

Inmates education as a function of developing socio-emotional competences*

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Imprisonment is a means of depriving a person of his freedom due to behavior that has been assessed as socially harmful and dangerous. The prison sentence should re-educate the inmate so that he no longer behaves in a way that endangers society. However, the prison environment itself has a negative impact on inmates, and education is proposed as a way of influencing inmates to increase the likelihood of positive behavior. Of the various forms of education, the one focused on the development of socio-emotional competencies is particularly effective. Taking into account the theoretical models and research results of the education of inmates, especially socio-emotional education in this work, we will provide a framework for the implementation of socio-emotional education programs in prison.

KEYWORDS: education, inmates, prison, socio-emotional competences.

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Introduction

Imprisonment is a complex process that affects vital aspects of life. The prison environment is characterized by uncompromising isolation, an inflexible environment, constant surveillance, a lack of intimacies, and frustrating situations, which, among other things, condition interpersonal relationships based on distrust and aggressiveness (Grandos et al., 2023). On the other hand, lack of contact with family, loss of usual habits, integration into a restrictive environment and social isolation can cause a significant deterioration in the emotional and social competences of inmates (Grandos et al., 2003; Pérez-Ramírez et al., 2022; Ruiz, 2007). Also, as an environment involving social, sensory, and intellectual deprivation, prison led to a decrease in inmates' quality of life (Skowroński, Talik, 2023). These negative effects of imprisonment are inconsistent with the basic purpose of imprisonment, which is reflected in the fact that during the execution of the sentence, the inmates, by applying appropriate treatment programs, adopt socially acceptable values with the aim of easier inclusion in the environment after the execution of the sentence so that they do not commit criminal acts in the future (Law on the Execution of Criminal Sanctions, 2014, 2019). This discrepancy can potentially be overcome by introducing education aimed at the individual needs and characteristics of inmates. Related to this is the position of certain authors who emphasize the need to recognize the numerous benefits of formal education in prisons, which, in addition to raising the level of knowledge, skills, and abilities, on a personal level, enables the development of the potential for transformation and change (Tønseth, Bergsland, 2019). In other words, personal development is a significant effect of education (Manger, Langelid, 2005). Riply (1993) emphasizes that education should provide inmates with the development of social, artistic, and other skills, as well as the acquisition of self-esteem, which certainly has a positive impact on their family life, but also on the understanding of their own emotions and behavior (Ilijić, 2014). Improving the educational level of inmates should not only be aimed at acquiring formal knowledge and skills, but should also have other positive effects, such as increasing self-actualization and self-realization, developing economic abilities, improving social relations, but also developing civic responsibility (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016).

Research indicates that education can influence a lower rate of recidivism (Hull et al., 2000; MacKenzie, 2006; Steurer, Smith, 2003; Vacca, 2004). In this paper, we are particularly interested in education focused on the development of socio-emotional competencies, because it has been shown that the program of socio-emotional education is the most effective in terms of reducing the criminal behavior and reintegration of inmates

(Casado, Ruano, 2018; Redondo, Mangot, 2017). The competencies that are most often developed are empathy, reasoning, and problem-solving skills, skills for evaluating one's own behavior and the behavior of others (Fovet et al., 2020; Papalia et al., 2019; Ricardo et al., 2019). Research suggests that prosocial behavior, emotional maturity, empathy, and emotional control can lead to a reduction in the frequency and severity of assaults in prison and a reduction in criminal behavior (Greer, 2002; Farrall, Maruna, 2004; Roger, Masters, 1997; Farley, Pike, 2016).

In the paper, we will emphasize the importance and role of the concept of education in prison, especially the concept of socio-emotional education or socio-emotional reintegration of inmates. First, we will start from the consideration of the theories of the effect of imprisonment, which consider the influence of the prison environment, and then we will summarize some previous considerations about the problem and goals of prison education. In the end, we will deal with the question of the necessity and importance of education aimed at the development of socio-emotional competencies, but also the challenges of implementing educational programs and conducting research in the given area.

Effects of imprisonment

Imprisonment can lead to a series of psychological reactions, which negatively and irreversibly affect vital aspects of life (physical, psychological, social, emotional, and professional) (Grandos et al., 2023). In order to adapt to the prison environment, inmates must make a great personal effort. The application of punitive and restrictive measures often has the opposite effect: a greater prevalence of anti-social behavior, criminalization, and social exclusion. In other words, imprisonment increases the development of maladaptive feelings and behaviors that, in the long term, lead to inmate recidivism (Chaguendo-Quintero et al., 2023; Cruz, Castro-Rodrigues, & Barbosa 2020; Meijers et al., 2017; Wallinius et al., 2019). A detailed explanation of the negative effects of prison on individual behavior is provided by theories of the effects of imprisonment: Deterrence theory (Masters et al., 1987; Matson, Dilorenzo, 1984), Schools of Crime theory (Cullen, Fisher, & Applegate, 2000; Gendreau, Goggin, 2013), and Behavioral Deep Freeze theory (Thomas, Foster, 1973).

Deterrence theory is based on the idea that prosocial behavior can be elicited by exposure to specific „punishers“ (i.e., prison time, corporal punishment, etc.) (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013). Psychological understanding of the utility of punishment as a behavior change mechanism has been derived from numerous experimental studies in the field of learning theories.

For example, based on findings from certain studies, specific punishers have been documented to suppress identified behaviors (e.g., physically aversive and/or painful stimuli, response cost), and conditional factors (e.g., punishment is administered immediately, at maximum intensity, with no opportunity of escape) (Masters et al., 1987; Matson, Dilorenzo, 1984). For example, they are mentioned as specific punishers: loss of income, stigmatization, and dehumanizing prison-based psychological events (Gendreau, Goggin, & Cullen, 1999; Nagin, 1998). Contrary to psychologists, supporters of the deterrence model from the fields of criminology and economics reduce this model to a simple economic cost-benefit equation (Listwan et al., 2013). Accordingly, it is assumed that inmates are capable of quantifying the exact dosage of pain that prison life has imposed on them and are then able to predict with absolute certainty whether they will desist from crime upon release (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013).

Studies on the impact of prison on subsequent recidivism have shown that prison significantly increases recidivism (Gendreau, Goggin, & Cullen, 1999; Jonson, 2013; Nagin, Cullen, & Jonson, 2009; Smith, Goggin, & Gendreau, 2002; Villettaz, Killias, & Zoder, 2006). The implementation of harsher prison conditions led to a 14 percent increase in recidivism (Gaes, Camp, 2009). Consequently, prison does not reduce future criminal behavior (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013).

The Schools of Crime theory is based on the assumption that the prison environment encourages criminal behavior and attitudes (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013). Namely, the length of stay in prison affects the development of criminal skills (Jaman, Dickover, & Bennett, 1972). According to the negative impact of imprisonment on the criminal behavior of inmates, various theories of prisonization have been postulated (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013): differential association, general strain, labeling, and self-control theories in criminology (Agnew, 2006; Akers, 1977; Colvin, 2000; Hirschi, 1969; Lemert, 1951); and social learning in psychology (Buehler, Patterson, & Furniss, 1966; Bukstel, Kilmann, 1980). Based on the aforementioned theories, studies were conducted that examined the influence of the prison environment on the behavior of inmates. Results of the studies indicate that peers and staff influence the reinforcement of antisocial behavior and tendencies (Bukstel, Kilmann, 1980). In other words, the research points to the importance of the risk level in the explanation of prisonization (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013). Some authors suggest that the exposure of low-risk inmates to higher-risk peers in prison leads to an increase in anti-social behavior in prison and postrelease recidivism (Latessa, Lovins, & Smith, 2010; Latessa et al., 2010; Smith, Gendreau, 2012; Wooldredge, 1998). This theory gains importance if it is considered that the rate of imprisonment of low-risk criminals is increased and that their exposure to the negative influence of high-risk criminals is also higher (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013). The problem of prisonization was solved

in the first prisons that emerged at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries with a cell system of execution of punishment based on complete isolation (Philadelphia system) or on silence or prohibition of communication (Auburn system) (Majdak, Jandrić Nišević, Duvnjak, 2023). It was assumed that in this way they could limit the negative influence among the inmates, however, it turned out that this system of execution of the sentence, in addition to being inhumane, endangers the psychological state of the inmates (Majdak, Jandrić Nišević, Duvnjak, 2023).

Behavioral Deep Freeze theory starts from the role of imported inmate experiences, both pre-and postprison, in explaining inmates' degree of adjustment to the conditions of prison life (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013; Thomas, Foster, 1973). Research has shown an increased rate of recidivism in those inmates who have not adapted well to prison conditions (Zamble, Porporino, 1990). In her research, Goggin (2008) concluded that high scores on the Correctional Climate Scale correlate with poorer prison adjustment and a higher rate of recidivism in low-risk inmates compared to high-risk inmates, especially in conditions of maximum security (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013). Given the role of the environment in the implementation of correctional programs, climate studies in prison should be aimed at understanding how the correctional climate affects the behavior and attitudes of inmates (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013). In this regard, certain factors of the prison environment stand out as predictors of psychosocial well-being, such as: prison overcrowding (inmate perceptions of control, prison management style, staff supervisory practices, sudden changes in the prison population demographic (e.g., influx of younger inmates), and design capacity (Bonta, Gendreau, 1990; Steiner, Wooldredge, 2009). In essence, supporters of this theory advocate for employing treatment programs to assist inmates' prosocial adjustment to prison and improve their reintegration potential (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013; Zamble, Porporino, 1990).

In addition to highlighting the suppression of criminal behavior by imposing certain punishments (Deterrence theory), then the degree of adaptation to prison conditions (Behavior Deep Freeze theory) or indicating the negative impact that the environment has on criminal attitudes and behavior (Schools of Crime theory), these theories do not examine, or ignore, the role of appropriate (alternative) programs for the reduction of criminal behavior and integration into the social environment. Only Behavior Deep Freeze theory highlights the importance of employing treatment programs to assist inmates' prosocial adjustment to prison and improve their reintegration potential (Gendreau, Goggin, 2013; Zamble, Porporino, 1990). However, employing treatment programs cannot be the only and most adequate approach to resocialization and reintegration of inmates.

Prison education

The goal of serving a prison sentence should not be reduced to the social isolation of the inmates, but to see the sentence as an opportunity to implement appropriate programs aimed at (positively) changing the individual's behavior, with the aim of better social integration (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016). Education is one of the possible approaches to change inmates way to social integration (Ilijić, 2022). However, as Paul Kirk points out (see Ilijić, 2022), inmates are required to undergo a process of change, as the most difficult of all human processes, in an environment that often does not support or encourage these changes. The prison environment is „often dark and contrary to the educational mission“ (Gehring, Eggleston, 2006; Ilijić, 2022). The potential of creating a positive space for changes and participation in the educational process is influenced by the nature of the prison environment, conditions (physical, material, social, etc.), institutional dynamics, the educational level of the group (inmates), growing managerialism and the way the prison is managed, as well as tendencies towards redefining the goals of education (Ilijić, 2022).

Typically, rates of inmates engagement with education are low, particularly in the first years of a sentence or while awaiting sentencing (Farley, Pike, 2016). There are several explanations for the limited implementation of educational programs and the low levels of inmates participation in education and training. In addition to the factors of the prison environment, and related to the prison context, the availability, attitude, and perceptions of prison staff (i.e., those in authority) and limited program availability (focusing only on basic literacy and numeracy programs) stand out (Gillies et al., 2014). It is not possible to bypass the prison staff in studying the problem of inmates education, because the outcome of inmates training and education depends on their knowledge, abilities, interpersonal relations, and motivation. Also, the relationship between education and criminological-penological characteristics of the environment and actors of resocialization can be seen depending on: the type of crime, the way the crime was committed, the relationship to the crime, the amount of the sentence, recidivism, disciplinary measures against the inmates while serving the sentence, rewards and commendation while serving the sentence (Knežić, 2011: 85).

Changes in behavior required of inmates in the process of prison treatment depend on the acquisition of new knowledge, abilities, habits, and skills, the development of new, socially desirable values and norms of behavior, and attitudes towards themselves and society. Education is a process in which personality traits “behavior regulators” (values, attitudes, norms), knowledge, habits, and skills are formed and changed, and the result

of education is conditioned, among other things, by “existing” personality characteristics (Knežić, 2011: 85). Therefore, according to the report adopted by the Council of Europe in 1989, education in prison shall aim to develop the whole person bearing in mind his or her social, economic and cultural context, which implies that the curriculum should be broad-ranging; as well as the regular classroom subjects and vocational education, creative and cultural activities, physical education and sports, and social education (Warner, 2007). Adapting to the prison environment, strengthening self-confidence, correcting violent behavior, developing communication and civic responsibility, literacy, reducing recidivism, professional training and finding a job, improving social skills and inclusion in society, etc., are some of the concrete reasons why it is necessary to organize education inmates (Knežić, 2017). Consequently, we cannot agree with the statement that one of the most important answers to the question of why education in prisons is important is the low educational level of the prison population (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016), especially if we look at it in the context of functional compensation for what was missed in regular schooling or, as already stated, focusing on limited programs for acquiring literacy and numeracy skills that are missing (Gillies et al., 2014). Seen from this perspective, the education offered may be suitable only for professional or technical training, and not for personal development. Good practice in adult literacy starts with the needs and interests of individuals and involves more than technical communication skills (Derbishire et al., 2005: 3). Literacy increases the opportunity to understand oneself and the community, explore new opportunities and initiate change, and thus contributes to personality development as a broader goal of education. (Warner, 2007).

Through the process of education, it is possible to influence the positive development of an individual’s personality, and the development of a mature and responsible individual who has a positive influence on peers and prison officers (Ross, 2009). Education can contribute to solving the issues of prisonization, the process whereby inmates become acculturated to the negative values of the prison sub-culture (Brazzell et al., 2009; Farley, Pike, 2016). Earlier studies have revealed the potential for prison education programs to create positive institutional cultures. These changes are caused by the inmates exposure to positive role models (educators), because the inmates are „occupied with education” and out of trouble (Adams et al., 1994), but also by improving the ability to make decisions and prosocial tendencies (Brazzell et al, 2009). Making decisions, but also working on developing problem-solving and goal-setting skills, are key factors for dealing with various difficulties upon release (Maloić et al., 2015). Some authors point out that inmates who participate in prison education programs are less dangerous to other inmates, staff, and visitors (Žunić-Pavlović,

2004), and that they have a lower rate of disciplinary violations and violent behavior (Knežić, 2017; Vacca, 2004). Certainly, the results of numerous studies indicate that education in prison can increase an individual's ability to solve problems, strengthen social interaction skills, stimulate a sense of self-efficacy, and thus increase the chance of establishing prosocial behavior (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016; Ross & Fabiano, 1985). These studies speak in favor of planning and developing educational programs aimed at the overall development of the personality, which would represent the core of an adequate approach to resocialization and reintegration of inmates.

Research shows that education can reduce recidivism (Hull et al., 2000;

MacKenzie, 2006; Steurer, Smith, 2003; Vacca, 2004). This is accomplished by increasing cognitive skills that change behavior and socialization towards a crime-free life (Bozos, Hausman 2004). Inmates who attended prison education programs were 10-20 percent less likely to commit crimes in the future (Bozos, Hausman 2004). However, the reduction of recidivism must not be the primary purpose of prison education, especially when we consider the prison context that leads to harmful effects (isolation, inhumane conditions, abuse, etc.), and especially in Western penal systems, unlike the Nordic countries (Warner, 2007). Recidivism is a multi-causal phenomenon, and the inclusion of inmates in the educational process does not mean that they will no longer commit criminal acts, but that the inmates increase their opportunities for inclusion in pro-social activities at liberty (Jovanić, Ilijić, 2015: 165). Prison education programs are effective only if work with inmates includes understanding the consequences of behavior and work on prosocial behavior, i.e. work on the development of the entire personality. The above must be accompanied by a humane approach, recognition of individuality, autonomy, potential, and acceptance of the person (Warner, 2007).

Specific goals of prison education

Considering the tendencies towards innovation of prison education, the literature highlights specific goals that prison education programs strive for, such as (Ryan, 1997): 1) self-actualization and self-realization of inmates; 2) improvement of social relations; 3) developing economic capacity; 4) developing civic responsibility.

In relation to the first goal, self-actualization and self-realization, the role of the prison education program is to provide inmates with a basis for the realization of their potential, a realistic and positive self-concept, and a value system that is in accordance with socially acceptable norms and

values (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016). Improving social relations, as another goal, implies the acquisition of (social) knowledge and skills that will provide inmates with the opportunity to change their behavior, apply prosocial patterns of behavior in relation to others, and respond adequately in challenging social situations (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016). The development or improvement of these skills can be encouraged by organizing special programs on the topic of constructive problem solving - techniques of self-control, non-violent communication, solving problems, and reacting in provoking situations, or through a formal education program (within the subjects of Serbian language and literature, and others). In the context of developing economic skills (the third goal), the emphasis should not be exclusively on professional training, but also on developing the ability to find employment, adequate information, and the like. This implies certain technical knowledge, but also communication skills, and the ability to establish functional relationships. Within the framework of developing civic responsibility (fourth goal), emphasis is placed on developing a sense of responsibility for one's own behavior and respecting legal norms of behavior (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016).

In addition to the stated goals, certain education and professional training programs are focused on risk factors, for example, control of aggressiveness or prevention of domestic violence (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016). In the world, there is a tendency for education programs to focus more and more on the development of the quality of individuals and social competences (Jovanić, 2010).

Socio-emotional education of inmates

In contrast to theories of the effects of imprisonment, two approaches to the explanation of criminal behavior can be observed in the literature: Risk - Need - Responsivity Model (Andrews, Bonta, 2010), and the Good Lives Model (Ward et al., 2022). These models provide a basis for understanding the role that social and personal factors play in the emergence or modification of criminal behavior, but also the role played by the prison re-education model implemented through education and teaching. The RNR model seeks to explain individual differences in criminal behavior by identifying influences in the immediate social, cultural, and family context, and by personal variables (biological, psychological, cognitive, behavioral, educational, etc.) (Grandos et al., 2023). The GLM focuses on moving from a therapeutic and rehabilitative approach to an educational approach. Unlike the first model, this model does not start exclusively from the reduction of risk

factors. In other words, GLM starts from the theory of prison re-education, which focuses on the legislative, ethical, and criminological framework of human rights that help to identify basic human needs, an appropriate way of life, and facilitate adaptation to the prison environment, but also acquire the resources necessary for a better life in freedom. The theory of prison re-education focuses on the legislative, ethical, and criminological framework of human rights that help identify basic human needs, an appropriate way of life and facilitate adaptation to the prison environment, but also acquire the resources necessary for a better life in freedom (Grandos et al., 2023).

The idea of prison re-education encouraged the development and implementation of the cognitive-behavioral psychological approach. The cognitive-behavioral approach is based on the principle that if a person changes their thoughts, attitudes, reasoning, and interpersonal problem-solving cognitive abilities (which also involves improving their emotional control and teaching them new skills and behaviors), it is more probable that they will experience prosocial behavior and a reduction in the frequency and severity of their criminal activities (Grandos et al., 2023; Papalia et al., 2019; Santana-Campas, Hidalgo, & Santoyo, 2019). The idea of re-education together with the cognitive-behavioral approach represents a starting point for a broader consideration of the role and importance of prison education, and especially education directed towards the individual needs and characteristics of inmates. The cognitive-behavioral approach defined in this way implies both cognitive abilities and socio-emotional competencies. This is significant because some earlier research has shown that cognitive abilities are relevant only for academic success (Moraru et al., 2011), while recently emphasis has been placed on cognitive abilities that are also mediated by socio-emotional competencies.

Research shows that socio-emotional competencies are the basis for psychosocial well-being and adaptation and that they play a significant role in the prevention of internalized and externalized behavioral problems (Moraru et al., 2011). Socio-emotional competences refer to the interpersonal and intrapersonal emotional domain (e.g. knowledge of emotions and emotion regulation), the social domain (e.g. solving social problems, processing social cues), and the cognitive domain (e.g. executive function) (Berg et al., 2019). Executive functions are cognitive, emotional, and motivational processes essential for regulating behavior, developing adaptive behaviors, and facilitating the social integration of individuals (Chaguendo-Quintero et al., 2023). SEC include „... *inhibition of impulsive behavioral responses, awareness and regulation of feelings, accurate perception of the perspectives of others, correct identification of problems, and development of positive and informed problem solutions and goals*” (Riggs et al., 2006: 300). In other words, emotional competence refers to a set of skills such as emotional

understanding, emotional expression and emotional regulation, while social competence implies respect for rules, social interaction and prosocial behavior (Stefan et al., 2009). In order to adapt to the social context, a person must recognize, interpret, and understand different emotions in himself and others, and respect social norms in expressing them (Moraru et al., 2011).

Programs focused on the development of socio-emotional competencies of inmates showed the greatest effectiveness (Casado, Ruano, 2018; Redondo, Mangot, 2017), and various socio-emotional competencies were examined: empathy, reasoning and problem-solving skills, skills to evaluate one's own behavior and the behavior of others, and social skills that inmates often lack (Fovet et al., 2020; Papalia et al., 2019; Ricardo et al., 2019). It has been shown that inmates often do not have developed social skills and are not able to respond adequately to the problems and situations they face in prison (Azevedo et al., 2020). Also, research shows that time spent in prison weakens social skills due to limiting and inhibiting social connections and interactions (Grandos et al., 2023).

In addition to social skills, it was observed that inmates do not have developed self-awareness and skills of emotional control and regulation, as well as self-esteem. (Grandos et al., 2023). The research that conducted by Fillela and others (Fillela et al. 2008) showed that the program aimed at improving attention, awareness, and emotional repair contributes to improving emotional control and regulation and reduces aggressive and impulsive behavior. In general, prosocial behavior, emotional maturity, empathy, and control can lead to a reduction in the frequency and severity of assaults in prison, as well as a reduction in criminal behavior (Greer, 2002; Farrall & Maruna, 2004; Farley, Pike, 2016; Roger, Masters, 1997).

Prison has a negative effect on the self-esteem of inmates because it encourages the creation of negative beliefs about themselves (Bradbury-Jones et al. 2019; Echeburúa, Fernández-Montalvo, 2009). Low self-esteem is associated with negative coping strategies such as emotional avoidance, aggressive behavior, and denial (Larrota, L. Sánchez, & J. Sánchez, 2016). High self-esteem appears as a significant factor in inhibiting aggressive and developing prosocial behavior (Andrés-Pueyo, Echeburúa-Odriozola, 2010; McKenna, et al., 2018). The socio-emotional intervention program affects the increase of self-esteem inmates, and emotional competences affect the development of social competences, empathy, and self-regulation (Grandos et al., 2023). Therefore, the results of all the aforementioned studies support the fact that the focus on the development of socio-emotional competencies in inmates enables the adoption of attitudes and behaviors that can be a preventive measure in relation to anti-social and aggressive behavior, but also a factor that contributes to the improvement of the psycho-emotional and social quality of life in prison and outside of it (Grandos et al., 2023).

Social and Emotional Education Program in the Prisons of the Republic of Serbia: Implementation Framework

Prison education varies from state to state. While in Scandinavian countries this system is at a high level, in some western countries this is not the case. Regardless of the arrangement of the prison system, the question arises whether in such systems there is a person in charge of the educational process, how it is implemented, and to what extent the inmates are included in it. For example, in Sweden, education is provided through the Swedish Learning Centre, and educational activities correspond to those available to adult citizens at large. In the Croatian Prison System, some treatments are universally applied, including those related to the work, education, and recreation of inmates (Majdak, Jandrić Nišević, Duvnjak, 2023). Special programs relate to individual and group psychosocial treatment of inmates, and these programs enable changes in the attitudes, values, and behavior of inmates to be achieved through direct action on criminogenic factors, and to fulfill the purpose of punishment (Majdak, Jandrić Nišević, Duvnjak, 2023). In the Republic of Serbia, according to data from 2006, one officer was in charge of cultural and educational activities (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016). In 2011, a project called „Support to Professional Education and Training in Serbian Prisons“ was implemented in prisons in the Republic of Serbia. The project envisages the training of inmates in five professions, namely: baking (three types of training), welding (three types of training), screen printing, carpentry, and vegetable gardening (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016). In terms of the professional education of female inmates, progress has been observed only since 2014, when a tailoring course was organized in the Penitentiary Center for Women in Požarevac (Ilijić, Pavićević, & Glomazić, 2016). Jovanić (2017) points to the scarce offer of jobs in prisons in Serbia, and that the jobs offered to prisoners are often not in line with the labor market. The presented approach to education refers to the acquisition of professional skills that will enable resocialization through finding employment. In the end, such an approach, narrowly directed towards the acquisition of professional competences and the economic gain of inmates as a means of resocialization and reintegration, cannot be considered as an adequate approach to education, which should ensure successful resocialization through complete personality development. Also, such an approach does not provide a basis for researching the importance of education in prisons and its effects, which, if we are talking about professional training, are assumed to be negligible. On the other hand, some authors point out that prison employment can (Mertl, 2021): establish practical and social skills among

inmates (Elisha et al., 2017; Sliva, Samimi, 2018; Pandeli, Marinetto, & Jenkins, 2019); be important for an inmate's self-esteem, identity, and social recognition (Feldman, 2020; Pandeli, Marinetto, & Jenkins, 2019); help inmates to cope with boredom, or, eventually, to escape the mundaneness of everyday prison life and its effects (Silva, Saraiva, 2016). This broader way of thinking about the advantages of professional training, which is also seen in the context of building personal competencies and easier adaptation to the prison environment, is in line with the view that education, even when it comes to professional training, should contribute to the overall development of the inmate's personality because in this way, successful reintegration can be achieved despite stigmatization and community resistance.

Educational programs aimed at the development of socio-emotional competences should be multidimensional and include various activities that will promote their development. The target competencies should relate to positive discipline, i.e. the ability to manage oneself and behavior; to basic cognitive skills, such as listening, thinking, and decision-making; to emotional skills, such as understanding and expressing emotions, self-control; and to social skills, such as prosocial behavior (sharing and helping), giving and receiving apologies and the like. Activities can be realized both through formal subjects, that is, teaching content, and through special activities that will be conducted through group debates, role-playing, cooperative learning, and the like. When implementing the program, one should take into account the educational level and age structure of the inmates, as well as the type and severity of the crime, that is, the length of the sentence. participation in the program. These factors can influence the decision on the possibilities of implementing the educational program and adapting it to individual needs. In relation to the older prison population, there may be a problem of motivation to participate in the program, which may also be the case with perpetrators of more serious crimes. Also, sometimes such inmates, due to the need for isolation, cannot be included in the program unless it is carried out individually. What can be highlighted as important is that educators who implement educational programs with inmates should have developed abilities to monitor, evaluate, and develop socio-emotional competencies in inmates, together with prison employees and administration, but also the wider social community. Because these actors can be role model for inmates and influence their further behavior, i.e. psychosocial well-being and adjustment in and out of prison.

The introduction of inmates education programs should be accompanied by a well-designed way of measuring their outcomes. If educational programs do not exist, they cannot produce results, that is, their importance and effect cannot be claimed or denied. Also, relevant and valid data cannot be obtained even if such programs are not organized in a scientifically adequate

and verifiable manner. Research on the outcomes or effects of educational programs can be conducted after a period of time while inmates are in prison, as well as after a period of time after release. In relation to the issue of socio-emotional education, initial research can be concerned with measuring the socio-emotional skills that inmates possess, and then, after focused programs, conduct research on program outcomes. Some of the instruments used in previous research on socio-emotional competences are: Questionnaire of Emotional Education (Cuestionario de Educación Emocional - CEE; Álvarez et al., 2001; Filella et al., 2008); Emotion Control Questionnaire (ECQ – Roger, Najarian, 1989) and the Coping Styles Questionnaire (CSQ - Roger, Jarvis, & Najarian, 1993; Roger, Masters, 1997); The Trait Meta-Mood Scale-24 constructed by Fernández-Berrocal, Extremera, & Ramos (2004) (Grandos et al., 2023); The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965; Grandos et al., 2023).

The implementation of educational programs for inmates and research in this area is a complex issue. Criminal behavior, both in its origin and reduction, is mediated by personal factors, the influences of the social environment from which the person comes, but also the conditions and relationships that prevail in the prison environment. On the other hand, the personal and prison context will influence the outcome of the educational processes carried out in prison, and the social environment to which the inmates returns after their release will have an inevitable impact on the durability of acquired skills or forms of behavior. In other words, the social context is significant because it is where the complex dynamics of violence and victimization take place (Tadić, 2023). Personal factors (psychological, educational, etc.) will influence the tendency towards criminal behavior, the motivation to participate in educational programs, and the ability and willingness to change, that is, the adoption of desirable forms of behavior. The prison context is also significant in terms of the complex dynamics of violence and victimization, as well as social isolation that inhibits the individual's existing skills. Secondly, prison becomes an actor who plays a significant role in the resocialization and reintegration of inmates. It refers to the responsibility for the education and socialization of inmates, the ability to transform behavior (through positive personality development), and the way in which inmates see and understand their own behavior and the behavior of others, as well as the wider community. It is important to keep in mind that different actors function in the prison, from inmates to guards, prison administration, and other relevant staff. Each of these actors individually can exert a certain type of influence on the inmates, which is important to keep in mind during research. Because inmates can in a certain way evaluate the role that these actors play in relation to positive or negative behavior and the

outcome of certain interventions. Recognition of the interdependence of the phenomena shown so far in earlier research is poorly represented.

What is certainly noticeable in relation to the question of research is the scarce empirical body of knowledge in the field of inmates education, i.e. examining the importance and effects of educational programs in general, and those specifically aimed at the development of socio-emotional competences. It is first important for any research to have a starting point in empirically verifiable conceptual frameworks (Astor, Guerra, & Van Acker, 2010). One of the problems in this regard is the question of the foundation and adequacy of the established frameworks. From the previous text, it can be seen that there are three theories of the effects of imprisonment on the behavior of prisoners (Deterrence theory, Schools of Crime theory, and Behavior Deep Freeze theory), as well as two models in the explanation of criminal behavior (RNR model and GLM). Each of the above theories, in different ways, provides a basis for understanding the impact that the specific environment in prison has on the behavior of inmates. The models, on the other hand, provide a basis for understanding the role that social and personal factors play in the emergence or modification of criminal behavior, but also the role played by the model of prison re-education implemented through education and teaching. On the basis of the above, one can see the importance of comprehensive consideration of factors in the prison context, as well as factors at the personal and social level when researching the issue of education in prisons.

Certainly, the observed limitations and shortcomings point to the need to organize educational programs, first of all with the aim of developing socio-emotional competences, adapting such programs according to their approach and form to the individual needs and characteristics of prisoners, the participation and cooperation of all relevant actors, and then a comprehensive overview of the interdependence of certain factors in the social, personal and prison context. In addition, the perceived shortcomings can provide guidelines for scientific and methodologically based research on the given issue, which stands out as another need.

Conclusion

Inmates are people regardless of the reason they are in prison. By implementing programs that are aimed exclusively at suppressing negative behaviors, nothing is achieved in terms of personality development and enrichment, and professional education has a narrow framework and is focused only on the development of the necessary skills and knowledge for a narrow field of work. Certain authors tend to see the issue and importance of education through the prism of reducing recidivism and successful resocialization through finding employment after leaving prison (Case, Fesenfest, 2004; Chappell, 2004; Petrović, Jovanić, 2019; Tyler, Kling, 2006). In other words, education is often viewed in the context of professional training, while its role in the development of an individual's personality, through the building of social and emotional competencies, is neglected. The main purpose of a prison sentence, and therefore successful resocialization, should be to change the attitudes, beliefs, behavior, and personality of the individual in a direction that will enable the development of a mature and (socially) responsible person. Therefore, while serving a prison sentence, it is necessary for inmates to have access to education aimed at the development of socio-emotional competencies, which would enrich their personalities, acquire widely applicable knowledge and skills, especially in the field of emotion control, reasoning, and decision-making skills, and the like. In this way, the negative effects of the prison environment would be mitigated and socialization in prison as well as resocialization after leaving prison would be improved. This type of education in prison would allow inmates to understand and change their own behavior, and thus better adapt to the social environment after leaving prison. By adopting certain competencies - control mechanisms, whether we are talking about those inmates who are prone to violent behavior or other undesirable forms of behavior, targeted behaviors would be reduced to a certain extent. Socio-emotional education would also contribute to changes in interpersonal relationships and life orientation. This would indirectly have a (positive) impact on the possibility of finding employment for those inmates who faced poor social conditions and status even before going to prison.

If we keep in mind that education would give inmates a chance for personality development and change, it could contribute to a certain extent to the reduction of the recidivism rate. Certainly, when we talk about the problem of resocialization in general, that is, about the rate of recidivism or the issue of employment of certain categories of inmates, it is undeniable that, apart from education, several factors play a role.

Some of them are connected with the inmates themselves, but also with the social system and the community. We can assume that the status of marginalized categories of inmates, regardless of behavior reduction, remains unchanged in the system and community. This makes it much more difficult to change their social status due to limited opportunities for employment and meeting other social needs. Stigmatization and community resistance towards convicted persons are deeply rooted. In this regard, apart from the necessity of change and progress in terms of penal policy, approaches to resocialization, and through education, in the penal system, changes in the wider community are also necessary regarding the status and attitude towards convicted persons. Only then can we talk about the relevant effects of socio-emotional education and the issue of resocialization, as well as the relevant and valid rate of recidivism.

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Obrazovanje zatvorenika u funkciji razvoja socio-emocionalnih kompetencija

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Zatvorska kazna odnosi se na lišavanje slobode pojedinca zbog ponašanja koje je procenjeno kao društveno štetno i opasno. Zatvorska kazna ima za svrhu promenu ponašanja zatvorenika kako se u budućnosti ne bi ponašao na način koji ugrožava društvo. Međutim, sama zatvorska sredina negativno utiče na zatvorenike, a obrazovanje se predlaže kao način uticaja kojim bi se povećala verovatnoća pozitivnog ponašanja. Od različitih oblika obrazovanja, posebno je efikasno ono koje je usmereno na razvoj socio-emocionalnih kompetencija. Razmatranjem teorijskih modela i rezultata istraživanja obrazovanja zatvorenika, a posebno socio-emocionalnog obrazovanja u ovom radu, pružićemo okvir za implementaciju programa socio-emocionalnog obrazovanja u zatvorskim ustanovama.

KLJUČNE REČI: obrazovanje, zatvorenici, zatvor, socio-emocionalne kompetencije.

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