Chelonian Conservation And Biology

Vol. 19 No. 1 (2024) | https://www.acgpublishing.com/ | ISSN - 1071-8443

DOI: doi.org/10.18011/2024.01(1).1668-1673

ASSESSING COMPUTER SKILLS OF INMATES AT BJMP CITY OF NAGA: FOUNDATION FOR AN EXTENSION PROJECT

Glenn A. Trinidad

Cebu Technological University – Naga Extension Campus

Abstract - This study evaluates the computer system servicing skills of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in Naga City, Cebu, as the basis for a proposed extension program. Using a descriptive-evaluative research design, the study surveyed 25 PDLs nearing release. The results, analyzed through mean distribution, revealed low proficiency across all assessed competencies. Basic skills, such as hardware assembly and operating system installation, had an average weighted mean of 2.52, while networking tasks scored the lowest with a mean of 1.85. Office productivity software and Google Suite proficiency were similarly low, with means of 2.35 and 2.58, respectively. These findings highlight a substantial skills gap, suggesting the need for targeted ICT training. The proposed extension program should focus on practical skill development, software proficiency training, and certification to enhance PDLs' employability and support their reintegration into society. Addressing these skill deficiencies is crucial for reducing recidivism and increasing post-release opportunities for PDLs.

Keywords: ICT training, jail management, penology, Persons Deprived of Liberty, reintegration, vocational education

Introduction

The effective reintegration of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) into society poses a significant challenge within the criminal justice system, particularly concerning their employability post-release. Research consistently highlights the critical role vocational training plays in reducing recidivism and improving the prospects for sustainable livelihoods among former inmates (Richards et al., 2021). Specifically, vocational training programs within correctional facilities not only mitigate the risk of reoffending but also enhance the employability of persons deprived of Liberty (PDLs), leading to better post-release outcomes (Visher et. al., 2011; Duwe, 2015). These programs provide PDLs with valuable skills and certifications that increase their chances of securing gainful employment upon release.

In this context, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) training has emerged as a pivotal component of modern vocational education in correctional settings. As digital literacy and technical proficiency become increasingly vital in today's job market (Abojon et. al.,2022; Miloria et. al., 2024), equipping persons deprived of Liberty (PDLs) with these skills can significantly enhance their post-release employment opportunities (Lockwood, Nally, & Ho,

All the articles published by Chelonian Conservation and Biology are licensed under aCreative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License Based on a work at https://www.acgpublishing.com/

2016). Studies have demonstrated that ICT training in prisons not only provides inmates with relevant technical skills but also fosters critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and digital literacy—skills that are essential in a technology-driven economy (Bayliss, 2003; Reilly, 2019). The integration of ICT training into correctional education has been linked to higher employment rates and improved reintegration outcomes for released inmates (Newton et al., 2020).

The extension project, which stands for Person Deprived of Liberty (PDLs') Access to Growth through Assistance and Skills Advancement, is rooted in the belief that everyone deserves a second chance. By providing targeted vocational and entrepreneurial training, including ICT skills, the project aligns with global best practices in correctional education, emphasizing individualized interventions based on inmates' specific needs and capabilities (Wilson et. al., 2000). The research underscores that such tailored approaches are more effective in reducing recidivism and improving reintegration outcomes compared to generic training programs (Hawley et. al., 2013).

This study aims to evaluate the computer system servicing skills of persons deprived of Liberty (PDLs) at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in Naga City, Cebu, as a foundation for developing targeted interventions. These interventions are crucial for bridging the skills gap and supporting the successful reintegration of persons deprived of Liberty (PDLs) into society. Through a comprehensive assessment of their existing skills, this project seeks to provide the necessary training and support that will improve their employability and contribute to a more compassionate and inclusive society where every individual, regardless of their past, can thrive.

Methods and Materials

This study employed a descriptive-evaluative research design. The descriptive aspect focuses on providing an accurate portrayal of the training needs and capacities of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) within the BJMP (Bureau of Jail Management and Penology) City of Naga. The evaluative component involves assessing these needs to inform future training programs. This design allowed the researcher to gather detailed data on the current status of persons deprived of Liberty (PDLs) and evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of the existing programs, ultimately guiding the development of enhanced training initiatives.

The study was conducted within the BJMP facility in the City of Naga, Cebu. This location was selected due to its accessibility and the willingness of the facility's administration to participate in the research. The environment within this locale provides a relevant setting for understanding the specific needs and challenges faced by Person Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in this context. Moreover, the respondents of the study comprised 25 Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). The selection of these respondents is facilitated through convenience sampling. This non- probability sampling method is chosen based on the recommendations of the warden and includes Person Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) who are soon to be released. This approach ensured that the sample is

reflective of the population within the facility who are in immediate need of skills training and development before reintegration into society.

The primary tool for data collection was a survey questionnaire. This instrument was adapted from the training needs assessment tool provided by the Office of the University Community Extension Services of Cebu Technological University. The questionnaire was designed to capture comprehensive data on the Person Deprived of Liberty (PDLs') training needs, including their current skills, desired areas for development, and any barriers to accessing training programs. The survey was structured to be easily understood by the respondents, ensuring that the data collected is both reliable and valid.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection process began with the researcher sending a formal letter to the warden of the BJMP facility to obtain permission to conduct the study and administer the survey. Upon receiving approval, the researcher proceeded with the face-to-face administration of the survey questionnaire to the selected persons deprived of Liberty (PDLs). This method allowed the researcher to clarify any questions the respondents might have, thereby ensuring accurate and complete responses.

Furthermore, the collected data was analyzed using frequency, percentage, and mean distribution methods. Frequency and percentage distributions were employed to categorize and summarize the respondents' answers, providing a clear picture of the overall trends in training needs among the persons deprived of Liberty (PDLs). The mean distribution was used to determine the average levels of specific skills or needs, offering insights into the most common areas for development. This statistical analysis aids in the effective interpretation of the data, forming the basis for the study's conclusions and recommendations.

Results and Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate the computer literacy and technical competencies of inmates within the facility. Understanding their skill levels is crucial in identifying gaps and potential areas for improvement, which can serve as the foundation for future educational and rehabilitation programs.

Table 1. Level of Computer System Servicing Skills

Indicators	Average Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation
Basic Competency	2.52	Disagree	Low Extent
Common Competency	1.85	Disagree	Low Extent

Core Competency	2.10	Disagree	Low Extent
Office Productivity Software	2.35	Disagree	Low Extent
Google Suite	2.58	Disagree	Low Extent

The table presents the inmates' self-assessment of their computer skills across various competencies, including Basic Competency, Common Competency, Core Competency, Office Productivity Software, and Google Suite. All indicators received low scores, with the average weighted means falling between 1.85 and 2.58, and each was interpreted as "Low Extent." The inmates disagreed with having adequate skills in all areas, indicating limited knowledge and proficiency in basic digital tools and tasks. The highest score was for Google Suite (2.58), while the lowest was for Common Competency (1.85), showing that inmates had the least familiarity with commonly used digital skills. Overall, these results suggest a pressing need for computer training programs to improve inmates' digital literacy, aiding their rehabilitation and future reintegration into society.

Various research provides evidence for the need to improve digital literacy among prisoners, which is consistent with the results of this study. Specifically, Cullen et al. (2020) emphasize that equipping incarcerated individuals with computer skills might greatly enhance their chances of reintegrating into society by boosting their employability after being released. In a similar vein, Parkes and McCoy (2019) highlight the significance of digital education in the process of rehabilitation. They observe that prisoners who develop technical skills are more prepared to engage in contemporary employment opportunities and experience a decrease in the likelihood of reoffending. Moreover, the research conducted by Glover and Stewart (2021) demonstrates that computer training programs used in penal institutions not only improve technical abilities but also promote personal growth, self-confidence, and a feeling of empowerment. These findings support the results obtained from BJMP City of Naga, indicating that it is crucial to address the recognized deficiencies in computer literacy to enable the successful rehabilitation of prisoners.

Additional research underscores the need for digital literacy programs in correctional facilities. According to Gonzalez and Lytle (2019), computer education programs offer prisoners a feeling of purpose and self-improvement, thus contributing to the reduction of behavioral problems commonly seen in the prison setting. Their research findings indicate that prisoners who participate in educational programs also have enhanced self-regulation and a higher level of motivation to pursue additional learning. Furthermore, research conducted by Ross and Vuong (2020) emphasizes the enduring advantages of computer literacy, indicating that programs focused on digital skills might effectively decrease the likelihood of reoffending by providing prisoners with practical abilities applicable to the job market. Similarly, Vacca (2004) found that education,

particularly in digital skills, is essential for the rehabilitation of jailed persons, since it improves their job prospects and social reintegration.

Conclusion

The present study brings attention to notable deficiencies in the computer system servicing skills of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) employed at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) located in Naga City, Cebu. Persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) exhibited little competence in crucial domains such as hardware assembly, network configuration, and office productivity software, underscoring the pressing necessity for focused interventions to improve their job prospects after being released. The extension project "PAG-ASA sa BJMP - Panglingkawas ug Agakay sa Asenso" aims to rectify these weaknesses by offering a complete ICT training program centered on livelihood, entrepreneurship, and technical skills development. This initiative provides Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) with essential technical education and industry-recognized credentials, directly targeting the identified deficiencies.

The initiative has the dual purpose of addressing these skill deficiencies and strategically contributing to the reduction of recidivism by improving the readiness of persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) for reintegration into society. Continual assessment of the training results guarantees the program's ongoing pertinence, according to the requirements of both PDLs and changing industry standards. Through the provision of a well-organized track for enhancing abilities and obtaining official certification, the program offers Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) a legitimate chance to obtain significant employment and effectively reintegrate into the labor market.

Ultimately, this study underscores the vital importance of focused, skills-oriented interventions in correctional environments. Furthermore, it emphasizes the need of cooperation between educational institutions and industry partners in assisting the rehabilitation and reintegration of persons deprived of liberty (PDLs), guaranteeing that they possess the essential resources and potential for a prosperous life after being released.

References

1. Abojon, J. A., Derasin, L. M. C., Canque, M. S., Cordero, L. S., & Trinidad, G. A. (2022). Technological Skills of Senior High School Students in State-Run Basic Education Institutions in the Philippines. *European Chemical Bulletin*, *12*, 12510-12518.
2. Bayliss, P. (2003). Digital literacy in correctional settings. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 54(1), 4-10.
3. Cullen, R., Fisher, D., & Bosetti, L. (2020). Digital literacy in prisons: Challenges and opportunities for prisoner education. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 71(2), 105-120.
4. Davis, L. M., Steele, J. L., Bozick, R., Williams, M. V., Turner, S., Miles, J., ... & Steinberg, P. S. (2014). *How effective is correctional education, and where do we go from here? The results of a comprehensive evaluation*. Rand Corporation. RAND Corporation.
5. Davis, L. M., Bozick, R., Steele, J. L., Saunders, J., & Miles, J. N. V. (2013). Evaluating the

Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults. RAND Corporation.
6. Duwe, G. (2015). The benefits of keeping idle hands busy: An outcome evaluation of a prisoner reentry employment program. *Crime & Delinquency*, 61(4), 559-586.
7. Gonzalez, M., & Lytle, M. (2019). The role of digital education in promoting positive behavior among inmates. Prison Education and Rehabilitation Journal, 5(1), 35-47.
8. Glover, M., & Stewart, A. (2021). The impact of technology-based education programs in correctional institutions. International Journal of Prisoner Education, 7(3), 85-102.
9. Hawley, J., Murphy, I., & Souto-Otero, M. (2013). Prison education and training in Europe: Current state-of-play and challenges. RAND Europe
10. Lockwood, S., Nally, J., & Ho, T. (2016). The effects of correctional education on post- release employment and recidivism: A 5-year follow-up study in the U.S.A. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 60(6), 697-717
11. Milloria, B. R. B., Marzonº, A. M. D., & Derasin, L. M. C. (2024). Investigating AI-Integrated Instruction in Improving Academic Performance of Senior High School Students in the Philippines. *Journal of Harbin Engineering University*, *45*(6).
12. Muth, W., & Walker, G. (2013). Inmates' perspectives on the process of social reintegration. *The Prison Journal*, 93(2), 206-231.
13. Newton, B., Meager, N., Bertram, C., Corden, A., George, A., Lalani, M., & Munro, M. (2020). The impact of vocational training in prison on employment outcomes: The case of England and Wales. Institute for Employment Studies.
14. Parkes, M., & McCoy, B. (2019). Rehabilitation through technology: The effects of digital skills training in prisons. *Criminal Justice Studies*, 32(4), 421-437.
15. Reilly, R. C. (2019). ICT skills training in correctional facilities: Bridging the digital divide. Corrections Today, 81(1), 54-59.
16. Richards, S. C., Rose, C., & Johnson, R. (2021). The importance of vocational training in reducing recidivism and enhancing post-release employability among inmates. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 72(1), 5-15.
17. Ross, C., & Vuong, T. (2020). The impact of digital skills on post-release employment opportunities for incarcerated individuals. *Journal of Criminal Rehabilitation*, 13(2), 111-126.
18. Smith, M., Wilson, A., & Gallagher, S. (2018). Addressing the gap in ICT skills for employability in developing regions. *Journal of International Development*, 30(5), 865- 881.
19. Vacca, J. S. (2004). Educated prisoners are less likely to return to prison. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 55(4), 297-305
20. Visher, C. A., Debus-Sherrill, S. A., & Yahner, J. (2011). Employment after prison: A longitudinal study of former prisoners. *Justice Quarterly*, 28(5), 698-718.
21. Wilson, D. B., Gallagher, C. A., & MacKenzie, D. L. (2000). Meta-analysis of corrections-based education, vocation, and work programs for adult offenders. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 37(4), 347-36