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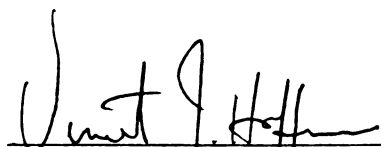
**A STUDY OF INMATE REASONS FOR ATTENDING  
EDUCATIONAL OR VOCATIONAL PRISON PROGRAMS**

presented by

ABIGAIL A. CALLEJAS

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for

MASTER OF SCIENCE degree in CRIMINAL JUSTICE

  
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**A STUDY OF INMATE REASONS TO ATTEND EDUCATIONAL AND  
VOCATIONAL PRISON PROGRAMS**

**By**

**Abigail A. Callejas**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of**

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**ABSTRACT**  
**A STUDY OF INMATE REASONS TO ATTEND EDUCATIONAL AND  
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**By**

**Abigail A. Callejas**

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe inmates reason(s) for attending educational or vocational prison programs. More specifically, this study will identify the reason(s) why inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs, and compare the differences and similarities between these two groups. These group differences and similarities will be examined as follows:

1. By their reason(s) for attending educational or vocational prison programs.
2. By the characteristics between the groups.

A survey design method will be used on those inmates attending educational or vocational prison programs at Jackson minimum prison facility. A questionnaire will be used to collect the data. The expected results of this study are to assist in improving the educational or vocational prison programs and their effectiveness and efficiency.

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**1995**

To  
My best friends  
Kevin  
Jack & Daniel

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH**

#### **Problem Statement**

Historically, the purpose of incarceration was based on the philosophy of punishment for social vengeance and retaliation. Punishment was "any lawfully imposed pain, suffering or loss of available rights confronted by an actor as a consequence of his or her culpable criminal action or inaction" to avenge the wrong inflicted on the community (Thomas, 1987:35). As the correctional system evolved the punishment philosophy developed other rationales for its continued existence. These rationales under the punishment philosophy were and still are retribution, deterrence or incapacitation.

In the late 19th century the purpose of incarceration was re-evaluated. A resulting influence of this re-evaluation was the introduction of the rehabilitation philosophy as an integrated part of the correctional philosophy and purpose. Advocates of the rehabilitation ideal held that the purpose of rehabilitation philosophy "is to effect change in the characters, attitudes and behavior of convicted offenders so as to strengthen the social defense against unwanted behavior" (Culled, 1982:34).

This rehabilitation philosophy ushered in an important concept of the "right to treatment" in the correctional system. This concept the "right to treatment" was originally embraced in the mental health arena and was advocated by Morton Birnbaum. Birnbaum held "that individuals who are deprived of their liberty because of mental illness serious enough to require involuntary commitment are entitled to treatment to correct that condition" (Siegal, 1985: 502).

Although this concept originated in the mental health arena it was broadened to embrace the criminal justice system. Through many court cases the "right to treatment" became applicable to all inmates involuntarily confined. This included both the juvenile justice system and adult justice system. It was contended that through treatment the involuntary confined inmates could be "cured". In other words, the inmates could be rehabilitated. This contention encouraged the development of various rehabilitation programs all aimed at treating the inmate (i.e., educational and vocational programs).

For the past century, the treatment for inmates was based on the rehabilitation philosophy has been under attack for its alleged failures. In fact, many critics have concluded that rehabilitation does not work (Glazer, 1989; Martinson, 1974; White, 1989). However, despite this contention the rehabilitation ideal survives within the correctional system.

Regardless of the answer to the above contention the correctional system continues to develop educational and vocational prison programs based on the rehabilitation ideal. The problem arises when these programs are developed under the guise of rehabilitation, and then are eliminated when the inmates recidivate. But, before the correctional system can accurately say the inmates are rehabilitated or not by a particular program one needs to identify the reason(s) why the inmates chose to attend educational or vocational programs. Some studies (Furtado & Johnson, 1980; Kiser, 1987; Pellegrine & Meyers, 1992; Stephens, 1992) have suggested that inmates attend these programs not for the perceived rehabilitative power, but for some self-serving reason(s). What are these self-serving reason(s)? Do these reasons include the concept of rehabilitation or not. The answers to these questions are not quiet clear. Therefore, identifying the inmates' reason(s) to attend educational or vocational programs may provide the means in how to create and develop programs that would encourage rehabilitation.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe inmates reason(s) for attending educational or vocational prison programs. More specifically, this study will identify the reason(s) why inmates attend

educational or vocational prison programs, and compare the differences and similarities between these two groups. These group's differences and similarities will be examined as follows by:

1. Their reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. Reasons are divided into personal gain and self-actualization interests (see appendix B).
2. The characteristics between the groups, individual age and duration of sentence, not an exhaustive list (see page 27 for comprehensive list).

### Need for the Study

Currently, society has become sensitive to the rehabilitative nature of educational and vocational prison programs. Several reasons for this is the amount of money it costs to operate such programs, and critics' contend that these programs do not rehabilitate. Society's reaction to this is to demand the elimination of programs that do not work thereby cutting back on spending.

By identifying the reason(s) why inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs can be beneficial to society's concerns. First of all, this information can assist in determining whether educational or vocational are rehabilitative to the inmates. It would provide a basis of distinguishing which inmates and their reason(s) lean towards rehabilitation, and those inmates and their reason(s) who do not.

A second benefit is on an Administration level. The ability to distinguish which inmates attend educational or vocational programs for

so called rehabilitate reasons could be useful in making these programs more effective and efficient. For example, spending more money on programs inmates attend for rehabilitative reason(s). Thus, identifying inmates reason(s) to attend educational or vocational prison program can provide a beginning for developing and providing a more solid information being from which to evaluate the rehabilitation hypothesis.

### Research Questions

The author's research questions will focus on inmates' reason(s) to attend educational or vocational prison programs. The research questions are:

1. Do inmates' reason(s) affect whether they attend educational or vocational prison programs?
2. Does an inmates' reason(s) determine whether they will attend a 2 year or a 4 year educational program?
3. Does inmates' race affect their reason(s) for attending educational or vocational programs?
4. Does the inmates' age affect their reason(s) for attending educational or vocational programs?
5. Does the type of crime committed by the inmates affect inmates' reason(s) to attend educational or vocational programs?
6. Does the duration of sentence affect inmates' reason(s) to attend educational or vocational programs?
7. Does the martial status of the inmates affect their reason(s) to attend educational or vocational programs?



### **Definition of Terms**

The following is a list of definitions used for the selection of respondents and for data analysis.

1. Reason(s) - refers to the reason(s) why the inmate attend the prison's educational programs or vocational programs (i.e., to escape the routine of prison life, etc).
2. Attendance - refers to inmates who currently attend prison educational or vocational programs.
3. Inmates - are inmates residing in Jackson minimum prison facility.
4. Types of crimes - refer to the type of crime for which the inmate was convicted and sentenced to prison, like burglary, robbery, and so forth.
5. Educational programs - refer to educational programs offered in the prison that are either a two year degree program or a four year degree program.
6. Vocational programs - refer to vocational programs offered in the prison that provides the inmate with some form of license or certification.
7. Duration of sentence - refers to the maximum prison sentence time and the minimum prison sentence time.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

Chapter II is an overview of the theoretical framework for this study followed by a review of previous research literature on inmates reason(s) to attend educational or vocational prison programs. Chapter III describes the research and statistical analysis procedures used in this

study. Chapter IV produces data analysis and presentation of findings. Finally, chapter V contains summaries and conclusions of this study.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Theoretical Framework

"Organized religion has provided the necessary philosophical foundation for educational and vocational programs in prison" (Pellagrin & Meyers, 1992: 43). Rehabilitation as an objective of criminal incarceration is directly traceable to the traditional religious concepts of charitable tolerance, education and the conversion of sinners (Pellagrin & Meyers, 1992). Espousal of these principles by the clergy in colonial times were instrumental in promoting public acceptance of education as a means of rehabilitating criminals in the United States (Forsythe, 1987). Moreover, as the "social position of theologians strengthened their support of skill - learning, knowledge - acquisition, hard work, and moral conduct as the avenue to salvation, this provided a basis for establishing educational and vocational programs in the correctional system" (Curti, 1943). It was believed that given the rehabilitative opportunities through education, for example, inmates would become rehabilitated. Therefore, educational, and vocational programs became the primary elements under the rehabilitation philosophy.

Presently, the correctional system functions under a duality of

philosophies which incorporates both the punishment and rehabilitation philosophies. Even with these co-existing philosophies, the punishment philosophy still continues to be the driving force behind the correctional system. Many studies support the contention that punishment should be the primary or sole goal of the correctional system because rehabilitation does not work (Bailey, 1966; Glazer, 1989; Martinson, 1974; White, 1989).

Given that the effectiveness of rehabilitation is perceived as questionable, why then do inmates continue to attend educational or vocational programs? This study purports that other self-serving reason(s) are key factors for inmates' attending educational or vocational programs. These reason(s) begin with the thesis that inmates attending educational or vocational programs is related to the inmates' perceived benefit(s) or cost(s) to attend such programs. More specifically, Bentham provided an explanation, other than rehabilitation for the reason why inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs this theory is called felicific calculus (Mack, 1969).

Bentham's involvement in the reform movement led him to develop the theory of felicific calculus to explain human behavior, and crime and punishment. Bentham's theory of felicific calculus (Mack, 1969) was grounded in the principles of utilitarianism. Bentham maintained that a person will act in such a way as to receive the greatest happiness over the least amount of pain in his or her actions. Bentham

used this utilitarian principle to derive assumptions of human nature, conduct and for explaining why individuals commit criminal actions. The general premise is that people are inherently rational, calculative and intelligent beings who voluntarily and freely choose the course of action that satisfies his or her rational self-interest. Therefore, a person commits a criminal offense because the pleasure (benefit) outweighs the pain (cost).

Bentham integrated the above assumptions to develop the theory "Felicific Calculus". Felicific calculus holds that a person will behave in a way to gain the most benefit, and to minimize some or all cost. When the perceived attainment of some benefit or the security of avoiding pain the individual will act for the attainment of such benefit. Therefore, intra - personal balance occurs if the benefit is attainable, and outweighs the cost (Mack, 1969).

Even though Felicific Calculus (Mack, 1969) was developed to explain human behavior, and criminal participation it can be used to explain other forms of behaviors. In this study felicific calculus provides an understanding of inmate's reason(s) for attending educational or vocational prison programs. The two elements necessary for the application of felicific calculus are the maximizing of the benefit(s), while minimizing of the cost(s). First, in terms of cost, the inmate soon discovers the pains of imprisonment. These pains of imprisonment arise

from the physical condition of prison, and the psychological deprivation caused by imprisonment. According to Sykes (1958) some of these psychological deprivations encountered by the inmate are: 1. loss of liberty, 2. deprivation of goods and services, 3. loss of sexual relationships, 4. autonomy and, 5. security. It is these pains of imprisonment that represent the cost to the inmate, and provide the incentive to seek a way of obtaining some benefit(s) while incarcerated.

The second element, benefit is the pleasure received from offsetting the cost. For the inmate prison environment provides limited options in which to release pent up frustration. In searching for pleasure of relief the inmate may reason that attending educational or vocational prison programs will provide such benefit or as an incentive to get out of the cell for awhile. Therefore, the inmate weighs the cost and benefit for attending educational or vocational programs. If the inmates' reasons that a benefit will be received by attending educational or vocational programs the inmate will do so (Mack,1969).

The benefit of attending educational or vocational prison programs can be divided into categories as either immediate or delayed. For example, the inmate who is trying to escape the monotonous everyday prison routine will view attending educational or vocational programs as an immediate benefit. On the other hand, the inmate who views studying, regular attendance, and homework as costs but still attend

educational or vocational programs for benefit of receiving a degree or certification at the completion of the program. Thus, regardless of the reason(s) for attending educational or vocational programs the inmate is constantly weighing the benefit and cost while determining his final decision to act in a certain way.

### Previous Research Efforts

In searching for previous research efforts on why inmates attend educational or vocational programs there existed a limited amount of studies. But, before these studies (discussed later in the chapter) are examined the issue of whether educational or vocational programs rehabilitates or not must be addressed. There is a tremendous amount of research literature in this area, so only the most significant studies were selected. The first set of research studies examined dealt with the belief that rehabilitation does not work. The second set (see below) of research studies examined dealt with the belief that rehabilitation does work. Finally, the studies (see below) that dealt with who and why inmates attend educational or vocational programs.

To begin with, the most famous and significant study was conducted by Robert Martinson (1974) on whether inmates are rehabilitated by prison reform. In other words, do the programs enacted by prison reform rehabilitate inmates. The importance of this study is

that it is used as a bases for many other studies, either to support the notion that rehabilitation does not work or to point out Martinson's misinterpretation of data or, to demonstrate that rehabilitation does work (in a later study Martinson states that rehabilitation does work) (Barone, 1977; Glazer, 1989; McCollum, 1977; Nelson, 1975; Wilson, 1985).

In Martinson's study there is a section in which he examined the rehabilitation efforts of educational and vocational programs on inmates. Twelve educational and vocational programs were selected (Martinson, 1974: 25).

In these studies rehabilitation was measured by the recidivism rate was used. These studies indicated that regardless if it was either an educational or vocational program the end result was similar, that there was no significant differences in the recidivism rate for any of the programs. Moreover, Martinson pointed out that he does not know why these programs were unsuccessful. Martinson suggested several reasons for the failure of these programs. For example, the programs may have been flawed in themselves, or the programs may have been unable to overcome the effects of prison life. Or perhaps the type of educational or vocational programs do not meet the needs of the inmate upon release from prison. Regardless, of the reason for the programs failures Martinson clearly stated in his findings that " to date education and skill



development have not reduced recidivism by rehabilitating criminals" (Martinson, 1974: 28).

In another study conducted by Alfred C. Schnur (1948), he examined the educational treatment of prisoners and recidivism. Schnur evaluated a Wisconsin State Prison full - time day school program. Schnur wanted to discover if there was a connection between inmates attending educational treatment and a reduction of the recidivism rate.

The hypothesis was tested by comparing the proportions of non - recidivists in both the control group and in the experimental group under adjusted conditions. The control group consisted of 1082 inmates who did not participate in educational treatment. The experimental group consisted of 680 inmates who were enrolled in at least one day-school class. This group was eventually divided into subgroups according to length of time they had attended the prison school ( i.e., inmates who attended two months or more).

The finding of this study indicated that there was a slight but non-significant differences between the experimental group and the control group with regards to the reduction of the recidivism rate. Moreover, the slight differences discovered between the two groups could not be determined if it was by chance or not. In order, to correct this situation a simultaneous multiple matching was used. Although the results of this test did support the early finding that there was a slight difference

between the two groups, the difference was not significant. However, what the researcher did surprisingly discover was that the length an inmate stayed in the educational program, six months or more, had an effect on the recidivism rate - a reduction.

Schnur (1948), suggested that if it is true that inmates who stay in the educational program six months or more results in the reduction of the recidivism rate, then inmates who have shorter sentences should not be permitted in the educational programs. Therefore, Schnur concluded that education can not be expected to reduce the recidivism rate unless the inmate can be expected to attend the educational program for the length of time indicated.

On the other hand, there are many studies that suggest that rehabilitation does work and that the previous research studies were using the wrong research methods to measure whether a programs is rehabilitative (Bindman, 1973; Enocksson, 1980; Irwin,1974; O'Neil, 1990; Wilson, 1985).

In a study conducted by Enocksson (1980), he examined the issue why programs appear to fail. Enocksson claimed that measuring a programs' effectiveness (rehabilitation nature) solely by the reduction of its recidivism rate is unrealistic (Enocksson, 1980: 7). He found that using the recidivism rate to measure a programs effectiveness can be misleading. For instance, it can be manipulated for public relations, or

to eliminate a program. Enocksson concluded that a programs' rehabilitative effect should be determined not solely by its recidivism rate but rather in combination with other factors, such as, the programs' participation rate and the quality of instruction provided.

Other studies re-enforced and suggested other explanations why educational or vocational programs appear to fail (Gottfredson, 1979; Irwin, 1974; O'Neil, 1990). Several of these explanations are:

1. The goals of corrections (custody & control) conflicts with the goals of education or vocational goals ( growth & self- actualization).
2. The program is expected to fit all inmates.
3. The measuring method to evaluate the program may be inappropriate or contaminated.
- 4 The program was based on an incorrect theory.

Essentially, these studies claimed that education and vocational training programs rehabilitate but that past studies were not properly evaluated or interpreted them.

Other studies claimed that the there is a positive relationship between correctional education or vocational programs and rehabilitation (O'Neil, 1990; Thorpe, 1984; Petersilla, 1979). Furthermore, there are studies showing that certain types of inmates can be rehabilitated more than others. A study conducted by Stephen and Dugiud (1982),

demonstrated that rehabilitation can occur through the use of education. They examined, evaluated and developed a program based on this program - University of Victoria program in British Columbia. In the evaluation of this program they concluded it was effective. The findings indicated a change in most inmates involved in this program, and the recidivism rate was reduced - 14% of participants as opposed to 15% of the non - participants. Subsequently, the authors took the core elements of this program and created another such program.

In another study by Beckerman and Fontana (1989), they examined a pre - professional social work educational program. This program was developed to determine if inmates can be helped by the program, and if the inmates' attitude can be changed to hold the essential profession's values, skills, and knowledge. Data was collected from students over a two year period. A questionnaire was given twice to the students. Once at the beginning of the program and at the end of the program. The questionnaire was divided into two sections which were: 1. value orientation, and 2. occupational commitment. The findings indicated those who participated in the program resulted in sharing many of the values and occupational orientations espoused in the social work profession - a success. Thus, the authors concluded that this program can be effect if the right types of inmates participate.

Finally, in another study by Thorpe, Jr. (1984), he summarized

research collected by the New York Department of correctional services on the recidivism rate of inmates who earned college credits or certificate (vocational) while incarcerated. Secondary data came from various prison facilities. A cross - section analysis and a survey was used on the data. The expected return rate was 20% of the 54 subjects. The finding indicated that the return rate of those successfully earned a certificate or degree was lower - 14% return rate (Thorpe, 1984: 87).

In conclusion, these are just a few of the studies that demonstrates educational and vocational programs can be successful. And that how research is evaluated or examined may effect if a program is view as rehabilitative or not.

As was shown there is sufficient research support for both sides of the argument that educational or vocational programs may or may not rehabilitative. However, the question still remains, why do inmates continue to participate in these programs, if the rehabilitative element of these programs remains questionable. Some studies have suggested that inmates are not concern with the rehabilitative effects of these programs, but for other reasons (Enez, 1987; Petersilla, 1979). In other words, do the characteristics or reasons why determine an inmates participates in educational or vocational programs.

There was a limited amount of studies that dealt with who and why inmates participate in educational or vocational programs. To

begin, what types of inmates participate in prison programs. In 1989 Armor, Head, Blackburn and Slone conducted a study to determine who participates in prison programs. The authors attempted to determine if certain types of inmates were more amenable to treatment than others. Secondary data was compiled using various prison records. The results indicated it was possible to distinguish amenable inmates from non-amenable inmates. The characteristics of the amenable inmates were as follows: higher intelligence, older, first offense, higher education level and most likely white.

Other studies indicated similar characteristics and provided additional characteristics of inmates who are amenable to treatment (Glover and Lotze, 1989; Knepper, 1990; Petersilla, 1989). These studies also, occurred in a prison setting. The finding indicated that inmates who attend educational or vocational programs tend to be unmarried, childless, and serving longer sentences such as five years or more.

Although the previous studies provided some insight as to the characteristics of inmates who attend educational or vocational programs they fail to address the question why inmates attend. Several studies have been conducted in attempt to answer this question.

Kisser conducted a study in 1987, that examined the reasons inmates attend educational programs. The population was selected from Pontiac Correctional Center. The author was an instructor in this prison

facility and used his class for subjects. The author's finding indicated seven reasons why inmates attend educational programs which are as follows:

1. Interested in the college course.
2. To make their transition back into society easier.
3. To reduce the boredom of prison life.
4. To get away from the danger inside of prison.
5. To get away from violent offenders.
6. To obtain prestige or status.
7. To obtains legal knowledge.  
(Kisser, 1987;103)

Stephens (1992), conducted a study that provided some insight into why inmates attend educational or vocational programs. The data was collected from New York State's Sing Sing Maximum Security Correctional Facility. A survey was used that incorporated three sections of questions. These sections consisted of demographic, perceptions and reasons for attending educational or vocational program questions. The findings indicated that inmates attend these prison programs because of the following reasons:

1. To better ones - self.
2. To get a better job.

3. To impress the parole board.  
(Stephens, 1992: 6 ).

In an earlier study conducted by Wesley (1982), he found similar findings for reasons why inmates attend educational programs. A questionnaire was given to the inmates. The questionnaire consisted of seven questions geared toward the importance of education. The findings indicated that inmates viewed education important. Furthermore, their reasons for attending were as follows:

1. To impress the parole board.
2. To fend off boredom.
3. To elude the less desirable work assignments.
4. To learn.
5. To be in an environment with less security.  
( Wesley, 1982; 6 )

### **LIMITATIONS OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH**

The foremost problem with the cited studies is that they are dated. With the exceptions of some of the last studies (Armstrong, 1989; Glover, 1989; Kisser, 1987; Knepper, 1990; Stephens, 1992; Wesley, 1982) nearly fifteen to twenty years has passed since other studies have been done on why inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs. What might have been true fifteen to twenty years ago may not be true now.



Another problem with the research is its fragmentation. Each study either focused on the educational reasons why inmates attend or on the vocational reasons why inmate attend (Kisser, 1987; McIntosh, 1986; Stephen, 1992). In some studies the reasons why inmates attend these programs was an accidental finding (Pollock, 1979). None of the studies compared inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs.

Previous research also failed to provide solutions for successful and unsuccessful programs. Or what to do with the knowledge of knowing the characteristics of inmates for attending educational or vocational programs and their reasons for attending these programs. For the above listed reasons, it is the intent of this researcher to clarify the reasons why inmates attend educational and vocational prison programs, and to identify characteristics that influences the inmates' reasons for attending these prison programs. Finally, this researcher will attempt to provide recommendations for the use of this study.

## SUMMARY

Historical writings indicated that the continuous conflict of the purpose of incarceration still persists. Even though a century has passed the purpose of incarceration still has two views, which are

punishment or rehabilitation. Although there is enough literature presented to support either view, both views seem to have something in common. The commonality within both positions is that under certain conditions some programs can work and that certain inmates may be more amenable than others.

The conflict in trying to identify the purpose of incarceration fails to recognize why inmates attend educational or vocational programs. Studies have recognized that inmates attend these prison programs not for rehabilitation effect but for some other reasons. None of the reasons listed, mentioned that inmates attended these prison programs because they wanted to be rehabilitated.

None of the studies provided any recommendations or demonstrated as what to do with finding on why inmates attend these prison program. Finally, none of the research efforts were inclusive of the reasons of inmates who attended either educational or vocational prison programs.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore, and describe inmates' reason(s) for attending educational or vocational prison programs. More specifically, this study identified the reason (s) why inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs, and to compare the differences and similarities between these two groups. The group differences, and similarities were examined as follows by:

1. Their reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. Reasons are divided into personal gain and self-actualization (see appendix B).
2. The characteristics between the groups, individual age and duration of sentence, not an exhaustive list (see page 27 for comprehensive list).

#### **Research Design**

A survey design was used in this study. According, to Hagan (1989), this survey design is most appropriate for primary data gathering, and data in which one desires to collect expressed attitude or claimed behavior. This study posed to explore and describe the

reason(s) why inmates' attend educational or vocational programs. Also, to identify the differences and similarities between the two groups.

### Study Setting

This study was conducted at a minimum security prison facility in Jackson, Michigan. This prison confines inmates who have a minimum sentence of one year.

### Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of inmates attending educational or vocational prison programs. The sampling frame was from a selected time within the regularly scheduled educational and vocational prison programs. The sample size included all inmates within this selected time period. The sample size consist of 136 inmates with 72 educational and 64 vocational.

### Sampling Method

During regular scheduled educational and vocational class time all inmates were selected to complete the questionnaire.

## Hypothesis

This study is based on the following hypotheses:

1.  $H_0$ : There is no difference in the relationship between the reasons of inmates attending educational programs, or inmates attending vocational programs.  
  
 $H_A$ : There is a statistically significant relationship between the reasons of inmates attending educational programs, or inmates' attending vocational programs.
2.  $H_0$ : There is no statistically significant difference between the reasons of inmates' attending educational programs seeking a two year degree, and a four year degree.  
  
 $H_A$ : There is a statistically significant relationship between the motives of inmates' attending educational programs seeking a two year degree, and a four year degree.
3.  $H_0$ : There is no statistically significant difference in the relationship between inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs and inmates' race.  
  
 $H_A$ : There is a relationship between inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs and the inmates' race.
4.  $H_0$ : There is no difference in the relationship between the inmates reasons for attending educational or vocational programs and the inmates's age.  
  
 $H_A$ : There is a relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs and the inmates' age.
5.  $H_0$ : There is no relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs and the type of crime committed by the inmate.  
  
 $H_A$ : There is a relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs, and the type of crime committed by the inmate.

6.  $H_0$ : There is no relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs, and the duration of their sentence .

$H_A$ : There is a relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs, and the duration of their sentence.

7.  $H_0$ : There is no relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs, and their marital status.

$H_A$ : There is a relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs, and their marital status.

### Variables

The following variables were used in this study.

#### **Independent**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Attributes</b>
<b>Race</b>	African American (black), European American (white), and other includes: Native American, Hispanic, Mexican American, unidentified.
<b>Age</b>	Represented in number of years
<b>Educational programs</b>	A list of prison educational programs offered that provides the inmates with a 2 year degree or 4 year degree.

**Continued**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Attributes</b>
<b>Vocational programs</b>	A list of prison vocational programs that provided the inmates with a license or certification.
<b>Duration of sentence</b>	Refer to the inmates actual sentence issued by the court.
<b>Time served</b>	A period of incarceration time served to date.
<b>Attendance</b>	Includes inmates currently attending educational or vocational prison programs.
<b>Marital status</b>	Refers to the inmates marital status: Married, single, divorced, separated, and widower.

**Dependent Variable**

<b>Reason(s)</b>	Reason(s) for inmates' attending educational or vocational prison programs.
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**Operational Definitions**

<b>Race</b>	Categorized into three race groups African American, European American and Other.
<b>Age</b>	Refers to the age of the subject.

Type of crime	Categorized into crime against property, person and other includes: dry related offenses, drunk driving, counterfeit, carry concealed weapon.
Educational Background	Refers to the last grade level completed by the subject. Educational level means 1-5 grade school, 6-8 junior high, 9-12 high school, 13-14 undergraduate, 15-16 upper graduate, and other degree.
Vocational Background	Refers to the completion of other vocational prison programs not presently attending.
Educational programs	Refers to classes offered: Associates degree in Data Processing, Para-legal, Bachelor of Arts, and Business management.
Vocational programs	Refers to voc-tech courses offered: Horticulture, Janitorial, Auto mechanic, and Slaughter House.
Duration of Sentence	Refer to the number of years the inmate was sentenced by the court.
Time Served	Refer to the amount of time the inmate has served to date.
Reason(s)	A list of possible Reason(s) inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs.
Marital Status	Refers to the inmates marital status: Married, single, divorced, separated, and widower.
Number of Children	The number of children the inmates have.



### **Measurement Instrument**

#### **- Construction of Questionnaire**

A survey questionnaire was developed for this study. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section contained demographic questions. The second section contained education and vocational background questions. The final section contained questions targeted at inmates reason(s) for attending educational or vocational prison programs (see Appendix A).

#### **- Pretest**

A pretest of the questionnaire was conducted on a small group of inmates in order to identify any ambiguous words or phrases. The pretest highlighted problems regarding the variables used in the questionnaire. The pretest sub - sample comprised of 5 inmates who are presently attending educational or vocational prison programs. Based on the inmates' comments, and suggestion revisions were made.

#### **-Questionnaire reliability**

Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was used to estimate the internal consistency measure of the reliability of the questionnaire regarding the inmates reason for attending educational and vocational programs. Before this test was applied the inmates' reasons were

divided into two categories: 1. personal gain interests - reasons the inmate receives some type of benefit (i.e. early parole), 2. self-actualization interests - reasons the receives some type of self - improvement benefit (i.e. to learn). The following alpha coefficients were obtained:

Personal gain interests	(16 items)	0.916
Self - Actualization interests	(8 items)	0.741
Overall interests	(24 items)	0.893

In this study the alpha coefficients for the personal gain interests 0.916 and the self-actualization interests 0.741 were very high. Also, the overall alpha coefficient for both interests 0.893 of the 24 items was high. Thus, the alpha levels supports a high level of reliability for this questionnaire.

#### -Anonymity and Confidentiality

To insure inmates anonymity and confidentiality the questionnaire required no identification that would link it to a particular inmate. No names were required. Once the questionnaire were returned there was no way to determine which subject completed which questionnaire. The questionnaire will be destroyed after the data is analyzed.

### Data Collection Procedure

The researcher, and researcher assistant collected the data in January, 1994 at Jackson minimum prison facility. This questionnaire was given on a one - shot basis. There was no need for added security because the questionnaires was directly handed to the inmates during regular scheduled class time and training time.

The following procedures was used in the collection of data. First the researcher distributed the consent form for the subjects to read. At this point the subjects may have refused to participate. Finally, the subjects were given the questionnaire to complete. The questionnaire took approximately 15 minutes to complete.

### Data Analysis Procedures

In this study descriptive statistics, and correlation co-efficient analysis were used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to analysis the demographic questions and inmates' reasons. Also, these same statistics were used to analysis the educational and vocational background questions.

Correlation analysis were used to test the null hypothesis. The variables used in this analysis are race, length of sentence, and inmates' reason(s). Alpha level .05 was used for all statistical analysis. The statistical package SPSS was used to analysis the collected data.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

In this chapter, the results will be presented by the differences, and similarities between the educational and vocational groups. Each hypothesis will be explain through the use of tables. Each table will identify the specific hypothesis or hypotheses addressed.

#### HYPOTHESIS #1:

$H_0$ : There is no difference in the relationship between the reasons of inmates attending educational programs, or inmates attending vocational programs.

The inmates' rankings and means of the reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs is presented in table 1.

TABLE 1

**Inmates Reasons for Attending Educational  
or Vocational Programs by Type of group**

	EDUCATIONAL		VOCATIONAL	
Reason	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
R1	8.71	1	8.44	2
R2	7.74	<u>8</u>	7.75	8
R3	8.48	3	8.15	5

Continued Table 1

	EDUCATIONAL		VOCATIONAL	
Reasons	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
R4	7.76	7	8.45	1
R5	2.35	<u>23</u>	3.30	23
R6	7.95	5	8.34	3
R7	3.50	17	4.19	19
R8	2.56	<u>22</u>	3.97	22
R9	2.79	21	3.28	24
R10	6.22	9	6.62	10
R11	4.10	<u>15</u>	5.38	15
R12	3.75	16	6.34	12
R13	5.48	<u>11</u>	6.47	11
R14	3.17	20	4.67	17
R15	2.06	24	4.00	21
R16	5.41	12	5.90	14
R17	5.24	<u>13</u>	5.94	13
R18	4.34	14	4.94	16
R19	3.34	19	4.06	20
R20	8.37	<u>4</u>	8.20	4
R21	3.45	18	4.67	17
R22	7.89	<u>6</u>	7.99	6
R23	8.69	2	7.89	7
R24	5.94	10	7.06	9

\* underline indicates similar rank

This table indicates the similarities between educational inmates' and vocational inmates' ranking of the reasons, why they attend the above mentioned prison programs. Also, the data indicates a similarity between the two groups' means for the reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. The analysis indicates there may be a correlation between the two groups' reasons for attending these prison programs.

To determine if a correlation exists between educational and vocational reasons for attending a spearman's rank order was conducted and present in table 1.1

**TABLE 1.1**

**Spearman's Rank Order Correlation by the Reason  
for Attending between Educational and Vocational Groups**

	Educational		Vocational	
Reasons	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
1. To learn new ideas and knowledge	8.71	1	8.44	2
23. To stimulate the mind	8.69	2	7.89	7
3. A desire to obtain a degree or certification	8.48	3	8.15	5

	Educational		Vocational	
Reasons	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
20. To feel a sense of achievement	8.37	4	8.20	4
6. To get a better job when released	7.94	5	8.34	3
22. To build self-esteem	7.89	6	7.98	6
4. To learn a skill	7.76	7	8.45	1
2. Interested in the course offered	7.74	8	7.75	8
10. To be treated as a person and not a number	6.22	9	6.62	10
24. To add a positive activity in your prison life	5.94	10	7.06	9
13. As a way to make time sentenced to go faster	5.48	11	6.47	11
16. As a way to reduce boredom	5.41	12	5.89	14
17. To change the daily routine of confinement	4.24	13	5.94	13
18. To interact with non-prison staff	4.34	14	4.94	16
11. to have more time out of ones prison cell	4.10	15	5.37	15
12. As a way to earn money	3.75	16	6.34	12
7. To impress the parole board	3.51	17	4.19	19
21. To gain privileges	3.45	18	4.67	17

	Educational		Vocational	
Reasons	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
19. To gain temporary relief from prison rules and regulations	3.34	19	4.06	20
14. To get away from Correctional Officers	3.17	20	4.67	17
9. To socialize with other prisoners	2.79	21	3.28	24
8. To gain acceptance from peers	2.56	22	3.97	22
5. To be around females who are non-correctional officers	2.35	23	3.30	23
15. To get away from dangerous inmates	2.06	24	4.00	21
Spearman Rho = 0.945, P - Value = 0.000*				

\* Significance at 0.05 level

Table 1.1 shows that there is a statistical association between the educational and vocational inmates reasons for attending these prison programs ( $p = .00$ ). The relationship indicated a very strong relationship ( $Rho = 0.945$ ). The analysis indicates that reasons ranked high by the educational inmates were also ranked high by the vocational inmates.

#### **HYPOTHESIS #2, 3, 5, 7:**

$H_0$ : There is no statistically significant difference between the reasons of inmates' attending educational programs seeking a two



year degree, and a four year degree.

$H_0$ : There is no statistically significant difference in the relationship between inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs and inmates' race.

$H_0$ : There is no relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs and the type of crime committed by the inmate.

$H_0$ : There is no relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs, and their marital status.

The variance of the difference between self- actualization interests (See appendix B) by respondents demographic characteristics is presented in table 2. Respondents refers to both the educational and vocational inmates.

TABLE 2

**Analysis of Variance Results for the Difference in the  
Self-Actualization interests by Respondents Demographic  
Characteristics**

Demo - Graphics	Levels	Mean	SD	F - Value	P - Value
Education	2 years	8.36	.72	.629	.430
	4 years	8.18	0.88		
Race	White	7.95	1.14	3.50	.033*
	Black	8.47	0.72		
	Other	8.22	0.77		
Type of Crime	Property Offense	8.14	0.97	.384	.682
	Offense against a Person	8.18	1.00		
	Other	8.39	0.57		
Marital Status	Never	8.19	0.82	.314	.815
	Married or Widowed	8.39	0.59		
	Separated	8.16	0.86		
	Divorced	8.15	1.20		

\* Significance at 0.05 level

In table 2 inmates who attended the 2 year or the 4 year educational program did not demonstrate a statistical significant difference in their self-actualization interest, (F-value of .629 and a P-value of .430). However, the data does indicate a statistical significant difference between respondents' race and self- actualization interests. The relationship indicates a F-value of 3.50 and a P-value of .033. The analysis indicates that race had an effect on the inmates self-actualization interests. African Americans (8.47) tended to rank self -actualization interests higher than Europeans (7.95) and Others (8.22). The third demographic characteristic type of crime indicates that there was no statistical significance between the educational and vocational inmates' self- actualization interests. The F-value .384 and P-value .682 indicates a slight correlation.

Finally, the demographic characteristic marital status did not indicate a statistical significance. The F-value (0.314) and the P-value (0.815) indicates a slight relationship.

#### **HYPOTHESIS #2, 3, 5, 7: See above for null hypothesis**

The analysis of variance for the difference between the personal gain interests (see Appendix B) by educational and vocational demographic characteristics is presented in table 3.

**TABLE 3**

**Analysis of Variance Results for the Difference in the Personal  
Gain Interest by Respondents Demographic Characteristics**

Demo - Graphics	Levels	Mean	SD	F - Value	P - Value
Education	2 years	4.26	1.28	1.52	0.221
	4 years	3.71	1.64		
Race	White	3.73	1.68	6.23	0.003*
	Black	4.59	0.66		
	Other	5.07	2.07		
Type of Crime	Property Offense	3.79	1.59	2.75	0.069
	Offense against a Person	4.75	1.98		
	Other	4.56	1.58		
Marital Status	Never	4.33	1.93	1.09	0.357
	Married or Widowed	4.87	1.84		
	Separated	4.84	2.12		
	Divorced	4.11	1.75		

\*Significance at 0.05 level

The first demographic characteristic education , 2 years and 4 years, shows no statistical significance with personal gain interests. The F-value (1.52) and the P-value (0.221) indicates a weak relationship.

The second demographic characteristic race indicates a statistical

significance. The relationship is a strong one. The analysis indicates that Other ranked their personal gain interests (5.07) higher than European Americans (3.73) and African Americans (4.59) personal gain interests.

The remaining two demographics shows no statistical significance with the inmates' (educational and vocational) personal gain interests (see table ).

#### **HYPOTHESIS #4, 6:**

$H_0$ : There is no difference in the relationship between the inmates reasons for attending educational or vocational programs and the inmates's age

$H_0$ : There is no relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs, and the duration of their sentence .

Pearson correlations was used to analysis self- actualization and personal gain interests with demographic characteristics, age and duration of sentence, the results are presented in table 4.

TABLE 4

**Pearson Correlations Analysis Between Self - Actualization and  
Personal Gain Interests with Age and Duration of Sentence  
( vocational and educational combined )**

	Self - Actualization			Personal Gain		
Demographic Characteristics	n	r	P - Value	n	r	P - Value
Age	135	-0.154	0.074**	135	0.016	0.850
Duration of Sentence min	124	-0.057	0.532	124	-0.168	0.061**
max	128	-0.207	0.019*	128	-0.156	0.858
length@	128	-0.170	0.055	128	-0.071	0.428

\*\*Significance at 0.10 level

\* Significance at 0.05 level

@ Length =  $1/2(\text{max} + \text{min})$

This table shows that age has a statistical significant effect on self-actualization and personal gain interests. However, the significance level of the variable age varied between the two interests (refer to table).

Next, duration of sentence shows that there is a statistical significant correlation between self- actualization with maximum and personal gain with minimum. The correlation between self-actualization with maximum showed an inverse relationship. The analysis indicates that

the inmates with the lowest maximum sentence selected more self-actualized reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. Moreover, the correlation between personal gain with minimum sentence also expresses an inverse relationship. The analysis indicates that inmates with the lowest minimum sentence selected more personal gain reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs.

#### **HYPOTHESIS #4, 6:**

$H_0$ : There is no difference in the relationship between the inmates reasons for attending educational or vocational programs and the inmates's age

$H_0$ : There is no relationship between the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational programs, and the duration of their sentence .

To determine if a correlation existed between educational and vocational groups with self-actualization and personal gain interests pearsons correlations was used. The results are presented in table 5.

TABLE 5

**Pearsons Correlations Analysis Between Educational and Vocational Groups with Self - Actualization and Personal Gain Interests  
( divided by age and duration of sentence )**

		Educational			Vocational		
Interest	Demographic Characteristic	n	r	P - Value	n	r	P - Value
Self - Act.	Age	72	0.043	0.722	63	-0.270	0.032*
	Duration						
	min	65	-0.012	0.923	59	-0.129	0.328
	max	68	-0.130	0.290	60	-0.261	0.044*
	length	68	-0.083	0.499	60	-0.248	0.056**
Personal Gain	Age	72	0.029	0.808	63	-0.037	0.775
	Duration						
	min	65	-0.175	0.164	59	-0.139	0.294
	max	68	-0.038	0.757	60	-0.024	0.854
	length	68	-0.081	0.510	60	-0.063	0.630

\* significance at 0.05 level

\*\* significance at 0.10 level

This table shows a statistical significance correlation between vocational with age, and vocational with duration of sentence. The significance level is different for each variable ( see table). The table indicates that there is an inverse relationship between vocational (self-actualization) and their age. In other words, the younger the inmate the more likely the inmate would select self-actualization reasons for attending the vocational program.



Next, the table indicates an inverse relationship between vocational with maximum and length of sentence. The analysis indicates the shorter the maximum sentence, and the overall length of sentence the more likely vocational inmates would select self-actualization reasons for attending the vocational program.

### **SUMMARY**

The major finding of the analysis are listed below.

1. The data indicates similarities between educational and vocational inmates' ranking of their reasons for attending the educational or vocational prison programs.
2. The data indicates a correlation existed between inmates' reason for attending educational or vocational prison programs. Reasons ranked high by the educational inmates were also ranked high by the vocational inmates.
3. African American inmates ranked self-actualization interests higher than European Americans and Others.
4. Other inmates ranked personal gain interests higher than African Americans and European Americans.
5. The inmates' age indicates a correlation on how they ranked the self-

actualization interests and personal gain interests.

6. The lower the inmates' maximum sentence the higher the self-actualization interests were ranked.

7. The lower the inmates' minimum sentence the higher the personal gain interests were ranked.

8. The younger the inmates the more likely the inmates selected and ranked higher the self-actualization interests.

9. The lower the maximum sentence and the overall length of sentence the more likely vocational inmates selected and ranked higher the self-actualization interests.

#### NOTES:

The scale presented below is used when referring to the strength of a given association in Chapter IV:

.8 - 1.00	=	strong relationship
.6 - .79	=	moderate relationship
.4 - .59	=	fair relationship
.2 - .39	=	slight relationship
.0 - .19	=	weak relationship

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

This chapter will be comprised of six sections. These sections are as follows: restatement of the purpose, identification of the similarities and differences of reasons why inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs, demographic characteristics, conclusions, limitation of the study and recommendations.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. More specifically, this study identifies the reasons why inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs, and to compare the differences and similarities between these two groups. The differences and similarities are examined as follows by:

1. the characteristics between the two groups
2. the groups reason (s) for attending educational or vocational prison programs.

### Similarities/Differences of Inmates' Reasons

This study found that the two groups ranked similar reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. The analysis indicated these two groups ranked their top five reasons based on self-actualization interests. These interests are as follows:

#### **TOP FIVE REASONS**

<u>Education</u>	<u>Vocational</u>
<u>1.</u> To learn new ideas and knowledge.	4. To learn a skill.
23. To stimulate the mind.	1. To learn new idea and knowledge.
<u>3.</u> A desire to obtain a degree or certification.	6. To get a better job when released.
<u>20.</u> To feel a sense of achievement.*	20. To feel a sense of achievement.*
<u>6.</u> To get a better job when released. *ranked the same	3. Desire to obtain a degree or certification.
	(_)Also selected by the vocational group

Both groups only ranked one reason the same (see above). The remaining reasons are ranked according to the groups specific perspective, in terms of pursuing an educational direction or pursuing a vocational direction (see above, reasons 23, 4). Essentially, one reason differentiated between the two groups, reason 1 and 4 (see above). But,

on closer examination the differentiated difference of reasons between the groups are based on the reasons corresponded to each of their specific interest - educational or vocational.

Another similarity between the groups are their lowest ranked reasons are based on personal gain interests. These interests consisted as follows:

#### LOWEST FIVE REASONS

<u>Educational</u>	<u>Vocational</u>
15. To get away from dangerous inmates	9. To socialize with other prisoners.
5. To be around females who are non-correctional officers.*	5. To be around females who are non-correctional officers.
8. To gain acceptance from peers.*	8. To gain acceptance from peers.
9. To socialize with other prisoners.	15. To get away from dangerous inmates.
14. To get away from correctional officers.	19. To gain temporary relief from prison rules and regulations.
(_) Also selected by the vocational group	

\*ranked the same

These groups ranked two reasons the same (see above). Once again there is only one reason that differentiates the two groups- reasons 14,19. A. Possible explanation for these similar ranking of reasons

between the educational and vocational inmates are their awareness of the deprivations associated with confinement, thereby electing the opportunity to obtain some form of benefit. The benefit perceived as acquiring knowledge or skill. This study also shows that the overall differences in the ranking of reason between these two groups is not significant. The differences indicated in this study are slight and focused according to each groups' perspective.

Previous research in this area is limited to examining vocational or educational inmates separately. Nor did the previous research specifically examine if a correlation existed between educational and vocational inmates' reasons for attending these prison programs, therefore, no standard is available for comparison (refer to chapter II). However, prior research studies (Jones, 1982; Kiser, 1987; Stephens, 1992) did show that educational and vocational inmates selected some of the reasons indicated in these studies. For example, desire to learn, to better ones self, and to get a better job. Thus, these prior findings only adds strength to the argument that inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs to obtain some type of benefit.

### Demographic Characteristics

This study examined various demographic characteristic to identify whether a correlation existed between the two groups regarding

their choice of reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. To begin with, the difference in educational level, two year or four year, did not show any statistical significance. A possible explanation could be that their perspective are too closely similar. Or the difference in educational degrees does not influence whether they selected self-actualization or personal gain interests.

Prior research studies do not exist that examine if there is a correlation of the reasons why inmates attend educational prison programs. Therefore, prior studies can not substantiate these findings.

The second demographic characteristic examined is whether race impacted the inmates' reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. The findings indicated that race did influence the reasons selected (refer to Table 2 and Table 3). Inmates categorized as African Americans selected reasons for attending based on self-actualization interests rather than personal gain interests. On the other hand, inmates categorized as Others selected reasons based on personal gain interests rather than self-actualization interests (refer to Table 3). It is interesting to noted that in either cases these groups' (African Americans and Others) selections and rankings differentiate slightly (refer to Table 2 and Table 3). However, unlike the European American group, a larger differential gap existed with their selection and ranking of reasons in relation to the other two groups (refer Table 2 & Table 3).

A possible explanation for the above findings could be that African Americans and Others, due to their ethnicity may in general view education and vocational skills similar therefore, it is reflected in their selection and ranking of reasons for attending prison programs. Another possible explanation for the differences between the two other groups and the European American group could be that less of the latter group participated in the study, that their true reasons may not have been adequately reflected.

The next two demographics characteristics examined are type of crime and marital status. This study found that neither of these characteristics affected the two groups' reasons (self-actualization, personal gain) for attending educational or vocational prison programs (refer to Table 2 and Table 3). Thus, in deciding to attend prison programs these characteristics are irrelevant.

A prior similar research study indicated that the type of offense did not affect inmates decision to attend educational or vocational prison programs (Petersilla, 1979). However, this study did not indicate whether marital status affected their decision to attend educational or vocational prison programs. It should be noted that this study only examined **who** attend prison programs not why inmates attend these prison programs. Although limited this study provides some support for this study's findings.



The fifth demographic characteristic examined is age. This study examined whether age affected the inmates reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. As indicated earlier the inmates' reasons are affected by the inmates' age for attending prison programs (refer to Table 4 & Table 5). This study found that younger inmates selected self-actualization interests well older inmates selected personal gain interests.

A possible explanation younger inmates select self-actualization interests could be their perception of the benefits from these programs when released from prison. As opposed to the older inmates in which the perception of benefits received in prison, personal gain interests, overwhelms their self-actualization interests. The younger inmates probably visualize the future benefits unlike the older inmates.

The final demographic characteristic examined is duration of sentence. This study found that inmates with the shorter maximum sentence selected self-actualization interests while inmates with shorter minimum sentence selected personal gain interests. Thus, the inmates' reason for attending educational or vocational prison programs is affected by their length of sentence.

A possible explanation for this finding could be inmates with shorter maximum and minimum sentences visualize the future possibilities of utilizing the benefits of a degree or certificate. Well

those with longer sentences may visualize their sentence in terms of how prison life can be made more comfortable (refer to personal gain interests).

In conclusion, the last two demographic characteristics shows that younger inmates with shorter sentences attend educational or vocational prison programs for self - actualization reasons. Thus, this study's premise is strengthened that inmates attend prison programs for reason other than personal gain reasons.

## CONCLUSIONS

In a time which prison programs are being re-evaluated as to whether the programs rehabilitates or not, the cost of such programs, this study provides some important insights. This study identifies demographic characteristics which may result in positive affects for those inmates' who attend educational or vocational prison programs for self-actualization reasons. The characteristics identified are that younger African Americans with shorter maximum sentences attend such programs for self-actualization reasons (interests). These findings may be utilized to develop prison programs that are geared toward those demographic that encourage attendance to prison programs for self-actualization interests (refer to Appendix B), which are interests aimed towards self-improvement and preparation for the return to society.

The second insight this study provides is that it identifies **why** inmates attend prison programs. Thus, these findings add to the existing research studies ( Knepper, 1985; Grover, 1989; Armor, 1989; Peterseilla, 1979) that identifies **who** attends prison programs. As a result the combining of this data with past research may be utilized as a foundation to develop and implement future prison programs.

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

There were several limitations in this study. The first limitation was the limited ability to generalize to other prison populations due to the sample size. Hence, using subjects solely from one prison facility limits the overall knowledge of inmates' reason(s) for attending educational or vocational prison programs.

The second limitation was the inability to verify the truthfulness of the subjects' responses on the questionnaire. Because of the fear that the subjects' responses may be used against them at a later time , the subjects may have given inaccurate responses.

Finally, this study did not examine the reason(s) of inmates who do not attend educational or vocational prison programs as to what would encourage them to attend educational or vocational prison. programs. This information though informative will have to be left up to future research to enlighten us on the finding in this area. Thus, this

introductory study will provide further researchers the opportunity to expand and build upon this introductory study.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

This study of inmates' attending educational or vocational prison programs has sheds more light in the area of why they attend such programs. However, this is just a chip at the tremendous amount of research that could enhance this study as well as to the overall research dealing with inmates.

Although this study provided some insight to inmates' reasons for attending prison programs, an area of research that would enhance this study would be to examine whether there is a difference in the recidivism rate between those who attend prison programs for of self-actualization interests or personal gain interests. The information obtained from this study can be utilized to determine whether prison programs should be developed and designed on the premises of encouraging self-actualization interests or personal gain interests.

In order to gain more precise knowledge, future research should examine whether those who participate in educational vs. vocational have a better success rate of completing the program. Success referring to obtaining and maintaining employment. And of those that completed the program did their reasons focus in self-actualization or personal gain

interests.

Finally, to improve upon this study future research should examine why all inmates in prison **do not** attend these prison programs. As indicated through this study, inmates attend these prison programs because they receive some form of benefit ( refer to Appendix B). A similar study such as this could be conducted to reveal the inmates' reasons for not attending. And based on this knowledge programs may be developed that may best meet theses inmates' needs in order to effect a positive change upon the inmates re-integration into society.

Thus, there is wide a variety of potential research that could expand the knowledge in this area. Also, with society's concern whether these prison program work and the cost vs. the effectiveness of these program, research conducted on this topic will be relied upon and utilized to eliminate, design, develop and implement programs in the future for our correctional system.

# APPENDICES

## **Appendix A**

### **Consent Form and Questionnaire**

## **CONSENT FORM**

**This study is for the completion of a Masters Degree at Michigan university to be received by Ms. Abigail Callejas. The purpose of this questionnaire is to explore why inmates attend educational or vocational prison programs.**

**If you decide to participate in completing this questionnaire your responses will remain anonymous. NO NAME or any coding technique will be used to link this questionnaire to you. So, **do not** write your name on this questionnaire.**

**At any time you may chose not to participate in completing this questionnaire.without penalty. In other words, you may choose not to participate at all, may refuse to answer certain questions or may discontinue completing the questionnaire at any time. However, you do indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire.**

**The approximate time for completing this questionnaire is 10 minutes.**



**Your responses in this questionnaire will be kept anonymous. DO NOT write your name on this questionnaire. Only those directly working with this study will have access to this questionnaire. When this study is finished this questionnaire will be destroyed. Thank you for participating voluntarily in this questionnaire.**

**Directions:**

**Please read the questions carefully and answer to the best of your ability.  
Please circle your responses.**

1. What is your cultural background?  
1. African American 2. Mexican American 3. Native American  
4. European 5. Hispanic 6. Asian American 7. Other\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your age ? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your marital status?  
1. Never married 2. Married 3. Separated 4. Divorced 5. Widow  
er
4. Number of children you have in each age group?  
1. None\_\_\_\_ 2. Under four\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Four to Seven years \_\_\_\_\_  
4. Eight to ten years\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Eleven to thirteen years\_\_\_\_\_  
6. Fourteen to sixteen years\_\_\_\_ 7. Seventeen to nineteen years\_\_\_\_\_
5. Have you been in prison before? 1. yes 2. no  
If yes, how many times (not including this prison sentence). \_\_\_\_\_
6. Imprisoned for what type of offense? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Length of prison sentence? Maximum\_\_\_\_\_ Minimum\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How much of your prison sentence have you served? \_\_\_\_\_
9. How many times have you been up for parole?  
1. Once 2. Twice 3. Three times 4 More than Three times 5.  
Not yet
10. How many years of school did you complete? (Please Circle one)  
(1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 ) (I Diploma)  
(College Degree) (Advanced Degree)
11. Do you have a GED? 1. Yes 2. No
12. Are you currently attending the prison educational program? 1. Yes 2. No  
IF no skip to question 16

13. What educational program are you attending?

1. Associates Degree in Data processing    2. Para-legal    3. Bachelor of Arts  
4. Business Management    (four year degree)

14. How long have you been attending this educational program?

1. less than one year    2. One year    3. Two years    4. Three years  
5. Four years or more

15. What is your goal for attending this educational program?

1. Two year degree    2. Four year degree

16. Are you currently attending the prison vocational program?    1. Yes    2. No

17. What vocational program are you attending?

1. Horticulture    2. Janitorial    3. Auto Mechanic    4. Slaughter House

18. How long have you been attending this vocational program?

1. Less than one year    2. One year    3. Two years    4. Three years

### Directions

Residents in this prison facility are given the opportunity of deciding whether to attend educational or vocational prison programs. Below is a list of reasons for attending educational or vocational prison programs. For each of the reasons listed circle the degree of importance from very important, somewhat importance or not important, for your decision to attend the educational or vocational prison program.

	Very Important			Somewhat Important			Not Important		
	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1. To learn new ideas and knowledge	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. Interested in the courses offered.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. A desire to obtain a degree or certification.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. To learn a skill.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. To be around females who are non Correctional Officers.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. To get a better job when released.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. To impress the parole board.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

	Very Important			Somewhat Important			Not Important		
	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
8. To gain acceptance from peers.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. To socialize with other prisoners.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
10. To be treated as a person and not a number.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
11. To have more time out of ones prison cell.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
12. As a way to earn money.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
13. As a way to make time sentenced go faster.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
14. To get away from Correctional Officers.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
15. To get away from dangerous inmates.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
16. As a way to reduce boredom.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
17. To change the daily routine of confinement.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
18. To interact with non-prison staff.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
19. To gain a temporary relief from prison rules and regulations.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
20. To feel a sense of achievement.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
21. To gain privileges.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
22. To build self-esteem.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
23. To stimulate the mind.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
24. To add a positive activity in your prison file	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
25. Other reason. Please Specify.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

## **APPENDIX B**

### **SELF-ACTUALIZATION INTERESTS & PERSONAL GAIN INTERESTS**

SELF- ACTUALIZATION INTERESTS AND PERSONAL GAIN INTERESTS

Self-actualization interests

1. To learn new ideas and knowledge.
2. Interested in the course offered.
3. A desire to obtain a degree or certification.
4. To learn a skill.
6. To get a better job when released.
20. To feel a sense of achievement
22. To build self-esteem.
23. To stimulate the mind.

Personal gain interests

5. To be around females who are non - correctional officers.
7. To impress the parole board.
8. To gain acceptance form peers.
9. To socialize with other prisoners.
10. To be treated as a person and not a number.
11. To have more time out of ones prison cell.
12. As a way to earn money.
13. As a way to make time sentenced to go faster
14. To get away form correctional officers.
15. To get away from dangerous inmates.
16. As a way to reduce boredom.
17. To change the daily routine of confinement.
18. To interact with non-prison staff.
19. To gain temporary relief from prison rules and regulations.
21. To gain privileges.
24. To add an activity in prison life.

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