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ABSTRACT

OLIVER, DOROTHY McMICHAEL. A Brief History and Description of Inmate Education in the North Carolina Department of Correction With an Exploratory study of the ABE and GED Programs in the North Piedmont Area. (1977)
Directed by: Dr. Joseph E. Bryson

The purpose of this exploratory study was to make an evaluation of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Educational Development (GED) programs for felon inmates in the North Piedmont Area of the North Carolina Department of Correction. As part of the classification process, felons are given the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) when they enter the North Carolina prison system. The original WRAT scores of 78 felons enrolled in ABE and GED classes were compared to scores made on the WRAT administered during this study.

Descriptive statistics were used to compare the two sets of WRAT scores, the inmate questionnaires and the teacher questionnaires. The questionnaires examined factors which might have some relationship to the effectiveness of the program, they furnished information to construct a profile of the average ABE and GED teacher in the North Piedmont Area, and they gave both the students and teachers an opportunity to make suggestions for the improvement of the program.

A further objective of the study was to provide, in brief form, historical and descriptive information on the education of inmates in the North Carolina Department of Correction.

An increase of one grade level in any one of the three areas tested: reading, spelling, and arithmetic, was considered a major increase, and the test scores were categorized on this basis. It was found that 62% of the inmates showed major increases in their scores. Eight per cent of this 62% made increases in all three areas, and 40% showed major increases in one area. An additional 19% of the students achieved a 1-7 month increase in their achievement levels. Therefore, 81% made increases in their original scores. Only 10% showed a decrease in original scores.

Further analysis of the scores was made on the factors of age, race, time incarcerated, education, marital status, frequency of transfers, and teacher changes. Age, time incarcerated, and education appeared to be most important in determining increased grade scores.

Based on the questionnaires, the students and teachers agreed on the things which would improve the program: more help from the teacher, more testing to check progress, and a quiet place for the students to study.

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A BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF INMATE EDUCATION
IN THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION
WITH AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE
ABE AND GED PROGRAMS IN THE
NORTH PIEDMONT AREA


by

Dorothy McMichael Oliver

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Approved by



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APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory study was to make an evaluation of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Education Development (GED) programs for felon inmates in the North Piedmont Area of the North Carolina Department of Correction. Since the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), which measures achievement in reading, spelling, and arithmetic, is administered to all felon inmates when they enter the correctional system, it was felt to re-administer the same test would provide a measure of the effectiveness of these programs. The original WRAT scores could then be compared with the new scores. Through the use of a questionnaire to the felon students and the teachers, the study examined factors which might have some relationship to the effectiveness of the programs. The teacher questionnaire requested information which was used to construct a profile of the ABE and GED instructor. A further objective of the study was to provide, in brief form, historical and descriptive information on the education of inmates in the North Carolina Department of Correction.

Definition of Terms

Adult Basic Education (ABE) is a program of instruction in reading, writing, and computation to bring the student's educational level up to the 8th grade.

Conditional Release is a parole granted as a discretionary act whereby a youthful offender is released under specified conditions before he has served his maximum term.

General Education Development (GED) is a program of instruction in high school courses which will enable the student to pass the GED test and be awarded a high school certificate of graduation.

Honor Grade is a level of classification awarded by a discretionary act of the Department of Correction which confers certain privileges as a reward for good behavior. A misdemeanant, one whose offense carries only a 6 month to 2 year sentence, has honor grade conferred automatically upon incarceration. The felon, one whose offense carries a sentence of 4 years to life, must serve a minimum of one month for every year of his minimum sentence, be without a major infraction within the last three months, and be recommended by a guard, his dorm counselor, and his assignment superior in order to achieve this level of classification.

Level(s) is a series of steps within the honor grade classification. The inmate must be in one level for 60 days before advancing to the next level. Each level has its

special privileges.

Mutual Agreement Program (MAP) is a contractual agreement between the inmate and the Department of Correction. If the inmate fulfills the contract, he is guaranteed parole on a specified date. This is a federally funded project which is available to a limited number of inmates in the North Piedmont Area of the North Carolina Department of Correction.

Parole is the act of granting release, under certain rules and conditions, when 1/4 or more of the inmate's sentence has been served.

Pre-release and Aftercare is a program designed to prepare the inmate for release and life outside the prison.

Prison Enterprises are state-owned industries which manufacture articles or produce services for state agencies and provide job training for inmates.

Recidivism is the tendency to continue criminal behavior which results in conviction and re-incarceration or revocation of parole.

Study Release is a program which allows an inmate to attend educational institutions off prison grounds without the presence of a guard. The inmate must return to the prison at night.

Work Release is a program which allows an inmate to work in the community during the day but requires that he return to prison at night.

Delimitation of the Study

The testing in this study was limited to the felon inmates participating in ABE and GED programs in the North Piedmont Area of the North Carolina Department of Correction. The expectation to evaluate the inmate's scores in relation to the time spent in the programs had to be discarded. The North Carolina Department of Correction has only recently provided an educational folder for the inmate who is a student. This becomes part of his permanent record. An attempt to get this information from the inmate proved to be too difficult. The questionnaire was revised to ask for the number of units, correctional housing facilities, on which the inmate attended ABE or GED programs for over a month.

Inmates are classified and housed according to their offenses, their behavior patterns, the work requirements of the state, the proximity of their homes to the installation of unit, and the space available. Consideration of these factors often brings about the transfer of an inmate from one correctional unit to another and from one correctional area to another. The inmate's educational program is interrupted if not stopped by such a transfer.

In this study the units were asked to provide a list of felon inmates presently enrolled in ABE or GED programs. By the date of the test some of the inmates had been transferred and other inmates recently transferred in were sub-

stituted. These inmates had been in the program at another unit. Inmates must volunteer in order to become a part of a research project. While some of the units provided a list of all felon inmates presently participating in an ABE or GED program, others provided only a list of the volunteers. Because of these factors, this study should be considered exploratory.

Prison Education in the United States

In order to understand prison education in North Carolina, a general knowledge of the history of prison education in the United States is necessary. One of the first attempts to provide educational opportunities to prisoners was in 1784 when some instruction was given in the Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia. During the first half of the 1800's, New York and Pennsylvania offered a few elementary courses.¹ The purpose of most of this education was to teach the inmate to read the Bible. Further progress in prison education did not come until the end of the Civil War when the Reformatory Movement was begun.

The First Prison Congress in 1870 issued a "Declara-

¹ Benedict S. Alper, Prisons Inside Out: Alternatives in Correctional Reform, (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1974) p. 82-83.

tion of Principle" which stated that: "...the supreme aim of prison discipline is the reformation of criminals, not the infliction of vindictive punishment."² This philosophy inspired some reform, for in the 1870's a prison school was started at the Detroit House of Correction and a reformatory was begun at Elmira, New York, which offered vocational trade classes. Education was not for filling the hours but for disciplining the mind and teaching the principles and thoughts of good citizenship.³

During 1927-28 Austin H. MacCormick made a survey of correctional education in the United States and found that 13 out of 60 prisons studied did not have any educational programs and that none had made much effort to offer vocational training. MacCormick's conclusion was that reformatory methods were not successful because they were patterned after public schools, had poor teachers, and lacked funds. The recommendations of this study were that educational programs for inmates be individualized, adult programs, which should not be compulsory.⁴

² George B. Vold, "Does the Prison Reform," Prisons in Transformation, American Academy of Political and Social Science, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973) p.43.

³ Albert R. Roberts, "Developmental Perspectives of Correctional Education," American Journal of Correction 1969, XXXI 3, p. 15.

⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

In the 1930's and 1940's federal prisons led in the education of inmates. Approximately 60% of all federal inmates in the 1930's participated in some form of educational program.⁵ Federal institutions started new trends in inmate education and set examples for the states. It was the federal prisons which added social education to help the inmate adjust to his community upon release.⁶ Correspondence courses played a large role in education of inmates in the late 1940's and 1950's, but only a limited amount of college-level work was available through this method.⁷

In the 1960's programmed studies and self-instructional programs were attempts to individualize education for the inmate. Two programs started during this decade, Upward Bound and New Gate, made it possible for inmates to participate in college courses.⁸ In the 1970's the idea was initiated of allowing inmates to receive instruction in community institutions outside the prison system.⁹ Study release programs are now common in many states. It is predicted that

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Alper, op. cit., p. 85.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

25,000 inmates in the United States will be taking college level programs in the near future.¹⁰

Theories of Correction

Today's inmate has benefited from the progressive improvement of man's behavior toward his fellowman. Only a few hundred years ago society punished those who broke its rules and standards by inflicting severe physical punishment in the form of whipping, branding, mutilating, and the ultimate punishment - the death penalty. Reformers replaced these severe practices with the prison sentence, an idea they borrowed from the debtors' prison.¹¹ Imprisonment was not only more humanitarian, but it prevented a person from committing more crimes and protected society. To keep the imprisoned from influencing each other, talking was forbidden.¹² Silence was supposed to enhance the inmates ability to contemplate his position and cause him to repent. Silence was coupled with hard labor to teach the inmate good work habits. When these methods did not reduce crime,

¹⁰
Ibid.

¹¹
Vold, op. cit., p. 42.

¹²
John P. Conrad, "The Need For Prison Reform,"
Current History, August, 1971, p. 1.

new ideas became necessary.

Reformation or rehabilitation became a part of penal theory after the Civil War. Persons imprisoned were considered to be different and in need of treatment.¹³ One method of treatment centered around psychological and sociological problems, and the other method centered around educational and occupational problems.¹⁴ The first utilized the doctor-patient model where the inmate played a subordinate and more or less inactive role. The latter used the teacher-pupil model where progress depended upon the inmates' active participation to remove the deficiencies.

Today a normative theory is being discussed.¹⁵ This theory is based upon the assumption that there isn't anything wrong with the offender. The offender's value system is different, and rewards are used to establish a value system which is acceptable to society.¹⁶ Most prison administrators concede that the inmate society does little to im -

¹³ John P. Conrad, "Program Trends in Correctional Rehabilitation," Research In Correctional Rehabilitation. (Washington, D. C.: Joint Commission On Correctional Manpower and Training, Dec. 1967), p. 9.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁶ Ibid.

17
 prove a value system. There is, therefore, a new trend to reduce the number of offenders committed to penal institutions by keeping them in the outside society under close supervision. Part of this movement also has its basis in economic considerations.¹⁸

Receiving benefits for good behavior in the form of higher status and increased privileges is not new for inmates. What is new is the goal of changing the inmate's value system and thus his behavior by use of rewards. Rewards or positive reinforcers are misused when the following occur:

- the objectives of the program are unethical
- participation is mandatory instead of voluntary
- accomodation supercedes human development as the fundamental goal.¹⁹

Perhaps the treatment model which is used most frequently is that of the teacher-pupil where a direct educational process occurs.

The Role of Prison Education

Complete agreement on the role of prison education

17
 Conrad, "The Need For Prison Reform," p. 91.

18
Legislative Commission on Correctional Programs, Final Report. (Raleigh, N.C.: Feb. 1977) p. 47.

19
 Ralph E. James, Jr., "Contingency Management: Toward a Behavioral Philosophy," Corrections: Problems of Punishment and Rehabilitation, Edward Sagarin, Donald E. J. Mac Namara, eds., (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973) pp.44-45.

has never been reached. In its early form it was directed toward improving the inmate's educational level and teaching a trade or vocation.²⁰

The views of W. R. Stirling are representative of the new concept of the role of education in the penal system. Stirling believes that the main justification for education in the prison system is to help individuals grow as people and that it should not be "a strategy for conversion, re-²¹formation, or treatment." Education should be a drawing out of the person's potential and not a pouring in of cer-²²tain concepts for the purpose of conditioning.

Legislators and citizens tend to view the role of education to be the reduction in the rate of crime and recidivism.

Different Methods of Delivering Educational Programs

Not all programs which deliver educational benefits are structured for that sole purpose. An example is the work release program. This program allows the inmate to

²⁰

Roberts, op. cit., p. 15.

²¹

W. R. Stirling, "The Role of Education in the Penal System," Progress in Penal Reform, Louis Blom Cooper, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974) p. 148.

²²

Ibid.

go out into the community each day to work, but he must return to prison at night. Educational benefits accrue in that the inmate does not lose work skills; and if skills are lacking, training can be implemented to the extent that the necessary skills are developed. The inmates exposure to outside values is a different facet of the unstructure education which comes through the work release program. It reduces the extent of "prizonization" which is the "process of socialization by means of which inmates adopt values and behavior expected of an inmate normative system."²³ The new inmate has to adjust to inmate society to survive; therefore, willingly or unwillingly, the inmate undergoes the prizonization process. Work release reduces his contact with the inmate society and the effects of this process.

Another method of delivering educational programs is through job training. State prison systems try to function as self-supporting agencies. To accomplish this industries are set up which not only provide an opportunity for job training but also provide services and materials for state agencies. Inmates receive short periods of instruction in job skills which are followed by on-the-job application of

²³ George Miller Britton, "Correctional Facility Inmate Rule Violation As a Function of Opportunity Structure," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1974., p. 19.

these skills. On-the-job training is also available in service occupations and industries and in agricultural and animal husbandry occupations.²⁴

Study release came from the concept of work release. Qualified inmates are allowed to participate as fulltime students at community educational institutions during the day. Like work release inmates, they must return to prison at night. Technical, vocational, and college courses are pursued under study release.

Programmed study where the inmate advances at his own rate through materials prepared for self-study are commonly used in ABE and GED programs. Some inmates are allowed to participate in correspondence courses on the high school and college level.²⁵ Usually, these methods of study are carried out on the prison grounds after the day's work is completed.

There are also programs to meet the spiritual and social needs of the inmate. These afford a certain amount of instruction. An example of spiritual instruction is church services conducted at the prison usually by volunteer min-

²⁴ North Carolina Prison Department, Prison Enterprises. (Mimeographed, undated) p. 13-16.

²⁵ North Carolina Division of Prisons, "Educational Services," c. 1975, p. 49.

isters from the outside. In some states the Yokefellow organization, a volunteer, interdenominational group, provides Christian fellowship and ministry to the inmates several hours each week.²⁶ Social instruction is found in pre-release and aftercare programs in which the inmate is prepared for outside society and its problems. A few community organizations, such as the Jaycees, sponsor chapters on the prison grounds for inmates.²⁷ From time to time outside volunteers present dramas or concerts for the inmates.

These examples present an overview of the methods and programs used to educate inmates. In order to participate in these educational opportunities, the inmate must meet certain qualifications. Some prison installations and units do not offer any educational programs. Others give the inmate a wide choice of educational methods and programs.

²⁶ Yokefellow Prison Ministry of North Carolina, "Training Manual for Volunteers," Winston Salem, N. C., Yokefellow Prison Ministry of North Carolina, Inc., P.O. Box 10094, undated, p. 8.

²⁷ North Carolina Department of Correction, Program Services. c. 1975.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

General History of Prison Education in North Carolina

The early history of the North Carolina prison system does not show that there were any educational programs or opportunities for inmates. It does reveal information concerning punishment, the length of sentences, and working conditions of inmates.

North Carolina's Constitution of 1868 listed four crimes for which the death penalty could be inflicted: arson, murder, rape, and burglary. Prison sentences, however, were generally short being only one to three years in length. The maximum sentence was for seven years.¹

According to the Superintendent of the State Prison System for 1907-08, prisoners were condemned "to unremitting toil and unendurable hardships, only to be worn out and buried within a few months, or at most in a few years."²

¹ Jesse Steimer and Roy M. Brown, The North Carolina Chain Gang. University of North Carolina Social Studies Series (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1927) p. 13.

² Ibid., p. 40.

The Superintendent made an appeal for the abolishment of the chain gang. Rehabilitation during this period appears to have existed only in the minds of the reformers who asked for longer prison sentences in order to carry out their programs.

In 1927 Jesse Steimer and Roy M. Brown wrote The North Carolina Chain Gang in which the living conditions of the inmates were studied. The study revealed that 74% of the prison population which was studied did not have enough education to read a newspaper. The authors concluded that "No thought is given to education of the illiterate or to the reformation of those not yet hardened to crime."³

A 1960 study made by Merrill, Sommerfeld, and Eason on prisoner education in North Carolina shows that formal instruction was not begun until 1942 when the Goldsboro Youth Center offered several evening high school courses. The Youth Center at Ulmstead started some elementary, high school and literacy evening classes in 1949. Literacy classes and elementary classes were added at Goldsboro in 1952. Food service classes started at Central Prison in 1955, with brick masonry classes being added in 1956. Waitress training became available for women in 1957 and domestic instruction in 1960. Trade math courses started

³ Ibid., p. 10.

at Central Prison in 1958, and in the same year instruction in livestock management and field crops was initiated at Caledonia. A large expansion of the literacy program came in 1958 when it was extended to 20 field units and to 16 additional field units in 1959.⁴

The authors of the above report found three kinds of efforts being made to further prisoners' education: vocational classes to carefully selected prisoners, education for the general prisoner, and education classes in 36 field units staffed by part-time instructors. Most of the instruction was given on Saturday morning on the inmates' free time. They also found that on-the-job instruction or work assignments stressed production instead of education. The general conclusion of the study was that the educational offerings were minimal and reached only a few inmates, that the courses were of short duration and were not as important as filling the requirements for prison labor.⁵

In contrast to the study of Steimer and Brown in 1927, Merrill, Sommerfeld, and Eason in their 1960 study found

⁴ E. C. Merrill, Roy Sommerfeld, and Fred Eason, Prisoner Education in North Carolina: A Report and Recommendations. School of Education, The University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: October 3, 1960) Chart IV.

⁵ Ibid., p. 12

that one-third of the prison population had prison sentences of ten years or more.⁶ The inmates who were less than twenty-five years of age generally had three more years of school than the older inmates. Only 3% of the whites were illiterate and only 8.3% of the blacks were illiterate.⁷

North Carolina General Statute 148-22.1 states that educational priority should be given to inmates who are less than 21 years of age when received in the prison system and who have a sentence or sentences not less than six months nor more than five years before becoming eligible for parole. Federal funds have helped North Carolina in this pursuit.

ESEA, Title I in 1974 and 1975 provided funds to meet educational needs of inmates under 21 years of age in basic reading, communication, and mathematical skills. During these two years, the average daily attendance in such classes was approximately 1,100 in the North Carolina prison system.⁸ Federal funds also helped North Carolina buy vocational training equipment and materials to increase the educational opportunities of inmates. There are several other

⁶ Ibid., Chart II.

⁷ Ibid., p. 9.

⁸ North Carolina Division of Prisons. Educational Services. (mimeographed, c. 1975) p. 24.

examples of the impact of Federal funding on inmate education. "Outreach to Inmates Program" is a correspondence course on the college level which is made possible under the Higher Education Act of 1965.⁹ This program began in North Carolina in 1973, and since then 178 new enrollments have been reported. Out of this number 93 withdrew, but 34 completed their courses. Inmates from 21 institutions participated in these courses.¹⁰ An Econo-College for inmates was begun in 1975. This is a program sponsored by the Extension Division of the University of North Carolina and funded by Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Prisons. It allows the inmate who is not eligible for study release to participate in college correspondence courses and college courses held on prison grounds. In the period of a year,¹¹ 35 inmates participated in this program.

In addition to the above programs, Federal funds under the Law and Order Assistance Act, Title I (omnibus Crime Control and Safe Street Act of 1968) made it possible for the Department of Correction and the Department of Community Colleges to develop a core curriculum of academic, vocational, and personal development to meet the needs of inmates who are quite often moved from one unit to another

⁹ Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 50.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 51.

interrupting their educational opportunities. The following briefly states the framework of this core curriculum:

- A) Basic Education - Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Science, Social Studies (8th grade level and below)
- B) High School Equivalency Program (for GED test) - Social Studies, Natural Sciences, Literature, General Mathematics, Correctness and Effectiveness of Expression (9th grade up)
- C) Social Education - Human Relations, Self-improvement, Family Relationships, Personal Finances.

Electives - History, music, crafts, etc.
 Drug Program
 Alcohol Abuse Awareness

- D) 18 Vocational Programs
 - Vocational Reading Improvement
 - Welding
 - Food Preparation
 - Auto Body Repair
 - Electrical Wiring
 - Brick Masonry
 - Small Engine and Equipment Repair
 - Carpentry
 - Plumbing
 - Air Conditioning, Heating, Refrigeration
 - Upholstry, Furniture Refinishing
 - Secretarial Skills
 - Cosmetology
 - Electronics Servicing
 - Industrial Servicing
 - Machine Repair
 - Heavy Equipment Operation
- E) Physical Education - to teach fundamentals of several sports. 12

¹²
 Ibid., p. 28.

This core curriculum is merely a guide for units. It does not follow that an inmate enrolled in a brick masonry class at one unit could be transferred and expect to be able to pick up his program. What educational opportunities are available at a unit is generally the decision of that unit's superintendent.

According to the following, the purpose of the North Carolina prison system is corrective:

North Carolina General Statute 148-22

(a) The general policies, rules and regulations of the Department of Correction shall provide for humane treatment of prisoners and for programs to effect their correction and return to the community as promptly as practicable ...

(b) The Department of Correction may cooperate with and seek the cooperation of public and private agencies, institutions, officials, and individuals in development and conduct of programs designed to give persons committed to the Department opportunities for physical, mental and moral improvement ...

To state a philosophy for an institution is one thing, but to translate it into goals and programs is a difficult task. The two goals of the Program Services sector in the North Carolina Department of Correction are the successful re-entry of the inmate into the community and labor force and his successful readjustment to the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.

13
North Carolina Department of Correction. Program Services. (mimeographed, c. 1973).

This researcher has not found a program specifically designed to increase the inmate's awareness of the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship. Not all inmates are chosen for pre-release classes where they are briefly reminded of their citizenship. Inmates are stripped of their citizenship privileges and are subjected to complete control. Even the privileges they work for by exhibiting improved behavior are awarded at the discretion of the system. Trying to teach citizenship responsibilities and privileges in a prison system is known, in prison literature, as Alec Paterson's perpetual paradox - "You cannot train men for freedom in conditions of captivity."¹⁴

The right to petition or file a grievance, a United States' citizen's right under the First Amendment of the Constitution, is a recent attempt to democratize the North Carolina correctional system. There is a North Carolina Inmate Grievance Commission which will consider inmate grievances after they have been channelled through the prison system. If inmates are not subjected to harrassment when grievances are filed; and if the petitions bring constructive results, the new system of handling inmate complaints has the potential for teaching both the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.

¹⁴ Hugh J. Klare, ed., Changing Concepts of Crime and Its Treatment. (London: Pergamon Press, 1966) p. 160.

Vocational and educational programs have been developed to assist the inmate in making a successful re-entry into the community and labor force. One such program is work release.

Work Release in North Carolina

The work release idea originated in Wisconsin in 1956 when the Huber Law allowed county jail inmates to continue their regular employment.¹⁵ North Carolina's work release program began in 1957 with only eight inmates. By 1973 an all time high of 1,900 inmates participated in the program. The recent recession has caused the number to drop by several hundred.¹⁶ A person receiving a sentence of five years or less, who is considered to be a minimum security risk, has a job, and has the sentencing judge's recommendation, can be put on work release almost immediately. However, if sentenced to five or more years, the person is not considered for work release until 15% of the term has been served and the inmate has achieved honor grade.¹⁷

¹⁵ Southeastern Correctional and Criminological Research Center, Description of North Carolina Work Release Program and Pre-Release Program. (Tallahassee: Florida State University, undated) p. 1.

¹⁶ Anne D. Witte, "Work Release in North Carolina State Prisons," Popular Government. (Winter, 1976) p. 32.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 33.

A 1968 study made by Cooper found that of a sample of 100 North Carolina inmates on work release 70%¹⁸ felt their jobs would make them less likely to recidivate. The Witte study of the North Carolina work release program did not find work release inmates less likely to recidivate. Eighty-two per cent of the work release group studied was arrested in contrast to 78% of the group not on work release. The important difference between these two groups was that the former work release inmates committed less serious crimes than before while the non-work release inmates committed more serious crimes than before.¹⁹

Cooper's study found that 92% of the work release employers would be more inclined to hire an ex-inmate who had been on work release.²⁰ Work release not only provides the ex-inmate with a reference for a future job, but it gives the opportunity to maintain work skills, and provide financial support to the family. After release, those who had been on work release were found to have higher wages, more stable job records, and lower unemployment records than those

¹⁸ William Douglas Cooper, "An Economic Analysis of the Work-Release Program in North Carolina," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1968. p. 24.

¹⁹ Witte, op. cit., p. 34.

²⁰ Cooper, op. cit., p. 24.

who did not participate in the work release program.²¹ Being able to work in the free society requires the inmate to exercise self-discipline. The inmate must also make decisions without assistance. Cooper considered the above to be reasons for preferring work release for inmates rather than prison enterprise work.

Cooper constructed a profile of the average work release inmate. This person is about 34 years old, has some high school or trade school training, was employed most of the time he was not in prison, has never received unemployment insurance, has a strong feeling of responsibility toward the family, is a low-skilled worker and earned \$251.00 more per year on work release than the \$3,169.00 he made prior to his imprisonment.²²

The main objective of Cooper's study was to make an economic analysis of the work release program in North Carolina. This study determined that the free society pays 74.4% of an inmate's incarceration costs in contrast to none of the costs of the inmate on work release.²³ Since the work release program financially benefits the state, Cooper

²¹ Witte, op. cit., p. 36.

²² Cooper, op. cit., pp. 41-42

²³ Ibid., p. 32.

suggested that it be used more extensively. Administrators, however, are cautious in selecting the inmates for the program, too cautious in Cooper's judgment.

Work activity carried on within the prison system, primarily through prison enterprises, appears to be less constructive for the inmate and the state. Cooper also found it to be more costly. Its controlled atmosphere with discipline imposed from the outside weakens the exercise of self-discipline, and its lack of contact with the outside society strengthens the bad effects of the prison society. Its low wages do not provide the proper incentive for good work habits.²⁴

Prison Enterprises in North Carolina

North Carolina Correctional Enterprises have multiple purposes. They are to help reduce the costs of government by providing services and materials to state agencies and to provide an opportunity for inmates to receive on-the-job training and work experience. There are some 20 industries and several inmate services which comprise the North Carolina Correctional Enterprises. These industries manufacture paints, soaps, signs, metal and wood products, and

²⁴
Ibid., p. 24.

make uniforms. They process meat and food products raised by inmates on state farms, provide laundry services for the system, and carry out a forestry program. Only state agencies using tax funds can purchase these services or products.²⁵

There are many critics of the prison enterprise system. Inmates, labor unions, industry and even prison administrators are critical of its operation.²⁶ In the prison industries, the inmate works in a controlled environment where the incentive to produce is missing for there is only a token wage. North Carolina Statute 148-18 states that the maximum wage for an inmate working in a state agency is \$1.00 per day. The inmate making \$1.00 or less a day feels exploited but finds little sympathy for his problems exists in the free society. The Board of Trustees of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, however, advocates legislation to raise the pay of anyone working in a federal, state or local institution to no less than the minimum wage.²⁷

²⁵ North Carolina Prison Department, Prison Enterprises. (Mimeographed, undated) p. 13-16.

²⁶ Richard McGee, "Saving Prison Waste," Prisons in Transformation. Thorsten Sellin, ed., (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1973) p. 61.

²⁷ Alper, op. cit., p. 82.

Labor unions and industry have unfavorable attitudes about prison labor and prison enterprises. One state, California, set up a commission in 1947 to develop a plan whereby labor unions and industry could provide advice on the operation of the state's prison enterprises. Committees were formed to determine markets for the enterprises and to help the enterprises deliver a higher standard of vocational instruction to the inmates.

A 1960 study of prison education in North Carolina drew the conclusion that filling prison labor quotas came before education and that courses connected with job training were of short duration. The North Carolina Bar Association's report on the North Carolina penal system suggested that a study should be made to determine whether prison industries are "being fully utilized as a portion of the entire correctional concept." Even correctional administrators would like to have prison industries re-evaluated. In the First (and only) Annual Conference on Corrections in North Carolina March 26-27, 1975, it was recommended that

²⁸
McGee, op. cit.

²⁹
Merrill, Sommerfeld, Eason, op. cit., p. 12.

³⁰
North Carolina Bar Association, "Interim Report of the North Carolina Penal System Study Committee," Special Reprint (Raleigh, North Carolina: March, 1974) p. 15.

"consideration be given to the changing and relocation of prison industries to better fit the rehabilitation of inmates."³¹

Study Release in North Carolina

The study release program in North Carolina began in 1968. In order to be eligible for study release the inmate must be honor grade, level 4, and housed at a minimum security installation. In addition, the educational prerequisites in the course of study must be met. Courses could consist of learning labs, on-the-job training, sheltered workshops, evening programs, and courses at technical institutes, colleges, and universities.³² There are a variety of ways the inmate's educational program may be financed. If a veteran, the inmate can receive educational benefits under the GI Bill, or the inmate may qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation funding, or the inmate's family may provide the funds necessary for program. This researcher has not been able to find a report on study release and its effects on recidivism rates in North Carolina.

³¹ North Carolina Department of Correction, "First Annual Conference on Corrections in North Carolina - March 26-27, 1975," Raleigh, North Carolina. p. 27.

³² North Carolina Division of Prisons, "Educational Services," (mimeographed c. 1975) p.2.

Information from the Research and Evaluation Department of the North Carolina Department of Correction shows that 69 inmates or .54% of the average inmate population participated in study release in 1974-75. One hundred and twenty-nine inmates or .99% participated in 1975-76. It is projected that by 1978-79 1% of the average inmate population will be participating in this program.³³ Another report from this same department covering study release from January 1, 1976, to September 21, 1976, shows 585 inmates participating as full-time students and 355 as part-time students. Approximately 70% of each of these groups was removed from the program for various reasons. Only 272 of the original 940 remained in the program at the end of the year.³⁴

Other Inmate Educational Programs in North Carolina

A few community organizations, such as the Jaycees, sponsor chapters on prison units. The existence of these chapters gives the inmates a chance to exercise leadership, to develop social skills, to be a part of a construc-

³³ North Carolina Department of Correction - Research and Evaluation Department, "Statistical Data in Support of the Budget FY 77-79 Biennial Report," Worksheet. Undated, unnumbered.

³⁴ Ibid.

tive group, and to enjoy fellowship of people having similar interests.

In 1970 an outside volunteer group called Yokefellow Prison Ministry of North Carolina, Inc., began its services to inmates at Caldwell and Iredell County Prison Units. The first Yokefellow group in the nation was started in 1952 at the United States Penitentiary at McNeil Island, Washington. The inspiration and momentum for this movement came from Dr. D. Elton Trueblood, a theologian and philosopher.
35

The following are the objectives of the North Carolina Yokefellows:

1. To help serve the needs of residents in correctional and penal institutions.
2. To bridge the gulf between persons confined and those in the outside community.
3. To demonstrate a continuing concern for offenders who are in the process of reintegration into community life.
4. To cooperate in the establishment and operations of local community-sponsored "halfway" residential house facilities.
5. To minister to persons on parole or probation and to support and offer fellowship to those persons who are involved in services to persons confined in city and county jails.
6. To initiate cooperative efforts to meet the needs of inmates and their families.
7. To participate in programs designed to improve correctional methods.

35
Yokefellow Prison Ministry of North Carolina, "Training Manual For Volunteers," op. cit., p. 5.

8. To bear concern for decisions made by those responsible for the policies and procedures of rehabilitative efforts.

36

In addition to the above-stated objectives, male Yokefellows, as can other approved citizens, sponsor inmates on leaves from prison for the purpose of finding jobs and housing in preparation for parole or just for recreational purposes. These passes are six hours in length, and prison administrators must approve the activities in which the inmate will participate during this period.

A paroled inmate is subject to a short period of exhilaration upon release, but soon the problems of everyday living which have been handled by the prison system are now his. The inmate must readjust to the family, and if married, must assume more responsibility for its welfare. To get the inmate ready for this responsibility some states have created programs which instruct the inmate in ways to seek solutions to problems. These pre-release and after-care programs acquaint the inmate with community organizations which provide assistance after release. The pre-release program has been shortened drastically since its inception in 1968. The program is now only 4 weeks long. Topics covered in this course are self awareness, family relations, community re-

36
Yokefellow Prison Ministry of North Carolina,
"Membership Card".

relationships, family planning and the cost of raising children, marriage, handling marital and family conflicts, and role expectations in the family.³⁷

All inmates are not eligible to attend this program. The inmate must be within 90 days of his release date, and be infraction-free within the three months prior to enrolling in the program. If chosen, the inmate does not have to accept the program, and he can drop out at any time. A counselor is available during pre-release and during parole. After parole the offender can continue to receive counseling service from the program's counselors for a year.³⁸

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill supervises the Outreach to Inmates Program which delivers especially designed courses to inmates and handles college level correspondence courses. The Econo-College conducts on-site courses and makes it possible for some honor-grade inmates to attend courses in community institutions.³⁹ An inmate must be a high school graduate or hold a GED certificate in order to participate in correspondence courses

³⁷ Ann Sjoerdsma, "Prison Inmates Tutored For Freedom," High Point Enterprise, 1 August 1976, p. 2D.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 1D.

³⁹ North Carolina Division of Prisons, Educational Services. (Mimeographed, c. 1975) p. 52.

for college credit. One hundred college courses are offered for credit or non-credit along with non-credit courses in remedial English and math.⁴⁰

A description of the educational programs and opportunities available to North Carolina inmates does not give an indication of effectiveness. Mistakenly or not, the recidivism rate is frequently used as a standard for evaluating rehabilitation programs.

Recidivism and Correctional Problems in North Carolina

Since the goal or objective of all rehabilitation programs is to prevent future criminal activity, many look at the recidivism rate and draw the conclusion that programs are of little value. A person can become a recidivist in many ways. Upon serving the maximum period of the sentence, a person can be released only to commit another crime which will require a new sentence. A person can also be released on parole or conditional release without having served the maximum time, but will be required to live under certain rules. If the rules are broken, the inmate will be returned to finish the previous sentence and will be counted as a recidivist.

⁴⁰ North Carolina Department of Correction, "Outreach To Inmates: Study For College Credit Through Correspondence Instruction," (Information sheet for inmates).

The requirements under which a person must live while on parole are not the same in all state penal systems; therefore, a person can be re-incarcerated in one state for a violation which would not be one in another state. The National Parole Institute gathers information on parole systems and currently has 32 systems reporting to it. This institute has found that even when the same definition for recidivism is used they are each granting parole to a different kind of person. Parole Boards are not agreed on what constitutes good parole material.⁴¹

A study made of North Carolina inmates paroled, unconditionally released, and conditionally released from January - June, 1968, showed an overall recidivism rate of approximately 45%.⁴² This study covered inmates returned to custody within four years of their release date. Service defined a recidivist as "a person who, after release from a facility of the North Carolina Department of Correction, is returned to the custody of that Department".⁴³ It was

⁴¹ Don G. Gottfredson, "Current Information Bases for Evaluating Correctional Programs," Research in Correctional Rehabilitation, Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training (Washington, D. C.: December, 1967) p. 32.

⁴² Philip M. Service, "The Recidivism of Persons Released From Facilities of the North Carolina Department of Correction During January-June, 1968," (Raleigh, North Carolina Department of Correction, December, 1972) p. 21.

⁴³ Ibid.

found that the type of release and the age of the inmate are significant factors in determining recidivism. During this period 4,338 inmates were released unconditionally, 920 were released on parole, and 450 were released conditionally. Unconditionally released inmates are significantly less likely to become recidivists. The younger a person was when first arrested or convicted or released, the more likely he will become a recidivist. The younger a person was when he left school produces the same result.⁴⁴ Inmates with 9-11 years of education are less likely to be recidivists than those have more education or less education.⁴⁵ This study was carried out by Guze.

Thinking that it will prevent crime, the public often demands longer sentences for offenders. Politicians are aware that taking the same stand on crime will win votes. However, a study by Alper found that most men who do not recidivate agree that if there was any benefit to imprisonment it came within the first few years. Alper points out that four-fifths of the serious crimes are committed by people who have already served time.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 101.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 105.

⁴⁶ Alper, op. cit., p. 17.

Alper also draws attention to the fact that the United States has the longest sentences and yet one of the highest crime rates in the world.⁴⁷

As stated before, all persons released from prison who commit another crime are counted in the recidivism rate which is quite often used as a standard for evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs; however, not all inmates have had the opportunity to participate in educational programs. Those who have participated are less likely to become recidivists. If trained and placed in an appropriate job, the inmates receiving this benefit are two to three time less likely to recidivate than those who did not.⁴⁸

Penal systems are educational institutions in which good influences and bad influences compete. If prison culture works against rehabilitation programs, there are also other problems in the penal system which work against the effectiveness of programs.

Penal systems operate with insufficient, under-trained, and under-paid staff. The national standard is one staff member for each six inmates. The North Carolina correction-

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

⁴⁸ Britton, op. cit., p. 29.

al system in 1975 had one staff member for every thirty⁴⁹ inmates. Overcrowding is another problem which is found in most states. In North Carolina the correctional facilities which were built to house 10,164 were housing 12,952 in⁵⁰ April 1975. Bullpens or dormitories are frequently used instead of individual, private cells. This creates opportunities for inmates to commit crimes against each other.

All inmates should be classified to determine their mental and physical capabilities as well as their aptitudes and interests. This information should be utilized in designing educational programs and making changes in the types of programs offered. Although North Carolina has Reception and Classification Centers, it is estimated that only two-thirds of the felons are classified.⁵¹ Even if the inmate is tested and classified, inadequate records are kept⁵² on his progress.

The lack of physical facilities for educational purposes is often a problem at penal institutions. In the

⁴⁹ North Carolina Department of Correction, "The First Annual Conference on Corrections in North Carolina," p. 4.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Merrill, Sommerfeld, Eason, op. cit., p. 16.

⁵² North Carolina Department of Correction, "The First Annual Conference on Corrections," op. cit., p. 4.

past few years, North Carolina Department of Correction has erected twenty-seven vocational buildings and installed twenty trailers for educational purposes.⁵³ The acquisition of these facilities will increase educational opportunities for inmates.

Most prison installations in North Carolina lack adequate library facilities and materials. The State Library Service helps by providing funds for books and a coordinator who works with the prisons as liaison between the two departments.⁵⁴

Often the administrative employees' attitudes toward educational programs are poor. Many have not had the opportunity to improve their education and it would be natural for them to resent the benefits the inmates receive. The salaries paid by the Department of Correction are inadequate, and the employees are often forced to work two jobs. A December 20, 1960, survey of the North Carolina Department of Correction showed that 616 held dual jobs.⁵⁵ Seventy per cent of these people were custodial officers.

⁵³ North Carolina Department of Correction, Educational Services, op. cit., p. 4.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 53.

⁵⁵ North Carolina Bar Association "Interim Report," op. cit., p. 10

A review of North Carolina's efforts to provide educational opportunities for inmates shows progress in the past three decades. The description of these efforts points out North Carolina's willingness to try many programs and methods to accomplish this goal. The programs which reach more inmates than any of the others are the ABE and GED. In 1975 the average monthly participation in the GED program was 2,006 or 15.67% of the average monthly population of 12,800. Of these inmates 669 were tested for GED and 495 passed. This means that approximately 74% of those taking the test passed. Vocational training programs attract almost as many inmates. In 1975 11.52% of the average monthly population of 12,800, or 1,475 inmates, attended these courses.⁵⁶ The ABE and GED programs are more available in the prison system, and it was the purpose of this study to try to determine the effectiveness of these programs in the North Piedmont Area of the North Carolina Department of Correction.

⁵⁶ North Carolina Department of Correction - Research and Evaluation Department. "Statistical Data in Support of Budget FY 77-79 Biennial Report." (Worksheet, undated, unnumbered)

CHAPTER III
PROCEDURE OF RESEARCH

Selection of Sample and the Procedure

This study is based on the comparison of two sets of Wide Range Achievement Test scores. The sample population, therefore, had to be made up of felon inmates, because all misdemeanants are not given the test when they enter the prison system. The North Piedmont Area of the North Carolina Department of Correction was chosen for several reasons. It has a reputation in the system of providing a wide range of educational opportunities for inmates, and it was also physically accessible for the researcher.

Contact through the Research and Evaluation Department of the North Carolina Department of Correction laid the groundwork for the approval of this study. It was this department's suggestion that an exploratory study of the ABE and GED programs be carried out to determine their effectiveness. Major William C. Brown, the Area Administrator of the North Piedmont Area provided the clearance for entry into the 11 units which house only male inmates. Mr. James Harris was assigned to assist the researcher with any problems in accumulating data and contacting the units regarding the research.

The unit Superintendents were requested to furnish Mr. Harris with a list of felon inmates who were presently enrolled in ABE or GED classes and to suggest a date convenient for the testing. A copy of the memorandum from Major Brown to the area Superintendents is included in the appendix. Telephone conversations between the researcher and the Program Directors of these units produced a finalized schedule.

Inmate participation in any research must be voluntary, but this does not guarantee their cooperation. To gain their cooperation and approval of the study, the researcher did three things. First, it was explained that the study was part of the researcher's requirement for completion of a degree in education. Secondly, it was explained that the researcher's concern for education in the prison system developed from contacts with inmates as a Yokefellow volunteer. Thirdly, it was explained that the researcher, as a 9th grade public school teacher, felt that something would be gained from the research which would help public schools retain the students who leave at this grade level.

This introduction usually prompted one or two questions such as:

What will you get out of the research?

What will we get out of the research?

It was explained that the same test which was administered when they entered the prison system would be given

to them again and their scores compared. These scores would be given to them and their teachers and would offer some measure of their progress. The students and teachers would also be given an opportunity to offer suggestions for improving the course by filling out a questionnaire. The questionnaire was also an attempt to determine if certain practices had any effect on the program. To show appreciation for their cooperation, the researcher provided homemade cookies and coffee. The atmosphere for testing was, therefore, as conducive as the researcher could make it under the conditions.

The procedure was to administer the spelling and math tests in a group and then have the inmates fill in the questionnaire as the questions were read to them and discussed in case of misunderstandings. With this completed, the questionnaires were collected, and the inmates had coffee and cookies. While they were talking with each other, the researcher called the inmates individually to the other end of the room where the word-recognition test was administered. The conversation of the inmates insured that they would not overhear the test. Since inmates live in a noisy environment, this atmosphere was considered more normal than an isolated, totally quiet environment. At any rate, the latter would have been impossible to secure since the tests were usually administered in the trailer classrooms.

Selection of the Instrument

Inmates are given the Wide Range Achievement Test as part of the screening and classification procedure when they enter the prison system. Because of the low level of education of the average inmate, the North Carolina Department of Correction in the North Piedmont Area administers Level I of this test. The test consists of a spelling, arithmetic, and word-recognition test. The first two parts can be administered in a group, but the latter part has to be administered individually.

The WRAT Manual (1965) was used for giving instructions to the students, for administering the test, and for scoring the test.

A fourteen-item questionnaire was constructed for the students. Questions 1-6 asked for personal data: name, age, race, sex, and marital status, in addition to the name of the prison unit. Questions 7-12 sought information about the following:

- the state in which the inmate received the majority of his education
- whether the inmate had been in the program at another unit
- the number of units in which the inmate had been a student in the program for over a year
- the number of teachers who quit during the course
- the number of transfers which occurred during the course
- the number of transfers the inmate requested

Question 13 sought to determine the inmate's motives for taking the program, and question 14 asked the inmate to check the things which would improve the programs. (See Appendix B)

The teacher questionnaire requested information from which to construct a profile of the average ABE and GED teacher at the prison units and asked for suggestions for improving the programs. (See Appendix C)

Analysis of Data

The analysis of the scores obtained from the tests could not include using standard scores because Level I test is designed for persons under 12 years of age. The scores were treated as averages in the various categories analyzed. The test scores, old and new, and all information gathered from the students' questionnaires were recorded on a 25-column analysis sheet. From this master, additional sheets were made to analyze the information by levels of increase or decrease, age, grade claimed, and year of incarceration. The master sheet and the other sheets allowed consideration of the other factors: race, marital status, unit, number of teachers quitting, transfers, and number of units in which the inmate has participated in the programs.

CHAPTER IV
INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Of the 87 inmates tested, original test scores for 9 could not be obtained; therefore, the population was reduced to 78 inmates. It was decided that a minimum increase of one grade level would be a standard for grouping the test results.

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF TEST SCORES
BY INCREASES AND DECREASES

| Type of Progress | Group Total | Per Cent to Total |
|---|-------------|-------------------|
| Minimum increase of one grade level in at least one area: | | |
| Increase in 3 areas | 6 | 8% |
| Increase in 2 areas | 11 | 14 |
| Increase in 1 area | <u>31</u> | <u>40</u> |
| Sub totals | 48 | 62% |
| Same achievement level maintained | 7 | 9% |
| Increase of 1-7 months in achievement level | 15 | 19 |
| Decrease of 1-4 months in achievement level | <u>8</u> | <u>10</u> |
| Totals | 78 | 100% |

It is important to note that 63 inmates or 81% showed

an increase in achievement level, that 7 inmates, or 9%, maintained the same achievement level, and that only 8 inmates, or 10%, showed small decreases in their achievement levels.

The fact that 62% of the inmates fell into the groups showing increases of at least one grade level in one area influenced the researcher to analyze much of the data in terms of this advancement. Instead of referring to this category as those showing a minimum increase of at least one grade level in one area, the category will be described as those making major increases.

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF MAJOR INCREASES
BY AGE GROUPS

| Age Group | Group Total | Per Cent to Total Pop. | No. With Major Inc. | Per Cent of Pop. With Major Inc. |
|-----------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 19-29 | 58 | 75% | 40 | 52% |
| 30-39 | 13 | 18 | 6 | 7 |
| 40-up | <u>7</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> |
| | 78 | 100% | 48 | 62% |

The age group 19-29 constituted the largest age group in the study (75%). Seventy per cent of this age group made major score increases and comprised 52% of the total 62% of the population making these increases. Thirty-three per cent of the age group 30-39 made major score increases.

This group made up only 18% of the total population and comprised only 7% of the 62% of the total population making these increases. Twenty-nine per cent of the population 40 years old and above made major score increases. This group comprised only 3% of the 62% of the total population making these increases. Younger students showed more of a tendency to increase their test scores. In this prison population it became less likely for this to happen over the age of 30.

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF MAJOR INCREASES
BY GRADE CLAIMED

| Grade Claimed | Group Total | Per Cent to Total Pop. | No. With Major Inc. | Per Cent of Pop. With Major Inc. |
|---------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 12 | 8 | 10% | 6 | 8% |
| 11 | 9 | 12 | 8 | 10 |
| 10 | 17 | 22 | 8 | 10 |
| 9 | 18 | 23 | 14 | 18 |
| 8 | 10 | 13 | 7 | 9 |
| 7 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 5 |
| 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| No grade | <u>1</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>1</u> |
| | 78 | 100% | 48 | 62% |

There were no inmates claiming a 4th grade education. Seventy of the inmates tested, or 90%, claimed an education ranging from the 7-12 grades. Of those claiming an

eleventh grade education, 88% made major increases in their scores. Seventy-eight per cent of those claiming a ninth grade education made major increases in their scores. Seventy-five per cent of those claiming a twelfth grade education made major score increases. Service's report on his study in recidivism stated that inmates with 9-11 years of education, when compared with those having higher or lower levels of education, are less likely to be recidivists. Table 3 also tends to show some uniqueness in achievement for the ninth and eleventh grade groups.

As shown by the table below, inmates entering the prison system in 1975 and 1976 made up 59% of the population in this study. They represented 40% of the total 62% of the population making major score increases.

TABLE 4
SUMMARY OF MAJOR INCREASES
BY YEAR OF INCARCERATION

| Year | Group Total | Per Cent to Total Pop. | No. With Major Inc. | Per Cent of Pop. With Major Inc. |
|------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1976 | 26 | 33% | 17 | 22% |
| 1975 | 20 | 26 | 14 | 18 |
| 1974 | 11 | 14 | 5 | 7 |
| 1973 | 9 | 12 | 3 | 4 |
| 1972 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 5 |
| 1970 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1968 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1967 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| 1964 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1960 | <u>1</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| | 78 | 100% | 48 | 62% |

TABLE 5
SUMMARY OF MAJOR INCREASES
BY PRISON UNIT

| Unit | Group Total | Per Cent to Total Pop. | No. With Major Inc. | Per Cent of Pop. With Major Inc. |
|-------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Alamance | 9 | 12% | 5 | 6% |
| Caswell | 9 | 12 | 6 | 8 |
| Davidson | 8 | 10 | 6 | 8 |
| Davie | 8 | 10 | 4 | 5 |
| Dobson | 23 | 29 | 15 | 20 |
| Guilford #1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Randolph | 12 | 15 | 6 | 8 |
| Rockingham | <u>7</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| | 78 | 100% | 48 | 62% |

Table 5 shows that Alamance, Davie, Randolph, and Guilford #1 have approximately half of their students making major increases in their scores. The other units have 65-75% of their students making major increases in test scores. Davidson had the highest percentage (75%) of students achieving major increases.

The above is not offered as an evaluation of the effectiveness of the programs at these units. Before this could be done it would have to be determined that each unit had had its particular students long enough to be responsible for the increases or decreases reflected in the scores. For example, of the six students at Davidson who achieved major score increases five had been in the program at another unit or units. Only half of these had not been transferred

during an educational program. The other half had had their educational course interrupted by a transfer to another unit.

A closer look at transfers and achievement levels shows the following results.

TABLE 6
SUMMARY OF EFFECTS OF TRANSFERS
ON ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

| No. of Units Inmate Was in ABE or GED Program Over a Month | No. of Inmates | Average Achievement Level | | Increase |
|--|-------------------|------------------------------|-----|----------|
| | | New | Old | |
| 1 | 34 | 6.6 | 5.8 | .8 |
| 2 | 19 | 6.5 | 5.4 | 1.1 |
| 3 | 5 | 4.6 | 3.9 | .7 |
| 4 | 3 | 4.2 | 4.2 | .0 |
| 5 | 1 | 5.1 | 5.1 | .0 |
| None | <u>16</u> | 5.1 | 4.5 | .6 |
| | 78 | | | |

Of the 78 students in this study, 62 indicated that they had been in the program before. These students made an average increase on their achievement levels of eight months. The 16 students who claimed not to have been in the program before made an average increase in their achievement levels of six months.

The following facts were revealed when the scores were analyzed on the basis of having a teacher quit during a program. Thirty-eight students who kept the same teacher achieved an average of 6.6 on their new achievement scores

in comparison to 5.9 on the old test. This represents an average achievement level increase of seven months. Twenty-one who did have one teacher to quit achieved the same average increase of seven months. Three students who had two teachers to quit achieved an average increase of one year and four months. Two students who had three teachers to quit, received an average increase in their achievement level scores of one year and six months.

The analysis of marital status does not reflect large differences in achievement levels. Thirty-nine single students, twenty-eight married students, six divorced students, one student who was separated from his wife, and one student who was widowed participated in the study. The single students achieved an average increase in their achievement levels of nine months. A six month average increase was made by both the married and divorced students. The two students whose marital status was separated and widowed had increases of one year and two months and two years and five months.

TABLE 7
SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENT BY RACE

| Race | Group Total | Averages | | | | | | | |
|----------|----------------|-------------|-----|---------|------|----------|-----|------------|-----|
| | | Achievement | | Reading | | Spelling | | Arithmetic | |
| | | New | Old | New | Old | New | Old | New | Old |
| Black | 49 | 5.7 | 4.8 | 6.2 | 5.2 | 6.0 | 5.0 | 4.8 | 4.3 |
| White | 28 | 6.3 | 6.0 | 7.7 | 7.1 | 6.1 | 5.4 | 5.7 | 5.4 |
| Oriental | <u>1</u> | 10.5 | 8.9 | 9.7 | 11.3 | 14.5 | 9.7 | 6.7 | 5.7 |
| | 78 | | | | | | | | |

The above shows the blacks to have made nine months average increase in achievement level in comparison to a three-month increase by the whites. Blacks made a whole grade increase in reading and in spelling, whereas the whites made increases of only six months in reading and seven months in spelling. The smallest increase for both groups was reflected in the math scores. The blacks still maintained a larger increase than the whites, five months for the blacks and three months for the whites.

An analysis of the students receiving a majority of their education outside of North Carolina showed their average achievement level to be lower than the test group as a whole. Those educated outside of North Carolina had a new achievement level average of 5.7 compared to the old achievement level of 5.1. This shows an average increase of six months. The new average achievement level for the

test population was 6.0 with the median being 5.5. The old achievement level average was 5.3. The new reading average was 6.8 compared to 6.0. The new average in spelling was 6.1 compared to 5.2. Math scores showed the least increase moving from an old average of 4.7 to 5.2. When the twelve out-of-state students are removed, the average achievement level for the North Carolina inmates rises to 6.1.

Self-improvement was given as the reason for participating in the ABE or GED programs. Seventy-one students checked this as a reason. Sixteen wanted to improve their chances of having a better job, nine participated in order to gain privileges, and two indicated that they were required to take the program.

The students had fairly definite opinions about what could be done to improve the programs. The greatest needs are a quiet place to study and more help from the teacher. Eighty-six per cent said a quiet place to study was needed, and seventy-one per cent thought more help from the teacher would be beneficial. Sixty-seven per cent felt that more frequent testing would be valuable; however, twenty-six per cent did not want to be tested more often. Seven per cent gave no answer for this item. Sixty-seven per cent were also for self-study and group-study in the program. Sixty-two per cent did not want to have fewer students in the class. Since they indicated a desire to have more help

from the teacher, it was surprising that only fifty-eight per cent wanted to have teacher aides. Not all of the students are pleased with the materials they use in the classroom. Fifty-seven per cent would like to have different materials while thirty-eight per cent believe the materials are good enough. Sixty-four per cent would like to have more time in class, but twenty-seven per cent do not feel that this would improve the program.

The information given on the teacher questionnaire revealed that the average ABE and GED teacher in the North Piedmont Area prison units is a 33 year old, married, white male for whom the job is part-time employment. This male teacher is certified in the Language Arts-Social Studies areas, is a graduate of a North Carolina college, and is in his sixth year as a teacher on the elementary or junior high level. Teaching experience with the community college system is relatively short, and outside working experience related to teaching is limited. Experience in the teaching field has been confined to those areas of certification in social studies and English. The average ABE and GED teacher in the North Piedmont Area correctional units has not received in-service training designed to be of assistance to those who teach these programs to inmates.

The typical teacher has strong opinions on how to improve the program. The two things which are considered

to be important to the improvement of the program are to have both self-study and group-study and to have more time to spend with the individual student. Three other suggestions which were stressed equally, and had about the same priority as the first suggestions, were to have a quiet place for the students to study, to have more tests to check progress, and to have volunteers to assist the teacher. The teachers were equally divided on their opinion as to whether more time in the class would make an improvement. A majority of the teachers does not feel that having fewer students would help. A majority is also satisfied with the materials used in the course and does not feel the necessity for a different type of materials.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this research was to make an exploratory study to determine the effectiveness of the ABE and GED programs in the North Piedmont Area of the North Carolina Department of Correction. The total population consisted of 78 felon students who were administered a Wide Range Achievement Test to compare their new scores with the WRAT scores received when they were classified by the prison system.

A minimum increase of one grade level in any one of the three areas tested was used as a standard to analyze the scores and was referred to as a major increase. Sixty-two per cent of the students showed major increases. Eight per cent of this 62% made increases in all three areas: reading, spelling, and arithmetic. Fourteen per cent showed major increases in two areas, and 40% showed increases in one area. An additional 19% of the students achieved a 1-7 month increase in their achievement levels. Combining the 19% representing minor increases with the 62% representing major increases, shows that 81% of the students made increases in their original scores. Only 10% of the tested population showed a decrease in their original achievement

levels. When the problems of the prison system and the inmate student are taken into consideration, it is believed that these increases indicate a fair amount of effectiveness in the ABE and GED programs in the North Piedmont Area.

Seventy-five per cent of the tested population was in the age group 19-29 with 25% being in the group 30-up. The younger group comprised 52% of the 62% of the population making major increases in their scores.

It appears that those claiming to have attended public schools longer are more likely to be in the group having increased scores. Those claiming a ninth or eleventh grade education increased their scores more than those claiming a twelfth grade education. Those most recently incarcerated also appear to have a greater tendency to be in the group with increased scores; however, this is not as strong of a factor as grade level. A little less than one-fourth of the students entering the system in 1976 made major score increases.

Davidson and Rockingham units had a larger percentage of their students to make major score increases than the other units. Since transfers between units are a constant process, too much credit for the success or failure of students should not be assigned until a determination is made as to how long that particular unit has had the inmate as a student. The fact that many students, if possible,

continue the ABE and GED program at new units may be the most important factor for increasing scores and grade levels. The research in this study does not show a reduction in scores until the fourth transfer. It is quite possible that a change of environment and exposure to a new teacher is beneficial to the learning process. Having a teacher quit provides the students who do not transfer an opportunity to be exposed to another teacher. Each teacher has an area of expertise; and once the student has utilized or experienced this, new inspiration and direction can be beneficial.

A student's marital status is not apparent in test scores. The single students had a slightly higher increase, 3 months, in their scores than those who were married or divorced.

The black students made larger increases than the whites in all three areas tested. They made an average increase of one grade level in reading while the whites made only a six-month increase. The blacks also increased their spelling scores by an average of one year while the whites raised their scores by seven months. The smallest increase for both groups was reflected in the arithmetic scores. The blacks still maintained a larger increase than the whites, five months to three months.

The students whose education was received outside the

North Carolina public school system had a new average achievement level of 5.7 compared to a 6.1 level for the North Carolina inmates.

Self-improvement was the strongest motivation for taking the program. This tends to support the new theories concerning the purpose of prison education, the development of the individual instead of the control of the individual.

The students and the teachers are agreed on the things which will improve the programs: more help from the teacher, more testing to check progress, and a quiet place for the students to study. Both students and teachers feel that self-study and group-study methods should be used. The students are more critical of the materials than the teachers. Perhaps this is due to the fact that programmed materials tend to lose their appeal after prolonged use.

The average ABE and GED teacher in the North Piedmont Area prison units is a thirty-three year old, married, white male who is a certified teacher in the Language Arts and Social Studies areas. Teaching at the prison units is a part-time position which he holds with a community college. The average teacher has not had in-service training designed for ABE and GED teachers of prison inmates.

Although these teachers have programmed materials to use, they are confronted with students who have learning problems. Today more is known about students with learning

disabilities and the methods used to identify and teach these students. A teacher who is not aware of learning disabilities quite often blames the student's slow progress on the lack of motivation.

Recommendations

As a result of the research carried out in this study, this researcher offers ten suggestions. Alper's study, previously cited, indicates that if any benefit comes from the prison experience, it is in the first two years. It is first suggested that the prison system use this time period to its advantage by offering the inmate the opportunity to advance his education as soon as he is willing. This would remove the doubt the inmate might have as to the real purpose of the program. Is it for the benefit of the inmate or is it to help relieve administrative problems of the prison system?

Secondly, once in the program, the student should be expected to make certain improvements and advancements. These objectives should be established by the teacher and the inmate after careful evaluation of the test results and classification materials in the inmate's folder. If these standards are not met, the teacher should be able to request that the inmate be removed from the program. Other than being removed from the program, the inmate should not be

penalized for this failure.

A third suggestion deals with motivation. Rewards for meeting these expectations should be established, for it is difficult for the student to remain motivated for an extended period of time while using programmed materials. This procedure should help remove the complaint that some of the students are not motivated to learn and waste class time.

The fourth suggestion concerns tests. In order to be fair to the student, tests to determine progress should be administered on a regular basis. This will allow the student to set goals and establish a schedule for meeting them. The questionnaire used in this study showed that a majority of the students desire to be tested more often.

Suggestions five, six, and seven relate to the teachers. The community colleges and technical institutes are responsible for carrying out the ABE and GED programs at the prison units. This should not preclude the prison system from requesting that regional in-service training programs be held for teachers employed to instruct inmates. All public school teachers are required to take 9 quarter hours of college work and in-service training every 5 years to remain certified. It is suggested that in-service training be directed toward increasing the teachers' knowledge about and expertise in learning disabilities and their understanding of prisons and inmates.

As stated before, a teacher usually has an area of expertise. To fully utilize this expertise, a system could be set up whereby the teachers could conduct classes at other units on a rotating basis throughout the year. The North Piedmont Area could be geographically divided in such a manner that several community colleges could rotate their teachers at the closest units. This would help fulfill the students' desire for group-study, and the change would help motivate the teachers and the students. These periods of duty at other units should be kept short in order to produce a high interest level for both the students and the teachers.

Program Directors at the prison units might explore the possibility of enlisting volunteers to assist the teachers. The questionnaire showed that the students are not as enthusiastic about volunteers for the teachers as are the teachers; however, they expressed a desire to have more individualized help. This help would be available if the teacher had someone to assist in the areas not requiring special skills. Volunteers could make a considerable contribution by assisting the teacher with record keeping. The prison system has started a new procedure which will provide a better record of the inmate's educational progress. An educational folder is maintained by the teacher which becomes a permanent part of the inmate's jacket or folder. This

folder should contain sufficient information for a teacher at another unit to continue what efforts are needed for the student's benefit.

The eighth suggestion concerns transfers. In order for the idea of rotating the teachers to be practical, the prison system will have to reduce the number of inmate transfers. Forty per cent of the students tested in this study had been transferred while participating in an ABE and GED program. The value of having the teachers design and initiate a short course in their area of expertise would be lost if the students could not participate in the full course.

The researcher's ninth suggestion is that an effort be made to include low-level but high-interest books in the units' libraries. This study did not include an analysis of the library facilities in the North Piedmont Area prison units; but if the books in these libraries have been acquired as a result of donations, it is possible that the ABE students and some of the GED students would not be able to read or comprehend them. Reading, as any other skill, improves with practice. The libraries should be fully utilized or else this opportunity will not be available.

The tenth and final suggestion concerns the findings of this exploratory study. Two weaknesses of this study are that only felon inmates who were participating in an

ABE or GED program were tested, and the analysis only utilized descriptive statistics. Although it appears from the increased WRAT scores that the ABE and GED programs are effective, this cannot be concluded until felon inmates who have never participated in either of these programs are tested. It is suggested that such a study be made. Once this additional study is made, both sets of findings should be analyzed by utilizing inferential statistics. The comparison of these two studies would provide the North Piedmont Area of the North Carolina Department of Correction with reliable facts upon which to base its decisions.

The educational opportunities offered by the prison system are sometimes the inmates' last chance to get what the public school system was not able to deliver, a basic education. Whether an inadequate basic education is the fault of the inmate, the public school system, or some other cause, the North Carolina Department of Correction attempts to correct the inadequacy through the ABE and GED programs.

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OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Unit Superintendents

PLACE North Piedmont Area

DATE: 1/27/77

FROM: W. C. Brown, North Piedmont Area Administrator

SUBJECT: Research Project

Attached is a Prospectus outlining the research objectives discussed/ approved by me for implementation within the North Piedmont Area Command. The project is being conducted by Mrs. Dorothy M. Oliver, a Teacher in the Greensboro City School System, to meet requirements for a Master's Degree in Education. The results will be most beneficial to the North Piedmont Area Program Staff in that an accurate analysis will be available to assess the success/failure of the felon inmates who are presently enrolled in an ABE or GED program.

In order to accomplish the tasks outlined in the Prospectus, your cooperation and assistance are necessary. To initiate the project, the following information is requested by February 9, 1977:

- (1) The names of felon inmates at your facility presently enrolled in ABE/or GED classes.
- (2) Names of teacher/teachers of the ABE and/or GED classes at your facility.
- (3) Day and time inmates are scheduled to attend ABE/GED classes.
- (4) Day and time which would be most convenient to administer test to the inmates and teachers.

Upon receiving the above data, this office will coordinate an appointment schedule (at your convenience) for the administering of WRAT to GED/ABE participants and short questionnaire to teachers.

This office wishes to convey our gratitude in advance for your cooperation.

KWH/da

cc: Dr. Richard Urbanik
Mrs. Dorothy M. Oliver ✓
Area Office Staff

QUESTIONNAIRE (Student)

1. Name _____; 2. Age __; 3. Race ___; 4. Sex M F
5. Unit _____
6. (Check one) Single ___; Married ___; Separated ___;
Divorced ___.
7. In which state did you receive most of your education?

8. Have you ever been in this program at another unit?
____ Yes
____ No
9. On how many units have you been a student in an ABE or
GED program where you were in class for over a month?
_____ Units.
10. In how many of these classes did you have a teacher to
quit? _____
11. How many times have you been transferred while you were
taking an ABE or GED program? _____
12. How many of these transfers did you ask for? _____
13. Why are you taking the program?
 - A. I was made to take the class. _____
 - B. To get things like home-pass, work-release, gain-
time. _____
 - C. To improve myself. _____
 - D. To get a better job. _____
 - E. Other (Please write in) _____
14. To each of the following write "Yes" if you think it
would improve the class. Write "No" if you think it
would not improve the course.
 - A. Have a volunteer to help the teacher instruct. _____
 - B. Have a different kind of study material. _____
 - C. Have more time with the teacher's help. _____
 - D. Be tested more often to check progress. _____
 - E. Have a quiet place to study. _____
 - F. Have fewer people in the class. _____
 - G. Have both self-study and group-study. _____
 - H. Have more time in class. _____
 - I. Other (Write in) _____

QUESTIONNAIRE (Teacher)

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1. Name _____ . 2. Age ___; 3. Race _____; 4. Sex: F M
5. (Check one) Single ___; Married ___; Separated ___; Divorced ___.
6. Degree(s) which you hold with the major.

7. College or university from which you graduated _____
8. Teaching certificate. Yes ___; No ___. Area of concentration

9. Number of years you have taught _____.
10. Check the level on which you taught and number of years you taught on these levels.
Elementary ___; Junior High ___; Sr. High ___; Community College or Technical Institute ___; College ___; University ___.
11. Course(s) you have taught with number of years you taught them.

12. Is this teaching job full-time or part-time? _____
For which community college or technical institute do you work? _____
13. What other major job or work have you had outside of teaching? _____
14. Have you had in-service training in ABE or GED instruction? Yes ___; No ___. Length of training _____. It was conducted by the prison system ___ by the Department of Community Colleges ___.
15. Have you had in-service training to prepare you to teach in the prison system? Yes ___; No ___. Length of training _____. If was conducted by the prison system ___ by the Community Colleges _____.
16. To each of the following write "Yes" if you think it would improve the class. Write "No" if you think it would not improve the course. Circle the one you think is most important to improving the class.
 - A. Have a volunteer to help the teacher instruct. _____
 - B. Have a different kind of study material. _____
 - C. Have more time with the teacher's help. _____
 - D. Be tested more often to check progress. _____
 - E. Have a quiet place to study for students. _____
 - F. Have fewer people in the class. _____
 - G. Have both self-study and group-study. _____
 - H. Have more time in class. _____
 - I. Other (Write in) _____