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## **Education Behind Bars: Program Effectiveness and Rehabilitation Outcomes in Two Indian Prisons**

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### **Abstract**

The present paper aims to dissect the impacts of the correctional educational programs, including learning outcomes, psychological well being, and rehabilitation throughout the Adult Literacy, IGNOU/NIOS, and Library Programs conducted by India Vision Foundation, and to compare the results based on the demographic factors including region and gender. A mixed-method cross-sectional design was employed with 140 respondents, collected from two North Indian prisons – which will be referred to throughout the paper as Prison A and Prison B for confidentiality – being selected through purposive sampling. 128 responses were used in the quantitative analysis, while 127 responses were considered in the qualitative analysis. Descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha, and the Mann-Whitney U Test were used to analyze quantitative data whereas thematic analysis methods were used to analyze qualitative responses. The results have shown that the participants reported a great improvement in literacy, access to education, psychological well being, vocational and skills development, and personal development as a whole. There were notable regional differences in some of the learning outcomes of some of the programs: those of Prison B stated higher learning outcomes in Adult Literacy and IGNOU/NIOS Programs and those of Prison A reported higher learning effects in Library Use Programs. Qualitative data also show the themes of emotional recovery, institutional support, and identity transformation, and participants repeatedly recounted experiences of greater self-confidence, resilience, optimism, and future planning. These results suggest that guided educational programs that are structured and supported by adequate material resources are a valuable source of rehabilitation and personal development, and correctional education in prison is paramount.

**Keywords:** Correctional Education, Adult Literacy, Distance Learning, Prison Libraries, Incarcerated Learners, Rehabilitation