# Chapter 23
# Prison Education for Industrialisation:
## Killing Two Birds With a Single Stone

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## ABSTRACT

*This qualitative study explores how prison education can provide necessary work skills to prisoners to enable them to become employable, and hence reduce recidivism rates. The chapter addresses two research questions: What is the link between prison education and industrialisation? and How relevant is prison education in reducing recidivism among the Tanzanian prisoners? The data were collected through documentary analysis. The findings suggest that there is a close relationship between prison education and industrialization. The chapter also suggests that prison education is a relevant approach in reducing recidivism rates among prisoners. This chapter argues that providing prisoners with relevant educational programmes might equip them with proper skills to become productive in society, and hence become employable after their release. Thus, giving prisoners a chance to education is like killing two birds with a single stone – developing a skilled labour force for industrial development and reducing recidivism rates.*

## INTRODUCTION

In legal terms, crimes are regarded as acts which are forbidden by law; hence a person can be imprisoned and/or fined for that act (Schiller, Black, & Murphy, 2012). Prisons (worldwide) have the aim to reduce crime. However, Recidivism remains the main challenge facing prison systems (worldwide). *Recidivism*, is a "subsequent offending by a person who has been convicted of a prior offence" (Carcach & Leverett, 1999, p. 2).

Criminology scholars have developed various theories which explain causes of crime and recidivism. The biological, psychological, and sociological perspectives have been the most quoted theories which

describe causes of crime (Siegel, 2010, 2012). Since this is not a criminology chapter, it will explain only the socioeconomic causes of crime because they are more relevant to this project. This study explores prison education, and success in education is partly explained by the socioeconomic status among people. Also, most scholars (Thornberry & Farnworth, 1982; Weatherburn, 2001; Webster & Kingston, 2014) suggested that 'low socioeconomic status' was greatly associated with criminality.

Studies suggest that *low socio-economic* status of individuals is a leading cause of many reported crimes. Scholars link criminal behaviours with ethnicity, language, and social class (education and socioeconomic levels). It is assumed that social disparities among people contribute to criminal behaviours (Siegel, 2010, 2012; Weatherburn, 2001; Zahn, 1997). According to Msoroka (2018), "the likelihood of offending becomes higher when individuals are poor and feel that they have nothing to lose, especially the jobless and lowly educated individuals" (p. 41). Rivera (1995) maintains that "crime stems not only from individual failures, but also from social factors: a combination of poverty, economic underdevelopment, displaced unskilled workers, discrimination, and a host of other factors which cause despair and learned helplessness" (p. 159). Hence, it is argued here that socio-economic factors have great contribution in one's offending behaviour.

In most countries, government policies propose severe penalties with an assumption that it may help to reduce crime and recidivism (O'Connor, 2017; Whitaker, 2016). Consequently, longer sentences are found to be common in many countries as an effort to discourage crime (Faulkner, 2010; Nyoka, 2013). For instance, out of 16,503 convicted Tanzanian adult offenders, 9,632 have served to more than four years (The United Republic of Tanzania, 2017). However, studies suggest that longer sentences and hard labour in prisons are not the perfect tools to address criminality behaviour. Studies suggest that first-time offenders may meet with experienced offenders in prisons, who may teach them effective offending techniques and become more active when released (Cullen, Jonson, & Nagin, 2011). As stated earlier, most prisoners have low/no education and backgrounds of unemployment (Klein, Tolbert, Bugarin, Cataldi, & Tauschek, 2004; The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2012; The United Republic of Tanzania, 2014). Thus, long-term training from more experienced offenders may be used by first-time offenders as an opportunity to become professional offenders, hence reducing the possiblity of prisoner's rehabilitation.

Literature suggests that the above mentioned conditions (poor education and unemployment) are among the main sources of crime and recidivism. When ex-prisoners "return to their original offending environment, they are subjected to the same offending conditions, for instance, being jobless; consequently, they are more likely to end up in reoffending" (Msoroka, 2018, p. 44). The failure of punitive view of imprisonment is manifested by high recidivism rates in most countries. For instance, Langan and Levin (2002) have reported a recidivism rate of 67.5% in the USA. In Tanzania, there is no proper study that addressed the issue of recidivism, however, 47% is the most quoted reoffending rates in the country (Inmate Rehabilitation and Welfare Services Tanzania, 2014).

Studies hold that Tanzanian ex-prisoners are not different when it comes to unemployment; they are reported to face difficulties in obtaining legitimate employment (Shadrack, 2019). From this point of view, one can argue that prisons have failed to address crime and recidivism. Hence, the current paper argues, while most prisoners have low education with no work skills (UNESCO, 2007), the prison education can equip them with necessary skills for industrialisation, and hence, "break the offending cycle" (Msoroka, 2018, p. 42). It is believed that prison education can improve prisoner's opportunity for post-release employment (Callan & Gardner, 2007; Graffam & Hardcastle, 2007). Consequently, it can be a contributing factor to poverty reduction (Preece, 2006; Van der Veen & Preece, 2011). With

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