra modern face to education in India. The structure of education is now going to be changed (Pathak, R.).

Along with all the sectors of society around the 2% population of India is in jails in various states of India only. The number in reference to other countries India is extremely high. Most of the prison population in India is undertrial under 75% (Berman, G., & Dar, A., 2013). The number of cases is pending in courts to be heard. A larger portion of the population has no education in prisons. And half of the total prison population has a basic education, but they don't have any earning skills. It converts them a habitual offender. The case of recidivism is increasing day by day in prisons. The offenders in petty crime cases have made prison their home to stay safe and secure. The less employability and work outside the world must be addressed in a different approach. And the impacts can be seen in the prison population.

However, there is an approach called rehabilitation that may reduce the causes of recidivism and help the prisoners re-integrate into society. The rehabilitation of prisoners may be achieved by the tool of vocational education training programs for prisoners. This paper has addressed the role of vocational education programs in prisons to prevent recidivism and

successfully reintegrate into society. The paper has adopted the qualitative research methods to address its objectives and used the secondary data available in reference to advancement in vocational education for prisoners.

## Review of Literature

There are several pieces of literature available that directly talk about the role of vocational education in prisons to correct the behaviours of inmates. This concept of vocational education helps inmates to stop attracting towards committing crimes again in society which is called recidivism tendency among inmates or first-time offenders. Recidivism tends to a tendency to commit crimes again and again even after getting a reward as punishment. This tendency can be adopted by the inmates due to any unfavourable conditions outside of prison in the mainstream of the world. These unfavourable conditions could be discrimination, poverty, unemployment, victimization of branding as an ex-prisoner, etc. A prison is an institution that works on corrections in the behaviour of prisoners to re-integrate them into the mainstream of society. This goal of re-integration is not fulfilled adequately. So, the motive of correctional institutions is not successfully completed. And nowadays it has become a major problem among the convicted prisoners who have completed their sentences in prison and are not able to cope with the mainstream societal norms. The government and prison institutions have also introduced several policies for the ex-prisoners and in terms of petty offenses, the offender must go through a counselling process who are committing crimes frequently. But it did not strengthen the prison system to reform its inmates in an effective way.

However, England was one of the pioneer states in the world where the significant development of prison education was noted in 1823 by Robert Peels in the document Parliamentary Gaol Act of 1823 (Thomas, R. G. 2012). After, a vocational education program was introduced in the prison system to correction of the inmates' behaviour before 1874. Earlier in the prisons of European and Nordic Countries, traces of prison education were noticed around 1842. Prison education was mandatory in European prisons during the 1850s. later, after the 1880s vocation education programs came into the discussion to keep busy the convicted prisoners by giving them jobs. Also, Denmark started the basic education programs in prison in the 1850s and till the 1930s it became mandatory for the prisoners. The first prison opened in 1851 which focused on prison education as a form of rehabilitation in Norway (Courtney, J. A. 2019).

In the year 1992, Human Rights Watch Report gave a picture of data that most prisons only give basic education and very less are focused on vocational education. Also, during that time females were very less accessed the education in prisons (Watch, M. E. 1992).

Attempts to rehabilitate prisoners in Russia were made in 1819, possibly for the first time in the country's history. Reforms included instructing them in "piety and good morals", though this proved impossible due to the cramped conditions, extreme poverty, and lack of other services (Linden, R., & Perry, L. 1983). Instead, general improvements to conditions were first made, after which "religious and moral education" were gradually introduced.

In India, reports showing the need for prison education were being made as early as the 19th century, however, the country's prisons focused mostly on punitive measures. In 1983, while

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general and vocational programs were in place, they were understaffed and underfunded, and the types of vocational training offered were outdated. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is considered to play a major role in prison education in India, becoming the country's first university to operate a study centre in prison at Tihar Jail in 1994 (Singh, K. P. 2013). By 2010, IGNOU had 52 prison study centres with approximately 1,500 students; several other universities were also running educational programs in India's prisons. Enrolments remained relatively low, however, as only fee-paying students were permitted to undertake courses. In 2010, IGNOU collaborated with the Ministry of Home Affairs to begin offering free education to inmates (Singh, M. S.).

Based on the existing literature it is the need of the hour to develop a new framework for prison education in India. The above-mentioned literature has given an essence that how much this vocational education is important for the prisoners. The report on re-imagining vocational education by the National Council of Education Research & Training, Delhi revealed all future possibilities of vocation education in India. The NEP, 2020 has emphasized especially on the development of vocational education in India. The report incorporated that it's a significant component of education initiatives in India.

As PSS Central Institute of Vocational Education (PSSCIVE) has developed a teacher training module and teacher handbook for adequate training management. Likewise, it would be a great initiative for the vocational education program for prisoners. There are several states in India has given the preferences to ex-prisoners in subordinates services, but no report has been produced by the employment department that how many seats were grabbed by the ex-prisoners. This research paper is addressing the vocational education program for prisoners in India. There is very little literature available on the vocational program in prisons. Only the IGNOU has taken up all education activities in prisons. As of now no empirical studies has conducted on the need and development of vocational education in prisons.

## **Research Gap**

Above mentioned literature review gives a clear-cut idea about the need for ground research in reference to vocation education activities in prison. It has been also noticed that vocational education can be one of the key indicators in improvising the behavior and skills of inmates which will make them capable of re-integrate into the mainstream of the society. This research paper is addressing the role of vocational education in prisons and pulls the focus of the National Education Policy and Ministry of Education towards it. Based on this research gap certain objectives of this research paper are sketched below.

## **Research Objectives**

- To know the advancement of vocational education in prisons to prevent recidivism among inmates.
  - To design a model of vocational education in prisons based on the guidelines of National Education Policy 2020 for the prevention of recidivism tendency among inmates and re-integrate them into the mainstream of society.
  - To provide recommendations and suggestions to adapt the vocational education model in prisons to stop recidivism tendency among inmates.
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## Research Methodology

To address the research objectives this research paper has adopted the qualitative research methodology. The content analysis approach is used to address the research objectives here (Downe-Wamboldt, B. 1992.) The existing literature review and vocational education framework will be reviewed to develop a model of vocational education for prisoners. Majorly it will address the principles of the correctional system and philosophy essence of re-integrate the prisoners into the mainstream of society again.

## Moral Elevation and Vocational Education

Moral and philosophical problems have been found in the long-term prisoners. Prisoners who are convicted for the life term sentence are not able to cope with the norms of mainstream society again. At the end of the sentencing, they adopted the method of prisonization. This concept of privatization makes the convicted prison more vulnerable in terms of reintegrating them into society again (Reisig, M. D., & Lee, Y. H. 2000). The norms and culture of the prison are not allowing them to live with dignity and not save on their moral values. The vocational education program can save their moral values. It gives an alternate dependency to the prisoners. The problem of moral elevation has been noticed in the Indian prisoners and a majority of them have been disturbed psychologically. Also, many of the prisoners have made prison their home and increasing the recidivism tendency among the prisoners.

## Process of Prisonization and Vocational Education

Here, the role of education is very important because a person comes from one culture (normal society) to another culture (isolated place or prison) and it makes them to adapt the new roles, norms, and rules. Apart from that still in a disciplined institution, people get the orientation of deviation. This deviation can be a reason to get-rid-off of the disciplined structure. Thus, an approach to vocational education for prison inmates can help in reducing the stress and make them skilled to get employability.

## Vocational Education in Prison

The concept of vocational education programs in prisons for prisoners acts as their rehabilitation which makes them to reduces the recidivism tendency and increases the chance to re-integration into society. Employability is a critical issue for the prisoners to reintegrate into society. The labeling that they get makes their branding as an ex-prisoner not helpful in reintegrating into society. The less confident the societal people have an issue not behaving with care and love to ex-prisoners. So, this trust and confidence in society must be built. Their perception should be changed. And for changing the perception of society towards the prisoners required to improvise the strategies of correction in prison (Dagar, P. 2022).

Likewise, Tihar Central Jail has started its own food zones, canteen, workshops, and other useful handicrafts (Sharma, D. 2012). Such kind of initiatives helps the prisoners to interact with mainstream people in a different way and it shows more compassion in them to make society better and crime-free.

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The Indian prisons offer vocational training programs with the intention of rehabilitating the offenders. The intention is not only to train them with vocational knowledge and skills but also to them towards the will to work, a sense of self-help, and a spirit of cooperation with their fellow teammates or workers. Vocational education is a full recipe for reforming a criminal in prison and making them useful assets for society.

### **The Problem of Trust and Confidence with Ex-prisoners in Society**

A person isolated under rule of law for his/her wrongdoing does not make them evil in society instead of that we can correct them and reintegrate them into society. We can use the prison man force in a better way to maintain peace and harmony in society. A big portion of the population is in jails in different states across the world. Their rights of freedom infringed to keep safe and peaceful the society. But its's not a permanent solution to keep them away from the mainstream. These decisions can be arbitrary or use the power of abuse. So that a mandatory attempt state implies to reintegrate them by the correction in prisons with the several unique approaches.

Just to know the origin and reason for criminality there are several experiments conducted on prisoners in mental asylums in past. And literature says that horrific conditions and terrible experiences our scientists, and psychologists had in examining them. Even many of them lost their lives during the experiments. Ultimately changing the perspective of wrongdoers in a disciplined place can help them in making their lives better.

Simultaneously, a different approach works on an individual basis in society. Society did not accept them with trust and confidence. This creates another problem and makes them forcefully commit the crime again. This problem is increasing nowadays rapidly.

### **Vocational Education Theory**

A consistent set of guiding principles turns into a consistent policy for action. The concept of vocational education theory generally talks about the goals, policies, organization, curriculum, and methods of teaching and if we see it in terms of prisoners or prison institutions it would be as a method of skill training and employment-based education. The physical experimental real daily work in prisoners' life is missing. To re-connect them with the societal industries keep them busy in the needs of society through such activities.

As literature reveals the fact about the advancement in vocational education that it could be classified as procedural knowledge. Generally, it could be an idea to inculcate the mind of an individual towards disciplinary things so that person will be organized in the manner of discipline. Declarative knowledge in a scientific manner concentrates on the theory and conceptual knowledge.

### **Vocation and Career**

The vocational theory is the most reliable, rigorous, and comprehensive form of knowledge on the basis that vocational education stands. It is generally famous because the criteria required by modern science emphasize consistent scientific methods and a scientific explanation of nature.

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It makes the person interact with the work life and enrich their skill to do in the best way. The market need also works on a similar platform. Vocational education provides several opportunities in getting jobs in society. This can really be helpful to the prisoners in learning the strategies and techniques.

### **Theory of Rehabilitation and Vocational Education**

The theory of rehabilitation believes that offenders have a condition of mental illness and hold the wrong values, however, criminals indulge in criminal activities. Therefore, this theory suggests the criminal needs corrections or treatment, not punishment. So, accordingly, the Criminal Justice System has used this approach to correctional punishment to reform the prisoner and re-integrate them into society again.

Now the process of rehabilitation has to begin in a definite and pre-experimental way. All the techniques and strategies involved in the rehabilitation process and part of vocational education can be one major stakeholder in that. In their experiment on rehabilitation approach among prisoners, found that criminal who commit a crime is a illness, so, it should be correct and treated by using giving them professional training or by their skill enhancement.

### **Vocational Education Model for Prisoners**

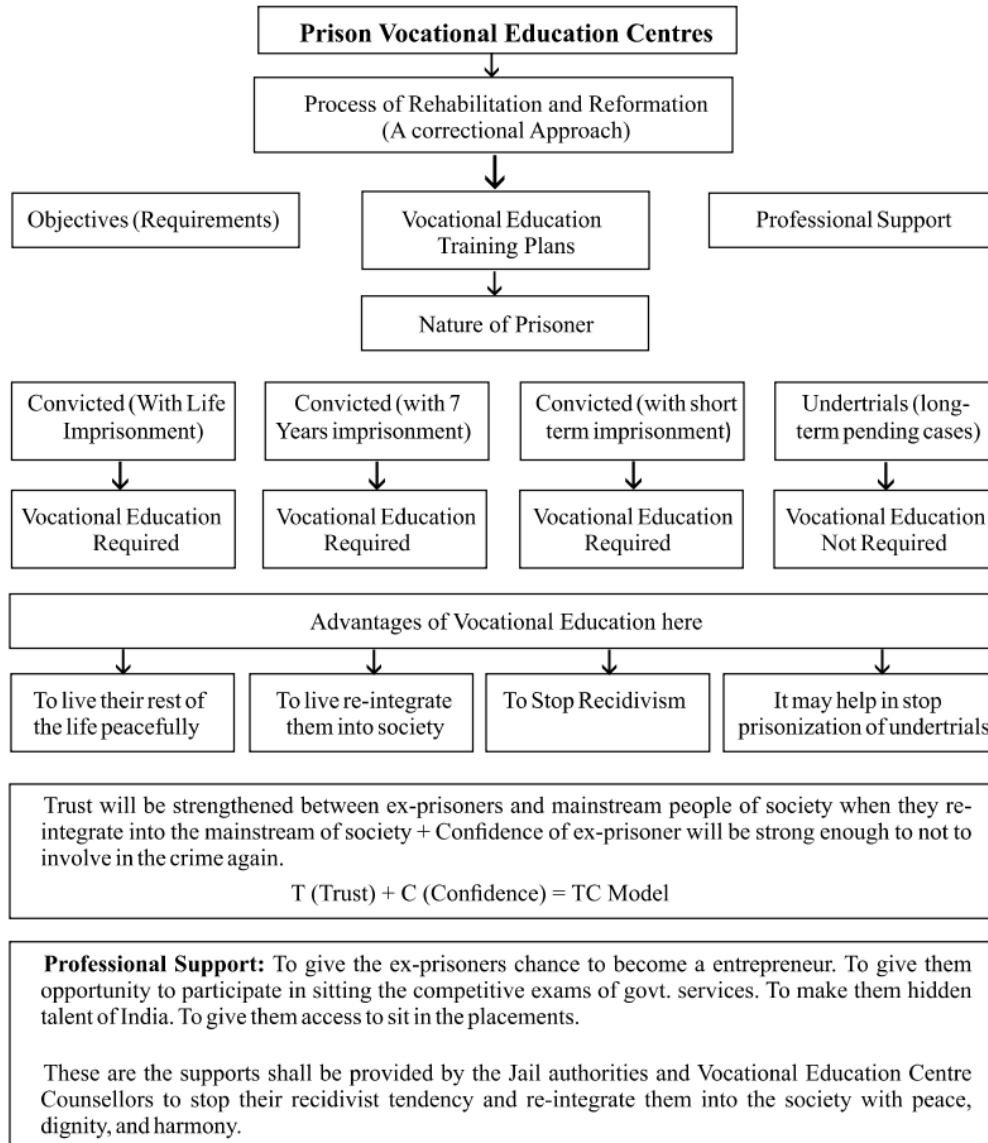
There are categories available in the prison among the prisoners based on the Jail norms and rules. Prisons have their system to address the categories of the prisoners based on the nature of the crime committed and accordingly, they allot the respective cells in jails. The concept of vocational education in prisons may not be helpful to every prisoner but it could be a great key to the certain type of category of criminals in prison.

Based on the categories of the seriousness of the crimes and the required training accordingly are addressed in a model of the vocational education model for prisoners in the prisons in India. The respective vocational education model is proposed for the criminal who has received a life sentence by the criminal justice system. Majorly a condition works here in terms of life imprisonment prisoners that their conduct should be good during the prison.

As the prison vocational model suggests that, not only the IGNOU is responsible for providing the education in prisons even NGOs and other agencies shall develop the vocational education curriculum for prisons. It may help them in controlling the recidivism tendency among the prisoners. And also, society can use this man force as an important asset. The contribution to society by these prisoners might be the biggest contribution one day. The best practices examples can make the people more useful.

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### Representation of Proposed Model of Vocational Education for Prisoners



### TC Model (Trust and Confidence)

Based on the prison rehabilitation model which is a form of prison vocational education model can be improvised the behaviour of prisoners. The theories of rehabilitation, it reveals that trust increase with confidence. The TC model is described in detail below.

**Trust:** Here the trust stands between the prisoner who was released from prison and mainstream people of society who interacts with him with dignity. If the training and correction process will be done effectively ultimately the prisoner will not be involved in the crime again. The tendency of recidivism will stop here completely if the prison system executes the vocational education program effectively.

**Confidence:** Confidence among ex-prisoners will increase when they get fair treatment from society. If the trust-building process occurs properly this will automatically increase. The confidence in living life peacefully may stop the tendency of recidivism.

## Suggestions

The research study suggests framing a prison vocation education framework for the prisoners in Indian prisons likewise vocational education program for differently abled persons. No literature has suggested about the prison vocational education program.

There are lack of resources and agencies in the prisons to address the vocational education for prisoners. The prison ministry shall intervene in prison education. A uniform vernacular language medium-based education shall be introduced in the prisons of India.

## Conclusion

The existing literature provides a huge research gap in field of prison education. There are very few empirical research available in terms of prison education. The National Education Policy, 2020 has come up with a unique approach to address vocational education for several sectors in India (Kannan, V. 2021). There is a high need of contemplating the prison vocational education for Indian Prisoners in the prisons in India.

There is secondary data-based research on a proposed model addressing the need of prison vocational education programs in India. There is a number of prisons in India has become a ideal prisons but the rehabilitation activities are the same. The researcher did not find any set vocational education curriculum in the prisons of the India based on the secondary data available. A TC (Trust and Confidence) model framework suggested as the outcome of prison vocational education training programs in Indian prisons.

## Scope of the Study

There are no dimensions addressed to prison education in India. There is a big space that has been generated in the education system of prisons for prisoners. There is a need to conduct empirical studies to develop the curriculum plan for prison vocational education to the prisoners or their well-being.

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