

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE NONPARTICIPATION
OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALE JAIL INMATES
IN CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of
Southwest Texas State University
In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements

For the Degree
Developmental and Adult Education
Master of Arts

By

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San Marcos, Texas
May 2002

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Give thanks to the Lord for He is good. His mercy endures forever!

I want to thank my husband Robert for his constant support and encouragement that I could complete this paper. I love you Poppa!

Thanks to my family for encouraging me every step of the way. Remember Dad, it's Southwest Texas State University. Not Southwestern University!

Dr. Lyman thank you for seeing my potential and allowing me the opportunity to pursue a graduate education when others would not give me consideration. To the other members of my committee Dr. Stedman and Dr. Ross-Gordon a hearty thank you.

Thanks to all the members of the Developmental and Adult Education thesis support group that have gone before me. Thanks for your support and advice on getting through this project.

A special thanks to Ursula for answering my late night data analysis and format questions. I never expected we would become such good friends. Thanks for your friendship.

Thanks to Jeannette, Laura, and Eileen for your encouragement and feedback. Thanks Kristen for an awesome job on editing my paper.

Lastly, to my thesis advisor, Dr. Emily Miller Payne, thanks for the listening ear. Thanks for the encouragement semester after semester after semester when I did more talking about my paper than actually writing it. I could not have finished this without you.

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ABSTRACT

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The United States has the highest incarceration rate for its citizens in the industrialized world. The increase in the US prison population is primarily due to the incarceration of non-violent property and drug related offenders. African-American males represent the largest population of those incarcerated in US prisons.

Correctional education programs are not mandatory in state and county facilities. Statistics show that a portion of eligible inmates and recidivists do not take advantage of correctional education programs while incarcerated. Due to the disproportionately high minority representation among the general prison and recidivist population, this research study investigated the reasons minority populations take less advantage of correctional programs.

This exploratory case study investigated the factors that influence nonparticipation of African-American male jail inmates in correctional education programs in relation to situational, psycho-social, institutional and informational barriers. The results of the research study revealed that informational and institutional barriers have a greater influence on non-participation in education classes than situational and

psycho-social barriers. This study includes recommendations for correctional education programs to increase participation of minority inmates in educational classes.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The United States has experienced a rise in its prison population during the last quarter of the twentieth century (Donziger, 1996; Mauer, 1999; Schlosser, 1998). Between 1985 and 1995, state and federal governments opened on average a new prison facility weekly to manage the continuing increase in prisoners (Mauer, 1999). Near the end of the twentieth century, the U.S. prison population was approximately 1.8 million adults (Mauer, 1999; Schlosser, 1998). This figure includes approximately 1.1 million prisoners in state facilities, 135,000 in federal facilities, and 550,000 in local jails (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1998; Mauer, 1999; Schlosser, 1998). The U.S. incarcerates its citizens at six to ten times the rate of most industrialized nations, and only Russia has a higher per capita incarceration rate (Mauer, 1999).

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (1999), Texas has the highest per capita incarceration rate in the nation at 700 people per 100,000 adults for a total of over 140,000 inmates (Criminal Justice Policy Council, 1999a). Inmates serving terms for non-violent property and drug-related offenses represent the majority the largest proportion of the Texas prison population at 46.6 % (Criminal Justice Policy Council, 1999a).

Contributing Factors to Increase in Prison Population

The fear of crime and crime victimization shape crime policy in the United States by contributing to the passage of laws such as “three strikes and you are out” and mandatory minimum sentences for certain offenses (Donziger, 1996; Mauer, 1999). The goal of legislation requiring more severe sentences is to remove violent offenders from the streets. However, after a decade of intensive prison construction, a larger proportion of space is being used to provide custodial care to non-violent offenders (Mauer 1999, Davidson 1997; Schlosser 1998). Between 1985 and 1995 there was 77% increase in the number of inmates sentenced for non-violent drug- and property-related offenses. During this same period, 61% of first-time offenders were sentenced for non-violent drug-related charges (Mauer, 1999).

Demographic Profiles of U.S. Prisoners

The current demographic profile of a U.S. prisoner is a minority male, who is 18 to 34 years old. He is typically a high school dropout with a functional literacy level of sixth grade and has completed an average of ten years in public school (Davidson, 1997).

The current recidivist profile includes descriptors of minority, male, single, a history of drug or alcohol abuse, and no job contacts upon release (Jancic, 1998; Schumacker, Anderson, D., & Anderson, L., 1990).

African-American males constitute the majority, about 50%, of the U.S. prison population. However, African-Americans represent only 12% of the total

U.S. population. The U.S. Department of Justice (1997) projects that 5.1% of the U.S. population will serve time in prison. This same report projects that 29% of African-American males are likely to serve time in prison compared to 16% for Hispanics , 4.4% for whites, and 9% for all males (Mauer,1999).

Prisoner Education Level

The National Adult Literacy Survey found that 7 out of 10 inmates score in the two lowest literacy levels of five possible levels. Readers who score in levels one and two have some reading and writing skills, however, many are unable to write a letter explaining an error on a credit card statement or to understand a bus schedule (National Center for Education Statistics, 1994). Inmate illiteracy is estimated to be three times higher than that of the general U.S. population (National Center for Education Statistics, 1994). Many inmates attended poor public schools, which is one cause of the low-literacy problem (Newman, Lewis & Beverstock, 1993). According to Eisenberg (2000), 33 % of all Texas inmates are functionally illiterate. Furthermore, a significant portion of Texas inmates have not completed 12 years of education. In 1998, only 31% of the Texas prison population had a high school diploma. More specifically, 21.6 % had not completed 9th grade and 47.9 % had had dropped out between 9th and 11th grades” (Eisenberg, 2000). The educational situation is worse for African-American inmates; their high school drop out rates are even higher than the general U.S. prison population. (Gibbs, 1988; Newman et al., 1993).

Prisoner Participation in Correctional Education Programs

The majority of state and county facilities do not mandate participation in a correctional education program (Kerka, 1995). The state of Texas does not mandate participation in its correctional education programs (Eisenberg, 2000). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (1994), only 60% of the U.S. prison population reports participating in educational programming while incarcerated. In 1998, the Windham School District, provider of educational programs for Texas prisoners, reported only 39% of eligible inmates participated in correctional education programs (Eisenberg, 2000). Furthermore, a common characteristic of a recidivist is nonparticipation in correctional education programs while incarcerated (Jancic, 1998; Schumacker, et al., 1990).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study is to investigate nonparticipation in Adult Basic Education (ABE) or Adult Secondary Education (ASE) programs by incarcerated African-American males. The study is based on information gathered through surveys and in-depth interviews with incarcerated African-American males not participating in ABE or ASE classes in a county jail facility.

Rationale for the Study

Recent research studies that focus on nonparticipation in adult education have not looked at prisoners as a subgroup of Adult Basic Education (ABE) or Adult Secondary Education (ASE) participants. There is a minimal amount of descriptive research that has been conducted regarding nonparticipation of incarcerated populations in ABE or ASE. With the large population in U.S.

prisons and the high recidivism rate of African-American males, a study that employs descriptive and qualitative methods to investigate African-American inmates' perceptions of the factors that influence their participation in ABE or ASE is timely.

Research Question

This case study will seek to answer the following research question: What are the factors associated with nonparticipation of African-American male inmates in Adult Basic Education (ABE) or Adult Secondary Education (ASE)? The four supporting research questions that will help to answer the primary research question are:

- What situational barriers influence nonparticipation?
- What psychosocial barriers influence nonparticipation?
- What institutional barriers influence nonparticipation?
- What informational barriers influence nonparticipation?

Definition of terms

1. adult basic education (ABE) – “functioning below the sixth grade level” (Eisenberg, 2000, p. 5).
2. adult secondary education (ASE) – “offenders who are working toward attainment of a high school equivalency certificate (GED)” (Eisenberg, 2000, p. 6).
3. correctional education - “an organized and individualized self-help strategy to interrupt nonsocial or antisocial behavior through vocational and academic learning activities that foster social attitudes and equip students

in contact with the criminal justice system for lives as responsible community members” (Wolford, 1989, p. 357).

4. General Education Development (GED) – “The most widely` recognized form of alternative secondary certification in the United States. Persons who pass the examination are awarded high school equivalency diplomas” (Boesel, Alsalam, & Smith, 1998).
5. nonparticipation- being (a) “eligible for ABE [or ASE] because [individuals] are 18 or older and had not completed high school and (b) had not attended or were not currently attending ABE [or ASE] classes” (Beder, 1990, p. 209)
6. parolee – “A convicted felon released from incarceration to serve portions of his sentence under supervision in the community. A parolee reports on a regular schedule to a parole officer and must obey specific conditions of release until the original sentence is complete” (Texas Department of Criminal Justice, 2000, p. 7 & 13).
7. participation- being eligible and attending ABE or ASE classes (Beder, 1990).
8. post-secondary education – Study at an institution of higher education that provides not less than a two-year program of instruction that is acceptable toward a bachelor’s degree or study at a non-profit institution offering certificate or apprenticeship programs (Carl D. Perkins Vocational & Applied Technology Education Amendments, 1998).
9. recidivism - habitual or chronic relapse or tendency to relapse, especially into crime or antisocial behavior (Neufeldt & Guralnik, 1997, p. 1120).

10. social education - instruction in the skills needed to operate successfully in society such as interpersonal relations, workplace literacy and finance. (Warner, 1998).
11. vocational education – “organized educational activities that offer a sequence of courses that provides individuals academic and technical knowledge and skills the individuals need to prepare for further education and for careers (other than careers requiring a baccalaureate, Masters, or doctoral degree) in current or emerging employment sectors” (Carl D. Perkins Vocational & Applied Technology Education Amendments, p. 3082, 1998).

Significance

The potential benefits of the proposed research include understanding the choice process of nonparticipating inmates. “Teachers, counselors, administrators and policymakers all have a keen interest in understanding why people do or do not participate in learning activities” (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 51). “Knowing who is not involved can be important information for providers who wish to attract new learners” (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 45).

Since participation in correctional education programs is not mandatory and minorities, specifically African-American males, constitute the majority of the U.S. prison population, descriptive and qualitative research that investigates factors associated with nonparticipation by African-American males in correctional education programs may be an important first step in addressing one factor associated with reducing recidivism, which is becoming better

educated. Current recidivism estimates range from 40% to 60% across the nation (Molitor, 1994). In Texas, the recidivism rate in 1994 for non-violent property and non-violent drug offenders was 47% and 36% respectively. The rate of recidivism is also higher in the early months after release from prison (U.S. Department of Justice, 1983). There are several studies dating back as far as 1949 that show the effectiveness of correctional education in reducing inmate recidivism (Martinson, 1974). A 1995 post-release follow-up study showed that inmates obtaining an education while incarcerated have a higher employment rate, higher salaries, and a higher rate of completion under community supervision (Jenkins, Steurer, & Pendry, 1995).

The majority of inmates who are incarcerated will be released (Newman et al. 1993). According to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Data Services in 1998, inmates for all types of offenses are sentenced to prison for an average of 7.98 years. The typical prisoner serves 50.4% or 3.53 years of that sentence. (Criminal Justice Policy Council, 1999d). Furthermore, 70% of all inmates released from Texas prisons in 1998 were those sentenced for non-violent property and drug-related offenses (Criminal Justice Policy Council, 1999c). With much of the increase in the prison population attributed to non-violent property and drug-related offenses, early intervention with the African-American male, non-violent inmate population is crucial. The longer an inmate is in contact with the criminal justice system the more likely the inmate will commit another crime. (Newman et al., 1993).

Summary

This chapter discusses the high incarceration rate of largely non-violent property and drug-related offenders in the United States, among whom African-American males represent the largest proportion. The educational level of the U.S. prison population is significantly below that of the general U.S. population. Inmate participation in correctional education programs in state and county facilities is not mandatory. The recidivist population in the United States is disproportionately minority, and research shows that many have not participated in correctional education programs. This exploratory study will seek to answer one central research question "What factors are associated with African-American male nonparticipation in Adult Basic Education and Adult Secondary Education? The four supporting research questions focus on four categories of barriers to participation in adult education programs: situational, psychosocial, institutional and informational.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The incarceration rate of African-American males is disproportionately higher than that of members of other ethnic groups. Incarcerated African-American males complete fewer years of education than the general U.S population and are less likely to participate in correctional education. This exploratory study will seek to answer the central research question: "What are the factors associated with nonparticipation of African-American male inmates in ABE or ASE?" The supporting research questions focus on four types of barriers to participation in correctional education programs: situational, dispositional, institutional and informational. This chapter is a review of the literature associated with the central research question.

Nonparticipation in Adult Education Programs

Research on nonparticipation in adult learning began with a study published by Cyril O. Houle in 1961. Houle investigated adult motivation to engage in various continuous learning activities. Through in-depth interviews with twenty adults, Houle studied their previous learning experiences and their perceptions of themselves as learners (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). From this data, Houle identified three learning orientations that motivate adults to engage in learning activities. First, goal-oriented learners engage in education to

accomplish a specific goal. Second, activity-oriented learners engage in learning as an activity and the opportunity for interaction with other people. Third, learning-oriented learners engage in learning specifically for the knowledge. This research has led to other studies seeking to validate or reshape the original learning orientations established by Houle.

The first U.S. national study on nonparticipation in adult education was conducted by Johnstone and Rivera in 1965 (Beder, 1991). Their research, which built on the typology of Houle (1961), investigated barriers to participation in self-directed learning activities (Beder, 1991, Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). The results of their study generated two categories of barriers to participation. The first category included those barriers external to the individual or beyond the person's control. The second category included those barriers internal to the individual and grounded in the person's attitude toward learning. External barriers were termed situational barriers. Internal barriers were termed dispositional barriers. Johnstone and Rivera (1965) investigated the relationship between the identified barriers and the sociodemographics of participants. Their findings showed women and younger participants identified more situational barriers, such as fatigue and cost, while older participants cited more dispositional barriers, such as feeling they were too old to learn. Participants of low socioeconomic backgrounds cited situational factors, dispositional factors, and a lack of information as barriers. The Johnstone and Rivera (1965) study provided the first framework for investigating nonparticipation in adult literacy programs. Recommendations from this study encourage further study of the

barriers for nonparticipation of adult literacy populations, in this case, specifically focusing on gender and race (Beder, 1991).

In 1972, building on the research of Johnstone and Rivera (1965), Carp, Peterson, and Roelfs (Cross & Valley, 1974) conducted a study on nonparticipation using a survey with a list of 25 barriers (Beder, 1991). The results of the study indicated that the majority faced predominantly situational barriers, such as cost and lack of time, while only 16% of participants cited lack of information as a barrier. Carp et al. also investigated the relationship between barriers and sociodemographics. The results showed men primarily cited work-related issues and lack of time while women primarily cited home-related issues and fatigue as barriers to participation. Cost was a barrier for participants under the age of 35 (Beder, 1991).

When looking at race, the researchers found that Caucasians identified lack of time and home-related issues at twice the rate of African-Americans. African-Americans identified predominantly situational barriers such as low academic scores, being unable to meet requirements, being unable to afford the fees, lack of child care, and lack of transportation (Beder, 1991). Monetary constraints were a significant barrier for African-Americans and younger adults. Carp et al. reported that reasons for nonparticipation varied based upon personal commitment and attitude toward learning. These factors vary frequently, based on race, socioeconomic status, and gender (Beder, 1991).

Cross (1981) expanded the framework of categories for nonparticipation by adding institutional barriers (Beder, 1991). Institutional barriers are defined as

“practices and procedures that exclude or discourage working adults from participating in educational activities” (Cross, 1981, p. 98). By adding institutional barriers, Cross recognized the role that education programs play in deterring participation (ie.g., class schedules, information, and program policies) (Beder, 1991). Cross cites situational barriers as being the most significant, with monetary constraints and lack of time emerging most often. According to Cross, dispositional barriers are the least significant of the three categories but may be minimized by the self-report nature of the research methodologies (Beder, 1991).

Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) further expanded on the framework of categories used to classify reasons for nonparticipation. Their definitions for situational and institutional are consistent with previous research. However, they expanded the framework to include informational barriers and redefined the dispositional category as psychosocial.

Psychosocial barriers are divided into two sub-categories. Category A “encompasses negative evaluations of the usefulness, appropriateness and pleasurability of engaging in adult education, particularly for lower and working class persons” (Beder, 1991, p.71). Category B “includes adults’ negative evaluations of themselves as learners” [e.g., fear of failure, low self efficacy]” (Beder, 1991, p.72). While Category B psychosocial barriers are less associated with socioeconomic status than Category A barriers “they are nonetheless prevalent among disadvantaged and working-class adults” (Beder, 1991, p. 72).

The addition of informational barriers is based upon the research of Johnstone and Rivera (1962) that showed that one-third of all participants did not

have any knowledge of the educational offerings in their area. Furthermore, one-fourth of the participants did “not know where to go or whom to ask to get information about learning opportunities” (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982, p. 138). According to this study, 85% of the participants with a high socioeconomic status in urban areas reported knowledge of “at least one place where adults could receive instruction whereas the comparable figure for persons of low socioeconomic status in small towns or rural areas was 19%.” (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982, p.138). For disadvantaged adults, lack of knowledge about available education offerings is projected to remain a significant barrier to participation (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982).

African American Males and the Criminal Justice System

Young, African-American males are largely a marginalized ethnic group in the United States. African-Americans males have been metaphorically termed an endangered species (Gibbs, 1988). An endangered species is, according to Webster, “a class of individuals having common attributes and designated by a common name [which is] in danger or peril of probable harm or loss” (Neufeldt, V. & Guralnik, D.B., 1997). There are approximately 10.1 million African-American males over the age of 18 in the United States (Donziger, 1996, Mauer 1999, Jackson 1997). Between 1985 and 1995 the African-American male prison population swelled from approximately 309,800 to 726,500 inmates (Davidson, 1997). This represents a 119% increase in the incarceration of African-American males over one decade. The nationwide imprisonment of African-American males for drug-related charges increased 707% during the

same period (Davidson, 1997). Between August 1994 and August 1998, federal penal institutions saw the number of African American males between the age of 18 to 25 increase from 1,496 to 6,820. In December 1999, the Bureau of Prisons reported an African-American male population of 52,656. (Jackson, 1997).

During the course of a year, 1 in 4 African American males is jailed. When the age is narrowed to 18-34 years of age or a total of 4.5 million African-American males, the number increases to 1 out of every 3 (Donziger, 1996).

The issues affecting this population are immense and complicated. Many of the incarcerated African-American male population come from disadvantaged families (Gibbs, 1988). A 1991 survey of prison inmates showed that "53% of black inmates grew up in single-parent households" (U.S. Department of Justice, 1991). From this same sample, 42% of black inmates reported having an immediate family member serve time in prison (U.S. Department of Justice, 1991). A 1993 technical report on prison literacy shows 70% of prison inmates were reared in dysfunctional environments (Newman et al., 1993). Even for those males raised in a two parent household, their fathers were 2.5 times more likely than white fathers to be unemployed (Gibbs, 1988).

Educating African-American Males

The primary issue that serves as a catalyst for many of the problems facing African-American males appears to be a lack of education. The current public school education system is not meeting the academic needs of young, African-American male students, nor is it meeting the needs of many other students. Many black males in urban inner city schools graduate

functionally illiterate through the social promotion system (Gibbs, 1988). The dropout rate for incarcerated black males is higher than that of the general population. The school failure rates of African-American males range from 50% to 65% and are as high as 90% to 95% in some school districts (Newman et al., 1993). In the state of New York, for example, 46% of all arrestees attended one of the 16 lowest performing schools districts (Davidson, 1997). By the magnitude of the African-American males incarcerated, it can be deduced that they are well represented in these numbers of lowest performing school attendees. "Young, black males have been trapped between the rock of poor educational backgrounds and the hard place of a changing job structure that demands higher educational levels" (Gibbs, 1988). " More and more black youth are unemployed, unskilled, and unproductive in a society which rewards hard work, competence, and productivity" (Gibbs, 1988). While statistics for urban youth have improved in recent years (Gadsden & Wagner, 1995), the prison population is steadily increasing (Schlosser, 1998).

Research shows that many African-American males matriculate in a different educational environment and experience lower teacher expectations (Gibbs, 1988).

"[African-American students, particularly African-American] male students are three-times as likely to be in a class for the educable mentally retarded as are white students, but only one-half as likely to be in a class for the gifted or talented" (Irvine-Jordan, 1990). Irvine-Jordan (1990) also states that "[African-American] students are more likely than white students to be enrolled in general

and vocational tracks and take fewer academically rigorous courses. The suspension rate of African-American males is disproportionately higher and for greater lengths of time than other student populations” (Lee, 1991). In addition, African-American males have a lower high school graduation rate than African-American females (Lee, 1991).

These factors alone may explain why African-American males are educationally marginalized in a global economy. According to Newman (1993), a prison literacy technical report concludes “there is a disproportionate representation of African-Americans among educationally-disabled inmates, and that “the interactive effect of socio-economic background, unstable childhood home, and the incidence of learning disabilities may be the single most important determiner of anti-social behavior which results in eventual contact with the criminal justice system.”

Skills for 21st Century Employment

African-American males often lack the marketable skills needed to compete in our evolving economic structure (Jackson, 1997; Mauer, 1999; Nelson, 1985; Schlosser, 1998; Wiley & Conciatore, 1989). Our economy has evolved from one of manufacturing to one driven by technology and information. This has led to a decrease in the demand for unskilled workers (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). The move to an economy dominated by white-collar positions rather than blue-collar positions has effectively displaced minorities in the labor force (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). A 1991 national survey of prison inmates

reported 69% of inmates with a pre-incarceration income below the national poverty line (Gabel & Johnston, 1995).

In 1990, approximately 1.3 million African-American males were unemployed. Of those in the workforce, a disproportionate number are represented in low skill positions such as janitors, orderlies, and security guards (Stein, 1996). "As long as [African-American] men are underrepresented in the workforce, then simple arithmetic tells U.S. they will be overrepresented in prisons and jails, or on the rolls of the unemployed" (Stein, 1996).

A study looking at the type and level of inmate work assignments showed African-American males being assigned predominantly unskilled positions such as janitors, landscaping, laundry and food service. These assignments perpetuate limited employment opportunities upon release (Jackson, 1997). The globalization of the U.S. economy toward a greater dependence on U.S. exports will significantly benefit skilled workers (Judy & D'Amico, 1997, Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). However, low or unskilled American workers will fare differently due to this globalization. "They will be forced to compete for jobs and wages not just with their counterparts across town or in other parts of the U.S. but also with low-skilled workers around the globe" (Judy & D' Amico, 1997, p. 4). As U.S. businesses shift their focus to controlling wage expenditures, the United States will no longer be the first choice for low or unskilled labor (Judy & D'Amico, 1997).

The type and level of skills required for future success in the U.S. economy will be much different than in the past. American workers

demonstrating proficiency in the natural sciences and standard English will see increased employment opportunities. "But other Americans with inadequate education and no technological expertise...will face declining real wages or unemployment, particularly in manufacturing" (Judy & D'Amico, 1997, p. 7).

The Department of Labor (1999) lists computer engineers, computer support specialists, database administrators, data processing equipment repairs, dental hygienists, desktop publishing specialist, medical assistants, paralegals, personal care and health aides, physician assistants, residential counselors, securities and financial sales workers, and system analysts, as just some of the fastest growing occupations for the future (Department of Labor, 1999, p. 1).

History of Correctional Education

Correctional education in the United States dates back to the 17th century (Cabana, 1996; Flanagan, 1994). Early American penology focused on vocational rehabilitation through hard labor. However, early American settlers quickly discovered the high cost of a custodial incarceration system (Cabana, 1996).

The Puritans viewed education as the foundation for success in the new world. The first taxes levied in the colony were used to hire a schoolmaster solely devoted to the academic training of the youth. "Of all the classes and elements in the English population, the Puritans place the highest value in learning, and paid the greatest attention to education" (Cabana, 1996, p.). From the Puritan perspective, the ability to reason was a way to forge a better life, and reason, by any standard, was the product of an educated spiritual being" (Cabana, 1996).

The early establishment of a printing press, a library, colleges, and further attested to this strong belief in education. The printing press established by the Puritans would be the second largest in the British empire. Publications were primarily religious materials but included laws and basic readers (Cabana, 1996). The Puritans influenced the shaping of the current model of correctional education found in U.S. prisons. They had the organizational structure and economic capital to manifest their beliefs in the penal system. Thus, in the late 1600's, there was a paradigm shift from punishment to rehabilitation with a focus on religious and moral education (Cabana, 1996, Newman et al., 1993). During this time, the primary goal of literacy activities for incarcerated adults was to read the bible (Cabana, 1996, Linden & Perry, 1982).

In the 1930s, correctional education programs led rehabilitation efforts and became accepted for their potential impact on recidivism (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995). During this time, academic and vocational programs were the primary focus of rehabilitation. In the 1960s, post-secondary education programs became available to inmates (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995).

Types of Correctional Education Programs

Currently, prison education programs are providing adult basic education, adult secondary education, post-secondary education, vocational education, and social education (Linden & Perry, 1983). Adult basic education programs teach basic literacy and math computation skills (Flanagan, 1994). Adult secondary education programs primarily prepare students for the General Education Development (GED) examination and post-secondary course work (Flanagan,

1994; Linden & Perry, 1983). Vocational education programs allow students to learn a trade, such as being an electrician or a plumber (Flanagan, 1994). Finally, social education programs include instruction in the skills needed to deal with daily life stresses (Flanagan, 1994).

Correctional Education and Recidivism Research

There is a plethora of research supporting the role of correctional education in reducing recidivism. The need for these studies was prompted by an undercurrent of criticism against prison education programs (Martinson, 1974). In Martinson's critique of the literature, he stated that correctional education programs did not have any appreciable effect on inmate recidivism. The quotation that "nothing works" in prison rehabilitation was promoted in the media by those against providing education in prisons (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995). In an attempt to counter the negative pendulum swing of public opinion against correctional education programs, corrections officials began trying to document the benefits of the education-as-rehabilitation paradigm (Flanagan, 1994; Gerber & Fritsch, 1995; Linden & Perry, 1982). There are some studies that show no positive correlation between correctional education and a reduction in recidivism. However, this does not negate the overall positive findings regarding positive recidivism research and correctional education (Flanagan, 1994; Gerber & Fritsch 1995; Linden & Perry, 1982).

Research studies measuring the impact of adult basic education and secondary education on recidivism date back to late 1940s. The results of twenty research studies regarding adult basic and secondary education were

reviewed (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995). Of those studies, 14 showed a positive correlation between correctional education and recidivism (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995; Portifino & Robinson, 1992). A study conducted by Mace in 1978 with 320 participants showed a recidivism rate of 13% for program participants compared to 26% for the comparison group (Portifino & Robinson, 1992). A study using a larger research sample tracked 3041 inmates across 18 Georgia institutions. The results of the study showed a recidivism rate of 12% for education participants compared to a recidivism rate of 19% for the non-participant control group (Portifino & Robinson, 1992). The most significant impact is reflected in a study by Walsh in 1985. This study sampled 75 participants for 42 months. The recidivism rate for the participants in education programs was 16%. The nonparticipant comparison group had a recidivism rate of 44%. (Portifino & Robinson, 1992).

Numerous research studies show a positive correlation between post-secondary correctional education and a reduction in inmate recidivism. In reviewing the literature, 15 studies were reviewed with 11 showing a positive correlation. (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995; Flanagan, 1994; Linden & Perry, 1982). For example, the Ohio Penal Education Consortium (OPEC), an organization of thirteen colleges and universities, joined with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation, in 1995, in hopes of saving inmate eligibility for Ohio Instructional Grants. This study reviewed the parolee performance of 1195 inmates who completed their post-secondary education programs between June 1989 and July 1992) and who were paroled between June 1990 and July 1992. The

parolees had been out at least three years when their rate of recidivism was checked in June 1995, using the most stringent definition of recidivism, which is a return to prison for any cause (Batiuk, 1997). The program participants were compared to other inmates paroled in 1992 who, although eligible, did not participate in any educational programs while incarcerated. The control group measured was unlikely to have completed any college course work before coming under the jurisdiction of the Ohio penal system. Although inmates were awarded Associate and Bachelor's degrees during the study period, only those individuals who completed Associate degrees were considered. "While the overall recidivism rate was 40% (38% for nonparticipants), college enrollee recidivism rates were at 18%-a highly significant finding in itself" (Batiuk, 1997).

Duguid, a researcher and author on correctional education issues, reported on a recidivism study at the University of Victoria in British Columbia (Duguid, Hawkey & Pawson, 1996). This report showed that only 14% of student inmates returned to prison versus 51% for nonparticipants (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995). The students also exhibited the use of higher-level cognitive thinking in the areas of law, crime and family relations (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995).

Two Maryland studies show a reduction in recidivism related to participation in education classes (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995). New York State has sponsored several studies on the correlation between attending college programs and a reduction in recidivism. (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995). One study showed that 26% of inmates who received a Bachelor's degree in 1986 or 1987

had been reincarcerated by February 1991, while non-graduates had a reincarceration rate of 45% (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995).

Research studies on vocational education recidivism show a strong positive correlation between attending educational programs and reduced recidivism. Of the 13 studies reviewed, 11 showed a positive correlation. A study conducted in Texas by Alston in 1981 showed lower recidivism rates for participants. Another study tracked 225 participants for 12 months. Those inmates completing a vocational program had a 79% success rate upon release versus a 21% success rate for non-completers (Portifino & Robinson, 1992).

Summary

This chapter is a partial review of the literature related to the exploratory study that seeks to answer “What factors influence participation of African-American male inmates in ABE or ASE?” The literature review discusses the research on nonparticipation in education programs, African-American males in the criminal justice system, educational history and marginalization of African-American males, 21st century employment skills, the type and history of correctional education programs, Travis County correctional education programs, and recidivism research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to identify, based upon self-report data, barriers that may influence nonparticipation of African-American male jail inmates in correctional education programs. The study design sought to answer the central research question and four supporting research questions. The central research question asked “What factors influence nonparticipation of African-American male jail inmates in Adult Basic Education (ABE) or Adult Secondary Education (ASE)?

The four supporting research questions asked:

1. What are situational barriers that influence nonparticipation?
2. What are psychosocial barriers that influence nonparticipation?
3. What are institutional barriers that influence nonparticipation?
4. What are informational barriers that influence nonparticipation?

Research Methodology

The qualitative tradition selected for this research project was a case study. “The case study is differentiated from other types of qualitative research in that they are intensive, descriptive analysis of a single or bounded system” (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). The use of the case study method allows the researcher “the benefits of ‘fencing in’ what [is to be studied]” (Merriam, 1998, p. 27).

Relative to this study, the focus was African-American incarcerated males who

have chosen not to participate in correctional education programs. The majority of the literature on African-American males in prison focuses on causation for incarceration (see examples, Davidson, 1997, Mauer, 1999, Miller, 1998). There is little research that looks thoroughly at the rehabilitation needs for this population. Historically correctional education research has focused on the needs of the general incarcerated population and has tended to be quantitative in nature (see Appendix F). In addition little research has been conducted on nonparticipation of incarcerated adults in ABE or ASE programs nor on nonparticipation influences specific to gender or race. In light of the limited amount and type of research on this topic available on African-American males in the context of correctional institutions, the case study as the research design was selected for its ability to provide “an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved” (Merriam, 1998, p. 19).

Setting

The research for this project was a county jail facility serving an urban area. The largest population at this facility was inmates with minimum-security classifications. The education program was located in Building One, the largest minimum security building. This building has 8 units, and each unit has 96 inmates. The education program at this facility served minimum-security inmates throughout the entire complex. The majority of education participants were from Building One. At the time that the research was conducted inmates with medium security classifications did not receive education services.

Currently, educational classes are available to male and female inmates with minimum-security classifications. The majority of instructional hours are available to the male population. All education staff and classes are located in Building One. All education classes are taught Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

The following classes were available at the time the research was conducted: Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and computer classes. ABE classes are offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays. ASE classes are offered on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Employability skill classes are offered in blocks of three weeks on Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (personal communication, Education Coordinator, May 17, 2000).

Minorities represented 52% of the incarcerated population at the research site. African Americans represented the largest ethnic minority group with Hispanic non-white representing the second largest minority group. The education program had three education coordinators paid by the county. Two additional instructors were paid by a grant funded through the local community college. Other education programs offered were parenting, anger and stress management, cognitive thinking, and drug and alcohol classes for those with a history of substance abuse. Religious education was also offered for those interested in participating.

The survey instrument was administered in the afternoon before the guard shift change at 2:30pm. The majority of interview sessions were conducted

before the dinner meal was served at 4:30pm. In some cases, follow-up interview sessions were conducted in the morning after breakfast. All participant interviews were conducted in attorney meeting rooms with one table and two chairs.

Population

The target study population was African American male inmates assigned to Building One in a county jail facility. This is the same building where the adult education programs were held. The survey instrument was administered in six of the eight housing units in Building 1. Out of the 139 surveys administered, 40 participants identified themselves as African-American males. Out of the 40 African-American males that completed the survey instrument, 26 participants reported having a high school diploma or GED. Therefore, only 14 survey respondents were eligible for the interview phase of the research project. Out of the 14 survey respondents eligible for the interview phase of the research project, seven were interviewed. Whenever possible the researcher tried to select inmates whose profiles closely reflected the demographic and recidivist profile of the U.S. prison population. The descriptors for the demographic profile are as follows:

- Minority
- Male
- Between the ages of 18-34
- High School Dropout
- Completion of an average of 10 years of public school education

The descriptors for the recidivist profile are as follows:

- Being eligible to participate yet not enrolled in education classes
- Current and previous incarceration could be classified as a non-violent drug and/or property related offenses
- Never been married

Survey participants were asked to estimate how much longer they anticipated being held at the research site. The length of stay was also a criteria for selecting interview participants. The ideal interview candidate estimated being held at the research site for at least eight additional weeks. The length of stay was an important selection criterion particularly for pursuing further lines of inquiry with participants and scheduling follow-up interviews.

Rights of the Participants

Prior to completing the survey, participants signed a consent form detailing their rights in the study. The researcher gave them time to read the consent form and then read the consent form aloud. Participants were allowed an opportunity to ask questions related to the study. Participants with low literacy skills were assisted by the researcher or another inmate in understanding the consent form and its detail of their rights. Each participant was asked directly if he understood the consent form or if he had any questions as they returned the consent form to the researcher.

Participants had the right not to participate or to completely withdraw from the study at any time. Furthermore, study participants were told that participating in this study would not positively or negatively affect their release dates or parole eligibility. Study participants who were selected for interviews were assigned a

letter and a number to generate a reference code in order to maintain anonymity. All study participant data was reported using this reference code. This information was outlined in the adult consent form and told to the study participants orally (see Appendix A).

Data Collection Strategies

Yin (1994) recommends gathering data using multiple sources of evidence. This exploratory study used three sources to obtain information to answer the research question and its four supporting research questions. The first source of evidence was a survey, the purpose of which was to gather demographic information and to determine if situational barriers influenced participation in a correctional setting. As explained below, the majority of the survey questions were taken from research instruments used in previously published research studies. Those survey questions not taken from previously published survey instruments were justified based upon a review of the literature and were subjected to a pilot study prior to use in this research study.

Initial research studies by Johnstone and Rivera (1965) and Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) generated or included lists of barriers to adults' participation in education published in previous research studies. Beder (1991) recommends that data collected on nonparticipation employ qualitative methods through open-ended interviews. Therefore the second and primary source of evidence for this exploratory study was semi-structured, open-ended interviews conducted with participants selected based upon their survey responses. The interviews were approximately 2 hours in length. The purpose of the interview with study

nonparticipants was to identify any situational, psychosocial, institutional, and informational barriers associated with their nonparticipation in correctional education programs. An interview guide was developed for use during the interview (see appendix D). The interview questions were taken from previously published research studies as explained below or based upon a review of the literature and were subject to a pilot period study prior to use in this research study.

The third source of information used for this study was a literacy activity inventory. The purpose of this instrument was to determine if early childhood literacy activities influenced the educational outcomes or perceived value of engaging in learning activities (Parker, 2000).

Research Instruments

The questions for the survey and research instruments (see appendices B, C, and E) were taken from previously published research or based upon a review of the literature. This section will discuss the research instruments as they relate to the four supporting research questions that were used to answer the central research question “What factors are associated with nonparticipation of African-American males in ABE or ASE programs?”

Research Question 1

What are the situational barriers that influence nonparticipation? This question was answered through the survey instrument. “Situational barriers are those arising from one’s situation in life at a given time” (Cross, 1981, p. 98).

Survey question 28 “Are you involved in other rehabilitation/treatment programs in this facility?” addressed possible situational barriers.

Survey questions 12 and 13, regarding current length of stay in the facility and anticipated release date, address the possible influence of situational barriers. Survey questions 29 and 30, regarding employment and question 20 regarding costs of education, further address situational barriers. The questions were based upon a review of the literature regarding situational barriers (Beder, 1991, Cross, 1981, & Sticht, 1998).

Research Question 2

What are the psychosocial barriers that influence nonparticipation? This question was answered through interview questions. Psychosocial barriers are [divided into two categories. Question 10, “What are the benefits associated with participation in educational programs while incarcerated?” addressed category A psychosocial barriers that “encompasses negative evaluations of the usefulness, appropriateness and pleasurability of engaging in adult education” (Beder, 1991, p. 71). Interview question 4, “Describe yourself as a learner,” addressed category B psychosocial barriers that “includes adults negative evaluations of themselves as learners” (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72).

Interview questions 5 through 8, which relate to previous educational experience, further address psychosocial barriers. More specifically, interview questions 5 through 7 and question 10 were taken from the research instrument of a previously published dissertation that studied the perceptions of correctional education programs by youth in juvenile justice facilities (Bolson, 1998).

Research Question 3

What are the institutional barriers that influence nonparticipation? This question was answered through survey and interview questions. Research states that institutional barriers are those that “exclude or discourage participation in educational activities” (Cross, 1981, p. 98). Survey question 23 “Has an educational staff member or counselor spoken with you about participating in any of the educational programs offered in this facility?” addressed the education department’s recruitment plan and its influence as an institutional barrier. Survey questions 19 and 25 further addressed institutional barriers. Interview question 12, “What do you consider to be the qualities of an effective instructor?” addressed instructional quality and its influence as an institutional barrier.

Interview questions 11 and questions 13 through 15, which relate to the quality of educational programs, further address institutional barriers. More specifically, questions 11, 12, and 14 are taken from the research instrument of a previously published dissertation (Bolson, 1998).

Research Question 4

What are the informational barriers that influence nonparticipation? This question was answered through both survey and interview questions. Informational barriers are those that “pertain to a lack of information about adult education offerings and said to be most severe for disadvantaged adults” (Beder, 1991, p. 71). Survey question 21, “List the types of educational programs offered in this facility” investigated potential participants knowledge of the types of educational classes offered in this facility and their influence as an informational

barrier to participation. Survey question 22 further addressed the influence of informational barriers.

Interview question 1, "What are the education programs offered in this facility?" addressed informational barriers. Interview questions 2 and 3, which relate to information about available education opportunities, further addressed information barriers. These questions were based upon a review of the literature regarding informational barriers (Beder, 1991; Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982).

Pilot Period

According to Yin (1994), the piloting of the instrument was an opportunity to reshape questions and procedures as necessary based upon the feedback from the pilot participants. The pilot of the study is "the occasion for a formal 'dress rehearsal' in which the intended data collection plan is used as faithfully as possible as a final test run." (Yin, 1994, p. 74). The survey instrument was administered to ten inmates at the research site. The educational staff assisted the researcher in getting volunteers to participate in the pilot phase of the study. The pilot of the instrument and the study were conducted using incarcerated African American male inmates from the research site.

The pilot period focused on clarifying the survey instrument and interview questions. Changes were made to the semantic phrasing of the survey questions. Some of the survey questions were placed in a different order on the survey instrument. For example, all of the demographic questions were placed at the beginning of the survey. Whenever possible all the questions that addressed a particular barrier were placed together on the survey instrument. A box was

added at the top of the page for the participants to identify their custody status (e.g., parole, probation). Three of the ten survey participants were asked to participate in the pilot of the interview questions. The pilot interviews helped the researcher get an accurate estimate of the length of an interview. The pilot interviews were not transcribed.

Data Collection Schedule

The data collection schedule was tentative, based upon approval of the study by the academic institution of the researcher. Further adjustments to the data collection schedule were necessary based upon schedule coordination with the correctional institution and the regular work obligations of the researcher.

- Pilot the instrument and the study – October 23, 2000 to November 1, 2000
- Data Collection (survey, interviews, and follow-up interviews) – November 4, 2000 to December 31, 2000

Data Analysis

The data from this exploratory study were analyzed based upon the theoretical propositions of Cross (1981) and Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) (Beder, 1991). The use of theoretical propositions as a strategy in data analysis is prevalent and in many instances recommended in case study research (Yin, 1994). Theoretical propositions aid in directing the researcher's attention to specific data and away from data not relevant to the research question. The theoretical propositions of Cross (1981), Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) and (Beder (1991) helped shape the research instruments used in this study (see appendix E).

While quantitative research approaches the activities of data collection and analysis as separate activities, preliminary data analysis for this exploratory study was conducted simultaneously with data collection (Creswell, 1994). The data were not analyzed using qualitative analysis software. All aspects of data analysis were done on paper.

Procedures

Phase 1

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study at the research site. Obtaining permission involved making a brief presentation to the program director for the facility. Upon approval and in coordination with regular work obligations, the researcher piloted the survey instrument and interview questions. The pilot phase of the study involved ten participants selected with the assistance of the educational staff.

After the pilot period, the formal data collection process began. The researcher administered the survey to the potential study population. The potential study population was approximately 750 inmates housed in the Building One. The researcher was escorted into each housing unit by an educational staff member or counselor. The researcher spoke through the housing unit intercom system or other voice projection equipment. Potential participants were given a brief explanation of the purpose of the visitors presence. The researcher then asked for volunteers to participate in the study. Volunteers submitted their names to the guard or counselor and the researcher was escorted back to a

large meeting room to wait for the volunteers to be formally transported to the meeting room.

Immediately, prior to the administration of the survey, all potential participants received an explanation of their rights as participants and the role of the researcher in this study. All potential participants signed a written consent after the researcher was confident that the participants understood the nature and scope of the research project (see Appendix A). After the surveys were administered, they were reviewed to select the participants who would be asked to take part in the interview phase of the study. It was determined that 40 of the 139 survey participants represented the target population, African-American males.

Phase 2

After administering the survey and completing the initial phase of data collection, the researcher selected the interview participants based upon the demographic and recidivist profiles discussed earlier in this chapter. The researcher proceeded to conduct interviews with the seven selected interview participants. Yin (1994) states that one of the weaknesses of relying heavily on interviews as a primary source of data is the inaccuracies that can result from poor recall of information by the researcher. In order to minimize this weakness and increase the validity of the data gathered, all interviews were recorded on audiotape. Participant interviews were transcribed as soon as possible after the interviews occurred to strengthen researcher recall and aid in the preliminary analysis of the data. Further lines of inquiry were explored with each subsequent

interview participant based upon the responses from previous interviewees (Merriam, 1998).

Phase 3

Follow-up interviews were conducted with the seven interview participants to review the transcript of the interview. The follow-up interviews were an opportunity to have responses clarified or questions answered more fully. Study participant data were verified through discussions with correctional education program participants, and corrections personnel, and through related documents and records such as student files, program orientation paperwork, and test scores.

The final step was a full analysis of the survey data (N=40) and interview data (N=7) to answer the research question "What factors influence nonparticipation of African-American male inmates in ABE or ASE?" The data analysis for this study was shaped through a detailed description of the case, simultaneous analysis of the data, and case study analytical strategies (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 1994).

The description of the case was the first level of analysis (Merriam, 1998). It was a "detailed view of aspects [or facts] about the case" (Creswell, 1998, p. 154). The researcher decided which information to include and exclude based upon the data gathered (Merriam, 1998). The purpose of the case was to "convey the meaning the researcher derived from studying the phenomenon" (Merriam, 1998).

Creswell (1998) discusses four possible analytical strategies for case studies. Two of these strategies were used to analyze the data collected from this study. The framework for data analysis was based upon the theoretical propositions regarding barriers to nonparticipation in adult education (Beder, 1991). The first analytical strategy was categorical aggregation. Categorical aggregation “seeks a collection of instances from the data hoping that issue relevant meaning will emerge” (Creswell, 1998, p. 153-154). The second analytical strategy was a review for patterns (Creswell, 1998) or pattern matching (Yin, 1994). The purpose of this strategy was to “look for a correspondence between two or more categories” (Creswell, 1998). As suggested by Creswell (1998), tables and matrices were used to aid in analyzing and organizing the data for emerging patterns.

Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology for conducting the study to answer the research question “What factors influence nonparticipation of African-American male inmates in ABE or ASE?” The first section of this chapter discussed research methodology employed for this research study. The target population was selected based upon the demographic and recidivist profile of the U.S. population. Of the 40 participants in phase 1 of the research study, only 14 were eligible for phase 2 of the study. This chapter provided a description of the research site, the handling of the rights of participants, the research instruments used in the study, the pilot period, the data collection schedule, and data

analysis. The final section of this chapter discussed the procedures for conducting the three phases of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This exploratory qualitative case study was conducted to answer the central research question and four supporting research questions. The central research question asked “What factors influence nonparticipation of African-American male inmates in adult basic education (ABE) or adult secondary education (ASE)?” The four supporting research questions asked:

1. What situational barriers influence nonparticipation?
2. What psychosocial barriers influence nonparticipation?
3. What institutional barriers influence nonparticipation?
4. What informational barriers influence nonparticipation?

The population for this study was African-American male inmates in a county jail facility. The data were collected using a 30-item questionnaire, a literacy activities inventory, and follow-up interviews with selected participants. When available, documents and records were used to gain additional information about the participants. The data are presented through analysis of the questionnaire data, analysis of participant interviews and select case studies based upon questionnaire and interview data. Analysis is in the form of summaries, interpretive comments and tables depicting the frequency of data from the survey component. The analysis shows patterns

and themes that answer the central research question and four supporting research questions.

Analysis of Questionnaire Data

The survey instrument was administered to 40 African-American male inmates who voluntarily participated in the study. The inventory was administered without knowledge of their education level. The 30-item questionnaire asked questions related to the current recidivist profile, situational barriers, dispositional barriers, institutional barriers, and informational barriers. In order to analyze the data from the 30-item questionnaire, a spreadsheet was set up for each participant and with a column for each question. The data were entered for each participant and sorted by category.

Participant Demographics

The participant demographic questions investigated how closely the target population mirrored the U.S. demographic profile and the recidivist profile for incarcerated offenders. The descriptors for the U.S. prison population are:

- Male
- Between the ages of 18-34
- High School Dropout
- Completion of an average of 10 years of public school education

(Davidson, 1995)

The descriptors for the recidivist profile are as follows:

- Being eligible to participate yet not enrolled in education classes

- Current and previous incarceration could be classified as a non-violent drug and/or property related offenses
- Never been married (Jancic, 1998).

Participants were asked to self-report information such as their age, previous criminal history, marital status, and educational attainment. The review of the participant demographic questions reveals that the target population at the research site largely mirrors that of the U.S. demographic profile and recidivist profile. The target population differs from the demographic profile in overall educational attainment. Twenty-six of the 40 or 65% of the African-American male participants reported earning a high school diploma or GED. The following tables report the specific responses to the participant demographic questionnaire items.

Table 1

Answers to Question 2: What is your age?

Responses	%	n
< 20	8	3
21-25	28	11
26-30	18	7
31-35	18	7
36-40	15	6
>40	10	4

Note. N=40.

The median age of the survey participants is 26 years old. The most frequent age of the inmates is between 21-30 years of age. The second largest segment was

between 31-40 years of age. The average age of interview participants was 27 years old. The average public school completion level was 10.0 years of education.

Table 2

Answers to Question 4: What is your highest grade level completed?

Responses	%	n
9	18	7
10	18	7
11	35	14
12	30	12

Note. N=40. Indicating grade level 12 as the highest completed does not imply earning a high school diploma.

Thirty-five percent of survey participants had completed 11 years of high school. Thirty percent had completed 12 years of high school.

Table 3

Answers to Question 5: Do you have a high school diploma or GED?

Responses	%	n
No	35	14
Yes	65	26

Note. N=40

Fourteen of the 40 survey respondents did not have a high school diploma or General Education Development test (GED). Interview participants were selected from these 14 respondents.

Table 4

Answers to Question 6: Have you taken college classes?

Responses	%	n
No	60	24
Yes	38	15

Note. N=39

Sixty percent of survey respondents had not taken college classes while 38% of survey respondents had taken college classes. The survey instrument did not differentiate among credit, non-credit, or vocational college courses.

Table 5

Answers to Question 7: What is your current marital status?

Responses	%	n
Never Married	53	21
Common Law	13	5
Married	5	2
Separated	13	5
Divorced	18	7
Widowed	-	-

Note. N=40

Fifty-three percent of survey respondents reported never being married. Thirteen percent reported common marital law relationships. Five percent

reported being married. Thirteen percent reported being separated and 18% were divorced.

Table 6

Answers to Question 11 and 12: Do you have children? If so, indicate the number

Responses	%	n
Yes	75	30
0-2 years		14
3-5 years		16
6-8 years		13
9-12 years		8
13-15 years		7
15-18 years		5
< 18 years		4
No	25	10

Note. N=40.

Seventy-five percent of survey respondents reported having children. A majority of the inmates' children were younger than 8 years old. The largest age bracket for these children was between 3-5 years old.

Table 7

Answers to Question 14: Is this your first time being incarcerated?

Responses	%	n
Yes	10	4
No	90	36

Note. N=40

Ninety percent of survey respondents reported previous incarceration experiences. Ten percent of respondents were first time offenders. Participants with previous incarceration experiences were also asked to indicate the number of times they have been incarcerated. Four respondents did not indicate a number but self reported a response of “several times.” One respondent self-reported “don’t know.” The remaining respondents (n=31) reported an average of 6 prior contacts with the criminal justice system. Since the survey question asked how many times have you been incarcerated, it can not be assumed that each incarceration led to a conviction and jail sentence. Interview participants were asked to elaborate on previous incarceration experiences in order to identify how many actually led to conviction and jail or prison time. The average age of first contact with the criminal justice system was 19.3 years. Nine respondents reported that their first contact was before the age of 18 years old. The earliest introduction into the criminal justice system reported was 9 years of age.

Table 8

Answers to Question 17: Which category best describes the type of activity authorities say led to your current incarceration?

Responses	%	n
Nonviolent drug	20	8
Nonviolent property	13	5
Nonviolent property and drug	15	6
Violent drug	8	3
Violent property	10	4
Violent property and drug	5	2
Other	10	
Child Support		1
Sexual Assault		1
I asked for treatment		1
Violent Property/Child Support		1

Note. N=40

Forty-eight percent of survey respondents reported non-violent drug and/or property related offenses for their current incarceration. Twenty-three percent reported violent drug and/or property related offenses. The survey question did not seek to identify the type and level of activity that qualifies the offense to be classified as violent.

Table 9

Answers to Question 18: Which category best describes the type of activity authorities say led to your previous incarceration?

Responses	%	n
Nonviolent drug	20	13
Nonviolent property	13	7
Nonviolent property and drug	15	3
Violent drug	8	4
Violent property	10	4
Violent property and drug	5	1
Other	10	
Aggravated Assault		1
Prohibited Weapon		1
Parole Violation		1
Disorderly Conduct		1

Note. N=36 Percentages do not total 100.

Sixty-three percent of survey respondents reported nonviolent drug and/or property related offenses for their previous incarceration. Twenty-five percent reported violent drug and/or property related offenses. Since the average number of contacts with the criminal justice system was six times, it cannot be assumed that all previous contacts are for the same type of offense. Follow-up interviews conducted with participants reveal a variety of offenses including probation and parole violations, license suspensions, and criminal trespassing. The offenses yielding longer sentences were drug and/or property related offenses.

Summary of Participant Demographics

Based upon the data reported for the participant demographic questions, the target study population has an average age of 27 years, completed an

average of 10.0 years of compulsory education with 65% reported earning a high school diploma or GED. Ninety percent of participants have been incarcerated for previous offenses. These offenses have been largely non-violent property and/or drug offenses.

Supporting Research Question 1: Situational Barriers

According to the definition of situational barriers, “arising from one’s situation in life at a given time or those more or less external to the individual or at least beyond the control” (Cross, 1981, p.98), the self report data from survey respondents (n=40) do not indicate traditional examples of situational barriers. Traditional examples of situational barriers include cost constraints and conflicts with work and/or family obligations.

Survey responses

Survey questions investigate the influence of situational barriers on nonparticipation in education classes. Participants were asked to report on their participation in correctional or rehabilitation programs while incarcerated. Participants were also asked to report on employment assignments at the research site to determine if there were possible school-work conflicts. Based upon the data reported on the questionnaire items, participants reported little influence of situational barriers. One-hundred percent of study participants reported not paying for educational services. The majority of participants report not being employed at the research site or participating in other rehabilitation programs. The majority of participants (95%) were not trustees. Only two respondents who were trustees answered this question about trustee duties

interfering with participation in education programs. One of the two respondents said that being a trusty interfered. The following tables report the participant responses to the situational questionnaire items.

Table 10

Answers to Question 20: If this is not your first incarceration, have you ever had to pay for educational classes while incarcerated?

Responses	%	n
No	100	36
Yes		-

Note. N=36

Table 11

Answers to Question 28: Are you involved in other rehabilitation programs in this county jail facility?

Responses	%	n
No	95	38
Yes	5	2

Note. N=40

Table 12

Answers to Question 29: Are you currently a trusty in the county jail?

Responses	%	n
No	95	38
Yes	5	2

Note. N=40

Table 13

Answers to Question 30: Does your trusty status make it difficult to participate in correctional education classes?

Responses	n
No	1
Yes	1

Note. N=2

Ninety-five percent of survey respondents (n=38) reported not having to pay to participate in correctional education classes in current or previous incarcerations. Three survey respondents did not answer this question. Ninety-eight percent of survey respondents (n=39) reported they were not enrolled in other rehabilitation programs. One survey respondent or 2% reported participation in other rehabilitation programs. An interview with this respondent showed that attendance in the other rehabilitation programs is voluntary and it was not confirmed that he would be accepted. Ninety-five percent of survey respondents (n=38) reported not having a trusty work assignment. Two respondents or 5% reported working as trusties at this jail facility. Only one of the respondents stated that a trusty work assignment would conflict with his participation in correctional education programs. The two survey respondents who work as trusties were not eligible to be interviewed as a part of this study because they reported earning a high school diploma or GED.

Interview Responses

While survey respondents report few situational barriers to participation in correctional education programs, interview responses indicated examples of

situational barriers unique to incarcerated populations. Several respondents indicated that the uncertainty about their release dates or case status was a primary reason they had not enrolled or had not persisted in educational classes while incarcerated. One respondent stated “No, I had started going here but I had stopped going because I thought I was going to get out quicker than what I was.” The same person also responded “I thought I was going to get out that day so I just stopped going.” When asked the same question, another respondent stated “Because I knew I was getting out soon and really didn’t want to get involved with the classes.

One respondent who had been incarcerated for nearly two months gave this response when asked what he had been doing with his time since he arrived in this facility.

Worried about my case. Not anticipating on going back to prison. I had to make a decision on whether to try to take care of the case and comp for some time then I have to deal with the parole board and them telling me they have to make a decision on whether they should violate [me] or reinstate [me]. I didn’t want to take that chance with them. So, I decided to fight my case.

When asked when he decided to register for classes, he gave this response:

“When I found out my case wasn’t all that serious”

Summary Supporting Research Question 1: Situational Barriers

Based upon the data reported for the situational barriers questionnaire items and interview follow-up data, participants cited the influence of situational barriers for an incarcerated population. While non-incarcerated populations cite issues such as school-work conflicts, transportation problems, and the need for childcare, the study population reported that concerns with their pending litigation and approaching release dates were a reason that participation in education classes was not immediately pursued upon incarceration. The data revealed that situational barriers for an incarcerated population do not represent a long-term barrier to participation. Several participants reported requesting enrollment in educational classes after the immediate issues relating to their pending litigation were addressed.

Supporting Research Question 2: Psycho-social Barriers

According to the definition of psycho-social barriers “derived from the values and attitudes adults hold for adult education. They are generally placed in two categories. Category A barriers “encompass negative evaluations of the usefulness, appropriateness and pleasurability of engaging in adult education.” Category B barriers “include adults’ negative evaluations of themselves as learners” (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72).

Survey responses

Survey questions (n=40) investigated the influence of psycho-social category A barriers on nonparticipation in education classes. Participants were asked to report on the educational attainment of their mother, father, and spouse,

if applicable. Participants were also asked to report on their post-release plans for participation in education classes. Based upon the data reported by study participants, the majority of participants revealed a desire to pursue educational classes upon release. The majority of participants reported a desire to attend college or vocational classes.

Table 14

Answers to Question 8: If married, what is the highest level of education of your spouse?

Responses	n
HS/GED	7
Vocational School	1
Some College	4
College Degree	1

Note. N=13

Married participants reported 54% of their spouses had earned a high school diploma or GED. Three percent had participated in vocational training. Ten percent had completed some college level coursework and 3% earned a college degree. When relevant, interview participants were asked more specific information about their spouses' education such as type of vocational programs or degree majors.

Table 15

Answers to Question 9: Did your mother complete high school?

Responses	%	n
Yes	65	26
No	15	6
Don't Know	20	8

Note. N=40.

Sixty-five percent of survey respondents reported that their mother's had completed high school. Fifteen percent reported "no" while 20 % reported not knowing the educational attainment of their mother. It can not be determined from the survey if answering yes to the question regarding the completion of high school means that their mothers earned a high school diploma or a GED certificate.

Table 16

Answers to Question 10: Did your father complete high school?

Responses	%	n
Yes	58	23
No	18	7
Don't Know	25	10

Note. N=40.

Fifty-eight percent of survey respondents reported that their father's had completed high school. Eighteen percent reported that their father's did not complete high school while 25 % reported not knowing the educational attainment of their father

Table 17

Answers to Question 19: If this is not your first incarceration, what type of educational programs have you participated in while incarcerated in other correctional facilities at an earlier time?

Responses	n
Basic Education/Literacy	4
GED	17
Vocational Training	15
Lifeskills	9
College	9
Other- Drug and Alcohol	1

Note. N=36. Participants were able to make more than one selection.

Table 18

Answers to Question 26: Do you plan to enroll in an educational program upon release?

Responses	%	n
No	7	3
Yes	28	11
Not Sure	65	26

Note. N=40

Twenty-eight percent of survey respondents indicated plans to enroll in educational classes upon release from incarceration. Sixty-five percent indicated not being sure of whether they would pursue educational opportunities upon release. Seven percent stated they would not enroll in classes.

Table 19

Answers to Question 27: If so, what type of program do you plan to enroll upon release?

Responses	n
College	22
GED	10
Vocational	17
Other	3
N/A	5

Note. Participants were able to make more than one selection

Participants who indicated that they were planning or were considering attending educational classes upon release from incarceration selected college as the primary study option. Vocational training was the second most frequent selection and GED received the third highest ranking. Several survey respondents indicated an interest in studying in more than one area. Most frequently they combined college or GED study with vocational programs. Table 3 shows that 26 of the 40 survey respondents have earned a high school diploma or GED.

Category A Psycho-Social Barriers Interview Responses

Follow-up interview questions investigated the influence of category A psycho-social barriers by asking participants to discuss what they perceived as the benefits of participating in educational classes while incarcerated. Six out of

seven participants identified positive outcomes related to participation in educational classes while incarcerated.

Four participants identified positive outcomes related to post-release success especially as it related to employment. One participant stated,

I mean I can go get a better job, a better paying job because believe it or not that paper means something to those people out there especially them white folks. It means something to them people. Even though you have done wrong or whatever...you show them that paper they are not going to go and look for your background or whatever. Nine times out of ten. If they see that paper, they are going to be like okay. And if you sit right there and you talk to them people like you know something... even if you don't know what you are talking to them about...[you] get them to believe that you know more.

Another participant stated, "It would help me if I go to a job interview. I would know what to say about what to tell them...the employer...what to put on my application." A third respondent stated, "Walking out with [a GED] can pertain to maybe a little more money, a little more respect...feeling good about yourself." A fourth respondent stated, "Hopefully you will help yourself when you get out."

One respondent identified positive outcomes relating to success with parole release or pending litigation. He stated, "[Participation in education] would help us get out faster. If they see you with a diploma or GED...if they see you are trying to help yourself while you are in here, they are more likely to let you back out."

Two participants identified positive outcomes related to the acquisition of knowledge and lifelong learning. One respondent stated,

You can always still learn more. Even what you already know you can learn more about it. Improve more reading...improve more knowledge in your mind. Hold conversations and help you with pronouncing words that you know you might not be saying right. Help others. It will help me stay on my toes.

One participant reported that participation in education did not offer any benefits. He stated, "I don't see none." However, he elaborated, "Mainly getting my GED. Helping myself. A piece of paper that said I completed my GED. I just need to get my GED." Two participants expressed regret about not focusing on academic achievement when they had opportunities. One participant stated, "I really messed up when I didn't take care of my business in school. When I was growing up I wasn't really into school. I should have been but I wasn't." When discussing his two-year sentence in a state jail, he stated, "I regret I didn't [attend classes in the state jail]." Another participant stated, "I am motivated by what I didn't learn when I was growing up. I feel as though I missed out on something."

Category B Psycho-Social Barriers Interview Responses

Follow-up interview questions investigated the influence of category B psycho-social barriers by asking participants' to report their perceptions of themselves as learners. The data reported by interview participants reveals both positive and negative perceptions of themselves and their learning ability.

Specifically, three participants reported positive perceptions of themselves as learners. For example, "I am a fast learner. It don't take me long to catch on. I have confidence in myself." One participant discussed his positive perception of himself based upon his experience of growing up without a lot of parental support or guidance. He stated,

There wasn't nobody but just me, my brothers, and my mom. My dad I don't know where he was. Everything we learned we had to learn on our own. Go to school, keep from doing wrong. We didn't hang around certain kids though it was basically learn on your own. My mom worked two jobs. She was never at home so it was either learn from my brother or learn by myself.

One participant reported an awareness of himself as a learner, yet did not attribute that to a negative view of himself. He stated,

I am a slow learner. I can do my work but it will take me a long time to understand it. I was in special education. Not that I am dumb. It is just that I am a slow learner. When I did my work I made good grades. It will probably just take somebody like one on one...to just sit down with me and you know to get me through it.

Three participants reported both positive and negative perceptions of themselves as learners. One participant stated, "I took GED for about two and a half years. I never could get the GED so I got frustrated and dropped out." He also stated, "I pick up real quick by seeing because I am a little slow on reading." Another participant first expressed confidence in his ability to learn. He later stated, "My

learning ability is not good because half the time I am not motivated enough to go so I get bored and then I just say forget it. I ain't [going], I just stop." A third participant reported,

Oh, I am very confident in my abilities to learn. I want to learn you know...I do it everyday. I want to learn. If I want to know something really bad then if it can't be taught to me then I will find out on my own how to do it.

When discussing his lack of participation with informal learning activities he stated,

Just like I used to do when I was in math. I always got somebody to do it for me. Because I don't feel like doing it and it something about me that says you are going to do it wrong. You are going to do it wrong. You are going to mess up on the money and you are not going to get these items that you want. But if you let him do it and then you just tell him what you want...I have more courage in him then myself

Summary of Supporting Research Question 2: Psycho-Social Barriers

Based upon the data reported for category A psycho-social barriers, which "encompass negative evaluations of the usefulness, appropriateness and pleasurability of engaging in adult education" (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72), survey and interview responses do not reveal a significant influence of category A barriers. The majority of participants reported a desire to attend educational classes upon release. The majority of participants reported benefits to participating in educational classes while incarcerated.

The data reported for survey and interview responses do not reveal a significant influence of Category B barriers which “include adults’ negative evaluations of themselves as learners” (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72). The majority of participants reported a positive evaluation of themselves as learners and expressed a belief in their learning abilities. While three participants expressed both positive and negative perceptions of themselves, these participants were not deterred in their efforts to enroll in educational classes at the research site.

Supporting Research Question 3: Institutional Barriers

According to the definition of institutional barriers which “exclude or discourage participation in educational activities.” (Cross, 1981, p. 98), “they involve instruction, practice, policies and requirements of the program (Sticht, 1998, p. 20).

Survey Responses

Several survey items investigated the influence of institutional barriers on nonparticipation in education classes. Survey and interview participants were asked to report on the educational recruitment program established at the research site. The data reported revealed a strong influence of institutional barriers. The majority of survey and interview responses revealed the lack of a comprehensive recruitment system and examples of poor instructional quality and classroom management. Participants also reported lengthy delays in receiving a response to written request from the educational department.

Table 20

Answers to Question 25: What type of educational programs have you participated in while incarcerated in the county jail?

Responses	n
N/A	26
GED	8
Vocational	4
Lifeskills	2
Drug and Alcohol	2

Note. Participants are able to make more than one selection.

At the time this study was conducted, the county jail facility offered courses in ABE, ASE, ESL, computers, cognitive reasoning, anger/stress management, parenting, and drug and alcohol. Twenty-six out of 40 survey respondents had not participated in educational classes while incarcerated in this facility. The remaining respondents reported participating in GED, vocational, lifeskills, and drug and alcohol awareness classes. It is unclear from the survey data if participation in these classes was during the current or a previous incarceration in this facility.

Table 21

Answers to Question 23: Has an educational staff member or counselor spoken with you about participating in any of the education programs offered in this facility?

Responses	%	n
No	80	32
Yes	20	8

Note. N=40

Eighty percent of the survey respondents reported that no educational staff member or counselor had spoken with them about participating in any of the education programs offered in this facility. One interview participant reported contact with a staff member regarding participation in educational classes during his first incarceration in this facility. The interview data shows that the participant initiated contact with the education staff member. He reported,

I saw her and I talked to some friends. A friend introduced me to her. She asked me was I interested in it. I have seen her before and I told her I didn't have a GED or high school diploma. She told me the best thing to do was to come and take some of the classes so I could get a better education.

Interview Responses

A common theme that emerged from participant interviews was the length of time that elapsed between submitting a written inquiry to education and receiving a response to that inquiry. One participant reported 3 weeks elapsed. Two participants reported 2 weeks elapsed. Two participants did not report the

amount of time that elapsed but reported initiating follow-up contact with an education staff member after not receiving a verbal or written response for a period of time. One participant stated,

The GED teacher comes in our unit and talks to other students. I asked him, well I requested to enroll in the diploma program. They told me I was too old and they turned my request over to you. Have you received my request?

[The education staff member responded], 'Well I haven't gotten to it. I have been busy. But when I come across it, I will let you know.' Another participant stated, "Ain't no use in putting in no request because we don't get an answer back on it. You quit sending in requests because you know you will never get [enrolled]."

Two participants reported submitting three written requests before finally being enrolled in ABE or GED classes. The data do not reveal how much time elapsed between written submissions.

After the initial survey was administered, four of the interview participants reported submitting an enrollment request to the education department. One participant had completed orientation prior to his first interview. He stated, "I thought going with you would get me in faster. I would be like telling you I am ready to go and you would say I can sign you up where you can go tomorrow. But it wasn't like that." Another participant had attended and was withdrawn from class prior to completing his first interview. He stated, "I went to class like twice that week and then the week before Thanksgiving they didn't call me and they didn't call me after Thanksgiving. They have not called me [to report to class]

since then.” He reported that he did not know why he was withdrawn from the education program. The participant submitted a request to find out why he was no longer being called to participate in education classes. At the time of his interview, he had not received a response from the education department.

Another participant was involuntarily withdrawn for fighting in his unit. He stated, “If you fight and you are in GED you go to lockout. You are automatically out of GED. You have to enroll all over again.”

Three participants never attended classes in this county jail facility. One interview participant stated, “They didn’t ever get back with me. I tried.” Another interview participant did not request to participate in education classes due to limited reading and writing ability. He stated,

I can read a little bit. I don’t like to ask nobody to help me fill out nothing. [I don’t want them to say] ‘Oh you don’t know how to fill out [a request] or ‘he had to ask me to fill out such and such.’ It has happened a couple of times. I try to avoid that.

A third interview participant had not enrolled in education classes because of the waiting list.

[When you get a response to a request] It is talking about the waiting list is a mile long. You can’t get into class because the list is too long. That takes away your self-esteem right there you know. Tell you how long the list is and all that.

This same participant reported attending class for about four months earlier in the year. He reported one of the reasons he withdrew from the class was due to

poor instructional quality. He stated, "She will sit there [she will tell you] to go and do it on the board. You would go up there and she would tell you that is not right. Okay, [Miss] can you come and help us then? She would sit there [and] didn't move. So, she wasn't really giving the education that I needed so I really didn't have any reason to go." The participant reported that the early morning class schedule was also a deterrent to his participation.

One participant discussed the number of education contact hours available to students. He stated,

They only let you go to class for like an hour or an hour and a half. You can't learn too much in one hour. By the time you get down there. The hour is already started. It takes about five or ten minutes for us to get out of the unit. They only go about two or three times a week.

The two participants who were voluntarily withdrawn from educational classes reported that the loud class environment made learning difficult. One of the participants stated,

Everybody was talking. It was a lot of talking. With a lot of talking I can't concentrate with a lot of people talking. [It was] loud. Real loud. Just rude. She would always say that she don't want nobody cussing. So, a lot of people instead of cussing would use other words. I would sit back and I would be like, man....

The second participant stated, "You have some people that are there to learn.

You got some people that are just there to see their friends that are in different tanks or whatever. It is loud. The instructor she would be trying to

tell them you know y'all are too loud off in here. She would see me sitting back there and she would always put me in the back by the computers and stuff. I would pull her to the side and I was like [Miss] I can't think like this when it is loud. I can't think. That is why I am going to talk to them about me studying one on one. I just want study where it won't be loud.

One participant reported withdrawing from educational classes after attending only one day of orientation. He stated, "It was boring. If I get bored I stop." He was asked to elaborate on what he thought was boring about orientation. He stated,

Like people talking too much. The woman talking too much. It ain't nothing. You just doing test for three hours. That is so [strong emphasis] boring to me. I get bored too quick. If something doesn't have my attention... if it is something they are talking about that doesn't have my attention my mind starts wandering and I am gone after that and ain't no coming back.

Summary of Supporting Research Question 3: Institutional Barriers

The data reported by survey and interview responses reveal a strong influence of institutional barriers to participation. Survey respondents reported the lack of a comprehensive recruitment program toward potential students. Four interview participants reported that as much as three weeks elapsed without receiving a response to written request to enroll in educational classes. One participant reported never receiving a response. While one participant did not submit a response due to limited reading and writing skills. Three former

participants in educational classes at the research site report incidences of poor instructional quality and lack of classroom management.

Supporting Research Question 4: Informational Barriers

According to the definition of informational barriers “pertaining to a lack of information about adult education offerings and said to be most severe for disadvantaged adults” (Beder, 1991, p. 71), the self report data (n=40) indicate the presence of informational barriers regarding the type of programs offered, enrollment procedures and proper identification of education staff. At the time this study was conducted, the county jail facility offered courses in ABE, ASE, ESL, computers, cognitive reasoning, anger/stress management, parenting and drug and alcohol.

Survey Responses

Survey responses investigated the influence of informational barriers on nonparticipation in education classes. Informational barriers are “pertaining to a lack of information about adult education offerings and said to be most severe for disadvantaged adults” (Beder, 1991, p. 71). Participants were asked to report on their knowledge of the types of educational classes offered at the research site as well as how they learned about the educational classes. Based upon the data reported by participants, the majority of the participants (71%) accurately reported two or fewer types of educational classes. The education program offered seven types of educational classes at the time of the study. The majority of participants reported learning about educational classes from another inmate,

word of mouth, and hearsay. The following tables report the specific responses to the informational barriers questionnaire items.

Table 22

Answers to Question 21: List the types of educational programs offered by the county jail

Responses	%	n
0	38	15
1	23	9
2	10	4
3	25	10
4	3	1
5	3	1

Note. N=40 Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding

Thirty-eight percent of survey respondents were not able to identify any of the education programs offered in this facility. This number includes three respondents that “didn’t answer” the question and two respondents that replied “N/A”. Survey respondents also identified programs that are not offered at the time that this survey was administered (i.e., lifeskills, high school diploma classes, horticulture, and electronics soldering).

Participants were asked to identify how they learned about the education programs offered in this jail facility.

Table 23

Answers to Question 22: How did you learn about the correctional education classes offered in [this facility]?

Responses	n
Inmates	12
N/A	6
Wrote Education	4
No one	3
Poster	3
Don't Know	2
Word of Mouth	2
C.O.R.E.	2
Previous Incarceration	2
Hearsay/Through Different People	2
Asking Around	1
Participation	1
Never heard	1
None	1

Note. Participants were able to provide more than one response

A few survey respondents provided additional comments to the question of how they learned about educational programs. One respondent stated, "I haven't...I would like to get into the computer [course]. I want to be computer literate. Computers run the world and I would like to be a part of it." A second respondent stated, "Coming to jail...they once offered college classes when I

was in C.O.R.E...but they no longer have these classes.” A third respondent stated, “No one has spoken to me about any classes.”

Interview responses

Interview follow-up questions investigated the influence of informational barriers on nonparticipation in education classes. The data from interview participants revealed the absence of a formal system to disseminate information about program classes and procedures. The majority of participants reported receiving written materials from the education program.

Interview participants were asked if they had ever received any written materials from the education program. Four interview participants stated they had not. One participant responded, “No, I have not. No kind of written programs, no kind of nothing...nothing at all...since I have been here nothing.” Two respondents stated that they received written materials. After further inquiry with the two positive respondents, one stated he learned of the program through a poster identifying the adult education program office. The education program office is visible as inmates walk from their unit to eat their meals, for a doctor’s visit, or to await transportation to the courthouse. The other participant responded, “We’ll I didn’t receive it...but they will post it up in the unit...they will probably have a list of GED classes.” The participant stated that he has seen or read something posted on the wall about GED classes. He stated he had seen this poster during a previous incarceration. During a follow-up interview session, an inmate stated that he had received a survey. He stated,

The other day I don't know who sent it to me they sent me an educational slip though asking me what kind of classes I want to take. They had something like GSL or some stuff on there and computer classes and stuff like that. I sent it back. They asked me what classes. I said all of the above.

This response prompted a round of follow-up interviews to determine how many interview participants received this survey. Four respondents stated they did not receive the survey. A respondent stated, "No, I didn't. Everybody received one but me." Another participant stated, "I just got one." The researcher did not ask about written materials or the jail survey with one of the interview participants.

Two interview participants discussed their understanding of the process to enroll in education classes and how they learned about the process. One participant stated, "An inmate told me that they do have classes and [there are] certain procedures you have to go through to get into classes." The second participant stated, "I knew that they sent a request in and I knew that a couple of days later that they were going. That was the only procedure I knew."

Summary of Supporting Research Question 4: Informational Barriers

Based upon the data from survey and follow-up interview data, informational barriers has a strong influence on nonparticipation in educational classes at the research site. The data revealed that the majority of participants did not have accurate or sufficient information on the educational classes offered at the research site. The data also revealed that the source for information

regarding educational classes or enrollment procedures came from another inmate rather than from an educational staff person or other jail employee

Other Findings

The data were analyzed using categorical aggregation. Two emerging themes of pursuit of informal learning and gender issues do not relate directly to the four supporting research questions but because of their prominence in the data warrant inclusion in the discussion of the research findings. The other emerging themes such as sports participation as motivation, early age substance abuse, family support, education and power, peer influences and learning preferences received limited mention across participants to warrant inclusion in the discussion of the research findings.

Informal Learning

Participants reported pursuing informal learning opportunities such as reading and journal writing. Several participants reported the difficulty in obtaining reading materials. One participant stated, "If there are books in the unit you have to wait your turn to read them. There are about 20 books for 96 people." Another participant stated,

We don't have any books. Most of the other books are in the other tanks. The books that are in my tank either they don't share them or they tear them up. They use them for scratch paper. They tear most of the pages out. You can't get a newspaper. They only bring in one [to the unit]. They separate it between 98 people. There is no dictionary in my unit. You have to buy it.

Another participant elaborated on the shortage of dictionaries in his unit. He stated,

There was one floating around on the dorm. But now I use a short hand dictionary. It is difficult because half the words I be looking for are not in it. It is a little shorter version of the Webster. I just asked [an education staff member] if he could get a dictionary on our tank because we are missing a dictionary. Every tank is supposed to have a dictionary. [I requested] a full size dictionary.

Six of the seven interview participants reported that the county jail facility does not have a library for inmates. However, one participant stated there was a library.

They got a library but you have to write them. Then it will probably take about two or three weeks to send you some books. You have to write the librarian. I don't know if it is here or at the other jail facility. But if you write the librarian eventually they will send you some books.

One participant reported getting reading material from a counselor. "The counselor will bring some books into [the housing unit]. When asked how often does the counselor provide reading materials, he stated, "I don't tell him nothing. He do it whenever he feels like it. He reported that if he had a specific book request he submitted a request to the counselor.

Gender Issues

Participants were asked to discuss their learning preferences by reporting the qualities of an effective instructor. One participant reported a strong

preference against male, particularly gay male, instructors. He stated, “It is just something about males that throw me off. The male teacher here is a punk. That just throws me off. I really don’t want to learn nothing [from him].” This participant reported “being bothered” by that type of learning situation.

Four participants described an ineffective instructor using female pronouns. One stated,

Yeah she is the kind of teacher she is ready to go home. You know she has a lot of things going on at home. She isn’t putting anything into what she is doing at work because it is just a money thing to her.

With regarding to describing an effective instructor, another participant stated, “[A teacher] who really wants to do her job and cares that the student learn or not.

One participant discussed his learning preference using male pronoun references. He stated, “You can tell a teacher that that is not interested because he is in and out of the class. And he spends more time in the break room then he do in class. He is there for a paycheck or he is hiding from somebody. Two participants described their learning preferences using both male and female pronouns. One participant stated, “Him or her is going out of their way to really show it and that would make me want to come to class.” Another participant, “I think it would be wrong you know if that person is willing to learn and she or he is not giving 110%.”

Case Studies

Seven survey respondents were selected to participate in an in-depth interview. This section will present a detailed case profile of two interview

participants (A & B). Each interview participant was assigned a code consisting of a letter, a number and a pseudonym to protect the confidentiality of the participant.

Case A

Keith is 20 years old. He is separated from his spouse and has two children ages 1 and 2. He has two younger brothers and his parents are no longer in a committed relationship. His criminal background includes both nonviolent and violent property and drug related offenses. Although he had been involved in juvenile delinquent behavior during middle school and high school, he entered the juvenile justice system at age 15 and was shot at the age of 16 for an undisclosed reason. According to Keith's survey responses, he has been incarcerated three times. After reviewing the interview transcript, it appears that he has been arrested five times. His first offense was a misdemeanor and he received probation. His second offense was a probation violation misdemeanor, burglary of a vehicle. He served a 500-day sentence in the county jail. His third, fourth, and fifth offenses are still in litigation. He is currently being held on three assault charges and two aggravated robberies. He has been incarcerated in this jail facility for 18 months awaiting the results of the litigation. He faces nine years in the state penitentiary if convicted of these charges.

Keith does not have a high school diploma. His family has a history of limited academic achievement. In his survey responses he stated that he does not know if his mother or father graduated from high school. During the interview he stated in partial contradiction that he knows that his father graduated. He

reported that his father has degrees in business and law that he earned while incarcerated in a Texas prison. It is not clear from the interview data if his father earned two separate degrees. Because of his father's background in business and law, his father assists Keith with his pending cases through mail correspondence. Keith's two brothers do not have high school diplomas. The youngest brother dropped out in the 12th grade and his other brother dropped out in the 10th grade.

Keith's family has a history of incarceration. His father is incarcerated for murder. His two brothers are currently incarcerated for unidentified criminal activity. Keith's mother was incarcerated much of his childhood for theft.

Keith received inconsistent family support for his education while growing up. His mother was incarcerated when he was 2 or 3 years old. She was released and re-incarcerated throughout much of his life. His father has been incarcerated since he was 4 or 5 years old. He reports that the first time he had contact with his father was when he was 16 years old. He states "I went and saw him. He was in Huntsville and Amarillo and I went and saw him. I looked at him and it was like identical. I was like...man. Then after that I haven't seen him since." When asked about the communication pattern of his parents, he replied "I didn't hear from them. I didn't know them then."

As a child, Keith was moved back and forth between relatives. He credits the numerous moves to family issues and his behavior. He states, "Middle school...that is when I started being bad, I started hanging out and hanging with my friends and not paying attention." His grandmothers, aunt, and uncle shared

the responsibility of raising Keith and his brothers while his parents were incarcerated.

I stayed with my maternal grandmother and I stayed with her until 8 or 9 years old. Then I stayed with my aunt, then my uncle, then my aunt, then my uncle. Then when I turned 15 I was on my own. Like I said I didn't have anybody to help me. I didn't have no family there to help me.

Keith reported living with his paternal grandmother for a period of time in elementary school. He states she helped him learn how to write his name. Keith's maternal grandmother was the primary caregiver for Keith in elementary school. He reported that his maternal grandmother did not help him academically in school. He stated, "She was busy." He stated that his grandmother inquired about his daily activities. It is not clear if this was his maternal or paternal grandmother. When he was asked about his elementary school experience, he responded

It was hard to tell you the truth. Growing up in elementary I wasn't allowed to have things like other kids. It was real hard for me not to have people to help me with my work and stuff when I go home. I didn't have things like that so it was pretty hard for me.

When asked to describe the kinds of things he was not able to have like other kids. He replied, "Material things. Family members there for you and stuff like that. I guess you can say help on a lot of stuff. I didn't have anybody to help me. I didn't have no family there to help me." Keith reports that he maintained an A average throughout most of elementary and middle school. When asked how he

accomplished this, he responded “ I had to study a lot to tell you the truth...I stayed right down the street from the school so the teacher would have me sit there and my maternal grandmother would pick me up late from school and I would sit there and study with the teacher one to one.” He recalls that his favorite academic subjects in elementary school were math, science, and history. Keith reported that he was enrolled in special education classes. It is unclear whether his enrollment in special education classes was based upon academic problems, behavioral problems or both.

Keith stated that during his middle school years the primary family member in his life was his uncle. He recalls his uncle taught him the alphabet. He stated, “I stayed with him for a long time.” “My uncle has always been very helpful. Always. That is my father’s brother. He has always been helpful. He is really more like a father to me. He has been there for me than anybody else has. I love my uncle more than anything.” When Keith was in elementary school, he recalls comments from his uncle such as “keep it up nephew you are going to make it. You are going to make it. Just keep it up.” When his grades and behavior changed after entering middle school, Keith recalls comments such as “I am telling you nephew you are going to be like your daddy and your momma and this and that. You ain’t gonna never be nothing. You ain’t gonna never have nothing.” He explains that his uncle “was always talking down to me to make me do better because I always had a messed up head to do the wrong thing and he was trying to teach me the right.” He reports being lectured by his uncle for hours at a time about the changes in his grades and behavior.

Keith recalls numerous times that his family members spoke what he viewed as negative comments regarding his future, his parents, and his siblings. He states, "My family kept putting me down. Telling me you ain't gonna be nothing, you are going to be like your mother and your father." He reported that he heard these types of things from everyone in his family. He stated, "They always compared me and my brothers to my mother and my father and it was like I kept getting immune to it. Then it started happening for real." He noted when his academic record reflected A averages these types of things were not being spoken to him. He received financial compensation from his uncle for earning high grade averages through the 7th grade.

Due to the numerous changes in custodial caregivers, Keith attended schools in the Austin and Dallas/Fort Worth areas for middle school and high school. Keith stated that middle school was easy. He reports earning an A average through the 7th grade and being assigned 8th and 9th grade work in the 7th grade. When he discusses his participation in organized sport activities such as football, he states

[football] kept me focused on my grades and my coach used to always tell me 'no good grades, no play.' So, I had to make the grades in order to play football. Because I was the starting quarterback, I had to make the grades in order to play and if I wasn't making the grades they would tell my aunt and then my aunt would keep [me] from staying for practice then I couldn't play.

Despite his involvement in school sports, he stated that behavioral problems began when he entered middle school. He began smoking marijuana in the 8th grade on a daily basis. He stated,

My cousin was the coach and something turned and it wasn't going right no more and then I started smoking weed and that is when I started messing up. That is when I started forgetting things. That is when I started dropping out and stopped going to school. I started hanging with my friends on the block. I was still interested in football and my uncle was talking about paying for my scholarship and stuff like that then all of a sudden...I felt like they were lying to me. They weren't lying to me. It was the weed lying to me. So, that is why I started slacking back and I didn't feel like nobody loved me anymore so I just threw it all away

Keith reports on his survey that he completed the 9th grade. According to interview data, Keith attended different high schools over a period of several years. It is unclear if the term graduated refers to years attended or credits obtained.

Uhh, I started 9th grade at [name omitted]. I stopped going and I went back. Then I stopped going and I went back again then I transferred because I moved to the southside that is when I started going to [school name omitted]. I went to [school name omitted] for about two years then I dropped out and then I moved to [city name omitted] and I went to [school name omitted] and I didn't stay up there for about a good five or six months and I got into it with some guys up there for gangs. So, my aunt

shipped me back down here. I came back down here and I went back to [school name omitted]. That is when I graduated from the [school name omitted].

He does not report enrollment in special education classes in middle school or high school. Keith reports being kicked out of two schools in high school for gang related fighting.

Keith stated that he is very confident in his ability to learn. He states, "I consider myself a smart person." He recalled being told by other inmates in his jail unit 'you are a smart young man.' "A lot of people ask for my advice." When asked to give an example of how he learns, he stated, "I am a quick learner...I would have to be told once. I catch on pretty quick. I listen to my elders. That is how I get my knowledge."

Organized school athletic programs had a significant influence on his educational goals. He stated, "My dream was to play football, then all of a sudden I got shot. So, I dropped out of school completely because I thought I wasn't going to be able to play football anymore so I just stopped going." With the support of a high school coach, Keith returned to school. He states,

He kept talking to me and telling me he wanted to tutor me and stuff like this and he talked to my cousin coach and kept tutoring me and tutoring me and tutoring me and I stayed in school. I went back and started doing a lot of work and then I would stay after school and sit down in the gym with him and he would help me with my work and he kept telling me you

are going to pass you are going to pass. I want you to pass and graduate and I said man that is what I want to do. That is what I want to do.

It is not clear from the interview data if Keith was playing football or if he had the potential to play football at the time that he was being tutored by his coach. When asked if he believes there are benefits to obtaining an education, he stated, “probably somewhere down the line I know there is and I do want to learn. Before I leave jail I want to learn something before I get out of here...so I won’t be some dumb person all my life.” When asked if he thinks he is dumb, he stated, “No, I am very smart. I consider dumb people not knowing nothing.”

When asked about the benefits of an education down the line, he states, “I do want to learn something. I don’t want to go back in that world and don’t know nothing, ain’t got no GED or high school diploma [and] can’t get no job.” Keith has a desire to own his own business. He states, “I am trying to start a little something so I can have my head focused on something where I won’t go back and sell dope.”

When asked about the types of educational programming available to inmates, Keith listed the GED program. His knowledge about the programs offered was based upon information received from other inmates. Keith attended GED classes during his 500-day sentence in 1997. During his first incarceration, he stated that he discussed attending GED classes with an education staff member. It is unclear how long Keith attended GED classes during that 500-day period.

During his current incarceration period that began in 1999, Keith has attended GED classes twice. He states he submitted five written requests about enrolling in GED classes upon his return. He remained on a waiting list for seven months before classroom space became available. He attended class for 3 or 4 months before voluntarily withdrawing from the program. When asked why he stopped attending classes, "I really don't have any reason. Well, I do. I started going I was trying to get my education but [the instructor] she don't want to teach you nothing." He also cited a strong dislike for morning classes, concerns about his pending litigation and a lack of family contact. He stated that his dislike of morning classes was the primary reason for withdrawing and that he would have stayed in the class if the external factors were stable.

Keith continued to persist in the class despite his complaint about the instructor and the class schedule. He stated, "I wanted that GED." He was asked how he compensated for what he perceived as poor instructional quality. He stated, "Well, there was a student that was in there that used to sit right next to me and if I didn't know something I would ask him. He would help me with my work. Okay, then all of a sudden he stopped coming and I didn't see him anymore. I guess he got out or transferred or whatever. So, after that it wasn't...I didn't have no help."

After agreeing to participate in this research study, Keith submitted a request to return to GED classes. He attended class for about three weeks and stated that the education department stopped calling him for classes. "I don't know what happened they just stopped calling me and I haven't been since." He

submitted three written requests about no longer being called for classes. At the time of the interview he had not received feedback on his request. He stated he has given up on trying to attend classes.

He prefers to learn in smaller groups or individualized tutoring. He described his ideal instructor as one who “wants me to strive for what I got...that I can get it...an attractive teacher. Someone that cares about what I am going through or willing to listen. Her just teaching just constantly teaching.” He describes the learning environment as, “It would have to be quiet. Not talking out of turn but talking one at a time.” He prefers a co-educational environment that is culturally diverse. He would like access to reference books such as encyclopedias and dictionaries. He states, “Yeah, real nice size dictionaries. Webster’s and stuff like that.” He describes the ideal instructional strategy as games, “I would probably have a lot of games and stuff like that...maps and games. Mostly games. Man. Just different types of things that would make the learning easier I guess.” Keith describes easy learning as, “It would be easy to where you wouldn’t have to keep asking the teacher to give you a better example.” He informed me that he would enroll as a student if the ideal instructor and learning environment were available in this or any correctional facility.

Keith was asked to discuss what he does to learn outside of the formal classroom setting. He stated, “Right now, I have been trying...I pick up a book and I read the book.” He offered this example.

I have a celly. Me and my celly sit in the room. I would take a book and open the book and I take some of the big words and little words out of it

and I say 'spell this word'. He would spell it. I would say 'spell this word here.' And he would spell it. Then I say spell this good word. And he would mess up. I say 'now spell it again.' Then he would get it kind of right. I would say, 'Naw, that is not it spell it again.' We quiz each other. Then we would read some books to see who will get through reading the book first. He discusses his desire to improve his vocabulary. "I sit in the dayroom and all I hear is 'dog this dog that, fool.' I want to learn words that white folks use. I don't want to put it like that but that is the truth though because I am used to the word 'nigga', 'dog', 'homeboy' [and] 'player.' I want to learn a higher vocabulary."

Keith does not know if he will enroll in education classes once he is released from prison. If he does decide to enroll in educational classes, it will be a GED class or business management classes to support his entrepreneurial aspirations. It is unclear if his reference to release means transfer to a state prison or release from correctional supervision. If the outcome of his pending litigation results in nine years in a state prison, Keith expects to stay another three months in a county jail facility before being transferred to the state prison. The time served in the county jail will be credited toward the nine-year sentence. He expects to be eligible for parole in four and a half years.

Case B

Jake is 35 years old, has never been married and does not have any children. He is the youngest of nine children. His father died when he was six months old. His mother never remarried. His criminal activity would be classified as non-violent property or drug-related offenses. He reported that he has never

been incarcerated on drug related charges. Jake entered the juvenile justice system at the age of 9 years old. He was incarcerated twice in a state juvenile facility. He reported that he has been arrested at least 40 times. The majority of his arrests were as a juvenile. He has been incarcerated twice in a state prison facility. He served two and a half years for the first offense and six years for the second offense.

He has been incarcerated at a county jail facility for two months on a misdemeanor charge of burglary of a motor vehicle. He had been on parole for approximately three months at the time of his arrest. If convicted, he faces a parole violation and will return to state prison custody. Jake has two brothers serving time in a state prison facility. His oldest brother is serving a sentence for aggravated assault. Another brother was convicted of reckless driving and is serving an eight-year sentence for a drug related charge.

Jake reports that his mother and father completed high school. His mother entered the workforce when his father died. She worked for several years as a nurse in a hospital. She later worked for her son-in-law in his commercial cleaning company. He discussed growing up in a single parent household.

My mother wasn't able to get some of the finest stuff you know. I was teased about the patches on my knees. My pants being up a little high over the shoes...ankle chokers. It caused me to be real aggravated.

Jake's mother had physical limitations that would not allow her to work when he entered middle school.

Jake reported that he is the only child of nine siblings not to complete high school. Jake discusses the educational and career achievements of his siblings. His oldest brother attended a university. He did not know the name of the university. He stated, "I don't know. I was real young. I just know I saw some pictures of him at a university." One of his sisters attended a community college. It is not clear from the interview data what academic majors his siblings pursued or if they graduated. Jake reported that another brother could have attended college because of his athletic abilities. One of his brothers is a successful entrepreneur. He states, "He didn't get to go to college. He runs his own business. He is a co-owner of parking lots. And he owns an automotive shop. I pretty much admire him."

Jake completed nine years of school. He did not attend kindergarten. He was asked to elaborate on how he was able to bypass kindergarten. "[I was] a mama's baby and didn't want to stay. She kept me home you know. I went straight to the first grade." He recalls pleasant experiences from elementary school. He was enrolled in special education classes in elementary and attended classes with teachers that taught several of his siblings. He states,

I was pampered by my teachers. My elementary teachers...I don't know. I was just a little kid that a lot of teachers took home. You know I went home with just about all of my elementary teachers.

They took me to their house on weekends and stuff like that there. At the time that he completely withdrew from attending high school, Jake could not read or write. He stated, "I could read words like 'stop', 'go', 'the' and 'to'.

When it came to words I would say five letters or more, I couldn't read them. I didn't learn to read or write until the first time I went to prison." He was asked to elaborate on how he attended school for nine years and could not read and write. He stated,

I guess I was never really asked. But I just sat in class. I got moved from one grade to the next. I didn't hardly take any homework home. I never seen any test in class when I was coming through school. I sat there you know I was active in school. If I can remember right, I played off a lot of that 'well why don't you tell us what that is on the board' and I would giggle it off and they would move on. They would ask questions but I found a way to get around it you know. I peeked over people's shoulders you know and copied papers. I did all that kind of stuff. I did some bullying and made somebody do some work for me in class.

Jake states that growing up he was embarrassed about not knowing how to read. He immediately countered that statement by saying, "I knew people that worked good jobs and couldn't read...that had problems reading." He reports that his mother did not know he could not read. "My report card [showed] B's and C's. They told her I was doing well in school. I kept it away from a lot of people." One of his brothers discovered he was having reading problems during his three-month parole period in 2001. "I was having difficulty filling out the application. And he told me 'boy you need to get the dictionary and read a dictionary.' So, that right there told me he was aware that I was having problems reading." Jake

does not recall many occasions of being read to as a child. He states, "We watched a lot of television together as a child." One of Jake's brothers was an avid reader.

The [brother] that is doing real good right now. He was a reader. He read just about anything that was educational. He had a lot of encyclopedia's but I didn't bother, you know. I didn't bother to pick them up.

Jake was enrolled in a special education class in middle school. Jake states he compensated for his poor reading skills in middle school and high school by taking classes that required minimal reading and writing skills. "Home economics, uhhh, survival classes." He recalled his middle school special education class, "We set and did a lot of crossword puzzles in there. That don't take a lot of reading." Jake defined the crossword puzzles as seek and find puzzles. "Just find the letters and then once you get the letters go on and circle it." When asked about his school experience with math, he stated, "I have done math. Math wasn't quite that hard you know...adding, subtracting, multiplication. I didn't really get into fractions."

Jake was asked about his academic performance in the 9th grade. He stated, "Naturally, you know, I lied. They started asking questions...I started showing up less." He attended two different schools for the 9th grade. He was involved in football and track and field. He recalls a reluctance to participate in athletic activities. "I really didn't want to play any sports because it took up my time. They asked me to quit smoking cigarettes and I wouldn't quit. I couldn't do my thing. [It] was good that they asked me to play." Jake considered the effects

that skipping kindergarten may have had on his educational achievement. “A teacher told me while I was in TDC that might have a big part on my learning difficulties.”

Jake described the family support he received for his education as a child. He reported that his youngest sister was constantly inquiring, “Boy, where is your homework at? She wanted me to graduate.” His mother was a member of the parent teacher association. He states, “She went to PTA meetings and all that there.” He reported that his mother inquired about his daily activities.

Jake described himself as a quick learner. He states, “I pick up real quick by seeing.” He described his confidence level in his learning abilities as “very high.” Jake discussed his motivation for learning. He stated, “You know I am motivated by what I didn’t learn when I was growing up. I feel as though I missed out on something. I look back and a lot of guys I went to school with are doing things...good things that I could have been doing but I couldn’t read.” He discussed the deciding factor that caused him to enroll in literacy classes. “It got embarrassing to let somebody read mail that was coming to you that was personal. I volunteered to get into school.”

When asked about the benefits of obtaining an education, he states, I can say it helps me more because I have what I call my disability. It would prepare me for a better job out there because I can fill out a job application. I have good skills but I still apply for low paying jobs that don’t demand a GED.

When asked about the types of educational programming available to inmates, Jake correctly identified the GED and drug and alcohol classes. His knowledge about the programs offered was based upon information he received from an educational staff member. He stated, "I asked." He attended educational classes during both incarceration periods at a state prison facility. During his two and a half year incarceration period, he was enrolled in basic math and life skills courses. His life skills courses included instruction in office support. He states that he is proficient in using a ten key adding machine. He reported that he has a certificate in bookkeeping and radiator mechanic repair.

During his six-year incarceration period, he reported continuous enrollment in the ABE/GED program for almost 24 months. He received 40 hours of classroom instruction weekly. He voluntarily withdrew from the program after being transferred to an instructor who was not able to manage the behavior of students in the classroom and provide quality instruction. He stated, "I would describe that [new] class for you in one way and that is "Welcome Back, Kotter." Jake discussed in detail his new instructor. He stated,

He was an old guy. He was going through some problems. You couldn't really blame him. He comes to work everyday. And he had a wife that was suffering from cancer and even though he showed up for work his mind was on his wife. He was in a stage of retiring anyway. He didn't just want to up and quit. He just wanted to finish it out. The man was almost 80 years old."

The correctional education program agreed with Jake's complaint that the teacher was not providing quality instruction to the students. "They knew that [name omitted] was having a hard time teaching. It came from the counselor's mouth. It came from other teachers. They knew. They knew [name omitted] class was the screw up class of them all." He offered a description of the learning environment, "He tried to get a hold of the class. The younger guys were beating on the table rappin' and writing rap music."

Prior to being transferred to this class, Jake reported steady progress on his educational achievement scores. "My math was 7.5 [grade level]. My reading was 6.1 [grade level]." He reported a drop in his achievement score after attending the new class for nearly six months.

Using books he received from a previous instructor, he tried to study independently in his unit for about two and a half weeks. He stated,

"A lot of it I couldn't do. I mean some of it I could remember from class. There was a lot of stuff that I needed explained to me. I had a cellmate. He was pretty sharp. He would help me from time to time. He spent a lot of his time in the dayroom playing dominoes. Things were getting more and more difficult. Then I started shying away from it."

Jake received support for his education from his youngest sister while incarcerated in the state prison facility. He stated,

My youngest sister...I wrote her and I sent her stuff that I was doing. Stuff that you bring home when you were in school. I would

write her and send her the stuff that I was doing. [I sent] the math that I was doing and [showed her] how fast in math I had went. She would write me back and tell me 'this is good'. You know how math papers [are] laying around in class? I would take them and go back to the dorm and do them and then send them back to her. She would send them back like she has graded them. She would say 'you need to do this and do this like this.'

After withdrawing from the ABE classes at the state jail facility, Jake obtained a job within the facility to increase his good time credit. "I had a porter's job, you know, which was cleaning up." He discussed what he did to learn on an informal basis for the four years prior to his parole eligibility. "We had a library. I would go to the library and pick [up a book]. I read and I worked. I worked at night and read myself to sleep during the day." In the state prison facility, Jake enjoyed reading books on black culture. He reported that read books by Nathaniel McCall and WEB Dubois. He stated, "Everybody was reading those books, you know. It is a lot of black young men down there that stayed in the black culture of the books in the library." He shared his thoughts on reading Coming of the Mayflower. "There were some frustrating moments in it. There were some tear jerking moments in it. There was a lot of joyful moments in it."

During his current incarceration period, Jake submitted a request to the education department. At the time of the interview, he had been on the waiting list for two weeks. He reported that he followed up with an education staff member. He stated, "As a matter of fact, I talked to him again today on the

[recreation] yard. I asked him had my name been put on the list? He told me yeah.”

He discussed what he did to learn on an informal basis for the two months he has been incarcerated in the county jail facility.

I read the newspaper. I read novels. I read a lot of novels because they pretty much keep me up on my spelling. Because if I read a novel and see the word enough then I can pretty much spell it. I can pretty much find a word that I am looking for that I can't spell in the dictionary. I write you know. I don't just write letters home. I write down stuff that I think about I still refer to the dictionary for spelling.

He recently completed A Time to Kill in the county jail facility. He stated it took him about a month to read it the book because of repeated references to the dictionary. Jake discussed the difference in obtaining reading materials in this facility versus the state prison facility. He stated,

It is enough books on the dorm that everybody just exchange books. Everybody that reads novels walks around with a novel and says 'Anybody got a book to trade?' You just swap out. I try to keep at least three or four. It takes me a while to read one so I got one all the time to trade with somebody.

Jake prefers to learn in active learning environments. He described learning history at a state prison facility. “[The teacher] made everybody a part of history. You know y'all are going to be the democrats, y'all are going to be the republicans. She would split the room up you know. And half the class we would

discuss it, act it out, and then the other half we would do it on paper. It made it a lot easier like that.” He described learning math at the same facility.

He would do the same thing. He would split the class up. He would put a certain amount of fractions on this side and a certain amount on this side. He would tell the class. These are for y’all and these are for them over there. We would see who is going to get the most of them right. It would be the same fractions it was just that they were wrote differently. But you were thinking that that they were two different kinds of fractions but they are not. He had a few little tricks up his sleeve...mind teasers you know. He taught me algebra. He made math fun. Every morning I would go into class he would have a math problem on the board for me, especially for me, a challenge you know. Math became fun to me.

Jake attempted to maintain regular employment. His mother gave him the option of school or work after being released from the state juvenile facility. He states, “I chose work.” The majority of his employment record is contracted work. He states,

I did odd jobs you know. Jobs where I didn’t have to fill out an application. I would ask people you know ‘say you need some help doing this or that’. I would see a job site going on and I would get hired.”

He discussed a promising position he had as a groundskeeper supervisor.

I had a crew of 12 people that I was taking out every morning and keeping the facility clean. I stayed there for about a month and half and I guess they background my application. They called me in and told me 'we have to let you go even though you are a good worker...but you falsified your application...you don't have a GED.' I quit going that route and now everything I put on my application is the truth.

During the three months prior to his incarceration, he obtained two jobs. His first job was with an insulation company. He held that position for a month and a half. He states, "I was let go for lack of responsibility. I was starting to show up a little late." His second job was as a radiator mechanic. He was earning \$9.25 per hour. He was employed as a radiator mechanic at the time of his current incarceration.

At the time of my follow-up interviews with Jake, he was participating in ABE classes at the jail facility. Jake indicated that he aspires to continue his education upon release from this facility. He plans to enroll in GED and vocational classes. His primary focus will be vocational training. "I am going back and redo radiator mechanic work again so I can get the full swing of it. I don't have the full skills of being certified." He elaborated on why he wants to focus on radiator repair. "It really caught up with me on that job I had [before coming to this facility] because today they have radiators that were in textbooks that I didn't know about because I didn't read the textbook." Jake also aspires to earn his CDL license. He stated, "I can drive trucks without the cab. I have to learn how to

make the turns with the trailer on the back.” Jake expressed some hope on the outcome of his pending litigation. He expects to be in this facility for another month.

Summary

This chapter is an analysis of the data collected for this exploratory case study. The data were collected using a 30-item questionnaire and interviews with participants. The data were presented in relation to the supporting research questions that were used to answer the question, “What factors influence non-participation of incarcerated African-American males in ABE or ASE programs?”

The data analysis revealed that situational and psycho-social barriers are not a significant influence on research participant’s decision not to enroll in education classes. Regarding situational barriers, survey and interview responses revealed situational barriers indigenous to an incarcerated population. The situational barriers reported by the study population were short term and did not impede long-term plans for participation in education classes. Regarding psycho-social barriers, the research participants reported positive outcomes associated with participation in education classes and a belief in their abilities to learn.

The data analysis revealed a greater influence on non-participation for institutional and informational barriers. Regarding institutional barriers, participants reported the absence of a comprehensive program to recruit inmates to participate in educational classes. Previous participants in educational classes reported incidences of poor instruction and classroom management by education

staff members. Regarding informational barriers, the majority of participants were only able to report two or fewer of the seven educational classes offered by the research site. The majority of participants reported learning about educational classes and enrollment procedures from another inmate, word of mouth or hearsay. Regarding other findings, research participants reported engaging in informal learning activities such as reading and journal writing when not enrolled in educational classes and expressed gender preferences when learning in a formal classroom setting. Participants reported substance abuse at an early age and revealed that sports participation was a motivation to persist in compulsory education as a youth. This chapter also provides a more holistic picture of the lives of two participants through descriptive case studies.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this exploratory qualitative case study was to determine what factors might influence non-participation of incarcerated inmates in correctional education programs. The case study examined the perceptions of incarcerated African-American males regarding non-participation in a county jail serving an urban area. The research design presents the data collected in relation to the following identified categories of barriers to non-participation in ABE or ASE: situational barriers, psycho-social barriers, institutional, and informational barriers (Cross, 1981, Beder, 1991).

The overall research findings reveal a limited influence of situational and psycho-social barriers on nonparticipation in education. The research data show the greatest influences on nonparticipation to be institutional and informational barriers to nonparticipation. Other findings reveal that participants pursue independent reading and journal writing for informal learning activities and have gender preferences or assumptions regarding instructional staff.

Generalizations and Discussions

Supporting Research Question 1

The first supporting research question is, "What situational barriers influence non-participation?" According to Cross (1981), situational barriers are

defined as “those arising from one’s situation in life at a given time.” Beder (1991) defines situational barriers as “those more or less external to the individual or at least beyond the individuals control.” Cross (1981) gives examples of situational barriers for non-incarcerated populations as time constraints, work schedule conflicts, limited financial resources to pay for educational classes, and lack of transportation.

According to the research data, the type of situational barriers reported by study participants are different from those reported in the literature on non-incarcerated populations. Participants described external distractions influencing non-participation as uncertainty regarding the length of incarceration, attorney fees, court appearances, outcomes of pending litigation, communication with legal counsel, and maintenance of personal and family relationships. One participant reported,

I had my mind on paying them lawyers. Going back and forth to court and because my lawyer was telling me ‘you are going to get out this day’, and there was a lot of confusion in my paper work. I was just trying to take care of them.

Participants reported that once these concerns were stable, they felt more comfortable turning their attention to the pursuit of educational classes within the facility. According to the data collected, situational barriers do not represent a significant long-term influence on non-participation in educational programs. Three participants reported that stabilization of these matters, particularly legal concerns within six to eight weeks of incarceration. Four participants did not

report an influence of situational barriers and inquired about participation in educational classes soon after arriving in the facility.

Summary Supporting Research Question 1: Situational Barriers

Based upon the data reported for the situational barriers questionnaire items and interview follow-up data, participants cited the influence of situational barriers for an incarcerated population. While non-incarcerated populations cite issues such as school-work conflicts, transportation problems, and the need for childcare, the study population reported that concerns with their pending litigation and approaching release dates were a reason that participation in education classes was not immediately pursued upon incarceration. The data revealed that situational barriers for an incarcerated population do not represent a long-term barrier to participation. Several participants reported requesting enrollment in educational classes after the immediate issues relating to their pending litigation were addressed.

Supporting Research Question 2

The second supporting research question is, "What psycho-social barriers influence non-participation"? Psycho-social barriers are "derived from the values and attitudes adults hold for education" (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72). They are generally classified as Category A barriers "encompassing negative evaluations of the usefulness, appropriateness and pleasurability of engaging in adult education" while Category B barriers are defined as those that address an "adults negative evaluations of themselves as learners" (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72).

The questionnaire responses investigated factors that may influence the participant's attitude and value toward participation in educational activities. Overall the participants report limited Category A psycho-social barriers. More than half of the respondents reported that their mother and father earned a high school diploma or GED. It appears this did not have a significant impact on their persistence in formal learning contexts. This finding appears contrary to the literature that suggests that the educational level of the mother is the greatest indicator of the educational level of the child. There could be issues with the self-report nature of the data or this body of literature may not have wide transferability to incarcerated individuals.

Sixty-five percent of respondents reported not being sure about participating in educational classes upon release. According to the literature, participation in educational classes while incarcerated may influence participation in educational classes after release (Warner, 1990). There was generally an even distribution between the types of educational programs that inmates might pursue upon release. College, vocational, and GED classes were the most common selections for post-release studies. Staff at the county jail facility reported that participants that attend the new student orientation receive information about learning opportunities available through the local community college. Since 26 out of 40 survey respondents have not enrolled in any classes in this facility, most are not receiving this important information. The lack of certainty about participation in educational classes upon release may be directly

related to a lack of knowledge about program offerings available to them upon release.

Four of the seven interview participants reported a parent or family member who had a degree or earned credit for college-level coursework. Warner (1990) discusses the positive influence of having friends and family participating in education.

Interview questions also investigated the influence of category A psychosocial barriers, that is those barriers “derived from the values and attitudes adults hold for education” (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72). Six of the seven interview participants identified benefits to participating in educational classes. The participants’ overwhelmingly positive perception of the value of education is not supported by the literature. The literature suggests that incarcerated individuals generally do not hold education participation in high regard (Warner, 1990). Four participants identified positive outcomes to participation in education being related to post-release success. According to McGivney (1999), the value or importance of participation in education varies based upon the context and experience. These participants are facing a depressed job market and possess minimal employment qualifications. This may explain perceived benefits of participation in education classes.

Overall interview participants revealed little influence of Category B barriers. Category B barriers relate to “adults negative evaluations of themselves as learners” (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72). Interview questions investigated the influence of Category B barriers. Six out of the seven interview respondents

reported being confident in themselves including having a strong belief in their abilities as learners. These findings are not supported in the literature. There is a large body of literature that reports that incarcerated ABE and ASE students struggle with issues of low self-esteem related to previous school failure. (Gunn, 1999). The interview participants attributed a lot of their success to quality instruction and the characteristics of the teachers. Participants cited that a teacher who shows they care about the student and their future success can go a long way in promoting positive learning outcomes. Larsgaard, Kelso, and Schumacher (1998) discuss the characteristics of teachers that have been identified as proving quality instruction in correctional education classroom.

Summary of Supporting Research Question 2: Psycho-Social Barriers

Based upon the data reported for Category A psycho-social barriers, which “encompass negative evaluations of the usefulness, appropriateness and pleasurability of engaging in adult education” (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72), survey and interview responses do not reveal a significant influence of Category A barriers. The majority of participants reported a desire to attend educational classes upon release. The majority of participants reported benefits to participating in educational classes while incarcerated.

The data reported for survey and interview responses do not reveal a significant influence of Category B barriers which “include adults’ negative evaluations of themselves as learners” (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72). The majority of participants reported a positive evaluation of themselves as learners and expressed a belief in their learning abilities. While three participants expressed

both positive and negative perceptions of themselves, these participants were not deterred in their efforts to enroll in educational classes at the research site.

Supporting Research Question 3

The third supporting research question is, “What institutional barriers influence nonparticipation?” According to the definition of institutional barriers, participants identified several factors that influence their non-participation in education programming at this facility. Institutional barriers can be related to “instruction, practice, policies and requirements of the program” (Sticht, 1998, p. 20). Eighty percent reported not speaking to an education staff member or counselor regarding participation in any educational classes. The county jail education staff reported that they generally do not make direct contact in the unit with potential students. The process for inmates to enroll in educational classes is to submit a written request to the education section.

Counselors work directly in the housing units and have a greater opportunity than education staff members to discuss education opportunities with inmates, particularly with those inmates assigned to their caseload. It is not uncommon for counselors to recruit or enroll participants for education and treatment classes based upon information or feedback received during conversations and counseling sessions. Counselors generally recruit for the treatment and lifeskills classes. Some of the participants who were not eligible for the ABE or ASE program (e.g. high school or GED graduates), had participated

in lifeskills classes such as positive parenting, anger and stress management, and drug and alcohol classes. Some of the interview participants indicated enrollment or completion of the positive parenting, anger and stress management, and drug and alcohol classes.

Participation in educational classes at this facility is not mandatory. According to Warner (1998) the movement toward mandatory participation in prison education reveals the failure of correctional education programs. He states, "if the education offered is even partly adequate prisoners will opt for it in large numbers" (Warner, 1998, p.127). He refers to literature showing voluntary participation levels of 50% of the prison population in some countries and as high as high as 70% for programs with quality education programming (Warner, 1998). The education department was not able to provide data on the number of students in need of ABE/ASE services in their facility. "We have never really researched that. We know there are more out there than we are serving."

The funding level for jail facilities, particularly jail education funding, lags far behind that of state and federal funding (Rubin & Clark, 1983, Clark & Patrick, 1999, Vogel, 1997, Tewksbury & Vito, 1994). This county jail facility does not have the funding levels to mandate participation in educational classes. This facility is overcrowded and has been cited by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards to address the issue of overcrowding and lack of services to the jail population.

Kerle (1998) discusses the constant problem in recent decades of jail overcrowding, limited funding for jail services and rehabilitation programs, and

lack of or failure of meeting jail regulatory requirements. This facility has an inmate population that hovers around 2,200 people. The facility was built with a maximum capacity of 1,400 inmates. With overcrowding at this magnitude equitable access to jail services are strained. The education program serves fewer than 75 inmates at any given time. This equates to less approximately 3% of the average inmate population. It is estimated that 50-60% of incarcerated populations are in need educational services.

One interview participant stated he did not attend classes because of a lengthy waiting list. He recalled conversations with other inmates about the education program. He stated, 'They said, man, it ain't gonna get any better until they expand it...make it bigger you know. Make the rooms bigger so we can get more people in it.' According to the staff, the waiting list at the time of the study averaged three to four weeks. There are periods of time when the waiting list has been less or exceeded four weeks.

Interview participants repeatedly reported the amount of time that elapsed awaiting a response to written request. Some waited periods of 2 to 3 weeks to receive a response. Some submitted as many as three requests before receiving a response. One interview participant reported never receiving a response. He cited the lack of response as the reason he was not enrolled in classes. The complaint of disjointed communication patterns to potential and current students is reinforced by 80% of survey respondents who reported not speaking with an educational staff member or counselor about participation in education classes.

During the administration of the research questionnaire, I recall participants inquiring to me about participation in classes and the status of their submitted request. Some respondents wrote notes on the bottom of their questionnaire requesting information about participation in classes or reporting the number of written request submitted to the education department. The education staff member that normally responds to written request reported, “I shoot for about a week. But it could go a week to two weeks if I was really swamped. I tried to get responses back at the end of the week.”

Correctional educators must operate in multiple roles within the education program. Gunn (1999) discusses the lack of clerical help available to correctional educators and security concerns within the classroom. Werner (1990) offers another possible explanation for the identified barrier of slow or no communication with the education program. These multiple roles are in addition to their primary role as instructor.

The clerk role refers to the paperwork and other administrative responsibilities required of instructors. It is not uncommon for correctional educators to find themselves pulled between the responsibility of multiple roles and the impact heavy emphasis on the clerical-role has on instructional quality. “The problem with the clerical mask – if there is a problem – lies in the possibility that clerical activity may become an end in itself, one that drives a teacher’s efforts and a student’s progress rather than keeps track of them. For some of us record-keeping and paperwork may become our most important and self-justifying activity (Werner, 1990, p. 115-116).

The education staff at this county jail unit receives funding for three education coordinators. Based upon my experience as a previous instructor for this program and now as a research observer, the education department struggles to maintain a full staff of three persons. The education staff reported that the third full-time coordinator had been on extended family leave for over ten months. He eventually retired from his position. At the time that the research questionnaire was administered, a third education coordinator had just been hired and was in the process of completing a multi-day employee orientation.

Another participant complained that the class periods were only one and a half hours in length. The class periods are shortened by delays in student movement to class. Student movement is regulated by post officers. Education staff members acknowledged that these delays reduce class instruction time. Classes are one hour and forty-five minutes to two hours in length. When you factor in time loss due to delays in student movement actual instruction time dwindles to approximately an hour and fifteen minutes to an hour and a half. One staff member stated, "I have had students arrive an hour into the class." In an effort to address the problem, education staff members considered assigning all education students to the same housing unit. The goal was to synchronize student movement and allow classes to start on time. This strategy was unsuccessful due to students' reluctance to being transferred to a new unit. An education staff member shared with me an inmate request to enroll in education classes. It said, 'I like the unit I am staying in. If attending class will require me to move from my unit, then forget about it.'

Werner (1990) discusses another responsibility of correctional educators that affects the quality and quantity of classroom instruction; the role of guard. The reality for correctional educators is that they work with students who have the potential to cause harm to others or themselves. "Like our all-too eager embrace of the clerical [role] we run the danger of making classroom and personal security an end in itself (Werner, 1990, p. 116). The necessity of the guard role varies across jail facilities. Some programs have security guards posted within the classroom (Gunn, 1999). Others have a guard posted outside the classroom (Brand, 1999). This county jail facility has neither. The education staff at the county facility is responsible for facility and personal security. The responsibility for maintaining security can impede class instructional time. For example, if a student request to go to the restroom, the instructor must call central control to notify them of the student movement or obtain the assistance of another staff member to personally escort the student. In either case, classroom instruction is disrupted to deal with these types of issues.

The role of clerk and guard are split between the two department coordinators. The interesting observation is that one coordinator operates primarily in the clerical-role. The other coordinator operates primarily in the guard-role yet both must maintain their instructional responsibilities. The struggle to balance these roles was evident during the data collection process for this research project. The clerical-role education coordinator worked to accommodate my need for information, materials, and space around her preparation for class and actual teaching time. The guard-role coordinator worked to accommodate

the need for a secure location to meet with the inmates and escort me through the units when necessary. Again this was done around his instructional duties. This county jail facility has a problem with effectively managing the recruitment and retention aspect of their program, which involves communicating with potential and current students in a timely manner and limitations related to administrative policies and procedures.

Four interview participants reported submitting an education enrollment request after agreeing to participate in the research study. Two participants reported being involuntarily withdrawn from the education program. One participant reported attending class for about a week and mysteriously being dropped from the class call list; he had an outstanding request to the educational department on why he was no longer being called to participate in education. Another participant reported being withdrawn from classes for fighting in his unit.

Based upon my observations as the researcher, each unit receives a daily education roster of students to be released for class. When a student does not arrive for class, the instructors contact the guard on that unit and ask the reason for the inmate's absence. Inmates receive excused absences for court appearances and physical illness. If the physical illness continues for a period of time, the student will have to visit the medical unit in order to return to class. If a student is placed in disciplinary lockdown, he is automatically removed from education classes.

If a student simply refuses to attend class for that day, that is noted on their file as an unexcused absence. The education department will allow an

inmate two unexcused absences before the student is removed from the roster. This is done to make room for students on the waiting list. One participant stated that he did not like to attend morning classes. He requested permission to attend classes in the afternoon and was told that there were none available for his skill level. He stated, "I can't get up in the morning. They wake us up. We eat breakfast at 5:30 almost 6:00. Then we wake right back up at 7:00. Then they start calling people for school and I can't do it." The participant did not disclose the details of his participation or whether he attended all classes. The difficulty of managing the clerical-role may be the reason for this student being removed from the list. It is probably why he has not received any information for two weeks on why he was removed from the education roster.

One participant reported withdrawing from education classes after the first day of orientation, citing the hours of testing and boredom. Jail populations are noted for their transient nature (Tweksbury & Vito, 1994). According to Werner (1990), the transient or short-term nature of this population forces many education programs to adopt an open-entry, open-exit system. He suggests the use of an orientation model to manage the flow of student entry into the classroom. Kuster (1998) discusses a prison program that used orientation as an important first step to acclimate students to the program. The clerical-role education coordinator described the orientation process.

It is broken down into four sections. The first two modules are taught day 1 and the second two modules are done day 2. Part 1 is filling out all of the paperwork and letting them know about some of the educational

opportunities available in our area upon release. Part 2 would be administering the diagnostic test. It is three parts timed and takes approximately 45 minutes. [The rest] is just going through some group exercises on learning styles and stress management.

The students self-score the test and receive test-taking tips to prepare them for the full test battery administered on the second day of orientation. Montross & Montross (1997) describe the challenge of working with incarcerated students who focus on immediate gratification of their needs. "It is uncertain whether most inmates' pursuit of and adherence to immediate gratification is a value or a personality trait, but, nonetheless, you will find it common among your students" (Werner, 1990, p.134). This participant exhibited that desire for immediacy when he stated, "I just need to get my GED." He saw completion of the orientation as an obstacle to his immediate desire for his GED. The participant may have been overwhelmed by the time nature of the diagnostic test and the self-scoring process. Seeing the answers he missed and hearing that he will be taking a longer test on tomorrow may have been his biggest deterrent to completing the orientation. However, another interview participant had recently completed the orientation process yet had not begun attending classes. He expressed a sense of accomplishment in finishing the orientation and regretted he did not bring his certificate of completion to me.

One participant reported not attending because of a concern with his ability to complete the written request form. It is not uncommon for low literate students to experience frustration trying to enroll in education classes. "Most

learners lacked formal education and were stymied by the forms they were required to fill out (Gunn, 1999, p. 76). A study that reviewed 24 ESL and ABE prison education classes revealed that 46% of the learners needed writing assistance from their peers. I observed this need for writing assistance when administering the research questionnaire to potential participants. I personally assisted several participants with completing the survey questionnaire. This is also consistent with the literature regarding the functional literacy level of most inmates. The National Adult Literacy Survey found that 7 out of 10 inmates possess minimal writing skills and are not able to write a letter requesting information or understand a bus schedule (National Center for Education Statistics, 1994).

Two participants reported their concerns with instructional quality and the classroom environment as former students in the education program. The research literature discusses the problem that correctional education programs face in finding qualified teachers to address the diverse learning needs of students (Ashcroft, Price & Sweeney, 1998; Gunn, 1999; Werner, 1990). There is a shortage of teachers trained to deal with students with learning disabilities and a need for instructor training in addressing multi-level classrooms (Ashcroft et.al; Gunn, 1999).

One participant discussed a strong desire for individualized instruction. According to Hayball (1973), individualized instruction in corrections allows programs to provide contextualized learning opportunities based on the skill level of each student. However, there is a concern that an over emphasis on

individualized instruction does not allow students to see their peers as resources. Thus, Werner (1990) states, “because of student-centered” learning, students in many prison classrooms never discuss ideas or information on a class-wide basis and do not recognize discussion as an integral part of the learning process” (Werner, 1990, p. 132).

Participants repeatedly identified active learning strategies as a learning preference in the ideal correctional education classroom. One participant reported a preference for both participatory learning activities and individualized attention to make sure that the student had mastered the learning objectives. He stated,

A lot of participation...a lot of that. A teacher that teaches each student individually from the whole class. What I mean by that is, you lean over the student's shoulder and you see what he is doing. You watch what he is doing and if he is not doing it right, you correct it. You stop him right there and don't let him go any further in thinking he is doing this right and he is not.

Warner (1999) challenges correctional education programs to provide incarcerated students with a level of teaching that is equal to or exceeds the level of education they can receive outside of prison walls.

One participant was frustrated with the lack of direct instruction he received in the classroom and he had to resort to working with another student on assignments. While this student was frustrated with the setting, the research literature supports the use of peer tutoring. Peer tutoring provides an opportunity

for students to interact and has the potential to increase student self-esteem and see the importance of helping others (Werner 1990). Correctional educators must be rooted in the principles of adult learning and be trained on effective use of appropriate adult instruction techniques in the classroom. Adult learning theory discusses the importance of teachers using facilitative skills and not relying heavily on direct instruction. Instructors must be clear in their direction and expectations and ensure that that students understand why an instructor is using facilitative skills (Werner, 1990; Kuster, 1998). Adult education students must be included in the planning and implementation of their instruction (Warner, 1990; Fox 1998).

Three participants discussed the noise level of the prison learning environment. This concern about the noise level in prisons is supported in the literature. "Prisons are notoriously noisy" (Boshier, 1982). However, Fox (1998) discusses the importance of correctional educators establishing a learning environment that is characterized by comfort and trust. The noise level of the classroom is indeed an issue of comfort in learning. Anderson and Anderson (1996) discuss the importance of making the correctional education environment conducive to learning. Instructors have the challenge of managing the classroom environment while maintaining an inclusive and non-restrictive learning environment (Kuster, 1998).

Summary of Supporting Research Question 3: Institutional Barriers

The data reported by survey and interview responses reveal a strong influence of institutional barriers to participation. Survey respondents reported the

lack of a comprehensive recruitment program toward potential students. Four interview participants reported that as much as 3 weeks elapsed without receiving a response to written request to enroll in educational classes. One participant reported never receiving a response. While one participant did not submit a response due to limited reading and writing skills. Three former participants in educational classes at the research site report incidences of poor instructional quality and lack of classroom management.

Supporting Research Question 4

The fourth supporting research question is, “What informational barriers influence non-participation?” Informational barriers “pertain to a lack of information about adult education offerings and [are] said to be most severe for disadvantaged adults (Beder, 1991, p. 71). The data reported by study participants shows a strong presence of informational barriers. Participants were asked to identify the types of educational classes offered in this facility.

The county jail facility offers eight different classes to inmates. Thirty-eight percent of participants were not able to identify any of the educational classes offered in this facility, 23% were only able to identify one class, 10% were able to identify two classes, and 25% were able to identify three classes offered. The most commonly identified classes were GED, computer classes and parenting. Survey respondents also identified classes that are not currently offered in this facility (e.g. lifeskills, high school diploma, horticulture, and electronic soldering).

When asked how they learned about the educational classes offered in this facility, the majority of participants reported information sources other than a

education coordinator, counselor, or correctional officer. Participants in the study obtained the bulk of their information regarding educational programs and procedures by talking to another inmate in the facility. This lack of access to information is consistent with the findings of the institutional barriers in that 80% of participants have not spoken with an education staff member or counselor about participation in educational classes.

The jail offers inmates the incentive of a contact visit for participating in education classes. According to the education staff member, participation in education is not the only requirement. Education students have to maintain good disciplinary standing with the facility, been in the facility for a certain length of time, and maintain a good disciplinary standing with the education program. Due to the short incarceration periods in county jails, perhaps most inmates won't meet the length of stay requirement to earn the incentive. It appears that the possibility of earning this incentive was not enough to influence knowledge about the types of classes offered in this facility. The reward of a contact visit was mentioned by two interview participants. If participants are not made aware of the educational classes offered in the facility, there is no way they can make a decision to enroll in classes regardless if the decision is for intrinsic or extrinsic reasons. The literature identifies the lack of information about programs as a problem that must be addressed (Beder, 1991; McGivney, 1999; Merriam & Cafferella 1999). McGivney (1999) supports the findings that men report not having information about educational programs.

Interview participants discussed their frustration with the length of time that elapsed between submitting a written request for information on educational classes and receiving a response. The disjointed communication pattern between the education programs and potential students is contrary to the approach recommended in the research literature. McGivney (1999) states that programs that serve young male participants should make follow-up contact with potential students once an interest has been shown. "One needs to engage them, there and then, on the spot" (McGivney, 1999, p. 90).

Summary of Supporting Research Question 4: Informational Barriers

Based upon the data from survey and follow-up interview data, informational barriers has a strong influence on nonparticipation in educational classes at the research site. The data revealed that the majority of participants did not have accurate or sufficient information on the educational classes offered at the research site. The data also revealed that the source for information regarding educational classes or enrollment procedures came from another inmate rather than from an educational staff person or other jail employee

Other Findings

The data were analyzed using categorical aggregation. Two emerging themes of pursuit of informal learning and gender issues do not relate directly to the four supporting research questions but because of their prominence in the data warrant inclusion in the discussion of the research findings. The other emerging themes such as sports participation as motivation, early age substance abuse, family support, education and power, peer influences, and learning

preferences received limited mention across participants to warrant inclusion in the discussion of the research findings.

Informal Learning

Participants report engaging in informal learning when not enrolled in correctional education classes. Participants reported a preference for fiction and non-fiction titles and National Geographic. This reading preference is supported in the research literature (Gunn, 1999, Knudsen, 2000). Informal learning is also supported in the research literature. Merriam and Cafferella (1999) discuss the importance of acknowledging all the ways that adults go about learning. Sua's (1990) research reveals benefits in the pursuit of independent learning activities for incarcerated populations.

Participants reported difficulty in obtaining quality reading and reference materials such as full size dictionaries. This county jail facility does not have an on-site library for inmates. Inmates report trading books with other readers in their unit, sharing one daily newspaper with 96 people and vandalizing books to obtain scratch paper. The literature supports the reality of poor funding levels of jails to support these types of learning activities (Rubin and House, 1983; Tewksbury & Vito, 1994,). There is a large body of research that discusses the benefits of providing reading materials to incarcerated populations (Hemp, 1996; Lehman, 2000, Rubin & House, 1983; Schneider, 1996).

Gender Preferences

Participants reported gender preferences for learning in the adult education classroom when providing feedback on their perceptions of the qualities or characteristics of an effective or an ineffective instructor. Four participants used female pronoun references, two participants used both female and male pronouns and one participant used male pronouns. In addition, one participant expressed a strong dislike for gay male instructors.

The research literature discusses the preference of incarcerated males for female instructors. Female instructors tend to have larger classes in male facilities, and fewer women work in prison settings during their middle career years (Gunn, 1999; Larsgaard, Kelso & Schumacher, 1998). Previous learning experiences may influence future learning experiences and preferences. The participant who used only male pronoun references recalled a very positive learning experience with a male instructor in a state prison. The four participants who used female pronouns grew up in learning contexts where the majority of teachers were female. When recalling positive learning experiences in elementary, middle, and high school, all participants made reference to a female teacher.

The homophobia expressed by one participant is not necessarily supported in the research literature. According to the literature, black males are more tolerant of gay male relationships in prison settings than other cultural groups (Hensley, 2000). Homophobia tends to rank higher in younger offenders and person who have been incarcerated for longer periods of time (Van De Ven, 1995). The participant who expressed a strong dislike for gay male instructors

was 19 at the time of his first incarceration, has been incarcerated for almost two years, and faces an additional six years of incarceration in a state prison. His demographic profile is consistent with the research literature as indicated by my study (Hensley, 2000).

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations to the study that decrease its generalizability to the larger population of incarcerated African-American males. The study had a limited sample size of African-American males who were not participating in educational classes. Due to the limitations in the data collection methods allowed by the county jail facility, only 14 participants constituted the target population. Jail populations are known for the short-term nature of their inmates. After processing the initial questionnaire and determining which participants were eligible for the interview portion of the study, six of the fourteen participants had been released or transferred. After beginning interviews with two of the remaining nine participants, it was discovered that they actually were not a part of the target population and their data was disqualified for inclusion in the results.

Secondly, it became apparent after beginning the interviews that the analytical framework selected for this study did not transfer neatly to incarcerated populations. This limited transferability made it difficult to answer the first research question on situational barriers. For example, incarcerated populations do not have concerns about child care, transportation to class. The possibility of work schedule conflicts is a possibility for incarcerated populations. However, county jail facilities do not offer many work assignments.

Another limitation to the study was inability to conduct thorough observations of the instructional environment. The data were gathered in the holiday months of November and December. The researcher was forced to adjust the data collection schedule to account for holiday shut down periods. Interviews had to be scheduled around mealtimes, official population counts, and recreation periods. Sometimes I found myself with less than a two-hour window to conduct an interview. I decided to make the interviews a priority due to the concern that eligible interview participants would be released or transferred.

The third major limitation is that the researcher is a former employee of the research site. This prior knowledge sometimes impeded my ability to gather data in an objective rather than a subjective manner. Further, the interview data was taped and subsequently transcribed. Due to the relative inexperience of the researcher and the participant's willingness to share in conversation, this produced interview tapes that sometimes exceeded two hours. The researcher allocated a month to transcribe the interview tapes. The actual process took nearly six months. The transcription was a very tedious process. Additional breaks in transcribing the interview tapes had to be taken due to a concern about possible carpal tunnel related injuries related to typing for extending periods of time.

Implications for Practice

The implications for practice will be discussed in relation to the supporting research questions and other findings from the research data. The implications will be discussed in relationship to their overall relationship to nonparticipation.

Relating to Situational Barriers

Based upon the finding that participants reported concern regarding pending litigation as the reason for not enrolling in educational classes shortly after arriving in the facility, it is recommended that correctional education programs use the information regarding situational influences on nonparticipation for recruitment and retention purposes. Counselors should be made aware of these situational barriers and be prepared to support students who are experiencing stress over these issues after arrival. If a student enrolls in a program immediately upon arrival and is frequently absent from the classroom environment, the education program might refer that student to a counselor to encourage him to continue his participation. Werner (1990) discusses that teaching in a correctional setting requires an educator to show interest and concern about a student's situation yet encourage him in achievement of their goals.

Relating to Psycho-social Barriers

The first step to address the influence of psycho-social barriers is to increase participation in education classes. Participation in education provides students an opportunity to experience successful learning situations to counter previously negative learning experiences that can diminish self-esteem. Participation in education has a positive impact on student self esteem (Yarborough, 1982; Warner, 1998). Incarcerated adult students report attending class to help with future success upon release. Therefore, it is important that students see the relevance of learning activities to achievement of goals.

Students will then attribute value to learning. The research literature demonstrates that participation in education programs has a positive influence on attitudes and value toward education (Warner, 1998). Incarcerated adult students should have an opportunity for success soon after enrolling in formal learning situations.

Relating to Institutional Barriers

Based upon the findings that the education program does not have the financial resources to adequately serve more students, it is recommended that this jail facility pursue external grant funding to expand program services to the population. Increased funding would allow the education program to expand its teaching staff to make better use of underutilized space such as the two large classrooms adjacent to the main classroom. Additional funding would allow the education program to make more books and material available to students. Another option, to expand the education departments capacity to serve more students, would be to apply for Americorp/Literacy Corps grant funding. This program would provide you with paid staff to teach students and provide clerical support.

Based upon the finding that the education department makes minimal use of community volunteers, it is recommended that the education department revitalize its community volunteer program to increase the availability of individualized instruction for those who desire additional learning assistance. Potential sources for the community volunteer program might be colleges, universities, and religious organizations.

Based upon the finding of incidences of poor instructional quality and classroom management, it is recommended that instructional staff commit to ongoing professional development particularly as it relates to working in a correctional setting. Correctional educators often work in isolation and do not have an opportunity to pursue professional development opportunities designed specifically for those working with incarcerated populations (Werner, 1990). Professional development is an allowable expense with many external funding sources. It is important for the instructional staff to increase their knowledge of adult learning principles in the classroom. Students should be allowed input in shaping the learning objectives. It is recommended that education program staff visit other jails that are successful in serving the growing jail populations (Werner, 1990). Instructional staff should stay up to date with the research literature on working with incarcerated populations.

Based upon the finding that diagnostic testing may pose a deterrent to enrollment in educational classes, it is recommended that participants be informed in advance of the format or agenda for the orientation particularly about the need for diagnostic testing. The orientation process might be modified to meet the needs of those students who suffer from test anxiety. The education program might consider reducing the number of full battery sections administered to students.

Relating to Informational Barriers

Based upon the finding that the education department does not have a comprehensive and consistent system in place to inform potential students about

the program, it is recommended that this county jail facility develop an integrated approach with jail administration and other rehabilitation programs to communicate the learning opportunities available in the facility. This could be in the form of regularly scheduled information sessions or a formal intake process specifically related to educational opportunities upon arrival to the facility. A plan for dissemination is not enough. It needs to involve a follow-up system to ensure that information has been received by the target audience (Cross, 1981).

Information also needs to be provided on learning opportunities available upon release from the facility. The research literature states that males obtain most of their information about learning opportunities from an employer (McGivney, 1999). Since most ex-offenders do not have job contacts upon release, it is important to provide with information on the learning opportunities available in their local community (McGivney, 1999).

Based upon findings that students often experience relatively long waits before being called for participation, it is recommended that this facility set up a system to respond to written request within a reasonable time frame. Interested students should be approached as soon as possible after they make contact with the education program (McGivney, 1999). If necessary, it is recommended to use community volunteers or consider establishing one or two trusty positions that support inquiries for information. Trustees have the freedom to move around within the facility. They can go into a unit and answer questions that inmates may have about the program. A community volunteer may face a harder time getting clearance to move about the facility.

Based upon the finding that written material about education programs was not readily available to students, it is recommended that posters and flyers with vibrant color and stylish design be displayed in high traffic areas in every housing unit. Another suggestion is to use the closed-circuit television system to communicate program offerings through out the complex. The education program could develop mini-commercials that can be played through the system.

Relating to Other Findings

Based upon the finding that gender preferences have the potential to influence enrollment and persistence in educational classes, it is recommended that the education program add curriculum on diversity and tolerance. Van De Ven (1995) reports that these types of education programs have been successful in reducing homophobic attitudes with incarcerated populations. The issue of homophobia can be addressed through sex education classes and be effective in reducing homophobic attitudes (Serdahely & Ziemba, 1984).

Based upon the finding that participants do not have ready access to reading materials within their housing unit, it is recommended that the educational program provide its incarcerated population with quality reading and reference materials through an on-site library. The library should be a place that inmates can come to physically to remove themselves from the environment of their cell unit. It is recommended that the library be staffed with a person who can make suggestions on reading material to facility patrons. The library could be staffed with inmate trustees who work under the supervision of a clerk or community volunteer. The institution should increase the availability of reading

material in the unit and impose disciplinary infractions on those who vandalize reading materials. If vandalism is related to a need for writing paper, the education program should make sufficient scratch writing paper available in the units. Each unit should have 5 to 10 hardback, full-size dictionaries available in each cell unit. The research literature is clear that the availability of informal learning opportunities has a positive impact on academic achievement and minimizes disciplinary cases (Hayball, 1973, Schneider, 1996).

Recommendation for Future Research

Due to the small sample size for the research study, it is recommended that this study be replicated with a larger sample of incarcerated African-American males in jails and state and federal institutions. A research study that looks at fewer barriers or only one barrier can provide more detailed information of its influence on nonparticipation (Yarborough, 1982). Based upon the finding that homophobia may influence non-participation or persistence in educational classes, it is recommended that research be done on the influence of homophobia on nonparticipation. Programs should address the issue of nonparticipation through analytical framework that matches the cultural background of the target population.

Conclusions

According to the analytical framework for this exploratory case study, incarcerated African-American male participation in ABE or ASE programs is influenced by situational, psycho-social, institutional, and informational barriers. The most significant influences can be seen through informational and

institutional barriers. Incarcerated African-American males need to be provided with information on learning opportunities available to them on a regular basis. Information on educational opportunities should also be made available upon release. Correctional education administrators should modify their program format to offer classes at a variety of times to accommodate different learning styles. Jail programs are in a constant struggle to obtain additional funding to expand program services. Jails should look to external funding sources to increase program services to inmates, particularly incarcerated African-American males.

Summary

This exploratory qualitative case study was conducted to answer the following central research question, "What factors influence non-participation of incarcerated African-American males in ABE or ASE programs?" The central research question was answered using four supporting research questions. The purpose of the study was to investigate the reasons incarcerated African-American male inmates have lower levels of participation in educational classes than other incarcerated populations. This chapter provided a discussion of the results based upon the research literature.

The data analysis revealed that situational and psycho-social barriers are not a significant influence on research participant's decision not to enroll in education classes. Regarding situational barriers, survey and interview responses revealed situational barriers indigenous to an incarcerated population. The situational barriers reported by the study population were short term and did

not impede long-term plans for participation in education classes. Regarding psycho-social barriers, the research participants reported positive outcomes associated with participation in education classes and a belief in their abilities to learn.

The data analysis revealed a greater influence on non-participation for institutional and informational barriers. Regarding institutional barriers, participants reported the absence of a comprehensive program to recruit inmates to participate in educational classes. Previous participants in educational classes reported incidences of poor instruction and classroom management by education staff members. Regarding informational barriers, the majority of participants were only able to report two or fewer of the seven educational classes offered by the research site. The majority of participants reported learning about educational classes and enrollment procedures from another inmate, word of mouth, or hearsay. Regarding other findings, research participants reported engaging in informal learning activities such as reading and journal writing when not enrolled in educational classes and expressed gender preferences when learning in a formal classroom setting.

This chapter includes several implications for practice as it relates to the research findings. Based upon the finding of limited resources to expand the availability of classes, it is recommended that the research seek external funding or partnerships with adult education cooperatives, community college or independent school district. Based upon the finding of student complaints regarding instructional quality, it is recommended that all instruction be based

upon adult learning theory and that all instructional staff commit to on-going professional development relevant to a correctional setting. Based upon the finding that participants received limited information about education class, it is recommended that the research site develop a comprehensive system to communicate information to potential students.

This chapter includes recommendations for future research. It is recommended that this study be replicated with a larger sample population of incarcerated African-American male inmates. It is recommended that this study be replicated with incarcerated African-American males in prison environments.

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**Informed Consent Form
Appendix A**

INFORMED CONSENT/CONSENT TO RELEASE INFORMATION FOR

RESEARCH (NOTE: When a language and/or literacy problem may prevent an individual subject from understanding the informed consent statement, the informed consent statement is to be read and explained to the subject by the individual (s) requesting the consent.

1. The project director for this study is Dr. Emily Miller Payne, Associate Professor of Educational Administration and Psychological Services at Southwest Texas State University. The researcher is Tamara D. Thornton with the Developmental and Adult Education Program at Southwest Texas State University.
2. The title of the research study is "Factors associated inmate nonparticipation in correctional education programs."
3. The objective of the study is to survey and interview inmates in order to determine the factors associated with nonparticipation and non-participation in correctional education programs.
4. The study has a tentative start date of July 15, 2000, and a tentative ending date of August 31, 2000.
5. The results of the study will be available to international, federal, state, and local correctional education programs.
6. The results of this study will provide correctional education programs with information that may lead to an increase in inmate participation and persistence in correctional education programs and thereby increase the likelihood of successful societal reintegration by former inmates upon release.
7. This is a non-medical study. Therefore, participants can expect no physical discomfort by participating in this study.

I understand that my participation is completely voluntary.

I understand that there is no penalty or prejudice of any kind for withdrawing from or not participating in the study.

I understand that my participation or non-participation in this research project will not affect my release or parole eligibility.

I understand that if I decide to end participation in the study, I will be returned to my regular assignment as soon as practical.

I understand that my participation in this study will involve answering initial survey questions.

I understand that I will be asked a variety of questions in an interview format.

I grant permission for the project researcher to audio-tape all interviews with me. I understand that I will not be identified by name in any of the audio-tapes.

I understand that all information obtained will be used for research purposes only and handled in the strictest of confidence, so that only the researcher will have access to information that is traceable to me. The only exception to the guarantee of confidentiality is specific information about the intent to commit a future crime or harm myself or someone else. My participation will not be individually identifiable in any reports.

By signing below, I understand all of the above statements regarding the study entitled "Factors influencing inmate participation in correctional education programs" as explained above, and I consent to participate in the above mentioned study.

Please Print-Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Witness

Date

Custody Status:

☐ Probation
☐ Parole
☐ City Sentence
☐ State Jail Sentence
☐ Other

Appendix B
Booking# _____

Unit # _____
Survey Questions

1. What is your gender? _____ Male _____ Female

2. What is your age? _____

3. What is your ethnicity?

☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
☐ Black or African American
☐ Hispanic
☐ Native American
☐ White (not of Hispanic origin)
☐ Other (including multi-racial)

4. What is your highest grade level completed? _____

5. Do you have a high school diploma or GED? _____ Yes _____ No

6. Have you taken college classes? _____ Yes _____ No

 7. What is your **CURRENT** marital status?

☐ Married
☐ Common law marriage
☐ Never married
☐ Separated
☐ Divorced
☐ Widowed

8. If married, what is the highest level of education of your spouse?

☐ less than high school
☐ high school or GED
☐ some college
☐ college degree
☐ other (please specify) _____

9. Did your mother complete high school? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

10. Did your father complete high school? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

11. Do you have children? _____ Yes _____ No

If **yes**, indicate the number of children in **EACH** age group

_____ 0-2
 _____ 3-5
 _____ 6-8
 _____ 9-12
 _____ 13-15
 _____ 15-18
 _____ over 18

12. How long have you been incarcerated in Travis County Correctional Complex?

_____ months _____ weeks _____ days

13. How much longer do you expect to be incarcerated in Travis County Correctional Complex?

_____ Less than one week
 _____ Less than 2 weeks
 _____ One month
 _____ Two months
 _____ 3 months or more

14. Is this your first time being incarcerated? _____ Yes _____ No

15. If this is **NOT** your first time being incarcerated, how many times have you been incarcerated? _____.

16. If this is **NOT** your first time being incarcerated, what was your age during your first incarceration? _____.

17. Which category best describes the type of activity authorities say led to your **CURRENT** incarceration?

_____ Nonviolent drug related
 _____ Nonviolent property related
 _____ Nonviolent property AND drug
 _____ Violent drug related
 _____ Violent property related
 _____ Violent property AND drug related
 _____ Other (please specify) _____

18. If this is **NOT** your first time being incarcerated, which category best describes the activity authorities say led to your **PREVIOUS** incarcerations?

- ☐ Nonviolent drug related
- ☐ Nonviolent property related
- ☐ Nonviolent property AND drug related
- ☐ Violent drug related
- ☐ Violent property related
- ☐ Violent property AND drug related
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

19. If this is **NOT** your first incarceration, what type of educational programs have you participated in while incarcerated in other correctional facilities at an earlier time?

- ☐ Basic education/literacy
- ☐ GED
- ☐ Vocational training (i.e. computers, computer manufacturing)
- ☐ Lifeskills
- ☐ College
- ☐ Other _____

20. If this is **NOT** your first incarceration, have you ever had to pay for educational classes while incarcerated?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, how much _____

21. List the types of educational programs offered by Travis County Correctional Complex.

22. How did you learn about the educational programs offered in Travis County Correctional Complex?

23. Has an educational staff member or counselor spoken with you about participating in any of the educational programs offered in Travis County Correctional Complex?

_____ Yes _____ No

24. Are you currently participating in educational classes Travis County?

_____ Yes _____ No

25. What type of educational programs have you participated in while incarcerated in Travis County Correctional Complex?

_____ Basic education/literacy

_____ GED

_____ Vocational training (i.e., computers, computer manufacturing

_____ Lifeskills

_____ College

_____ Not Applicable

26. Do you plan to enroll in an educational program upon release? _____ Yes

_____ No _____ Not Sure

27. If so, what type of program do you plan to enroll in upon release?

_____ Literacy

_____ GED

_____ Vocational/job training

_____ College

_____ Other _____

28. Are you involved in other rehabilitation/treatment programs in Travis County Correctional Complex?

_____ Yes _____ No If yes, what program?

29. Are you currently a trusty Travis County Correctional Complex? _____ Yes

_____ No

30. Does your trusty status make it difficult to participate in correctional education classes? _____ Yes _____ No If yes, explain how.

Appendix C

Non-Participant Interview Questions

Informational Barrier Questions

1. What are the educational programs offered in this facility? How did you learn about the educational programs offered in this facility?
2. Have you discussed or been approached by an educational staff member or counselor about participating in educational programs in this facility?
3. Have you received any written materials from an education staff member or counselor about the educational programs offered in this facility?

Psychosocial Barrier Questions

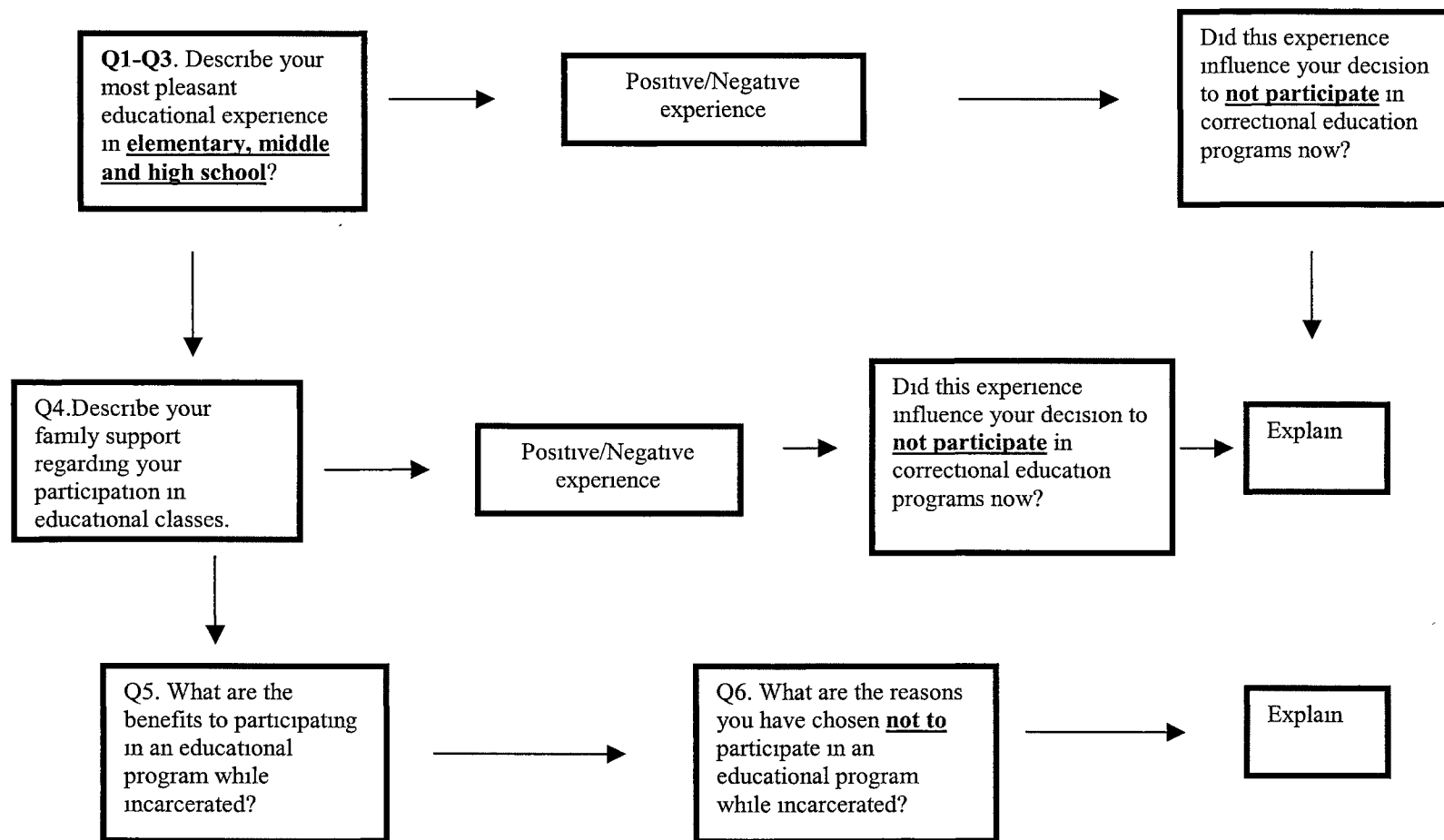
4. How would you describe yourself as a learner?
5. Describe your most pleasant educational experience in elementary school.
6. Describe your most pleasant educational experience in middle school (junior high).
7. Describe your most pleasant educational experience in high school.
8. Describe your family support regarding your participation in educational classes.
9. Describe other inmates' attitudes towards participation in educational programs here.
10. What are the benefits associated with participation in educational programs while incarcerated?
11. What are the reasons you have chosen not to participate in educational programs while incarcerated?

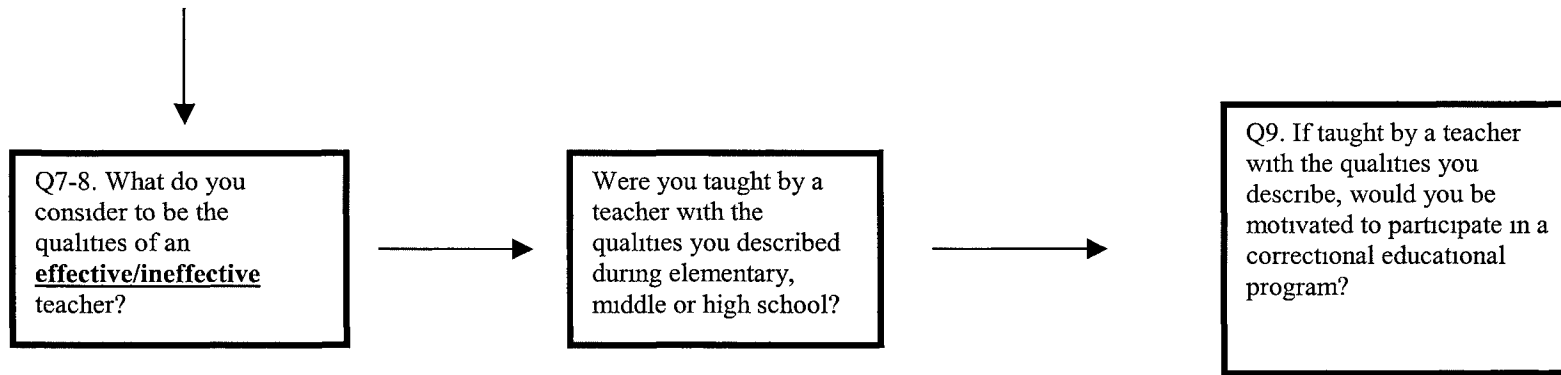
Institutional Barrier Questions

12. What do you consider to be the qualities of an ineffective teacher?
13. What do you consider to be the qualities of an effective teacher?
14. If taught by a teacher with either set of qualities described above, would you be motivated to participate in an educational program while incarcerated?

15. Describe the perfect correctional education program.
16. If this facility offered the perfect program you just described would you be motivated to attend classes while incarcerated?

**Non-Participant Interview Guide
Appendix D**





Appendix E

MATRIX FOR SURVEY QUESTIONS			
RESEARCH QUESTION			
What are the factors that influence nonparticipation of African-American male inmates in ABE or ASE programs?			
Barriers to Participation in Adult Education Programs	SUPPORTING RESEARCH QUESTIONS	SURVEY QUESTIONS Appendix B	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS Appendix C
<p>"Situational barriers are those arising from one's situation in life at a given time (Cross, 1981, p. 98) or "those more or less external to the individual or at least beyond the individuals control (Beder, 1991, p. 68)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of time ▪ Employment conflicts ▪ Lack of money" Cross, 1981, p. 98) 	What are the situational barriers that influence nonparticipation?	12 13 20 28 29 30	11
<p>"Psychosocial barriers derive from the values and attitudes adults hold for adult education. Category A: encompasses negative evaluations of the usefulness, appropriateness and pleasurability of engaging in adult education. Category B. includes adults negative evaluations of themselves as learners" (Beder, 1991, p. 71-72).</p>	What are the psychosocial barriers that influence nonparticipation?	8 9 10 19 26 27	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
<p>"Institutional barriers exclude or discourage participation in educational activities (Cross, 1981, p. 98). They involve instruction, practice, policies and requirements of the program (Sticht, 1998, p. 20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustrated/discouraged about school environment • School not relevant for needs (Cross, 1981, p. 98) • Class schedule times • Ineffective course instruction" (Sticht, 1998, p. 20) 	What are the institutional barriers that influence nonparticipation?	19 23 25	11 12 13 14 15 16
<p>"Informational barriers pertain to a lack of information about adult education offerings and said to be most severe for disadvantaged adults" (Beder, 1991, p. 71)</p>	What are the informational barriers that influence nonparticipation?	21 22	1 2 3 11

Appendix F

Data Analysis Color Code

RQ 1	Situational	Red
RQ2A	Psycho-social Category A	Green
RQ2B	Psycho-social Category B	Yellow
RQ3	Institutional	Blue
RQ4	Informational	Purple
SC1	Family Support	Brown
SC2	Substance Abuse	Pink
SC3	Informal Learning	Orange
SC4	Perceptions of education and power	Light Blue
SC5	Peer Influences	Lime green
SC6	Learning preferences	Fuschia

RQ= Research Question

SC= Supplemental Category

VITA

Tamara Thornton Clunis was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. She graduated from the University of Texas in Austin with a B.A. degree in 1992. She was an adult education practitioner for over 5 years. She has taught in a correctional facility and a family literacy program. She was a lecturer in the Educational Administration and Psychological Services Department in the College of Education at Southwest Texas State University. She teaches developmental reading as an adjunct faculty member at Austin Community College. She is director of a state leadership grant at Southwest Texas State University that has developed a certification model for adult education practitioners in Texas. She resides in Austin, Texas with her husband.