

Challenges in providing correctional service education: A case study in a correctional institution in Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to identify the challenges encountered in the provision of correctional service education in a correctional institution in Amhara National Regional State, Ethiopia. Guided by the constructivist paradigm, the study employed qualitative case study as a strategy, involving sixteen participants selected through purposive sampling from one institution. Data collected through one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions were thematically analysed. The study identified long and stringent procedures, inmates' misbehaviour, lack of resources and facilities, mismatch between inmates' needs and curricular contents, and lack of monitoring and evaluation as challenges affecting the provision of education. It was concluded that the majority of challenges faced in the case correctional institution occurred as a result of inadequate attention and conflicting missions of the correctional institution (security and rehabilitation) and the tendency of prioritizing security over rehabilitation. In order to mitigate the problems and to improve the provision of correctional service education, possible suggestions are forwarded.

Keywords: Correctional institution, Education, Challenges, Ethiopia

INTRODUCTION

As the issue of lifelong learning is high on the education agenda these days, it is not surprising to see the provision of education in various settings in addition to the formal ones. Different organizations and institutions are thus offering education and training related to their missions and visions. Providing education and training in correctional institutions is a case in point.

The most important reason behind providing education for inmates in correctional institutions is that education is a human right. In line with the Universal Declarations of Human Rights (United Nations [UN], 1948), like any citizens of a country, inmates should be given the right to education. It is asserted that lifelong learning is related to human right, and "... there is no reason why the process [i.e., lifelong learning] should be interrupted by imprisonment" (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 1995, p. 1). In explaining how correctional institutions can be used as a means to address inmate's lifetime needs, Biswalo (2011, p. 71) emphasized that these institutions

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“play a significant role in contributing to the lifelong learning needs of their inmates who often have limited formal education and skills”.

Another rationale behind the importance of providing education in the correctional settings is related to the well-being of the inmates and the society at large. Running educational programmes for inmates helps them find jobs and develop positive attitudes towards themselves and the society. Boulianne and Meunier (1986, p. 217) argue that education provided to inmates in correctional institutions enables inmates to “reintegrate to the society.” Diseth, Eikeland, Manger and Hetland (2008) also stress that correctional education is helpful not only for reintegration with the society after release but also for offering them opportunity to spend their time on meaningful tasks during their stay in correctional institutions.

There is considerable evidence that shows the benefit of correctional education for inmates as well as the society as a whole (Jovanic, 2011; Vacca, 2004). Studies confirmed that inmates who participate in educational programmes in correctional institutions, as compared to those who do not, display good behaviour and are unlikely to go back to prison (Bazos & Hausman, 2004; Vacca, 2004). Thus, prison education has paramount importance not only for inmates but also for the well-being of the society at large.

International experiences show that various challenges hamper the provision of education in correctional institutions, regardless of all its advantages. For example, Brazzell, Crayton, Mukamal, Solomon and Lindahl (2009,) identified three categories of challenges: those related to the background and experience of inmates; procedures of the institutions; and lack of resources, funding, materials, etc. These scholars believe that such challenges are unique to such institutions as they are “first and foremost, institutions of control and security, not classrooms or schools” (Brazzell et al., 2009, p. 24). The challenges in such settings become more prevalent in developing countries.

Studies in African context confirm that correctional institutions face a number of challenges such as overcrowding, diseases, insufficient education, lack of capacity of officers, unemployment, inmates’ uneasy reintegration into society and political instability which affect the rehabilitation of inmates (Biswalo, 2011; Onyango, 2013; Sarkin, 2008). Thus, this study set out to identify context-based challenges in Ethiopia focusing on one correctional institution. After providing background to the correctional system and correctional education services in the Ethiopian context, the challenges in providing correctional education in the case institution are presented and discussed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The history of prison system in Ethiopia

Given the lack of literature to date, the history and development of correctional institutions are not clearly known in Ethiopia (Ethiopian Human Right Commission [EHRC], 2012). The report by Worku, Geberemariam and Belete (2014) stated that the practice of imprisonment and punishment started during power conflicts among princes during ‘Zemene Mesafint’ (the

Ethiopian term for "era of the princes") to imprison their opponents who surrendered at battle fields or who were alleged to defy their rule and power. Similar sources also show that the practice of imprisonment could be traced back to the 17th century in Ethiopia (Gulilat, 2012; Tadesse, 2011). Since that time, the conditions of the places assumed to be used as prisons in Ethiopia, and the methods employed to keep convicts had been inhuman and degrading, when seen against the standards which such institutions are expected to fulfill these days (Tadesse, 2011).

There is also considerable debate among writers on when formal prison system began in Ethiopia. For instance, Worku et al. (2014) stated that the first formal prison system was established in Ethiopia in 1924 when Ethiopia's application for membership to the League of Nations was rejected because prison system fulfilling certain standards was non-existent. Accordingly, the first formal prison in Ethiopia, "Kerchele/Alem bekagn" was established in the capital Addis Ababa by French engineers (Worku et al., 2014). Other sources connect the beginning of prison system in Ethiopia with Italians during their five-year occupation (EHRC, 2012; Gulilat, 2012; Tadesse, 2011). These sources also showed that the modern practice of prison and imprisonment expanded in Ethiopia with the building of a number of prisons afterwards during Hailesillasié's regime (1942-1974). In fact, Worku et al. (2014) also admit that the prison which had been first established had various problems with regard to structure and administration and claim that the modern prison with clear organization and structure started in the 1940s. Hence, based on these sources, it is possible to say that it was during Hailesilassie's time that the modern history of prisons began in Ethiopia.

History of correctional education in Ethiopia

Although Ethiopia had the first written constitution in 1931(Gulilat, 2012), it was not complete enough to deal with different criminal acts and how prisons could be administered. During the reign of Hailesilassie, in addition to the establishment of prisons, Proclamation No.45/1944 was issued to facilitate prison administration (Centre for International Legal Cooperation [CILC], 2005; EHRC, 2012; Gulilat, 2012). Then the criminal law which was proclaimed in 1957 was issued to complement what had already been provided in Proclamation No. 45/1944 (Gulilat, 2012). Compared to the preceding proclamations, the criminal law was better in terms of handling and punishment of inmates as it clearly indicated prisoner duties and rights regarding work payments, parole and education and training (Worku et al., 2014). As a result of these proclamations and laws, though they were disorganised and unsystematic, there were basic education and related vocational training provisions in most of the prisons (Gulilat, 2012; Worku et al., 2014).

During the Dergue Regime (1974-1991), in which prisons were expanded all over the country (Gulilat, 2012) as a result of mass incarceration, the prison condition and the inhuman handling of prisoners in Ethiopia got much worse (Worku et al., 2014). Though a number of additional prisons were built, the number of prisoners was beyond the capacity of the existing prisons due to mass imprisonment (Gulilat, 2012; Worku et al., 2014). In such conditions, the services provided including education were limited. With regard to education, except the National Literacy Campaign, which was implemented for ten years all over the country, there

was no regular educational programme for prisoners in the country during this time (Gulilat, 2012).

Since the current government came to power in 1991, a lot of positive changes have been observed. Among these, the transitional government in October 1992 issued a proclamation to re-establish prisons in a new way following acceptable standards and with positive mission. Accordingly, in this system the nomenclature of the institutions “prison” was changed to “correctional institution” (Worku et al., 2014). Moreover, a new approach to the administration of prisons was devised and the detention centres focused on correcting and rehabilitating inmates rather than punishing, as it was clearly stipulated in the Transitional Government Charter, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia [FDRE] Constitution and Regional State proclamations (EHRC, 2012).

The FDRE Constitution (FDRE, 1995) recognises education as one of the fundamental rights of citizens. For instance, Article 21(1) states that “all persons held in custody and imprisoned upon conviction and sentencing have the right to get treatments that respect their human dignity” (FDRE, 1995, p.24). Similarly, Article 41 (3 & 4) further entitles Ethiopian nationals to get equal access to publicly funded social services. In line with this, International Labor Organization [ILO] (n.d) attested that prisoners in Ethiopian correctional institutions, among others, have the right to gain access to capacity building services, counselling, skills training, business development services and income generating activities.

Practical examples have also shown education and training bringing about positive gains in correctional institutions of Ethiopia. For instance, in Tigray Regional State in Ethiopia, the intervention to bring about inmates’ rehabilitation was reportedly successful in changing the behaviour of inmates and benefiting the correctional centres as well as the community (ILO, n.d). This report by ILO further showed that as a result of interventions during their sentences, inmates rejoined the society with new skills and a greater chance of employability. This report further noted that the provision of a better chance for inmates to integrate with the community helped the inmates lead a peaceful and productive life after prison which in turn reduced crime and the number of inmates returning to those institutions (ILO, n.d).

However, evidence shows that there is a gap between what is stated in the constitution and what is being implemented due to a number of challenges those institutions are facing. For instance, Centre for International Legal Cooperation [CILC] (2005) made clear in its baseline study report that the status of correctional institutions in Ethiopia is below the international standards. Among others, the report revealed challenges such as lack of training centres for administrators and inmates, lack of training materials, aids, reference books and materials for education as chronic problems facing the institutions with regard to education and training.

With regard to the physical condition of the institutions with education facilities, they are reportedly worse and even some are described as “...intolerable” (CILC, 2005, p.196). Gulilat, (2012) and Tadesse (2011) affirmed this. For instance, Tadesse (2011) showed that the handling of inmates and services provided in most of the institutions of Oromia National Regional State are below the standards. This study found the institutions poor in terms of

accommodation, clothing and bedding, personal hygiene, medical care, sport and exercise, libraries and books, work, education and training, separation of categories and compliant handling procedures. Similarly, Gulilat (2012) studied the situation of the federal correctional institution in Addis Ababa and found out overcrowding, inadequate or inappropriate food, poor sanitation, inadequate medical services and a lack of recreation and educational facilities as challenges facing the institution. The study further revealed that the available education and training programmes were not given regularly, that females did not take part in the programme and the trainers were not well-equipped to provide valuable training to inmates (Gulilat, 2012). The study concluded that all these conditions of the institution were not in line with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and Articles 18 and 21 of the Ethiopian constitution (Gulilat, 2012).

Two main reasons initiated this study. The first one is that the issue of correctional institution education is hardly investigated in Ethiopia and that most of studies conducted so far focused on other issues of correctional institutions rather than on correctional education. And the second reason is that the researcher learned during his/her informal communication with officers in charge of inmate correction and behaviour modification (ICBM) of the institution under study that the provision of education for inmates is not in line with their needs. This necessitated further investigation into the challenges behind. Thus, the purpose of this study was to identify the challenges encountered by the correctional institution in providing education for inmates. It was hoped that investigating the challenges encountered would assist concerned bodies such as facilitators, coordinators and leaders in correctional institutions and education bureaux to be informed about the gaps so as to take actions for provision of better education for inmates. Moreover, the study could be an additional resource to the hardly available body of research in the area of correctional education in Ethiopia. To this end, the study basically intended to answer the question: "What are the challenges faced by the case correctional institution in providing education for inmates?"

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

As this research was aimed at investigating the challenges in providing correctional education by taking one correctional institution in the Amhara National Regional State as a case, it employed a qualitative case study in order to be able to explore the issues in depth by probing the views of those directly affected. Since investigating such an issue needs a closer scrutiny, a qualitative case study design was chosen by taking a correctional institution as a case. Considering the suggestions of Baxter and Jack (2008), Creswell (2007) and Yin (2009), this case study involved exploration of a phenomenon through one case institution within its context as a bounded system using multiple data sources. This approach helped to capture multiple perspectives and experiences of participants.

Research Setting

This study was conducted in Amhara National Regional State [ANRS], one of the second populous regions in Ethiopia. Among the available 11 zonal and 19 Werdea (district) correctional institutions in this regional state, Bahir Dar Correctional Institution was the one selected as a case in this study. This correctional institution is found in Bahir Dar, a capital city of ANRS.

In this correctional institution, the education and training service consists of three components. First, the academic programme provides both formal and non-formal education. The formal education service runs primary and secondary education (Grade 1 – 10 formal school-like programme) by employing trained teachers, while the non-formal education service runs a separate two-year programme called Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) aimed at enabling illiterate inmates with basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic to manage their day-to-day lives effectively through functional literacy. Second, the vocational training programme is aimed at enabling inmates get skills such as weaving, welding, hairdressing, metal work and brick works for income generation. These skill trainings are run by volunteer inmates and professionals who come from outside. Third, the awareness creation and behavioural modification programme focuses on other trainings on contemporary issues and follow-ups during guidance and counseling. This programme includes guidance and counseling services and a number of activities which can make the inmates get up-to-date information on health matters such as HIV/AIDs, amendments on laws, and other issues that can make the inmates aware. It also includes provided by the professionals to the inmates on continuous basis. In the case institution, all the three categories of programmes were found.

Sample and sampling techniques

The research setting and participants were purposefully selected to help meet the research objectives. Accordingly, Bahir Dar Correctional Institution was selected by considering that the institution provided education in an organised and sustained manner. The sample included totally sixteen participants whose age ranged from 23 – 49 years (i.e., five formal school teachers and two facilitators in the non- formal functional adult literacy programme, one administrator and eight inmates). Among these sixteen participants, three were females and thirteen were males. Different sampling techniques were employed to select these participants. Primarily, these participants were selected on a voluntary basis. Secondly, inmates' grade distribution and year of attendance and teachers' and facilitators' year of involvement were taken into consideration. Accordingly, six inmate participants whose attendance ranged from 5 – 10 years were selected from different grades of the formal programme (three from Grade 7, two from Grade 5 and one from Grade 9) and two inmates were taken from Level 2 of non-formal functional adult literacy programme. Five teachers who were all bachelor degree holders with longer years of experience and two facilitators who completed secondary education from the non- formal academic program were selected based the information obtained from ICBM office.

Data collection instruments

The researcher used one-on-one face-to-face interviews and focus group discussion as instruments of data collection. The interview was taken as the principal instrument because it allows interviewees to talk in detail about their experiences (Patton, 2002) of the various challenges in the provision of education in the case correctional institution. The interviews were held with an administrator, two facilitators and four inmates. In addition, focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted to gather data from inmates and teachers, separately as a means of triangulating the data obtained through individual interviews. Accordingly, the first FGD involved four inmates and the second one involved five teachers. Both the individual interviews and the FGDs took place in and around classrooms.

Data analysis techniques

Thematic data analysis approach (Patton, 2002) was used in this study. The researcher started to analyse data while collecting them, so both the data collection and analysis were concurrent (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell, 2007). In the initial step of analysing the data, the researcher read the interview transcripts and the notes taken during data collection to organise the data into codes. Similar codes were grouped together to formulate initial categories. While coding, the researcher was going back and forth between the original data and the categories initially formed to make necessary modifications and changes until the final ones were identified. The categories identified were used to construct themes which are presented as topics in the finding section. As part of the data analysis, some strategies were employed to ensure credibility and trustworthiness. To this end, the study used thick description of the views of participants. Thick description denotes a mechanism used by a researcher to enable readers to feel like they are in the place where the research was conducted (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). Triangulation was another means of ensuring credibility (Tracy, 2013). To ensure this, interview and FGD were used to gather data on similar issues from different groups of participants.

Ethical considerations

The issue of ethics was very important in this study since the setting for the research was a correctional institution and the majority of participants were inmates. The researcher tried to study and acquaint herself with the rules and regulations of the institution, also called “situational ethics” (Tracy, 2013, p. 243). Moreover, the researcher approached the concerned bodies formally by showing letters to get access to the participants. Furthermore, the researcher explained the purpose and possible outcomes of the study to the participants, before starting to collect data. The data collection commenced after the participants gave their informed consent. Besides, the researcher approached the inmates in a friendly way to make them feel relaxed during the interviews and FGDS. The researcher also assured the participants about confidentiality of the information they would give by using pseudonyms while reporting their reflections.

FINDINGS

From the interviews conducted with inmates, facilitators, teachers, and administrators, six themes were identified and are discussed as topics hereunder. These are procedures of the institution, inmates' behaviour, resources and facilities, the curriculum, sanitation and school attractiveness, and monitoring and evaluation of the education services.

Challenges related to procedures of the correctional institution

This challenge was mainly reported by teachers who were teaching in the formal academic programme in the correctional institution. These teachers reported that some of the activities of the correctional institution were challenging to run the instructional programme effectively. They pointed out that head counting to ensure inmates' presence which is done every morning during the changing of the guard and visitations from relatives are the major problems they are facing with regard to procedures of a correctional institution. The teachers affirmed that visitations from relatives frequently interrupted inmates' classes and most inmates missed the first class in the morning because of head counting. The head counting and relatives' visits reportedly had disruptive influence in the instructional process and resulted in not being able to finish courses within a given period.

Moreover, inmates both in the formal and the non-formal FAL programme revealed that the work they were supposed to do as part of their sentence interfered in their education. While those in the formal academic programme said the work clashed with their tutorials and took up their time for studying and doing homework, those in the FAL programme mentioned that their classes clashed with it. Similarly, another inmate in the same programme stated that even though teachers were eager and willing to help them, the time for tutorial programmes overlapped with correctional duties.

The teachers also reported the mind-numbing nature of the security check to enter the correctional institution as a challenge. They said, among other things, it was discouraging to come with additional aids to support instruction. One of the teachers expressed how this process of checking made him stop bringing instructional materials. He mentioned,

I used to bring with me various kinds of instructional materials to show to my students but God knows how much I suffered when I once brought such materials.

Two teachers added that they did not even feel safe in the classroom as the guards were always there watching them. These teachers believed that the security guards did not trust them. One of them said,

In fact, the guards are protecting us, especially the female teachers but from the way they look at us, I feel more controlled than protected.

The findings indicated that the inmates were not learning at a level that was required as they usually missed or interrupted classes because of head counting and relatives' visits. The work assigned by the institution was another hindrance for inmates to get additional support in the form of tutorials. Teachers' reluctance to enter the institution with teaching aids to support

instruction due to frequent and discouraging security checks aggravated the problem. The literature also shows that the procedures of correctional institutions are obstacles to the provision of education in correctional settings. As has been reported by Brazzell et al. (2009), correctional institution procedures negatively affect the provision of education by limiting the movement of inmates and restricting items entering the institutions thereby making instruction in the institutions painful for teachers and inmates.

Challenges related to inmates' behaviour

Participant teachers disclosed in the individual interviews that inmates' behaviour was one of the challenges. The teachers reported unwillingness of inmates to do things as required, inmates' waste of time during breaks and harassment as challenges. To clarify inmates' unwillingness, the teachers in the formal academic programme mentioned that the inmates were often reluctant to do assignments and project work and refused to take notes from lectures as signs of disobedience. Another indicator of inmates' non-compliance with the classroom ground rules was the unnecessary delay after breaks. One of the teachers expressed his observation as follow:

The bell often rings signaling the end of the break, yet our students act as if they didn't hear it. We also remind them that they should go back to their classes; they do not listen and care.

For these teachers, inmates were generally not willing to do what they were expected to as students. On the other hand, the teachers stated that because of the nature of the setting, they were unable to take disciplinary measures. One of the female teachers said,

There are some inmates who threaten to kill us by drawing their hand across their neck in a cutthroat motion ... imagine, this happens in the middle of teaching. So ...um... we are not free, you know (*she bent her head and was playing with her fingers*).

The teachers, both males and females, reported that they were not free and safe to act in any way in response to the condition of inmates. The teachers expressed their helplessness by stating that they would not try to take any measure or report to the concerned body about the misbehaviour believing that emotionally disturbed and hopeless inmates could do anything to hurt them.

All the female teachers also believed that the correctional institution was not convenient for them. According to their views, the correctional institution in general and classrooms in particular were very frightening to them. During the FGD, one of them stated,

We cannot move around in the classroom to check if students are doing their class work as we face different attempts of harassment from inmates while teaching... it is so challenging.

Compared to their male counterparts, all female teachers reflected that generally working in the correctional institution was uncomfortable both in and outside of classroom. One of the female teachers added the following:

Our burden is heavier than that of male teachers. We fear to move from our class [room] to the principals' office let alone come any time to provide additional support to our students. Giving class work and moving around to see how students are doing is unthinkable. We usually go out together in a group as moving alone for a female is dangerous in the correctional institutions.

From the findings related to behaviours of inmates, two issues emerged: inmates' disobedience to schoolwork requirements and their attempts of harassment on female teachers. It is possible to infer that inmates' disobedience emanated from inmates' lack of interest to learn as some of them might come to class for attendance which in turn could guarantee parole. Their low interest might also have occurred due to the unattractive nature of the school, the irrelevance and inapplicability of contents which were aggravated by lack of resources, and the poor methods and approaches followed by the teachers. These factors generally affected the quality of the teaching and learning in the correctional institution because for effective instruction to occur teachers should feel psychologically free while teaching. In addition to its psychological impact on the female teachers themselves, the lack of safety coupled with limited movement, negatively affected the instruction as teachers should move around and see what their students were doing in their classrooms. This clearly made teaching difficult in such a setting. Hence, it is logical to say that teaching in the correctional institution demands unique capabilities to deal with the circumstances. According to Thompson (1996), teaching in such an institution needs "vigilance, imagination, courage and taking the trouble to be free" (as cited in Behan, 2007, p. 167).

Challenges related to the resources and facilities

The resources the teacher and inmate participants listed as lacking include textbooks, chairs, science kits and other teaching aids. The teachers stated that lack of textbooks forced inmates to be dependent on teachers as a source of knowledge. The same notion was reflected by inmates. They asserted that the shortage of textbooks made them rely only on what are covered by the teachers and prevented them from reading more on issues covered during class time.

Both teacher and inmate respondents reported that shortage of chairs in the classroom was another challenge affecting the instructional process directly. The inmates stated that limited chairs compared to the large class size made the teaching and learning challenging. This problem was also reported to have created inconvenience to inmates. One of the inmates said:

Sometimes three to five of us sit on a chair prepared for not more than two people. In such a situation, we have to keep our balance not to fall. You can imagine the difficulty of taking notes and listening attentively to what the teachers say.

Concerning the availability of facilities, the formal teachers and inmates reported the absence of a laboratory and fields for physical exercise, as well as underutilization of the library which contained a collection of obsolete books. Teachers expressed their concern that inmates' competence in subjects that require experiments might be negatively affected. A similar concern was reflected by all the research participants with regard to a library. According to the participants, although there was a library in the correctional institution, it had hardly any books to supplement the subjects being taught in their classes. Moreover, the inmates claimed that the time of the library service is too short for most of them to sit and study there. Another concern raised by the teachers and inmates was the inexistence of fields for physical exercise. One of the teachers who was teaching sport in the formal academic programme said,

Since we don't have fields to work physical exercises on, most of the time, we cover theoretical topics in the classroom without properly practising it.

In addition, teachers, facilitators and students generally believed that their classrooms were dirty and unattractive. According to one of the inmates, the crowdedness of classrooms and lack of water to take shower made their classes unattractive. He said:

There are up to 50 students in the classroom; it is overcrowded. What is worse is that we are not taking showers as needed as there is no relevant facility.

From the participants' reflections in this study, it is possible to say that most of the problems facing the institutions occurred due to the limited budget allocated to correctional education which was mainly because of the lack of attention from the concerned bodies as well as the conflicting roles of correctional institution: security and rehabilitation. The findings of various studies go in line with what was found in this study (cf. Barringer-Brown, 2015; Diseth, Eikeland, Manger, & Hetland, 2008). A study by Brazzell et al. (2009) also showed that correctional institutions exceptionally face resource shortages resulting from lack of an adequate budget for the programme.

Challenges related to the curriculum

As reported by teachers in the formal academic programme, inmates were learning based on the curriculum prepared for younger students. During the FGD, teachers in the formal academic programme boldly noted that the formal curriculum is not appropriate for inmates. The teachers explained that inmates wanted to focus on limited contents relevant to their lives unlike what was in the curriculum. One of the teachers argued as follows:

We cannot implement what is in the curriculum properly as these people are older and the condition they are in is different.

Inmates also have some reservations about the contents of their lessons and the way their teachers treat them. One of the inmates in the formal academic programme stated,

Apart from science, Amharic and Mathematics, other subjects are not as such relevant to our lives and we always ask our teachers to focus on those but they don't listen to us.

On the other hand, both the formal teachers and FAL facilitators believed that given the flexibility of schedule, the relevance of contents and the orientation of the people who taught in the programme, the FAL programme was more appropriate to inmates than the formal academic programme. However, for one of the FAL facilitators who himself was an inmate the FAL programme was not entirely needs-based regardless of its being preferable to inmates, . He further mentioned that it would be more relevant if the felt needs of inmates were considered in designing the programme.

This study found that the formal academic programme was especially problematic for inmates as it was designed for primary school students. As a result, inmates in the formal academic programme were not interested and ready enough to grasp the contents. One of the reasons behind this might be the curriculum itself as it was not designed based on their needs both as inmates and adults. The findings also revealed that the way the contents were selected and organized, the approach teachers used to deliver instruction, the way the teachers interacted with inmates were all inappropriate and at odds with the age of inmates and with the principles of adult learning. The findings contradict with what scholars have suggested with regard to what curriculum and approach should be used for adults (cf. Biswalo, 2011; Langelid, Maki, Raundrup, & Svensson, 2009; Ültanır & Ültanır, 2010; Warner, 2007). For instance, Langelid et al. (2009) argue that the curriculum provided for inmates should consider their age and social expectations. This implies the importance of conducting needs assessment on what and how to provide education and training in a correctional setting. Similarly, according to Biswalo (2011,) assessing the educational needs of inmates before designing programmes has various benefits as it not only develops the sense of ownership of inmates towards the programme but also enables the facilitator to “make exclusions and inclusions in the programme content based on the degree of the participants' knowledge” (p. 77)

Challenges related to sanitation and school attractiveness

Formal teachers, FAL facilitators and inmates raised the unattractiveness of the school and their classrooms as a challenge. All participants affirmed that the school in general and the classrooms in particular were full of dust and bad smells. For instance, one of the teachers reflected, “The bad smell in and around the class is so disturbing”. The inmates believed that the crowdedness of the classrooms and lack of water around cells aggravated the problem. The teachers also reported the sanitation in their work area affected them adversely. One of the teachers complained,

While teaching, I see the inmates struggling with fleas in classrooms. We teachers are also facing the same problem in the class.

Similarly, another teacher explained that the cough and flu affected the education provision as it forced inmates to be absent as a result and sometimes forces her to interrupt instruction in the classroom until all inmates finished coughing.

Based on the findings, it could be said that the condition in the class such as dust and overcrowdedness as well as the lack of hygiene on the part of inmates affected the effective provision of education in the case institution. The negative impact on education occurs as inmates are forced to stay in their cells until they get well, and it also makes the teachers to interrupt instruction now and then.

Challenges related to monitoring and evaluation

It was learnt from head of the ICBM that Woreda (district) education office and city administration education office were main bodies responsible for the school in the institution. One of the teachers, also the principal of the school in the case correctional institution, confirmed that these offices were supposed to support and follow-up the school. The participants reported that, although these bodies hire teachers, provide materials, facilities, and training when appropriate, there was a problem of closely following up the programme and taking actions with regard to fulfilling facilities. One of the teachers mentioned:

...city and *Woreda* education offices are the ones which allocate budget, provide necessary materials and guidance to improve the provision of education. But they are not as such close to see how we are doing and what we need so as to improve our education. Rather, they usually demand that we have to provide quality education, but the question is “how?” In fact, people from the city education office come and try to supervise our work, identify gaps and give us training with other school teachers in the Woreda, but for us it is not enough. This school is poor and needs more attention, unlike many other schools outside.

Teachers claimed that the school in the correctional institution was not given attention by the concerned bodies. The teachers further stated that they were not invited to ongoing professional training to enhance their skills like teachers in other schools which according to them clearly showed the lack of attention given to correctional institutions. The inmates also reported that except for the ICBM officer and the principal, they had never seen other officials who came and asked them how they were doing. One of the inmates said that they were told by the principal and teachers that most of their questions could be answered by people in the woreda education office as they are the ones with the power and capacity but he said,

They [people from the woreda and the city administration education offices] don't usually visit us and are not responsive to our questions we report to the supervisor.

With regard to the reasons behind lack of closer follow-up from the Woreda and city administration education offices, one of the teachers guessed that they might fear to come and see what was going on in the correctional schools. She said,

In my long experience, I have not seen responsible officials coming from education offices to visit the institution. I am sure these people are afraid or are uncomfortable when they come here. Yet, they are the ones most responsible for the well-being of this school.

Another teacher recalled one moment when a supervisor came to see how teachers were teaching. The teacher said that supervisor tried to give them support on methods of teaching, portfolio preparation and other issues, but his help was insignificant compared to the complexity of the problems faced by the school which needed the intervention of higher officials.

From the views of the participants, it was learnt that except those with minimal mandate, the concerned bodies with potential impact on improving the condition in the correctional institution were not seriously following up what was going on in the school. Given the complex problems faced in the delivery of correctional education in the institution related to fulfilling materials and facilities and making working there conducive to teachers, the participation and support from the woreda and the city administration was found to be inadequate. This happened because those people in charge in those offices merely assumed the provision of education as a privilege to inmates. Moreover, the people in education offices were either afraid or were tired of passing through security procedures to enter a correctional institution to monitor and evaluate the teaching- learning process.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings obtained, it is concluded that the majority of challenges faced in the case correctional institution happened as a result of inadequate attention and conflicting missions of the correctional institution (security and rehabilitation) and the tendency of prioritizing security over rehabilitation. Based on the findings, this study recommends the following suggestions. First, Regional Education Bureau and Regional Justice Bureau should consider correctional education as one of priority agenda. To do so, they should make sure to allocate an adequate budget for the institution to ensure fulfillment of educational materials and facilities and make continuous follow-ups on educational programmes in the setting to take remedial action in time. Second, the Regional Education Bureau, Justice Bureau, the Regional Commission for Correctional Centres as well as the Woreda and City Administration should work together and partner with higher learning institutions and schools to alleviate shortages in resources and facilities. Third, in order to alleviate problems teachers face related to procedures, they need to be consulted and be part of the decisions made particularly when it affects education provisions. Fourth, to meet the needs of inmates, experts in regional education bureaus need to be consulted to revisit the existing curriculum in the formal academic programme to make the necessary amendments or perhaps design a different curriculum for correctional services education. Finally, in order to attract potential teachers and make those already working there stay for long, incentives in the form of additional payment or opportunity for further education might be sought.

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