

## Inmates' Adult Education in Greece—A Case Study

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### Abstract

Correctional education in Greece has been implemented since 1980's. Second Chance Schools (SCS) in prisons were established in 2004, aiming at combating social exclusion. This study's aim is to look into the reasons of school dropout and to interpret why inmates take part in the educational program provided by SCS, registering the motives, expectations and barriers. According to the findings, inmates dropped out particularly due to financial problems. They engage in the educational process having strong motives, primarily the beneficial calculation of the days of their sentence as well as it is a way to get out of the pains of imprisonment. Their expectations have to do with education, improvement of their vocational status, personal development and social acceptance. There were no barriers mentioned.

**Keywords:** adult education, correctional education, second chance school

### 1. Introduction

Education in prison is one of the means for enhancing rehabilitation. Inmates can achieve a better future after their release, improving the quality of their lives and gaining something useful such as skills, knowledge, understanding, social attitudes and behaviors, which may lead to further training and employment. According to Munoz (2009), prisons could create an environment that enables positive change and human capacity for those who are detained.

Welch (1996) claims that correctional education programs continue to draw the citizens' support, due to the fact that, in essence, education itself is positively valued by society. These educational and vocational programs focus on developing inmates' practical skills and also support the idea that every individual has the right to education. According to Lejins (1971), education in prison provides a second chance to both education and life.

In addition, education helps inmates realize that they remain members of the wider community reminding them, as Eikeland, Manger, and Asbjornsen (2009, p. 11) mention that they will still be members of the society after their release and that, given the fact that social alienation is a factor leading to crime, the democratic and comprehensive nature of education is crucial. By acquiring skills and redefining their position in society, those individuals may become active members in their local economies and communities and overcome the stigma of their criminal involvement.

According to Putman (2000), education and vocational training support the development of social capital. Furthermore, by means of their participation in educational programs, inmates boost their self confidence, improve their social skills (Parker, 1990) and feel satisfied, as they are given the possibility to show the positive aspects of their personalities (Kett, 1995).

It is proven that ex-convicts have to face high risk of unemployment and that there is a correlation between unemployment and recidivism (Farrington, Gallagher, Morley, St. Ledger, & West, 1986; Finn, 1998; May, 1999; Motiuk, 1996).

Research by Rand Corporation (2013) also points out a positive correlation between correctional education and employment after release. More specifically, it has been found out that post release employment was 13 percent higher among inmates who participated in either academic or vocational education programs than those who did not. These findings align with those of the research carried out by Wilson, Gallagher, and MacKenzie (2000).

According to the aforementioned study by Rand Corporation (2013), vocational training programs are more

effective than academic ones, as far as employment after release is concerned.

The benefits the prisoner gains thanks to the education provided in prison are indeed copious. The sense of boredom and loneliness decreases and inmates trainees form a strong educational community, feeling, as a result, less marginalized, as they feel they keep their right to education to the full (Gus, 2003), like any free citizen.

As it has been pointed out in a study conducted in prisons in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Norway, the inmates themselves could, by participating in training programs, spend their time doing something useful and sensible (Eikeland et al., 2009). In the same time, the feeling of discrimination which they go through, being treated as if they were inferior creatures is turned, thanks to education, to a feeling that they stand out among the rest of the inmates, freeing them from the subculture of prison.

Their participation in educational programs can be a source of optimism for inmates, awaken them and boost their creativity, which, as Piche (2008, p. 10) points out, is therapeutic and could potentially lead to rehabilitation. In addition, it “may be the first glimmer of hope that they can escape from the cycles of poverty and violence that have dominated their lives” (Erisman & Contardo, 2005, p. 23). The enhancement of self-confidence and self-respect are taken into account when it comes to evaluating education as part of personal development.

The debate over whether in prison education is of value is a controversial issue among researchers. A great number of studies have been carried out, particularly in USA, regarding the usefulness of in-prison education. Of course, there are always those skeptics who claim that, in many cases, prison education produces nothing more than “better educated criminals” (Roberts, 1973).

## **2. Education and Recidivism**

The relation between education in prison and decrease of recidivism has been a cause for concern among a lot of researchers. Some claim that education achieves its goals (Anderson 1981, 1991; Porporino & Robinson 1992, as cited in Ubah, 2005), while others believe that it does not work (Kettering, 1965; Martinson, 1974; Sullivan, 1990, 1992; Schumacker et al., 1990, as cited in Ubah, 2005). The answers to the main question, how education can tackle recidivism, are quite a lot. The individual forms a better character, gains self-respect, feels that it gives them new prospects in life with a new orientation, obtains new interests and know-how which can work as credentials in the business market.

Studies carried out by the Reentry Policy Council (2007 in the USA) have pointed out that taking part in training programs can decrease recidivism. Other studies in the USA have come to the conclusion that the percentage of recidivism is considerably higher for inmates who lack academic studies (Harrer, 1994), while an analysis of 60 different studies has concluded that inmates who did not have a Junior High School certificate and took part in education programs in prison had lower recidivism rates (Flanagan, 1994).

From a study conducted among 15 states of America in Iowa University (2011) on behalf of the state it has been found that recidivism rates for those who took part in voluntary educational programs were lower compared to those who took part in mandatory ones.

The most recent meta-analysis for the effectiveness of correctional education regarding the reduction of recidivism rates was conducted by Rand Corporation (2013). Fifty studies which were published between 1980 and 2011 were analyzed. The main finding was that correctional education decreases recidivism after release and it is profitable as well. In addition, it has been found that education in prison can increase the possibility for employment after release.

According to empirical criminological research (Baumann 1984, pp. 31-36, as cited in Papathanasiou, 2010), vocational training alone reduces recidivism (to a percentage of 12-15%), while the impact of schooling on recidivism is negligible.

It is essential to clarify that most studies about the usefulness or not of education in prison are related to financial criteria as well, since there is an interest in the cost/benefit relation. A USA study by Bozos and Hausman (2004) concluded that one million dollars spent on the training of inmates prevent about 600 crimes, while the same amount of money spent on imprisonment prevent 350 crimes. Correctional education is twice as much profitable as a policy to contain crime.

## **3. Inmates and Education**

The inmates' relationship to education is characterized as deficit, as confirmed by a great number of studies (UNESCO, 2008; Vacca, 2004; Gus, 2003; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; C. Hendricks, J. Hendricks, & Kauffman, 2001). Thus, the need for their training becomes imperative. However, many parameters should be taken into consideration, such as the particularities of this vulnerable social group, the motives which will boost

participation in educational activities, the expectations inmates will develop, as well as any kind of barriers which may discourage them.

The low educational level of inmates constitutes a reality unrelated to the time or place, fact supported by all studies which have tackled this particular topic, as well as by the official statistics of every country. It has been found that most inmates have not completed their basic education and they lack vocational specialization (Vacca, 2004; Theophilou, 2004).

A crucial factor which contributes to the shaping of this fact is school dropout (Stephens, 1992) and most likely the early involvement in criminal activities (Harlow, 2003, as cited in Dimitrouli, Themeli, & Rigoutsou, 2006). There has also been a relation between cognitive disorders and delinquency with failure in education (Leone et al., 2003; Linares-Orama, 2005; Zabel & Nigro, 1999, as cited in Dimitroulis et al., 2006.) As reported in a study by Vergidis, Asimaki, & Tzintzidis (2007), inmates mention family financial difficulties and immigration as the main reasons for their dropping out of basic education.

In a USA study, it has been concluded that 19% of inmates are illiterate over a 4% of the population and 60% are functionally illiterate over 23% of the population. In another study in 136 prisons in England and Wales it has been found that 80% of inmates had writing skills similar to those of an 11-year-old or even younger (Spinelli, 2009).

In Greece, in a study conducted by the National Center of Social Studies (1983, in Varvatakos, 2010) in six prisons, it has been found that only 25% of interviewees were high school graduates, while only 6% had high or university education, which means that the majority (69%) had failed to complete basic education. In addition, in a study carried out in Korydallos prison in 2005, it has been concluded that 7.1% of inmates had high or higher education, 21.4% were Lyceum (upper secondary school) graduates, with the majority (71.5%), being, in the best case, Junior High school (lower secondary school) graduates (Varvatakos, 2010). The official statistics of National Statistical Service of Greece confirm the findings of the studies. For 2007, 31% of inmates had completed Primary school, 5% knew just how to read and write, while 14% were illiterate, which means that 50% did not have even basic education. For 2006, 15% of inmates were illiterate and 60% were primary education graduates. The equivalent rates, for previous years, of convicts with no or only primary education in relation to the total, are as follows: 72.6% (2005), 78% (2001), 78% (2000), 73% (1999) and 75.4% (1998) (Varvatakos, 2010).

The above findings clearly depict the educational deficiency of inmates and highlight the imperative need for their education.

#### **4. Motives-Expectations**

The wide range of motives is such that no isolated theory is enough either to describe or to interpret the mechanisms which affect human experience, behavior and action. For instance, Spector (2000) claims that motives are an inner process which activates, leads and sustains behavior as years go by, extending and guiding it under the effect of needs and desires. McClelland (1961) and Atkinson (1964) expressed the achievement and motivation theory, which defines motive as an inner need and desire to experience success which pushes individuals to take action.

According to the self-determination theory, motivation could be either intrinsic or extrinsic (Ryan and Deci, 2000): the former exists when someone takes action in order to satisfy an inner need, while the latter when someone takes action hoping for a result which is directly related to this action.

A series of factors, such as age, origin, duration of detention and the educational level, form inmates' motives and expectations from participation to training programs in prison (Manger, Eikeland, Diseth, Hetland, & Asbjørnsen, 2010, p. 544). In the same study, however, it has been found that inmates with minor sentences did not have such a strong motive to take part in a training program, as those with major sentences. Regardless of the above factors, there are also common motives for everyone (Manger et al., 2010, p. 537), like spending the time in prison as pleasantly as possible, the exemption from tiring chores, communication with others, the feeling they are doing something creative. The above findings are confirmed by studies conducted in Greece (Vergidis et al., 2007; Hiliopoulou, 2011; Kouimtzi, 2011).

#### **5. Barriers in Learning**

Cross (1981) classifies barriers in three categories:

Situational: Barriers related to the situation in which the adult is during a specific period.

Organizational: All the factors related to organizations and constitutions which offer adult educational programs

are included, which also regulate the organizational context of operation of those programs.

Dispositional: Attitudes towards education and the ideas adults have about their roles as trainees.

As far as inmates are concerned, prison both as a place, as well as an institution, constitutes a barrier against their participation in training programs, as inherent or intrinsic restrictions account for the deprivation of their right to education.

Quite often arises the lack of a specific and explicit organizational context of operation educational structures within prisons (organizational barrier).

At the same time, inmates experience the trauma of incarceration, along with all the suffering which goes with it (Toch, 1975). The situation they go through has a negative impact on their participation in training programs (situational barrier).

Furthermore, most inmates have negative experiences from the educational system and quite often are prejudiced or they have a preconceived attitude to life. As a result, they are not willing to learn new things, are suspicious towards their instructors and insist on already existing patterns. This renders them reserved in trying new educational challenges (Winters, 1997) (dispositional barriers).

It is obvious that a variety of barriers has been registered, which have an inhibitive effect on inmates and act as a braking towards taking part in the idea of education which potentially has the power to change their lives.

## **6. Educational Programs for Inmates in Greece**

The General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning has implemented since 1984 educational and vocational programs for inmates, as well as counseling programs, while in the last decade has included programs of psychosocial support for inmates (Rigoutsou, 2005). In cooperation with the Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation, there has been an effort to organize a network of activities of formal and non-formal education in this field. In addition, different NGOs, in cooperation with Vocational Training Centers, organize programs in different prisons of the country.

Nevertheless, according to Koulouris (2002), all initiatives, whether they come from official welfare institutions or from private sectors, are sometimes partial, selective and lacking in coordination, programming and cooperation with correctional services, sometimes are consistent but without continuity and vice versa, and all in all with dubious results.

### *6.1 SCS in Greek Prisons*

In 2004, the innovative institution of SCS was introduced in Greek prisons. SCS are attended by adults who have graduated from primary school and have not completed lower secondary education. In 2004, the first SCS starts operating in the Judiciary Prisons in Larisa. Since then SCS have been set up in several prisons of the country, i.e. in Korydallos (Ahtens), in Grevena (region of Southern Macedonia), in Larisa and in Trikala (region of Thessalia), in Diavata Salonica (region of Central Macedonia), in Eleonas Thives (region of Continental Greece) and in the end of 2014 in Domokos, which has now suspended its operation.

The choice of Greek State to set up SCS in prisons, according to the equivalent European plan of action, clearly shows the need for holistic education for inmates, aiming at the trainees' general development and participation in the financial, social and cultural life, as well as at their more effective participation in the world of work. The SCS constitute an institution of social justice and offer inmates a second chance for a fresh start in life, with changing their way of thinking and adopting the right choices.

The education provided by SCS is systematic and continual and leads to the acquisition of a certificate equivalent to the one of Junior High School. The duration of the school curriculum is 18 months, divided in two study circles, each of them lasting one year.

#### *6.1.1 SCS in Korydallos Prison*

It was set up in 2005. Until the school year 2014-2015, according to the school records, 551 inmates of both sexes have enrolled. 160 trainees have graduated, while 300 of them have failed to complete their studies as due to release, transfer and punishment. 89 inmates have enrolled (with the more or less the same rates of presents in their studies) in the school year of 2014-2015.

The success of this venture in SCS in Korydallos prison is certified by the low rates of recidivism, according to ins and outs record of Korydallos inmates. Recidivism reaches 5% among inmates who have completed both circles of studies. Included is the rate of those who have been released and came back to prison for offences they had committed before their enrollment in SCS.

## 7. Methodology of the Research

In this unit the methodology of the research is presented.

### 7.1 Research Questions

- 1) What are the reasons leading to dropping out of school according to the sample?
- 2) What are the motives - expectations of inmates of the sample which led them to reenter the educational process?
- 3) Were there any prohibitive factors related to the participation of the sample in the educational process?

### 7.2 Methodological Approach-Research Tool

The qualitative method was chosen in order to collect data, as it constitutes an invaluable tool to understand in depth the social and cultural actuality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, pp. 18-29). Thus, the opinions of adult inmates, regarding the education they acquire in SCS in prison, can be profoundly understood and investigated. For the particular research purpose, the semi-structured interview has been used as research tool. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2008), it aims specifically at the acquisition of information related to the study and it is focused by the interviewer on a content defined by the aims of the study by means of a systematic description, prediction or interpretation. As a result, the chosen form of interview aims at making the inmates –trainees experiences heard and understood.

### 7.3 Sample

The study took place during the school year 2014-2015 in SCS in Korydallos prison, with a sample of 18 trainees in total, who were studying either in the A circle of studies or in the B. We would like to highlight that, given it is a case study, the research findings are not generalizable.

The sample is formed as follows (Table 1):

Table 1. The sample

S/N	Age	Marital status	Professional status	Nationality	Penalty duration	Cycle studies
Tr1	18	Single	Craftsman	Albanian	In custody	A
Tr2	30	Married/4 children	Salesman	Romany	20 years	A
TR3	28	Single	Businessman	Albanian	10	B
TR4	36	Single	Craftsman	Greek	12	A
TR5	25	Married/2 children	Freelancer	Romany	20	B
TR6	27	Married/4 children	Laborer	Romany	11	A
TR7	37	Divorced/2 children	Freelancer	Greek	16	A
TR8	49	Married/1 child	Employed	Cyprian	13	A
TR9	41	Married/3 children	Freelancer	Greek	In custody	A
TR10	56	Married/2 children	Freelancer	Greek	In custody	A
TR11	28	Married/1 children	Freelancer	Greek descent	In custody	A
TR12	36	Single	Builder	Greek	11 years	A
TR13	40	Married/2 children	Employee	Greek descent	In custody	A
TR14	30	Single/2 children	Employee	Greek	12.5 years	B
TR15	30	Single/1 child	Craftsman	Albanian	Contemned for life	B
TR16	30	Married/2 children	Freelancer	Albanian	7 years	B
TR17	29	Single	Freelancer	Albanian	In custody	B
TR18	25	Single	Athlete	Greek	104 years	A

#### 7.4 Method of Data Analysis

Content analysis was chosen as the method of data analysis. This is a method intended to provide objective, systematic and quantitative description of the overt content of communication of written or verbal expression and the subsequent interpretation of it (Berelson, 1952, in Landsheere, 1979). The topic was selected as the recording unit (Holsti, 1969), giving precedence to the qualitative dimension of the analysis.

### 8. Results

In this section we present the results of research.

#### 8.1 Reasons for Dropout

The first question was about the reasons why they dropped out of school at an early age. As it derives from the analysis of the respondents' responses, the main reasons are associated with family and school (Table 2).

Table 2. Reasons for dropout

Categories/ Subcategories	Number of Trainees
REASONS RELATED TO FAMILY	17
REASONS RELATED TO SCHOOL	6
NO DROPOUT	1
N=18 (Some trainees mention more than one category)	

Most of them mentioned financial difficulties which created the need to work. This occurred in half of the respondents (9 out of 18). Trainee 7 (Tr7) says: *"I went to Junior High School until the second grade. I took evening classes, as I had to work. Then I had to stop, because I was tired and did not have the time to study"*. Also, migration coupled with financial difficulties is a cause for school dropout in 4 (out of 18) cases. Tr1 says: *"The year I finished primary school, I came to Greece with my family and due to financial difficulties I had to work, so I never enrolled in Junior High School"*. 3 Romani stated that due to wedding, but also because they had been working since childhood with their parents, they did not have the opportunity to either go to school or to continue it. Tr6 says: *"I went to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade of primary school and then stopped because I got married"*. Romany lifestyle and the traditional principles of their community are the main reasons for school dropout. Also, two (2) of the respondents dropped out of school due to work in the family business: *"I finished primary school and then I stopped in order to help my family. I wanted to learn the job so it wouldn't be lost"* says Tr14, but the second one justifies the decision of his family: *"At the time, they believed that family tradition was more important than education"* (Tr10).

Six (6) respondents refer to their personal responsibilities for dropping out of school. More specifically, three (3) left school because of misconduct: *"I finished Junior High School, but I had to retake two subjects and due to my conflict with my teachers they failed me"* (Tr11); two (2) due to absences, because they were working at the same time: *"I went to Albania till 1<sup>st</sup> grade of Junior High School. Then, we came to Greece. I enrolled in evening classes, but they failed me due to absences. As a result, I did not complete it"* (Tr15). Only (1) one stopped school due to poor performance at school: *"I took the 6<sup>th</sup> grade in Primary school in Greece and had to stop because of financial difficulties but also because I did not do well at school"* (Tr16).

#### 8.2 Inmates' Motives and Expectations

Inmates' motives and expectations is the main object of the first research question of this study. Survey respondents referred to both what gave them the motive to reenter the educational process and the expectations they had when starting. It was found that along the way their expectations differentiated and were enriched as school gave them the tools to develop higher expectations than their original ones.

##### 8.2.1 Motives

The question posed to participants aiming at researching their attendance motives towards SCS was: "What was that prompted you to enroll in the educational program?" It was specified that they could mention more than one reason. The answers given are diverse (Table 3).

Table 3. Motives for attendance at SCS

Categories	Number of Trainees
1. "BONUS"	14
2. ESCAPING FROM PAINS OF IMPRISONMENT	12
3. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CERTIFICATE	9
4. SOCIALIZING	7
5. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	6
6. AVOID TRANSFER	2
7.FAVORABLE TREATMENT ON COURT	2
N=18 (Some trainees mention more than one category)	

The answer "The bonus" is given by the majority (14/18) of respondents. It is natural this answer prevails, as attendance at SCS prison leads to beneficial calculation of their sentence (1 day in school equates to 2 days imprisonment). It is important that the four (4) inmates who did not mention the "bonus" as a motive emphasize that the reason for studying was not the bonus, probably implying that having the bonus as a motive is rather self-seeking and is not consistent with the value they attribute to the idea of education. Tr15 says: "*The only thing I thought was not the bonus*". A further comment on this issue has a semantic value: Many of those referring to the bonus as a motive mentioned it last, thinking perhaps that they can be criticized as being self-interested. The wording of Tr14 is: "*The 'bonus' was one of the reasons, but the last on the list*".

Escaping from pains of imprisonment ranked second in their responses (12 references). Of course, respondents gave a variety of answers which were codified by that phrase, because what they experience and feel was expressed in many ways. Eight (8) out of 12 regard the time spent in prison as wasted and boring and they believe that by attending school they use it creatively. In their own words: "*I spent my time*" (Tr1), "*I feel that the time does not pass wasted*" (Tr13). Also, four (4) out of 12 were motivated by the idea of "escaping" from the prison. Tr10 says: "*I wanted to get away from prison*". The idle mind is another reason that led them to school, as mentioned by 3 out of 12. "*My brain keeps functioning at school*" believes Tr3, who is also an undergraduate university student, but attends SCS with the main objective to sharpen his mind and socialize. Two (2) respondents out of 12 were motivated by the aim of maintaining their mental balance. They both use similar words: "*In order not to get crazy*" (Tr11) and "*In the aisle of the prison you go mad*" (Tr1). It is obvious that attending SCS works as a psychotherapeutic factor for these inmates.

Half of the respondents' (9 out of 18) motive was obtaining the Junior High School graduation certificate for reasons such as to use it in the business sector, for further education and social recognition. Tr5 says: "*I was set to getting my graduation certificate and get a good, legitimate job*". Tr11 hopes that "*with the graduation certificate I will be able to get to a technical college*", while Tr16 believes that "*without the graduation certificate you're nothing, nobody takes you into account*".

The ranking of motivation is as follows: First, to gain knowledge (7 out of 18), socializing (6 out of 18), personal development (2 out of 18), to avoid transfer (2 out of 18) and favorable treatment on court (1 out of 18). Typical answers or respondents are listed below by category: "*I was in love with education. I wanted to learn how to read and write correctly*", says Tr2, while Tr9 refers to the "*necessity for social interaction*". Tr5 believes that attending school "*is a way to help my children*". Tr18 cites avoiding transfer and, as if he is speaking on behalf of the others, regards it as a motive for everyone: "*One more reason to stay here in Korydallos prison, avoid transfer, something that applies to everyone here*". We can speculate that it is an issue for debate among inmates, although only one reported it as motivation. It is possible that they were afraid of being blamed for being utilitarian.

Summing up, it is clear that survey respondents have three primary motivations for attending the prison school: the bonus, avoiding the trauma of prison and obtaining Junior High School graduation certificate. Secondly, the acquisition of knowledge and socialization are also important motives for inmates.

### 8.2.2 Expectations

Under the scope of the expectations, interviewees were asked two questions: "When you started attending SCS, how did you hope it would help?" and "Now, what are the benefits you hope that you will have after your

release?” Initially, all the expectations of respondents will be presented and later on expectation of inmates when they started attending SCS and to what extent those differentiated during the educational process (Table 4).

Table 4. Expectations of attendance at SCS

Categories	Number of Trainees
1. EDUCATION	15
2. WORK	9
3. PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT	9
4. SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	4
5. HELP IN ALL FIELDS	3
N=18 (Some trainees mention more than one category)	

The majority of learners expressed expectations related to education and more specifically 12 out of 18 expect to continue their studies. Tr2 says *“I want to continue my studies, I want everything”*, Tr11 hopes that *“with the graduation certificate I will be able to go to a technical college”* and Tr15 hopes to go on to university. *“I want to study psychology. It is my dream and I will go after it”*. One wants to learn English, one how to read and write, one began attending in the hope to obtain the graduation certificate. The fact that most of them wish to continue their studies may be related to the long duration of their sentence, something which gives them the opportunity to take advantage of the lost time in prison in a creative way. For some others perhaps there was a deep unfulfilled desire, as they were forced to abruptly interrupt their studies for financial or other reasons.

Many interviewees have expressed expectations related to work. Nine (9) out of 18 are hoping that after their release they will benefit in the field of work, finding a better job than the one they had before imprisonment (5) or improving work skills they had before incarceration (4). Tr14 says that *“school gives me a second incentive to go on in life and do a job I always wanted”*, Tr2 expects *“...I’ll start my own business and I think that everything I have learned will help me”*, while Tr1 believes that *“school subjects help me do better both in my life and at work”*. The reasons of these expectations are interpreted as both the acquisition of the Junior High School graduation certificate (subcategory: finding a better job) and the acquisition of knowledge and skill (subcategory: improving their existing job).

Several of the respondents have expressed expectations concerning their personal improvement, like expectations for acquiring peace of mind (2), *“Seeking peace”* (Tr7), to put an end to delinquency *“...what I now think is that I do not want to get involved in criminal activities any longer”* (Tr5), to change the way of thinking, for a better personal life, to acquire self-confidence, for a better future. The words of respondents reveal a sense of personal quest either in mental or emotional field that will provide them with a basis to get better persons and build a good life. Tr13 says *“...I think that school attendance helps you have a better personal life...”*

Expectations of respondents revolve around the society, as it seems they seek social acceptance, acquaintance with honest, well to do people and acquisition of prestige. Tr8 says: *“I feel different, I feel that I have gained prestige”*, while Tr16 hopes that *“...I will get to know good and educated people. And just being in that environment counts”* and Tr17 believes *“...that it can open doors later, in society”*. Although few referred to this field, only four reveal a sense so social exclusion they go through and the need to reintegrate into society.

Three (3) of the respondents hope to be helped in all fields without naming them. Tr18 says: *“I have no previous education experience and I believe that I will generally benefit when I am free”*. Two (2), however, had no hopes for some benefit from their studies in SCS. Tr4 says: *“I hoped for nothing”*, as far as the future is concerned and generally and vaguely thinks that perhaps *“there are some benefits but do not know which one”*. Trying to explain this attitude, we can speculate that the primary motivation for their studies was the bonus, which they mentioned when asked. However, other meanings can be given such as frustration experienced by Tr4, who considers himself deviant by nature: *“I think my nature pushes me to become delinquent”*, or other reasons, such as being taken by something else that they find more important rather than developing expectations that can never be achieved. Tr9 says: *“I had no hope when I started”* and *“may no have any benefit because I will leave Greece after all”*.

According to the answers of respondents, they start with expectations that change along the way. Specifically,

prior to their studies their personal expectations have priority (5) and expectations regarding education (5), then comes society (1) and in general any assistance (1), while they express no expectation related to the work. The answer “no expectation” is the only one that does not vary. In an effort of interpreting this classification, we think that personal expectations before attending the SCS because inmates are experiencing the suffering of detention and they believe that school can help them to overcome it. Of course there is the expectation of literacy but further studies are not something most of them think (only 2 out of 18). This probably is due to the long time gap separating them from the time they dropped out of luck of school and contact with the educational process for years, which has a prohibiting effect the development of expectations for further studies. An important finding which emerges is that respondents have no expectations for the field of work. We could speculate that this is because they are all workers, regardless of their jobs, and also because they cannot relate the usefulness of the school to their professional improvement.

Respondents when asked about their expectations after starting attendance of at SCS give priority to education and in particular the continuation of studies (12) and to work (9).

Here the catalytic influence of the school in creating expectations related to important sectors of life thanks to the knowledge and skills acquired by trainees-inmates is clearly depicted. Moreover, their personal expectations become more realistic, *“I have much more confidence and this is the great benefit that I will have when I get out of here because I feel that I can count on my own abilities”*, says Tr8, while Tr1 states: *“I think i should look for a better life away from prison”*. Social acceptance is still an aim for few inmates.

The difference found in this subcategory expectations appear to be associated with the adoption of new attitudes and perceptions about life thanks to the attendance at SCS.

Summarizing, we can say that the motives and expectations of inmates before their studies in SCS are accomplished by means of their studies. However, we cannot know if the expectations for after their release will be realized.

### 8.3 Barriers for Participation

In order to provide an integrated interpretation of inmates’ participation in SCS, it was considered appropriate to ascertain whether respondents faced any barriers related to their individual situation (situational), compared with institutions offering the educational program (organizational) and in relation to the attitudes of respondents towards learning and the ideas they have of their role as learners (dispositional). The question asked was: “Did you or do you face any barriers, either as an individual or in relation to prison?” (Table 5).

Table 5. Barriers to participation at SCS

Categories	Number of Trainees
1. NO BARRIERS	16
2. DISPOSITIONAL	2
3. ORGANIZATIONAL	0
4. SITUATIONAL	0
N=18	

The total number of respondents answered negatively regarding the existence of organizational barriers. It is natural that the inmates do not face situational barriers such as lack of money, lack of time, the care of children and others, as the situation of incarceration “exempts” them from such problems and worriers. Organizational barriers that could discourage the inmates, such as schedules, entrance SCS conditions, do not exist, since the time of the inmates is not limited by any factor or there are no entrance requirements, as all that is required is a simple application. Tr4 points out: *“No, I had no barriers attending school, only it is up to their discretion whether to get accepted or not”*.

2 of the 18 inmates reported dispositional barriers. Tr11 specifically says: *“One personal barrier was adaptation. I was afraid that it will be difficult to adapt but I got over it thanks to the encouragement of my family”*.

Subsequently we move on to conclusions.

## 9. Conclusions

After the analysis which was carried out previously we came to the following conclusions:

First research question: Reasons for school dropout

Survey respondents failed to complete compulsory education, mainly for reasons related to the family, such as financial problems, immigration, and marriage at a very young age. The causes for dropout were mostly in connection with school, such as misconduct, absenteeism, poor performance in the courses. These findings coincide with the findings of other surveys conducted in SCS Greek prisons (Vergidis et al. 2007; Hiliopoulou, 2011), with the only different finding being marriage at an early age. This finding is due to the fact that Romani were among the surveyed, who reported the wedding as the reason of dropping out of school.

Second research question: Motives and expectations of learners inmates

- The “bonus” is found as a motive for almost all trainees, without, however, this being the only motive or being referred to as the most powerful one. This conclusion is confirmed by many other studies (Vergidis, 2003; Landritsi, 2007; Vergidis et al., 2007; Irwin, 2008; Bhatti, 2010; Manger et al., 2010; Papathanasiou, 2010; Hiliopoulou, 2011; Kouimtzi, 2011).
- Equally big urge to attend SCS gives them and ‘escape’ from the sufferings of confinement, i.e. avoidance of boredom and creative use of “dead” time, need for change of settings, training of brain and maintaining mental balance. Surveys of Vergidis et al. (2007), Bhatti, (2010), Hiliopoulou (2011) and Kouimtzi (2011) have reached the same conclusions.
- The Junior High School graduation certificate was reported by many, as they hope that its acquisition may lead them to better job opportunities, social recognition and the opportunity to continue their studies.
- Acquiring knowledge is a stimulus with a positive sign, and showcases trainees - inmates’ need for personal improvement, which after release can be specified in improving relations and assistance to the family, a “vessel” to follow the right path without exceptions.
- Social interaction with the right people was found as a motivation for several trainees, apparently realizing that devious relations was a cause of their delinquency, hence the pursuit of healthy standards is important for them for the additional reason that it works as an antidote to contact with the subculture of prison.
- Two more motives were mentioned, of utilitarian nature: (a) avoiding the transfer from the prison of Korydallos, mainly to be close to their family -the same finding in Kouimtzi’s research (2011)- and (b) more favorable treatment in court, since they can provide from school evidence of their good conduct.
- Generally, motives of inmates, whether of utilitarian character or either completely of pure intent, are targeted and clear, which substantially helps in their decision to attend school and complete their studies. Moreover, education alone cannot act as a motive (Manger et al., 2010) if there are no other motives.
- Expectations expressed by trainees - inmates are mainly related to the field of education, with most of them wanting to continue their educational routes after graduation from SCS, a finding aligned with the one in Hiliopoulou’s research (2011). Following is hope for an improvement in working area and hope for finding a better job or improvement of the existing one. Other expectation are: improvement on a personal level, seeking peace of mind, change of their way of thinking, better personal life, a better future, possibility of communication, putting an end to illegality and hoping that society will open its arms to accept them. More generally, they perceive attendance SCS as an opportunity to rehabilitate.
- Interesting is the transformation of expectations after attending school as opposed to those when starting. While when enrolling in SCS they were hoping mainly for personal improvement, putting their education or social acceptance into a second place, now that they have attended SCS and its educational process they wish to be educated and want to continue their studies.

Third research question: Barriers for participation

Exploring the barriers and difficulties that can be encountered leads to the conclusion that the sample have not encountered any barriers whatsoever that hindered their studies, either personal or in relation to the prison. The current positive attitude towards education removes all kinds of hesitation and school attendance is now regarded by inmates as a second chance of life that they must seize, therefore no difficulty and barrier can stop them. This finding coincides with the research of Kouimtzi (2011).

We would conclude that education in prison seems to be an oasis for the inmates of our sample, as it enables them to develop expectations, to dream and to pursue a second chance for personal improvement, as well as

social and professional rehabilitation.

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