

How Effective is Vocational Education and Training for Rehabilitation in Kenyan Prisons? A Study Protocol

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Abstract Rehabilitation and reformation of offenders is one of the core functions of the Kenya Prisons Service. Kenya Prisons service has various modules of training that make the staff more effective and professional in carrying out their mandate of securing prisoners for the purpose of rehabilitation and reintegration back into society. Learning strategies can open up opportunities for increase in participation in formal and vocational training, broaden prisoner's academic horizons and provide a second chance to learn the skills and competences needed in order to reintegrate in society and hence reduce recidivism. Recidivism is still evidenced in Kenya and therefore there is need to keenly investigate and interrogate specifically the Vocational Education and training programmes offered and find out whether they really meet the needs and expectations in assisting integration of Ex-prisoners back to society. The purpose of this research study is to determine the effectiveness of the methodologies employed in delivery of VET to aid in integrating Ex-prisoners to the society. The objectives of the study are to establish; the learning strategies employed, the nature and types of VET programmes being delivered in Kenya Prison, the adequacy and appropriateness of resources used in Prison training programme delivery, the perceptions on Vocational Education Training and other training fields in Kenya Prisons, and challenges of VET trained Ex-prisoners in the field of work. The study is based on the assumption that the prison authorities would spare time for the inmates to be interviewed and fill questionnaires fearlessly, and that the in-charge will be ready to respond to questionnaires without fear or intimidation from prison authorities. Target population will be of 1700 prison trainees, 25 prison trainers and 10 prison administrators. The study population will be a total of 369 prison trainees, 25 prison trainers, 10 administrators and 50 ex-convicts. Further the Prison authorities have sufficient data of the trained reconvicts already integrated in the society. Purposive sampling will be employed to reach out to the aforementioned key informants. Systematic random sampling will be used to identify the trainees to be interviewed. Reliability of the research instrument will be done by carrying out a pilot study and the items found to be inconsistent with objectives of the study will be left out so as to increase reliability. During the pilot study, the split half Pearson's product moment correlation (r) formulae will be used to establish the extent to which items were consistent. Validity of research instruments will be done by consulting Vocational Education experts at the University of Eldoret and the pilot study will be used to test the content validity of the instruments. Document analysis, observation and semi-structured interviews will be conducted to gather the data. The proposed study will utilize content analysis approach in analyzing qualitative data and will involve quantitating where numbers will articulate the message clearer than words. In this study the quantitative data collected using questionnaires will be coded, entered, cleaned and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS 22) computer software. Basic features of the data will be explained by descriptive statistics such as frequencies, Mean and percentages. The Chi-Square test statistic (χ^2) will be used to evaluate tests of Independence, whether association exists between Independent and dependent variables. The qualitative data obtained from the interviews will be transcribed, coded and interpreted thematically. Results of the proposed study will be discussed extensively and recommendations of the proposed situation analyses will seek to contribute to the information in aiding in the integration of trained ex-prisoners back to the society through the VET training.

Keywords: vocational education training, rehabilitation, prisons, recidivism

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1. Introduction

The introduction of vocational education and training (VET) programs as part of prisoner rehabilitation offers opportunities for offenders to reduce recidivism, thereby increasing the likelihood of successful re-integration into the community and reducing the risk of reoffending. The programs target the provision of pre-release/transition and employment opportunities, the opportunity to be involved in meaningful prison work, the expansion of vocational training, and more access to advice about health services, education, training and housing prior to release [1].

The aim of establishing prison institutions all over the world is to provide rehabilitation and correctional facility for the convict thereby providing an effective environment that reduces the risk of reoffending. Inmates who enrolled in educational and training programmes while incarcerated had lower recidivism rates than those who did not attend the programmes [2]. Inmates need education and training programmes that not only teach them to read and write but also provide them with the necessary skills that promote a positive transition to society when they are released. Efforts in this direction would help promote better participation of inmates in all prison education programmes and will go along away to help the prisoner rehabilitation processes [3].

Education is the whole process by which one generation transmits one culture to the succeeding generation' or better still as a process by which people are prepared to live effectively and efficiently in their environment'. Jacques Maritain expressed the same idea more romantically: 'The education of man is a human awakening - its aim is to guide man, in the evolving dynamism through which he shapes himself as a human person, armed with knowledge, strength of judgment and moral virtues. According to [2] the major focus of the Prison rehabilitation Programme should be to increase the inmates' education or skills level and thus improve their chances of success in life once they are released from custody and easily integrate to society.

The conventional Prisons System was introduced in Kenya by the British East Africa Protectorate through the enactment of East Africa Prisons Regulation in April 1902. At independence, the reforms in the penal systems were stepped up with the enactment of chapters 90 and 92 of the constitution leading to the establishment of the Kenya Prison Service in 1911 [4]. Since its inception, there has been gradual increase in the number of prisons, prison staff and prisoners-which currently stands at an average population of 54,000 [5]. The steadily growing size of this incarcerated population jeopardizes sustainable development and occasions the need to accord relevant and quality education to prisoners. The Kenya Prison Service was created under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Heritage and Sports. Currently, Kenya has 92 Correctional Institutions, that is, 89 prisons, 2 Borstals and 1 Youth Training Centre. Liberalization of education in Kenya in 2003 has culminated in expansion of education services throughout the country including Kenyan prisons. Consequently, many inmates have been equipped with requisite skills and knowledge that are crucial for national development. Kenya has registered laudable steps in an attempt to reform prisons in general, and particularly education services [6].

Research consistently indicates that educational attainment and employment stability are inversely associated with criminal reoffending [7]. In the United States (U.S.), the prison population is characterized by lower levels of literacy and educational achievement when compared to the general population [8]. As many as 37% of state prison inmates do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, compared to 19% of the general population. This discrepancy is even wider when looking at higher education, with half of the general population having some postsecondary experience compared to 14% of state prisoners. These figures suggest that offenders and ex-offenders are at a substantial disadvantage in a job market that increasingly requires postsecondary education or training [9].

Employment is theorized to reduce criminal behaviour because of its impact on social engagement, pro-social identity, and self-sufficiency [10]. Many criminal offenders enter prison with limited job skills and no stable employment history. Offenders with educational and employment deficits at the time of incarceration often emerge from prison with employment prospects that have been further diminished due to deterioration of skills, experience, and network contacts [11]. Given positive associations between education, employment, and desistance from crime, researchers and practitioners suggest that incarceration should be organized such that it functions as a mechanism for enhancing offenders' human capital [12]. Corrections-based vocational and education programs are intended to reduce offender recidivism by enhancing educational attainment and employability.

Prisoners in Uganda, have the lowest formal and vocational skills compared to the general population despite introduction of prison education in Uganda in 1996 [13]. A survey by Uganda Human Rights Commission (2015) shows that 85% of the prisoners in all the 225 government prisons lack basic education, nor do they have any vocational skill and 80% of prisoners are school drop outs. The survey further revealed that less than a quarter of prisoners in Uganda participate in education and training. Low participation in formal and vocational training among prisoners in Uganda can be associated with poor or lack of learning strategies [14]. Lack of knowledge of an appropriate learning strategy or poor use of a learning strategy may lead to failure, poor performance and loss of interest in learning process [15].

Rehabilitation and reformation of offenders is one of the core functions of the Kenya Prisons Service. It comprises a number of various intervention mechanisms that are employed in varying degrees to provide purposeful activities for prisoners, challenge their offending behaviours, provide basic education to tackle illiteracy and equip them with life and work skills.

According to Kenya prisons report on needs assessment for developing educational and vocational training programs for inmates in Kenya 2009, Vocational training is offered in 60% of the institutions with developed various forms of apprenticeship such as upholstery, fashion and design, tailoring, pottery, carpentry, metal work, welding, stone curving, leather work, mat making, motor vehicle mechanics, polishing, hair dressing, modeling, farming, printing and building construction among others.

Kenya Prisons service has various modules of training that make the staff more effective and professional in

carrying out their mandate of securing prisoners for the purpose of rehabilitation and reintegration back into society. These staff training include: Development courses, International attachments, workshops and seminars.

It is against this background that this study is being undertaken to determine the effectiveness of VET training methodologies employed in Kenyan prisoners in aiding prisoners reintegrate back to the society.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Kenya has set a target to achieve industrialization status by the year 2030. The Kenya vision 2030 aims to transform Kenya into a newly industrializing, “middle- income country providing a high quality life to all its citizens by the year 2030”. It’s based on three “pillars”: economics, social and the political. The social pillar seeks to build a just and cohesive society with social equality in a clean and secure environment. The vision for security is “a society free from danger and fear”. This can be achieved by institute reform in the Prisons Service among others [16].

Recidivism has been defined as return to custody for any reason, including technical violations others see it as re-arrest, reconviction and re-incarceration. Recidivism in a Criminal Justice context could be defined as the reversion of an individual to criminal behaviour after he or she has been convicted of a prior offence, sentenced and presumably corrected [17].

The Kenya Prisons Service Strategic Plan 2005 - 2009, aims at turning prisons into proper correctional facilities with human considerations rather than places of torture and punishment [18]. According to Penal reform international strategic plan 2015-2020, one of the core functions of prisons is to provide education, healthcare treatment and vocational training to prepare prisoners for release. Kenya Prisons have formulated necessary strategies in vocational programmes with the purpose of developing skills to assist the offenders to become self-employed when they leave prison [6].

The Kenya Vision 2030 Social pillar seeks to create a just, cohesive and equitable social development order in a clean and secure environment. This will be achieved through focusing on eight social sectors namely: education and training; health; water and sanitation; environment; housing and urbanization; gender; youth and vulnerable groups. Special consideration will also be given to marginalized communities and persons with various disabilities [16].

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the total prison population including pre-trial detainees and remand prisoners stood at 54,000 as at February, 2012. This is against the official capacity of prison system in Kenya which is 22,000. The occupancy level based on official capacity is 236.4%, a fact that there is overcrowding in the 99 institutions established across the country, which accommodates prisoners, according to the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government. This high figure of prisoners is occasioned by a growing number of re-offenders being incarcerated [19]. About 700 out of 744 inmates released under Presidential amnesty it was found out that more than 60% of the inmates had returned to prison. This extraordinarily

high rate of recidivism has tremendous costs in terms of public safety and in money spent to arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate re-offenders [17].

Data on recidivism around the world show that most offenders leaving prison are likely to be rearrested within 3 years of release; nearly 80% of prisoners are likely to be rearrested within a decade of release [20]. Studies conducted around the world suggest that re-arrest may occur within the first year after release if no support is available to the released offender. High rates of recidivism mean more crime, more victims, and more pressure on the criminal justice system [17].

In Kenya, released citizens have a 75% chance of committing another crime and a 50% chance of returning to prison two years after release from prisons. There are inadequate reintegration programs in the prisons and very few resources on the outside to help returning citizens avoid recidivism. Mbatha, 2010, gave a recommendation for a detailed study on the methodologies employed in delivery of VET to aid prisoners reintegrate back to the society [21].

Families suffer when the sole breadwinner is sentenced to prison, children are denied proper education and the government as well spends millions in maintaining convicts while in prison, an amount which can be channeled in productive venture to generate greater social benefits to the citizen. Against this background thus, there is need to keenly investigate and interrogate specifically the Vocational Education Training programmes offered and find out whether they really meet the needs and expectations of the prison inmates in securing their full rehabilitation and in essence assist them in the integration to society. With the widespread concern of escalation in insecurity, prison congestion and recidivism, studies conducted in this field so far have not provided enough data to prove and determine beyond doubt the effectiveness of the VET training programmes offered to the prison inmates [22].

Use of proper learning strategies can open up opportunities for increase in participation in formal and vocational training, broaden prisoner’s academic horizons and provide a second chance to learn the skills and competences needed in order to reintegrate in society [23]. This is central for adequate implementation of vocational education in prisons, otherwise it may lead to wasted Government initiative and commitment on education as a rehabilitation strategy for prisoners reflected by low enrollment, high drop outs, overcrowding in prisons and increased expenditure.

In summary, the Prisons Service system in Kenya as in many other places has not been able to achieve its stated goals. There is need for penal reforms to enable the Prisons Department perform effectively the four major functions geared towards reformation and rehabilitation of the offender and the reduction of crime rates in society. This main objective is possible to achieve through a research undertaking into the factors undermining the effectiveness of prison VET training in the rehabilitation of offenders. Only when we have identified the areas of weakness in the training can we be able to make any tangible suggestions towards solving the problems by way of penal reforms.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The overall objective of this research study is to determine the effectiveness of the methodologies employed in delivery of VET to aid in integrating Ex-prisoners back to the society and avoid recidivism in Mombasa County, Kenya.

1.2.1. Specific Objectives

- i. To establish the types of VET programmes being delivered in Kenya Prisons.
- ii. To establish the learning strategies employed in the VET training.
- iii. To establish the adequacy and appropriateness of resources used in Prison training programme.
- iv. To establish perceptions on Vocational Education Training and other training fields in Kenya Prisons
- v. To determine challenges of VET trained Ex-prisoners in the world of work.

1.2.2. Research Questions

- i. What is the types of VET programmes being delivered in Kenya Prisons?
- ii. What are the learning strategies employed in the VET training in Kenya Prisons?
- iii. How adequate and appropriate are the resources used in Prison training programme delivery?
- iv. What are the perceptions towards Vocational Education Training and other training fields in Kenya Prisons?
- v. What are the challenges by VET trained Ex-prisoners in the world of work?

1.3. Assumption of the Study

This study will be undertaken on the following assumptions:

- i. The study assumes that the prison authorities would spare time for the inmates to be interviewed and fill questionnaires fearlessly, and that the in charge will be ready to respond to questionnaires without fear or intimidation from prison authorities.
- ii. The Prison authority has sufficient data of the trained reconvicts already integrated in the society.
- iii. The study samples will be heterogeneous enough to generate representative data for entire population.

1.4. Limitations of the Study

The study has the following limitations:

The study will only be carried out in selected prisons. These will be Prisons that offer Vocational education and training thus the study results may not adequately represent the whole experience in Kenya.

1.5. Scope of the Study

Three sites have been identified as study areas based on purposive sampling of the existence of Vocational Education Training. The selection will further take into consideration the need to reflect geographical, religious and social diversities so that lessons are more likely to be applicable to Kenya as a whole. The five Prisons selected

include Shimo la Tewa Maximum Security prison, Medium and women prisons in Shimo la Tewa, Bostal Prison and Mombasa Remand.

1.6. Theoretical Frame-work

1.6.1. Learning Theory

The research will be based on interpretivist/constructivist paradigm. This position is described by [24] as anti-positivist since it is contended that there is a fundamental difference between the subject matters of natural and social sciences. In the social world it is argued that individuals and groups make sense of situations based upon their individual experience, memories and expectations. Meaning therefore is constructed and (over time) constantly re-constructed through experience resulting in many differing interpretations.

It is these multiple interpretations that create a social reality in which people act. Under this paradigm, therefore, it is seen as important to discover and understand these meanings and the contextual factors that influence, determine and affect the interpretations reached by different individuals. Interpretivists consider that there are multiple realities [25]. Since 'all knowledge is relative to the knower' interpretivists aim to work alongside others as they make sense of, draw meaning from and create their realities in order to understand their points of view, and to interpret these experiences in the context of the researchers academic experience [26], and hence is inductive or theory building. The focus of the researcher is on understanding the meanings and interpretations of 'social actors' and to understand their world from their point of view, is highly contextual and hence is not widely generalisable [27]. Understanding what people are thinking and feeling, as well as how they communicate, verbally and non-verbally are considered important [28] and given the subjective nature of this paradigm, and the emphasis on language, it is associated with qualitative approaches to data gathering. The close nature of the researcher and the researched in this paradigm, and the risk that any interpretation is framed within the mind of the researcher means that steps must be introduced to avoid bias.

1.6.2. Theoretical Framework Model

The theoretical framework guiding this study is based on 'what works' model used by Martinson R and Edward Latessa, 1974. It is also referred to as evidence-based practice; the What Works movement demonstrates empirically that theoretically sound, well-designed programs that meet certain conditions can appreciably reduce recidivism rates for offenders. Through the review and analysis of hundreds of studies, researchers have identified a set of principles that should guide correctional programs.

The Canadian 'what works' model suggests that reductions in recidivism can be maximised for high-risk offenders if they are involved in learning programs which target factors that are known to be directly related to the reasons for offending (including antisocial attitudes, gambling, substance misuse and anger). [28] noted that the higher-risk offenders will benefit most from these rehabilitation interventions. In this model, risk is assessed in terms of static risk factors that are not amenable to

intervention (including age of onset of crime, offence history and family structure) and dynamic risk factors that might change over time (such as family and social factors, substance abuse history, educational factors and non-severe mental health problems). Risk factors that are dynamic or amenable to change through intervention are also referred to as ‘criminogenic needs’. Interventions consist of learning experiences which use cognitive-behavioural approaches based on psychological theories of behaviour management. The extent to which learning is facilitated or inhibited is mediated by offender age, ethnicity, gender, disability and socioeconomic status [28] These factors have also been called ‘responsivity’ factors.

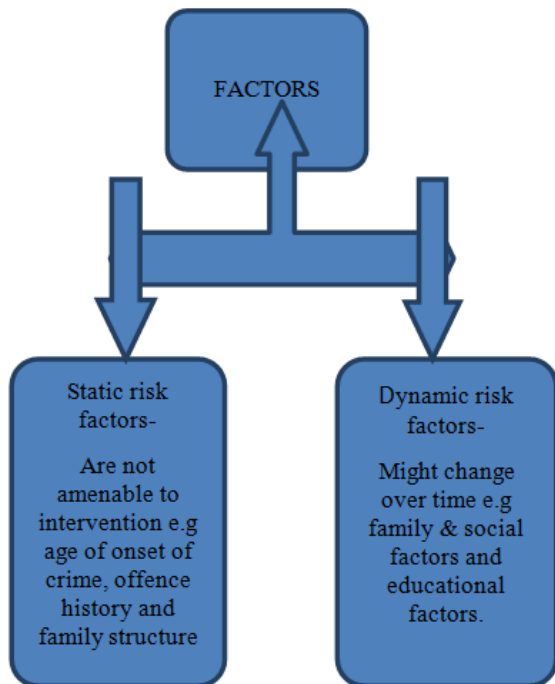


Figure 1. “What works model” (Source: Andrew and Bonta 1998)

This theory of rehabilitation has been influential, particularly in Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. However, [12] considers that the ‘what works’ movement in the United States evolved from a sociological rather than a psychological perspective and is applied in a different way. In particular, intervention programs for offenders in the United States focus on the community environment and the ex-offender’s employment, education, health support and housing needs in that community. Intervention programs, known as ‘prisoner reentry’ programs in United States, assist the transition of ex-prisoners into the community as law-abiding citizens. [12] is of the view that combining the Canadian model of ‘what works’ with that applied in the United States would be of benefit.

According to [29] review and analysis of hundreds of studies, researchers have identified a set of principles that should guide correctional programs. The first is the risk principle, or the who to target – those offenders who pose the higher risk of continued criminal conduct. This principle states that our most intensive correctional treatment and intervention programs should be reserved for higher-risk offenders. Risk in this context refers to those offenders with a higher probability of recidivating. Why waste our programs on offenders who do not need

them? This is a waste of resources, and more importantly, research has clearly demonstrated that when we place lower-risk offenders in our more structured programs, we often increase their failure rates, and thus reduce the overall effectiveness of the program. There are several reasons this occurs. First, placing low-risk offenders with higher-risk offenders only serves to increase the chances of failure for the low risk. For examples, let’s say that your teenage son or daughter did not use drugs, but got into some trouble with the law. Would you want them in a program or group with heavy drug users? Of course you wouldn’t, since it is more likely that the higher risk youth would influence your child more than the other way around.

Second, placing low-risk offenders in these programs also tends to disrupt their prosocial networks; in other words, the very attributes that make them low risk become interrupted, such as school, employment, family, and so forth. Remember, if they do not have these attributes it is unlikely they are low risk to begin with. The risk principle can best be seen from a recent study of offenders in Ohio who were placed in a halfway house or community based correctional facility (CBCF). The study found that the recidivism rate for higher risk offenders who were placed in a halfway house or CBCF was reduced, while the recidivism rates for the low risk offenders that were placed in the programs actually increased.

The second principle is referred to as the need principle, or the what to target – criminogenic factors that are highly correlated with criminal conduct. The need principle states that programs should target crime producing needs, such as anti-social peer associations, substance abuse, lack of problem solving and self-control skills, and other factors that are highly correlated with criminal conduct. Furthermore, programs need to ensure that the vast majority of their interventions are focused on these factors. Non criminogenic factors such as self-esteem, physical conditioning, understanding one’s culture or history, and creative abilities will not have much effect on recidivism rates. An example of a program that tends to target non-criminogenic factors can be seen in offender-based military style boot camps. These programs tend to focus on non criminogenic factors, such as drill and ceremony, physical conditioning, discipline, self-esteem, and bonding offenders together. Because they tend to focus on non-crime producing needs, most studies show that boot camps have little impact on future criminal behaviour.

The third principle is the treatment principle, or the how – the ways in which correctional programs should target risk and need factors. This principle states that the most effective programs are behavioral in nature. Behavioral programs have several attributes. First, they are centered on the present circumstances and risk factors that are responsible for the offender’s behaviour. Second, they are action oriented rather than talk oriented. Offenders do something about their difficulties rather than just talk about them.

Fourth, they teach offenders new, prosocial skills to replace the anti-social ones like stealing, cheating and lying, through modeling, practice, and reinforcement. Examples of behavioral programs would include structured social learning programs where new skills are taught, and behaviours and attitudes are consistently

reinforced, cognitive behavioral programs that target attitudes, values, peers, substance abuse, anger, etc., and family based interventions that train families on appropriate behavioral techniques. Interventions based on these approaches are very structured and emphasize the importance of modeling and behavioral rehearsal techniques that engender self-efficacy, challenge of cognitive distortions, and assist offenders in developing good problem solving and self-control skills. These strategies have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing recidivism. Non-behavioral interventions often used in programs would include drug and alcohol education, fear tactics and other emotional appeals, talk therapy, nondirective client centered approaches, having them read books, lectures, milieu therapy, and self-help. There is little empirical evidence that these approaches will lead to long term reduction in recidivism.

Finally, a host of other considerations will increase correctional program effectiveness. These include targeting responsibly factors such as a lack of motivation or other barriers that can influence someone's participation in a program, making sure you have well trained and interpersonally sensitive staff; providing close monitoring of offender's whereabouts and associates; assisting with other needs that the offender might have; ensuring the program is delivered as designed through quality assurance processes; and providing structured aftercare. These program attributes all enhance correctional program effectiveness.

In summary we have who, what, and how of correctional intervention, also known as "What Works." The theory emphasizes on the need to use the four factors in assisting Ex-prisoners integrate back in society and also assist in avoidance of recidivism in Kenya.

1.8. The Conceptual Framework

The research aimed at determining the extent to which Vocational Education and Training aids in integration of trained ex-prisoners back to the society in Kenyan prisons. Vocational Education and training in Kenya Prisons aims in equipping inmates with knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly on labour market to reduce recidivism.

The conceptual framework therefore is an illustration of the relationship between Vocational Educational and Training in prisons and the rate of integration of trained ex-prisoners back to the society. The Prison VET are expected to assist improve prison conditions and inmates rehabilitation programmes as the changes are realised, inmates will still make further demands on the prisons provisions hence calling for more reforms to improve the programmes.

Reforms process is therefore unending and the prisons system has got to continuously review its performance and delivery of VET training to the prisons community if programmes are to be efficient and effective.

The goal of conceptual framework is to categorize and describe concepts relevant to the study and map relationships among them and also defining how variables interrelate. The conceptual framework for this study is figuratively shown in Figure 2;

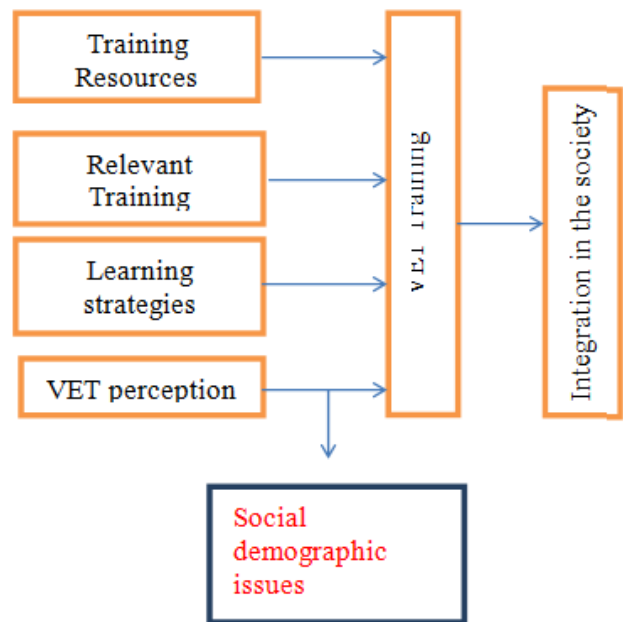


Figure 2. The Conceptual Framework (Source: Author, 2017)

1.9. Operational Definition of Key Terms

Inmates - Persons held in serving a sentence of imprisonment and undergoing treatment.

Maximum Security Prison - Prisons are designed to hold the most dangerous and aggressive inmates. They have high concrete walls or double-perimeter fences, gun towers with armed guards.

Medium Prison - Medium security prisons hold inmates who have committed less serious crimes, such as minor assaults and small thefts. The inmates in medium security prisons are generally less dangerous than those in maximum security prisons. Medium security prisons may be surrounded by fences with guard towers. Some have educational and athletic facilities similar to schools.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training – an aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupants in various sectors of economic and social life.

Vocational Education and Training – Education and training which aims to equip people with knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly on labour market.

Recidivism - The act of a person repeating an undesirable behavior after they have either experienced negative consequences of that behavior, or have been treated or trained to extinguish that behavior.

Rehabilitation - The result of any social or psychological intervention intended to reduce the offenders' further criminal activity.

2. Literature Review

Recidivism is a return to criminal behavior after release, and the effectiveness of corrections is usually measured by rates of recidivism. Recognized factors impact recidivism

rates. Among them are: socio economic status of Prisoners, effectiveness of post release supervision (for parolees), length of time incarcerated, severity and seriousness of crime committed, access to data which varies from state to state, and educational level of achievement of each individual [30].

According to the Journal of Correctional Education 61(4), 2010 one conclusion that can be made regarding recidivists and their return to criminal behavior has been offered by Harriet Gagliano in her doctoral dissertation where she writes, the fact that 60% of prison inmates cannot read above the sixth grade level "provides some indication of one major reason for their criminal activity". Steven Klein of the US Dept. of Education writes, "American prisoners have consistently tested at the lowest levels of educational achievement, and at the highest levels of illiteracy and educational disability of any segment in our society." (qtd in Burton). He and his colleagues conclude, "considering the vast numbers of inmates that do not possess the basic social and educational skills that they need to function in society, it should come as no surprise that many of those released from prison or jail will eventually return".

In U.S.A, just over 40% of young Black men, ages 22–30, with less than a high school diploma were incarcerated on an average day in 1999, and more than half of Black high school dropouts in their early 30s had been incarcerated at some point in their lives [30]. In addition, prisoners have lower than average levels of income in the months before their incarceration and lower than average educational attainment [7].

Six hundred and fifty thousand prisoners are released each year from federal, state, and private prisons into the communities of America. When these ex- inmates re-enter society, they seek employment, but with limited education and low literacy levels their prospects for becoming employed are reduced [31]. A three-year study of 1,205 releases showed a strong positive relationship between prisoners obtaining education of any kind in prison and the reduction of recidivism. Because education has been shown to reduce recidivism, federal, state and private prisons offer correctional education classes to inmates. The most widely offered correctional education classes are Adult Basic Education, General Education Diploma (GED) preparation, and vocational training [31].

2.1. Nature of VET Programmes

Kenyan Prisons have formulated necessary strategies in vocational programmes with the purpose of developing skills to assist offenders to become self-employed when they leave prison [6]. Among vocational rehabilitation programmes are Livestock production, which encompasses dairy production, rabbit rearing, bee keeping, fish farming, floriculture, sericulture, mushroom production, carpentry, garment making, upholstery, metalwork, soap making, saloon management, cosmetology, masonry, painting, knitting, pottery and brick making. All these activities are aimed at equipping the inmates with necessary skills that would enable them to actively participate in positive socioeconomic engagement upon release and to reduce recidivism among the offenders being released to the community [6]. However, some of these rehabilitation

programmes exist only on paper according to [32] and have not been implemented. According to [33] most vocational programmes are designed around available resources and not around the needs of offenders while according to [34], Personal awareness and development programme was found to cut across all inmates irrespective of age. According to him, Kenyan prisons do not have special rehabilitation programs targeting psychosocial adjustment of the elderly offenders. In summary, he concludes by indicating that, educational and vocational rehabilitation programmes should be provided in a way that targets the criminogenic needs of offenders.

According to [35], Prison institutions should be provided with all the facilities needed for vocational education and training thus; standard workshops, modern facilities and as well improved remuneration for all the stake holders. There should be regular evaluation of the programmes to determine the strength and weakness of the programmes. Non-governmental organization should be involved in funding and supervising the programmes.

Some of the barriers that prevent women from getting their educational needs met in prison are current policies, availability of programs, and the quality of programs [36]. [37] criticized that vocational educational programs in female institutions tend to be gender-stereotyped and lower-paid professions in comparison to vocational education programs in male facilities. Nonetheless, the researchers recommended that facilities should offer programs that develop marketable skills of female inmates in order to enhance their ability to provide for their children and overcome destitution. Researchers encourage the development of gender-responsive educational programs designed to address the unique needs, barriers, learning, and relationships styles of female inmates [37].

In 2006, Young and Mattucci conducted a study on a pre-plumbing program involving 60 incarcerated women from four different facilities of New York State. The program incorporated hands on work and evaluation, teamwork, optimism, and confidence building. The inclusion of these aspects allowed the researchers to not only build qualities that are essential in the work force, but also in the women's self-esteem. The results of this study indicated that women improved their tests scores on the pre-plumbing program, reported feeling more confident about themselves. Additionally, correctional staff noticed an improvement in the women's interpersonal behavior [37].

Another educational program specifically designed to assist female offenders improve their relationships with their children is Partners in Parenting (PIP) [38]. This parenting program was offered to 219 incarcerated mothers in various facilities in Colorado. The objective of PIP was to strengthen family relationships and promote positive behaviors so that mothers can be good and effective parents once they reunite with their children. The results of this study showed that women who participated in PIP improved their parenting skills and understanding of parenting, which is expected to improve the parent-child relationship [38].

The Shelby County Division of Corrections (SCDC) in Memphis, Tennessee also incorporated gender specific programming focusing on the needs of their female prison population. The program, Lifeskills for Women, sought to

motivate, educate, and empower female offenders to expand their personal and interpersonal skills, increase awareness, and construct links to the community [39]. A study was conducted to evaluate the effects of the program on 144 inmates after their release. The study found that after a year, 21% of females that participated in program were arrested again, and 10% were re-incarcerated, compared to 70% of re-arrests and 62.8% re-incarcerations among the general female population who did not participate in the program. The study also evaluated the effects of the program on 98 participants after two years of release. Data revealed that 27.9% of the participants were rearrested and 0% were incarcerated; in comparison to 66.7% of re-arrests and 58.2% re-incarcerations of the general female population [39]. SCDC's Life skills for Women proved to be beneficial to participants, SCDC, and the Memphis community because it was able to increase the employment rate of inmates, augmented tax contributors in the community, lessen criminal behaviors, build a feeling of community safety, reunited families, and improved personal and financial independence of inmates [39].

While empirical research associates educating inmates with reductions on recidivism, cost efficient alternatives to incarceration, and improvements to the prison environment [38], some scholars and policy makers do not share the same sentiment. This can be observed by criticisms of studies on prison education programs and through policies that have diminished educational opportunities for inmates.

Should programming be limited to academic, vocational and social skills? Each can help prisoners upon release from prison and even while in prison. How about artistic skills or moral education? What is an appropriate and effective education. How do taxpayers get "the most for the money"? Many state penitentiaries offer a wide-array of programming. The programs focus on academic, vocational, social, artistic, and sharing techniques and strategies for dealing with emotions in an appropriate manner. Programs should focus on effective education programs, which are those helping prisoners to deal with social skills and techniques and strategies for dealing with emotions. Most statistics for a "typical" prisoner in the DOC is a non-white, 25-year-old male with little or no employability skills and lack of formal education. When he leaves prison just a few years older without a formal education or training, the likelihood of him returning is high.

The statistic is not found in any other literature and seems very high Vacca concludes that education programs in prisons should stress practical applications of literacy (filling out forms, making requests in letters inside and outside of prison). The GED Testing Service (GEDTS) made little changes to the GED since it appeared after World War I. GEDTS revamped the test in 2001. The test evolved to a more "hands on approach" to daily living. Many questions regarding daily activities were included on the test, including rental contracts and forms. Most prison jobs require literacy skills and often require the prisoner to have a GED. In addition, inmates can use reading as a way to pass time (p. 302). Literacy skills can be applied in the prison and are important to success outside of the prison upon release [40].

In the year 2000, prisoners were no longer permitted to apply for Pell Grants. As a direct result, prisoners were no

longer able to attend college courses held at prison to earn a higher degree. Due to lack of funding, universities and community colleges pulled programs run at state prison institutions. Though prisoners received less than 1% of all Pell Grant funds the concept of prisoners receiving a free higher education enraged law-abiding, tax-paying citizens and lawmakers. It seemed unfair for prisoners to have the opportunity to earn degrees while incarcerated. Recently the "get tough on crime politicians" called for an end to "country club" prisons, which resulted in Pell Grants being eliminated [41]. In essence, denial of Pell Grant application for prisoners shut college programming down in prisons because colleges could or would not offer the college courses free. Few lobbyists push for prison reform in the form of opportunities in education. Unless a person is touched personally by a loved one or family member going to prison, most people really do not give much thought to educational opportunities for those who are incarcerated or see the long-term outcomes as potentially positive for not only the offender, but for society as a whole.

In Michigan, Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation classes are taught in addition to Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. If a prisoner earns a GED early in his/her prison term, an opportunity to earn a CTE certificate may become possible. However, some programs end with a prison issued certificate, which may not be recognized as equally as a GED certificate, within the public or workforce. The MDOC is currently pushing for state or national certification in each CTE program offered. Also, waiting lists are designed to assist those being released from prison in a short time rather than for those serving long sentences.

Most programming is focused at lower security levels and at those potentially leaving prison soon. The MDOC CTE committees are working to provide relevant training for those incarcerated in Michigan. Current programs offered include: Auto Mechanics, Auto Body, Business Education Technology, Visual Graphics, Computer Repair, Custodial Maintenance, Building Trades, Horticulture, Food Technology and Hospitality, Electronics, Machine Tool, Welding and Optical Technology. There are many areas for improvement and many opportunities for research, including researching which work fields are predicted to have the most openings and then focus energy in training opportunities within those fields.

Over 7 in 10 of prisoners who currently hold a GED earned the diploma while in a correctional facility. Inmates raised without two parents are less likely to have a high school diploma or GED [7]. It is difficult not to draw a conclusion relative to a link between education level and incarceration. More research could be done. Other common factors must play a role in typical offenders, including socio-economic factors, parenting issues and having a family or individual history of mental illness.

When state-run mental hospitals closed in Michigan, prison populations skyrocketed. Many prisoners have a history of mental health issues. As with many other areas mentioned, appropriate mental health services and treatment concerns need further research. In addition, there are high numbers of students participating in education programs

in prison with a history of prior participation in special education. Though these students may not qualify for special education services in the DOC, having the history documented will help future researchers in possibly linking the two factors. In addition, having the history may help current teachers in the system help the students to succeed.

Some GED test takers qualify for accommodations on the GED test. By having the SPED history on file, it can help school psychologists to make the recommendations to GEDTS. Some accommodations include having the test read-aloud or allowing the test taker to have extra time. All accommodations must be previously approved by GEDTS prior to testing. Numerous literature reviews and studies have been conducted which conclude a positive correlation between education and successful release to society. In 2004, Vacca found a study that measured the success of inmates enrolled in twenty-one college-level education programs. Inmates who earned a diploma returned to prison at a lower rate (26.4%) than those prisoners who did not earn a degree (44.6%). Another study reviewed by Vacca demonstrated that 25% of inmates who received vocational training in prison returned to prison following release. The comparison group (no vocational training) had a 77% recidivism rate. The study was conducted in Oklahoma. Both studies suggest that working toward and earning a degree is positively related to success upon release. Leder states a 30-70% reduction of ex-offenders returning to prison for those who get some form of higher education. Vacca also reviewed a study conducted in Ohio. Ohio's overall recidivism rate was 40%. The recidivism rate for inmates enrolled in college (not completing college- just enrolled) was 18%. Prisoners who earned a college degree while incarcerated in prison reduced the rate of recidivism by 72% when compared to inmates not participating in any education program [40]. There is always a danger in reading too much into statistics. Perhaps the numbers who participated in college programming was a low number and may not represent people who might not have returned to prison regardless of program participation. Mark Twain said, "There are three types of lies: lies, damn lies, and statistics". Statistics can have a way of being manipulated to get the desired results and readers and researchers need to be careful of the implications.

In 1996, Leder points out some observations. The purposes of incarceration are few. Punishment is the most obvious. Another is to provide opportunities for rehabilitation. Not every person in prison is capable of rehabilitation. Prior and potential victims need to be protected from criminals. The name "Department of Corrections" implies opportunities to correct negative behaviors will be provided. Some judges sentence offenders so they will receive some sort of treatment during incarceration [41].

Whichever course a prisoner may be enrolled in at any given time, modeling, group learning, soft-skills (job transferable skills), and technical skills are always being demonstrated. Cooperation, conversation and modeling of appropriate behaviors by other prisoners, teachers, officers and other correctional staff show prisoners alternate ways of dealing with stress, anger, and controlling emotions.

Prisoners are given an opportunity to learn and demonstrate self-respect, anger-management and social skills that are considered acceptable to the public.

In 2004, President George Bush signed into law the "Prisoner Re-entry Initiative" (PRI) requiring states to offer more assistance to prisoners being released from prison. Each state was responsible for enactment. MPRI in Michigan is fully implemented. Every region in Michigan now has at least one MPRI in-reach program. Michigan has three regions--Region I: the metropolitan area surrounding Detroit; Region II: which reaches further west and north than Detroit; Region III: which includes the northern Lower Peninsula and the entire Upper Peninsula. MBP is the MPRI "In-Reach" facility for the entire Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Feinstein cites the reality of measuring the success of re-entry programs and any success of any prison program. Once a prisoner leaves the prison system (incarceration, parole or probation), little contact is maintained. Only prisoners who are not successful are tracked by state data entry. Even prisoners who do experience successful release may be reluctant to give credit for his or her success to the skills taught while in prison. Perhaps the success of the prisoner has little to do with the program itself, but more of the person who delivered the program. All day presents information on prisoner perceptions of effective teacher behavior and working with students who have experienced "excessive school failures" [42]. Programs may be more successful with people who are trained to work and deliver information in an institutional setting. This aspect would be difficult to measure [40].

What about moral education? Does religious program participation help recidivism rates? As with many aspects of life in prison, further study would need to be conducted. Whatever is taught in the prisons, the program should be learner-centered and tailored to the prison culture. If prisoners see no value in participating, currently or upon release, programs cannot be effective.

Based on a report of a Prison Entrepreneurship Program (PEP) created in 2004 by Catherine Rohr, a young Wall Street Investor. The work that prisoners must complete to participate is rigorous, but the successes appear to be high. The program boasts a 93% employment rate among graduates. The program is primarily a mentoring program rather than an education program. Education is not the only tool to lower the rate of recidivism and to help prisoners to succeed. Perhaps the program is successful for another reason. Most states have education and vocational programs in prisons. Perhaps the Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative can help because of the bridge from prison to the community without the gap. If prisoners are arriving in the communities unprepared, whether or not he or she earned a GED certificate may not make a difference if the documentation is not available [41].

A study conducted at a Community Corrections Center (CCC) in 1997 in the month of November found most prisoners lacked possession of necessary documentation. Only 68% arrived with a Social Security Card; 43% arrived with a pictured ID; 14% with a resume; 16% with a copy of the GED earned in prison; 73% with a copy of a GED not earned in prison; and 20% a vocational training certificate earned in prison [43].

2.2. Integration of Trained Ex-prisoners Back to the Society

The introduction of vocational education and training (VET) programs as part of prisoner rehabilitation offers opportunities for offenders to reduce recidivism, thereby increasing the likelihood of successful re-integration into the community and reducing the risk of reoffending. The programs target the provision of pre-release/transition and employment opportunities, the opportunity to be involved in meaningful prison work, the expansion of vocational training, and more access to advice about health services, education, training and housing prior to release [44].

Research supports the idea that providing education to nearly two million prisoners of the U.S. is one of the most effective ways to advance community reintegration possibilities for prisoners. Providing education to prisoners has been a part of the U.S. criminal justice system since the inception of the first state-run prison in Philadelphia [42].

Correctional education serves three purposes: first, it enhances inmates' chances of employment once released from prison by enriching their level of knowledge and skills; second, it increases inmates' ability to think more responsibly; third, it diminishes the inmates' odds of returning to prison by being more apt to be employed and making better decisions. The ultimate goal of correctional education programs is to generate a change in the inmates' behavior [40], and to help inmates become self-sufficient, enabling their reintegration into society.

[30] emphasizes that educating inmates reduces recidivism, improves the ambience of prison, and reduces costs associated with long term warehousing. Esperian conducted a study on the education program offered by the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) at the Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC). In this study, former and current staff members of CSN, NDOC, and the Clark County School District, which worked directly with the prisoners and the prison programs, were interviewed. The results of this study indicated that the recidivism rate of the general prison population was 70%. For inmates that achieved a college education, the recidivism rate was 6% [30]. It was also found that correctional officers of the NDOC supported prison education because it facilitated the management and control of the penal complex. Lack of employment was identified by correctional staff as a primary reason for recidivism. Thus, they pointed out that educating inmates was the best way to increase the odds of an inmate's employability and diminish recidivism rates. Interviews of Clark County School District administrators indicated that Nevada correctional officers and state politicians supported education because they understood the cost benefits of educating inmates. A reduction of recidivism fostered a cost efficient method to reduce Nevada's correctional budget; reducing the inmate population by 1.6% would save Nevada \$38 million and avoid a \$1.2 billion in construction cost of more detention centers [30].

Studies conducted by the Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council (CJPC) further support that prison education programs are effective in reducing recidivism. A series of studies conducted by CJPC in 2000 evaluated the effectiveness of prison education programs administrated

by the Windham School District (WSD), which was specifically created to administer prison education in Texas. The studies evaluated the effect of correctional education on educational achievement; educational achievement in prison on recidivism; and educational achievement on employment, wages, and recidivism. Recidivism in this study was defined as "the reincarceration of an inmate in a state facility for a new offense or parole violation during the follow-up period". In this study, prison education refers to the educational programs offered by WSD which include: academic/literacy, vocational, and life skills training programs. The study consisted of a sample of 32,020 inmates that had served a new prison sentence and were released between 1997 and 1998 [45].

Higher educational achievements were associated with an 11% reduction of the recidivism rate in a two-year period. A more notable reduction of recidivism was observed among nonreader property offenders who learned how to read or became literate, 37% reduction among individuals younger than 35 and a 55% reduction among individuals older than 35. The study also found that prisoners that left the institution with a higher level of educational achievement had a 31% rate of employment and earned about \$2,442 more annually than inmates who functioned below a fourth grade level [45]. It was also noted that although educated inmates had a higher employment rate, the rate was still 36% lower than the employment rate in Texas. Inmates that were literate had an increased rate of employment of 18% compared to nonreaders, and inmates who earned a GED increased their employment chances by 7%. Individuals that were employed had 20% lower recidivism rates in a two-year period. Individuals with an annual income of \$10,000 had a recidivism rate of 6% to 9%, regardless of their educational achievement. Whereas, the recidivism rate among individuals with an annual income of less than \$10,000 was 15% to 26%. The findings of this study demonstrated that education can assist in diminishing a few innate barriers to community reintegration by amplifying an inmates' intellectual, cognitive and life skills.

An examination of the recidivism rates among inmates that participated in correctional education while incarcerated at the Huttonsville Correctional Center in West Virginia supported the findings of [30]. In this study, conducted by Gordon and Weldon in 2003, recidivism was defined as "a return to state custody, after having been released for a new felony conviction" and correctional education was defined as "all education, from basic literacy to vocational training to college degrees given to people within the criminal justice system". The population sample included inmates who were released between 1999 and 2000 from the Huttonsville Correctional Center in West Virginia. Data was collected from electronic file reviews of inmates that had completed a vocational course or their GED while detained and compared to the recidivism rates of those who did not participate in the vocational program. Descriptive statistics was utilized to arrange and summarize the data.

The findings of the Huttonsville Correctional Center study in 2002 indicated that the recidivism rate of those that completed the vocational program was 8.75%. Those

who completed a GED and participated in vocational training had a recidivism rate of 6.75%. Of the 169 inmates that completed the vocational program, 11 had their parole revoked, in comparison to the 2 parole violations reported among the 24 inmates that completed a GED. The recidivism rate of inmates that did not participate in an educational program was 26%. The findings from this study provided evidence that prison education programs, whether a vocational program, a literacy program or a combination of both, have some impact in the reduction of recidivism rates among those inmates that take advantage of these programs [45].

When economists theorize about the effects of education they note the difference between gains in human capital and signaling effects. Human capital gains are what educators call achievement gains and these are presumed to give the student a skills advantage. Some of these advantages are generic, such as the ability to understand and execute printed and written instructions skills educators often refer to as literacy. The second advantage is skill specific, such as learning welding or computer skills. By gaining some kind of certification such as a GED (General Education Development), this signals to potential employers that the offender is capable of completed work. This advantage may help to combat the signaling "penalty" accompanying prisoners into the labor market resulting from a spell of incarceration [45]. Some educators, notably John Dewey also argue that certain levels of education are a prerequisite to moral thinking. Other theorists argue that prison education promotes prosocial attitudes and instills a disposition antithetical to the anti-social norms of prison life. Harer calls this normalization, the competing process in opposition to prisonization. It is the prison process that mirrors involvement and commitment to social institutions discussed by [45]. The theory is important because it focuses our thoughts on not only the policy variables, but on the measurement of intermediate outcomes as well.

Studies of correctional education have included analyses of Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Education Development (GED) preparation and certification, college coursework, various forms of vocational training, apprenticeship training, and some combination of one or more of these programs during a prison spell. Some studies distinguish between completion of a program and whether the completion produces some form of certification. Certification confirms a special status. It demonstrates that the program participant has achieved a specific level of skill that authorizing institutions endorse, or employers and other members of the community acknowledge. The research question is whether this status confers an additional advantage to prisoners when they reenter their community, seek work, and try to re-establish their civic identity.

The primary post-release outcome analysts have examined has been recidivism, measured as arrest, conviction, but mostly recommitment. A few studies have measured legitimate labor market participation and wages, and recent studies have used earnings prior to, during, and after a spell of incarceration in well-designed panel studies. In only a few cases, researchers examined institutional misconduct and one study even looked at parole adjustment [46]. One question that has not been

addressed in any depth is whether prison education spawns a greater interest in pursuing continuing education once the inmate is released. There were no studies in this literature that measured whether participation or completion of education programs increased commitment to prosocial institutions, promoted prosocial attitudes, or enhanced moral reasoning. If these processes are an important dimension of reentry success, and they are an important side effect of education training, then we ought to innovate ways to measure and evaluate these dispositions.

Many of the studies have been plagued by potential selection artifacts. These have been noted by analysts, reviewers, and meta-analysis of this literature. The best studies in this literature have tried different approaches to handle selection artifacts including studies that directly measure intermediate levels of motivation to assess the selection process, models that simultaneously quantify the selection process and the treatment process, propensity score models that try to match treatment and comparison subjects to minimize selection artifacts, and fixed effects panel models that control for time invariant characteristics that may be associated with selection processes. These strong quasi-experimental studies have still demonstrated reductions in recidivism and effects on labor market outcomes; however, the effect sizes have been smaller than those that do not introduce selection artifact controls.

2.3. Effect of VET in Relation to other Selected Variables on Recidivism

Moreover, researchers argue that spending time in prison actually decreases one's ability to cope in the community and maintain employment, as the values needed to succeed in prison often directly conflict with societal norms [47]. Simply having a prison record also decreases a former inmate's ability to find employment that pays a livable wage. As a result, many former convicts return to their criminal behaviour because they lack the educational and social skills necessary to function successfully in society [48].

There are many factors that affect a prisoner's ability to successfully be rehabilitated in prison and reintegrate into society. Factors include substance abuse problems, mental health disorders, family dynamics, domestic violence, socioeconomic status, and education. To close the revolving door of incarceration, it is important for prisons to prepare inmates with the necessary tools to overcome the challenges they face in their reintegration process [49].

Statistics support on claim/hypothesis that educating prisoners contributes significantly to reducing recidivism. [General numbers provided by research suggest 50% to 70% re-incarceration within three years. Three state recidivism studies made in 1997 by Steurer, Smith, and Tracy, conducted in Maryland, Minnesota, and Ohio involved 3600 men and women inmates released from prison at least three years. The study showed that male and female offenders who participated in education programs while in prison reduced re-incarceration by 29%.

A 2007 study of incarcerated mothers in Colorado found that recidivism rates of women who participated in vocational programs had a recidivism rate of 8.75%, those who completed their CED, 6.71%, and those who

participated in neither a vocational or academic program, 26%.

Another study in 2002 surveyed research in Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Texas, Utah and Virginia. Results indicated that educational programs cut recidivism from 49% to 20%. ("Recidivism Rates"). "National studies show," write Keys and Jackson, "that college classes cut recidivism by 30% or more. That would make a good investment for state taxpayers."

A West Virginia study (1999-2000) found dramatic outcomes. Records of 320 adult male inmates discharged in 1973 were followed. At the end of four years, there were 76 recidivists; 55 had not participated in an educational program, only 7 had completed a GED program, and four were college level participants [30].

According to the National Correctional Association, in a 2009 report, inmates who earn an AA/AS are 70% less likely to recidivate than those who do not complete a program, a GED, 25% less likely to recidivate, and those who earn a vocational certificate, 14.6% less likely to recidivate.

A recent U S Department of Justice report says that "Prison-based education is the single most effective tool for lowering recidivism. According to the national Institute of Justice Report to the U S Congress, prison education is far more effective at reducing recidivism than boot camps, shock incarceration or vocational training." The report goes on to say that "Other studies sponsored by the Federal Bureau of Prisons find that...the more educational programs successfully completed for each six months confirmed, the lower the recidivism rates. The exact figures indicating these inverse recidivism rates for degree recipients were: Associates (13.7%), Baccalaureates (5.6%), Masters (0%).

Moreover, researchers argue that spending time in prison actually decreases one's ability to cope in the community and maintain employment, as the values needed to succeed in prison often directly conflict with societal norms. Simply having a prison record also decreases a former inmate's ability to find employment that pays a livable wage [48]. As a result, many former convicts return to their criminal behaviour because they lack the educational and social skills necessary to function successfully in society.

Despite these obstacles, inmates on the whole want to secure employment upon release and, if they do, they are less likely to recidivate. A four-state longitudinal survey of inmates after their release from prison found that 26 percent said that they would have liked job training while incarcerated [48]. A study conducted by the Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control to determine the usefulness of prison literacy and vocational programming found that inmates were more likely to participate in programs if they believed their participation could help them obtain a job after release. The study also found that inmates who enrolled in these programs while incarcerated were more likely to maintain employment and earn slightly higher wages than inmates who did not enroll. Not all correctional institutions, however, are able to offer these programs to eligible and/or interested inmates. Although most prisons offer academic and vocational programs, many have waiting lists. In fact, according to the 2003 National Assessment of Adult

Literacy, more inmates reported being on waiting lists for vocational education programs than were enrolled [50].

[51] in their research entitled "Bridging learning from incarceration to the community" in US established that, the structure supporting postsecondary correctional education (PSCE), whether centralized (coordinated at the state level), *decentralized* (coordinated on an institution-by-institution basis), or a combination of the two, can affect program content and the transferability of the credits, certificates, and degrees earned by inmates. In general, the more decentralized a system is, the more difficulty it has with ensuring that college courses and programs articulate among state colleges and universities and are recognized by business and industry. Several states, for example, reported that the vocational programs offered by community colleges to inmates currently do not articulate with the same programs offered to non-incarcerated students. While these states have succeeded in getting employers to recognize their prison-based vocational programs, they are working hard to develop articulation agreements with the non-incarcerated college courses and among the various colleges providing inmates with these services. Moreover, since most state-supported PSCE is offered on-site rather than through distance education, the absence of a statewide articulation agreement can create transfer issues for inmates since inmates are often transferred from one facility to another and therefore may be unable to continue the course or program in which they were previously enrolled. A similar transfer issue may occur when inmates are released from prison; their hometown is generally not the same town where they were incarcerated and enrolled in college courses.

2.4. Learning Strategies in Addressing Recidivism in Kenya

Kenya Prisons have formulated necessary strategies in vocational programmes with the purpose of developing skills to assist the elderly offenders to become self-employed when they leave prison [6]. Among vocational rehabilitation programmes are Livestock production, which encompasses dairy production, rabbit rearing, bee keeping, fish farming, floriculture, sericulture, mushroom production, carpentry, garment making, upholstery, metalwork, soap making, saloon management, cosmetology, masonry, painting, knitting, pottery and brick making. All these activities are aimed at equipping the inmates with necessary skills that would enable them to actively participate in positive socioeconomic engagement upon release and to reduce recidivism among the offenders being released to the community [6].

According to [52] vocational education and training reduces recidivism rates by providing inmates with the technical skills, literacy and numeracy courses, as well as motivation and employment opportunity:

Technical skills: prisoners believed that as well as providing technical skills, the courses also improved their communication and organizational skills, all of which would help find employment and reintegrate in to the community upon release. A technical skill is a skill that is required for the accomplishment of a specific task. Barriers to undertaking or completing vocational training

courses include the need for prisoner to undertake offending behaviour programed and desire to earn money through paid prison work. Other factors were short sentences (under 12 months) and long waiting lists of courses, being transferred to another centre without much more notice or being release early.

Literacy and numeracy: the educational programme offer literacy and numeracy courses as well as higher-level qualifications such as Vocational training Diplomas. The completion rate was found to be over 80 percent. The high completion rate was attributed to: undertaking a risk assessment and looking at the sentence management plan to determine the educational and vocational training needs of offenders, offering the courses as modules, having dedicated training workshops, promoting the employment opportunities provided by the training, recognizing the achievements of trainees who completed the course.

Motivation: Another factor that will determine an offender's recidivism is the motivation for the offender to change. Argued that the analysis of former offenders indicated that their decision to change was a significant factor in them not re-offending. Offenders with no motivation had fatalistic and respondent attitudes towards their criminality whereas motivated offenders were able to identify and make sense of their criminality.

[52] argues that in order for Technical and vocational education to benefit the offender, it is important for it to be tailored and focused on the needs of the offender; an example of this is the needs surrounding female offenders. [52] argues that issues surrounding female offenders are compounded by other issues that can include being single percent family rejection, history of physical or sexual abuse as well as a high prevalence of mental health issues.

Employment opportunity: [53] describes how training and education offered to offenders needs to be relevant to employment opportunities that exist in the location that the offender lives and is likely to be employed in. An example of this is for offenders in areas with high tourism, hospitality courses would be the focus likewise, and vocational training in rural areas would focus on agriculture and forestry

Educating Prisoners has become a worldwide concern as a measure that can save community costs associated with criminal behavior [53]. Reports by European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms(2012), the Australian Council for Social Service (2002), the Canadian Government Productivity Commission (2004), the American Correctional Association (1997) and the Uganda Human Rights Commission (2015) suggest that prisoners suffer cumulative social and economic disadvantages, low education levels, higher rates of mental illness and greater rates of unemployment compared to the general population [23]. Vocational Education being one of the most significant individual and social change phenomena, it has been adopted as one of the major strategies to rehabilitate prisoners and prepare them for successful integration with their families, communities and employment world [23].

Available literature shows that there are different learning strategies used by learners, some are used consciously while others are used unconsciously in transferring of new knowledge and skills. However, there is no documented study on particular learning strategies

employed by prisoners on vocational training in Kenya [54]. Learning strategies are broadly classified as cognitive strategies i.e. grouping, summarizing, and asking friends and Meta cognitive strategies e.g. planning and self-monitoring. Several studies conducted on learning strategies are from a teacher's perspective without much emphasis on students' perspective. This study shall evaluate the learners perspective. Once instructors are aware of effective learning strategies, they will be able to teach individual prisoners to use learning strategies appropriately and effectively in addition to recognizing learners' strengths and weaknesses thus adjust instruction accordingly which ultimately leads to academic achievement [54].

2.5. Resource Adequacy and Appropriateness

Inmates reentering society face a wide range of challenges, from securing employment and housing to treating substance abuse and mental and physical illnesses and reconnecting with their families and communities. With nearly 700,000 inmates released from prisons in the United States each year and many more from jails, a growing number of states are working hard to identify effective methods for helping inmates meet the challenges of reentry and successfully reintegrate into society. These approaches can include prison education programs (adult basic education and academic and vocational postsecondary education), life-skills and job-readiness training, job placement assistance, mentoring services, and pre- and post-release case management [55].

In Kenya, prior to 2003, most prisons were unable to discharge the rehabilitation function owing to among other things, a chronic shortage of equipment and raw materials for industries and farms. After 2003, inmate rehabilitation through vocational training has improved courtesy of donations of industrial equipment and raw materials from well-wishers in most prisons. This can be attributed to the open door policy which has highlighted problems faced by prisoners. The open door policy has also opened prisons to external scrutiny against use of force to compel prisoners to work [56].

2.6. Summary and Identification of Gap

According to penal reform International Strategic Plan 2015-20 one core function of Prison is to provide Vocational training for the Ex-prisoners to integrate well back to society once released from Prison. 60% of the released prisoners under presidential amnesty is found to return back to Prison (Dennis Lumiti, 2004). This high rate of recidivism has tremendous cost in terms of public safety and money spent on prosecution and incarceration of the reoffenders. According to KHRC report, 2008, studies conducted in Vocational Education and Training in prisons, there is no enough data to prove and determine beyond doubt the effectiveness of VET programmes offered to prison inmates.

Due to the documented high rate of recidivism globally and Kenya in particular there is need to research on the effectiveness of VET programme methodologies in assisting the Ex-prisoners integrate back into the society and avoid recidivism.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter contains the research design chosen to facilitate the acquisition of data on the vocational education and training for rehabilitation in Kenya's prisons. It includes a description and justification of the survey research design, location of the study, sampling procedures, data collection techniques, data collection procedures, reliability and validity of research instruments, data presentation and analysis procedures, logistical and ethical issues.

3.2. Research Design

This study will use descriptive survey which is perhaps the most ideal method available to the social scientist researcher who is focused on gathering authentic data for describing a large population.

A mixed method approach will be used to gain perspectives from the Kenya Prisons family and other stakeholders in Mombasa County using questionnaires and interviews schedules. It is defined by [57] as the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially, are given priority (status), and involve integration of data at one or more stages in the process of research. The current study will adopt the concurrent design such that data obtained from the sample selected for one phase do not inform the data gathered from the sample selected for the other phase. However, data obtained from both samples are integrated and interpreted at the data interpretation stage [58].

For this study, the advantage of a quantitative research is to provide the opportunity to present the general picture and offer good opportunities to explain how vocational education and training plays a role in rehabilitation in Kenya's prisons by trainers and trainees. On the other hand, a qualitative approach will provide an opportunity to gather in-depth insights into the perspectives of prison Administrators and trained Ex -Prisoners on vocational education and training for rehabilitation in Kenya's prisons. This approach therefore will serve the purpose of triangulation and complementarity.

3.3. Location of the Study

The study will be conducted in Mombasa County which was purposively sampled based on the number of prisons. Further, the government shifted its major purchases of furniture to the prisons citing Shimo la Tewa as one of the largest suppliers (Business Daily, July 30, 2010). The County has the following Prisons; Shimo la Tewa Prison, Shimo la Tewa Annex and Kingorani Prison Industries. Mombasa County is one of the 47 counties of Kenya. Its capital and the only city in the county is Mombasa. Initially it was one of the former districts of Kenya but in 2013 it was reconstituted as a county, on the same boundaries. The county lies between latitudes 3°56' and 4°10' south of the equator and longitudes 39°34' and 39°46' east. It is the smallest county in Kenya, covering

an area of 229.7 km² excluding 65 km² of water mass. The county is situated in the south eastern part of the former Coast Province. It borders Kilifi County to the north, Kwale County to the south west and the Indian Ocean to the east. Administratively, the county is divided into seven Subcounties, eighteen locations and thirty sub-locations.

3.4. Target Population

The target population for this study will include; Prisons Administrators, Prison trainers, Prison trainees and trained Ex -Prisoners. There are 108 prisons in Kenya with the total prison population of 53,841 including pretrial detainees/remand prisoners according to Institute for Criminal Policy Research 2015. The study population for each category mentioned above will be; 369 Prison trainees, 10 Prisons Administrators, 25 Prison trainers, and 50 trained Ex -Prisoners.

3.5. Sampling procedures

The researcher will use various sampling techniques to determine the various samples for this study. To get the participants to be involved in this study from the prison proportional stratified sampling will be used. Each stratum is represented in the sample in exact proportions to its frequency. Purposive sampling will be used to sample Prisons Administrators, Prison trainers, Prison trainees and trained Ex -Prisoners.

3.6. Sample Size

The sample size for the prison trainees will be obtained using a formula as used by Fisher *et al* (1998) for calculating sample sizes whose target population exceeds 10 000 persons as shown below;

$$n = \left(Z^2 pqD \right) / d^2$$

Where; n= is the desired sample size when the study target population is over 10,000

Z - Is the normal deviate=1.96 which corresponds to 95% confidence interval.

p - Proportion of the target population estimated to have the desired characteristics.

Q= 1 - p

d = Degrees of freedom = 0.05

D - Is the design effect = 1 (since there will be no comparison between two study areas).

The proportion of the target population (p) estimated to have the desired characteristics is 60/100 (Chances of returning to prison according to Lumiti 2004 is 60%).

Therefore;

P = 60/100 or 0.60

q = 1-p = 1- 0.60 = 0.40

Hence, the desired sample size (n) is calculated as follows.

$$n = Z^2 pqD = \left(1.96^2 \times 0.60 \times 0.40 \times 1 \right) / (0.05)^2$$

$$n = (0.921984) / 0.0025.$$

$$n = 368.79 \text{ which is approximately } 369.$$

Table 1. Distribution of respondents across categories

Category	Target population	Sample population	percentage	Sampling Strategy
Prisons Administrators	10	10		Purposive
Prison trainers	25	25		Purposive
Prison trainees	1700	369		Systematic random
Trained Ex -Prisoners		50		Purposive
Total		454		

The sample will consist of 369 trainees and 85 key informants (See Table 1), who will comprise of; 10 Prisons Administrators, 25 Prison trainers and 50 who will be purposively sampled.

3.6. Data Collection Instruments

The instruments to be used for data collection in this study will include the following; Questionnaire and Key Informant Interview Schedule guide.

3.6.1. Questionnaires

In the proposed study questionnaires (see appendix C) will be used to collect data from Prison trainers and Prison trainees. The questionnaire will collect data on availability of resources and the learning strategies employed in the VET training.

3.6.2. Interview Guide

The study will use a face-to-face interview which ensures better understanding of the personal opinions, voices and lived experiences. A structured interview guide will be used to seek for information on the experiences and challenges of VET trained Ex-prisoners in the world of work and establish perceptions on Vocational Education Training and other training fields in Kenya Prisons.

3.7. Pilot Study

Before undertaking the main study, data collection instruments will be piloted in one prison in Machakos County. The purpose of the pilot study will be to provide information on the deficiencies in the research instruments and suggestions for improvement. This will ensure that the data collection instruments are clear of any ambiguity, bias, unclear wording and are able to provide the data they are supposed to generate.

3.8. Reliability of the Research Instrument

In the proposed study reliability will be ensured through triangulation. Different respondents will also be involved in providing information on the same issues. A pilot study will also be carried out. After the pilot study, the items that will be found to be inconsistent with the objectives of the study will be left out so as to increase their reliability. A test will be administered in Machakos County similar to the main study in Mombasa County. The questionnaires and interview will be separated into two equal parts using odd and even numbered technique. During the pilot study, the Split half Pearson's product moment correlation (r) formulae will be used to establish the extent to which items were consistent. If the test is reliable, the scores on

the two halves have a high positive association, that is, a high correlation coefficient. The measure will be used because of the ability to measure internal consistency of the instruments being tested. Split technique is preferred over other methods like test re-test methods because it takes care of the changes in time and circumstances.

The Split – half formula is given below:

$$r = \frac{n(\Sigma XY) - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)}{\sqrt{\{n[(\Sigma X^2) - (\Sigma X)^2]\} \{n[\Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2]\}}}$$

Where r = Coefficient of reliability
 n = Total number of items in each half
 X = rated values of one half
 Y = rated values of the other half.

Since only half the number of items will be used, the reliability coefficient is reduced. To get a better estimate of the reliability of the full test, Spearman – Brown correction will be applied. The Spearman – Brown correction formula is given below:

$$R = \frac{2}{(1+r)}$$

Where r = correlation coefficient.

The reliability should be at least of 0.70 whenever a large calculation is required.

3.9. Validity of Research Instrument

Validity of instruments will deal with the accurate interpretability of the results (internal validity) and the generalizability of the results (external validity). Researcher will also focus on content validity which is a form of validity that ensures that elements of the main issue to be covered in the research are both a fair representation of a wider issue under investigation and that the elements chosen for the study sample are addressed in detail. Therefore the study will ensure that items are carefully sampled to ensure they represent all the constructs under study as outlined in the objectives. The researcher will also consult Vocational Education experts in at University of Eldoret with regard to the instruments' validity. In addition the results of the pilot study will be used to test the content validity of the instruments.

3.10. Data Analysis

The proposed study, having adopted a mixed approach will generate both quantitative and qualitative data. Analysis will follow the seven stages of the mixed methods data analysis process: (a) data reduction, (b) data display, (c) data transformation, (d) data correlation, (e) data consolidation, (f) data comparison, and (g) data integration Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003). In this study

the quantitative data collected using questionnaires will be coded, entered, cleaned and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS 22) computer software. Basic features of the data will be explained by descriptive statistics such as frequencies, Mean and percentages. The Chi-Square test statistic (χ^2) will be used to evaluate tests of Independence, whether association exists between Independent and dependent variables.

The independent variables are Training Resources, Relevant Training Programmes, Learning strategies and VET perception which will be subjected to Chi-square test against the Dependent variable 'VET Training'.

Qualitative data analysis will have to pay attention to the 'spoken word', context, consistency and contradictions of views, frequency and intensity of comments, their specificity as well as emerging themes and trends. Exploratory perspective approach will be used in which all the data will be coded, allowing for new impressions to shape the interpretation in different and unexpected directions referred as thematic network analysis. The three key components of qualitative data analysis will be; codes, basic themes, organizing themes and global themes.

3.11. Logistical and Ethical Issues

Ethical considerations play a critical role in all studies and therefore all researchers must be aware and address the ethical issues/considerations related to their studies. Therefore before embarking on this research journey, the proposal will be submitted to the school of graduate studies Moi university. A research permit will then be obtained from the National council for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct the study. The researcher will then pay a courtesy call to the prisons department, Nairobi and then to Shimo la Tewa prisons.

Once in the Prison the researcher will first introduce himself to the Prison. Administrators who are the gate keepers. Before administering the research instruments the researcher will give an overview of the research. Participants will be asked to give their informed consent by reading and signing the consent form. The participants will be assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

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