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PRISON EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND: A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF YOUNG OFFENDERS INSTITUTIONS (YOIS)

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IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM

- Does prison (education) work? or inversely, 'is prison (education) working? is a well rehearsed question in prison research.
- In *Can Prisons Work?* (2000), Stephen Duguid wrestles with the paradox of corrections-sanctioned rehabilitation:
 - Tensions and structural constraints inherent in prison rehabilitation programs such as education
 - How transformation can and does occur within prisons.
 - Tensions between prison personnel and external agencies offering higher education
 - Extent to which education can provide rehabilitation to inmates.
 - Consistency of thought and similarity of epistemic trajectory the purpose of prisons and whether prison (education) works across Western world (USA, Australia and Scotland)
- Duguid also identifies consistency of thought and similarity of epistemic trajectory the purpose of prisons and whether prison (education) works across Western world (USA, Australia and Scotland)
- In UK a raft of policies and guidelines on how best to rehabilitate prisoners exist
 - "Education should be at the heart of the prison system" (Coates, p. i)
 - However, despite rhetoric, prison education remains at the back of the class (Allison and Sloan, 2015).
 - Over 50% prisons inspected required improvement (Ofsted, 2014).
- 2016 review of education in UK prisons inspected in terms of 'effectiveness' reveals:
 - (a) 2 excellent
 - (b) 9 outstanding
 - (c) 27 required improvement
 - (d) 7 inadequate
- In addition: "three fifths of [UK] prisoners leave prison without an identified employment or education or training out come" (Coates, 2016, p. i).
- Report by Prison Reform Trust identifies the need "more resources" in order to improve prison education (PRT, 2003, p. 59).
- Calls to overall prison education
 - If prisons are ever to be able to tackle recidivism, and make inmates more employable (see BBC News, 2015; Coates, 2016).

NEED FOR THE RESEARCH

- UK-Wide research
 - Prison education remains a fertile area of research in the UK
 - Some published research in England and Wales but none on Scotland (see Reuss, 1999; Czerniawski, 2015; Education Scotland, nd).
- Scotland - Devolved Status
 - Scotland has Jurisdiction over Crime and Justice, including management of prisons.
- So far only unpublished reports in Scotland
 - Unpublished reports such as those commissioned by the Scottish Government,
 - Undertaken by Prison Reform Trust (PRT).
 - Annual self-reported reports by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland (HMIPS) - all which provide important information (PRT, 2003; HMIPS, 2015; Sapouna, 2015).
- Scottish 'uniqueness' provides the need to understand:
 - (a) The Scottish scenario in terms of published on prison education.
 - (b) How Scotland rehabilitates inmates through education as a way to dealing with the persistent problem of recidivism.
- Issues of research focus on prison education in Scotland include:
 - (a) Extent and quality of educational provision in prisons,
 - (b) Inmates' engagement (or not) with and experience of prison education,
 - (c) Who teaches in prison and their experiences of a prison teaching and learning environment,
 - (d) How prison staff manage education, including resources available, time allocation within the wider 'purposeful activity' programme,
 - (e) What works (and doesn't) and how to motivate and improve learning in prison?

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

- Realist Evaluation
 - Developed by Pawson (1989) and Pawson and Tilley (1997) and adopted by Duguid and Pawson (1998).
 - Offers tools to explore suppositions behind (educational) programmes being evaluated.
 - Highlights theories, ideas and practices that can help explain why such programmes succeed or fail.
 - Theories, ideas and practices are drawn from the experience of connected with the programmes concerned such as:
 - > Instructional leaders (prison management),
 - > Practitioners (teachers and prison staff),
 - > Participants (prison inmates),
 - > Policymakers (government officials)
 - Realist evaluation attempts to discover what works and why, for whom and in what circumstances (Duguid and Pawson, 1998).

TENSIONS AND CONTESTATIONS IN PRISON EDUCATION RESEARCH

- Paradox of provision due to conflicting interests and ideologies between the education and penal systems.
- Need for prison education to appease different audience (Duguid and Pawson, 2000)
- Prison Education: Contested terrain between 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic' scholars and theorists on the purpose of prison (Ubah, 2003).
 - (a) Transformative vs prisoners can not change (Duguid and Pawson, 1998).
 - (b) Tool for living vs tool of control (Wilson, 2000, 174).
 - (c) Self selection vs mechanistic (Wilson, 2000; Duguid and Pawson, 1998).
 - (d) Recidivism vs empowerment (Reus and Wilson, 2000).
 - (e) Killing time vs rehabilitation (Reuss and Wilson, 2000).
 - (f) Punishment vs Human Rights/public safety (Reuss and Wilson, 2000; Thomas and Murray, 2008).
 - (g) Cost vs benefit: Keeping law breakers locked up is very expensive (in UK cost per prisoner is £33, 785) (Thomas and Murray, 2008).
 - (h) Choice vs control (Reuss and Wilson, 2000).
 - (i) Basic skills vs employability skills (Duguid and Pawson, 2000).
- Areas of general agreement in the discourse
 - Less dispute regarding 'barriers' to education in prison: (a) dispositional barriers, (b) effects of prisonisation (negative values of prison sub-culture) and (c) institutional factors (Czerniawski, 2015; Farley and Pike, 2016; Westreheim and Manger, 2014).

SITUATIONAL AND POLICY CONTEXT IN SCOTLAND

- Scottish Prison Service (SPS)
 - Prisons under the 'Scottish Prison Service' (SPS), an agency of the Scottish Government under a Chief Inspector of Prisons.
- One of the Highest Rates of Imprisonment in Europe
 - Although reconviction rates declining slightly (0.6%), along with Wales and England, Scotland has one of the highest rates of imprisonment in Europe per head per population.
- Re-offending rates for young people offenders
 - In Scotland, re-offending rates is highest for young offenders (16-21 years old)
 - 53% re-offend after two years.
 - Young offenders largely reluctant to participate in 'purposeful activity', including education and preferring to watch TV instead.

Prison population across the UK

Region	Population (2015)	Prisoners (2016)
England and Wales	55 Million - England 3.1 Million - Wales	85400 (2016)
Northern Ireland	1.9 Million	1836 (2014)
Scotland	5.4 Million (2015)	7872 (2016)

- Annual budget
 - SPS receives an annual budget of £382.3 Million of which £18 Million is spent on 'purposeful activities' including education (SPS, 2014).
- Prison population in Scotland (2016)
 - Male sentenced: 5551 | Female sentenced: 266
 - Young offenders male-sentenced: 264 | Young offenders female-sentenced: 17
- Number of Prisons in Scotland (15): 13 public and 2 Private

Prison	Ownership	Additional Status
Corton Vale - Stirling	Public	Women/Young Offenders Institution (YOIs)
Dumfries - Dumfries	Public	
Edinburgh - Edinburgh	Public	Some women
Glenochil - Tullibody	Public	
Greenock - Greenock	Public	Some women
Inverness - Inverness	Public	
Palmont - Falkirk	Public	Young Offenders Institution (YOIs)
Low Moss - Bishopbriggs	Public	
Perth - Perth	Public	
Shotts - Shotts	Public	
Addiewell - Addiewell	Public	Sodexo Justice Services
Kilmarnock - Hurlford	Private	Serco
Grampian - Peterhead	Public	HMP and Young Offenders Institution (YOIs) and some women
Castle Hurty - Longforgan	Public	

- Interesting policy detail
 - From a policy context, SPS has no statutory duty to rehabilitate prisoners (Ross, 2012).
 - SPS however does recognise the important of rehabilitation.
 - Encourages prisoners to take opportunities which will reduce the likelihood to re-offend and help them reintegrate them back into their community.
- Purposeful activity
 - Prison education underpinned by a nation-wide initiative known as 'purposeful activity' (HMIP, 2015).
 - Scheme that encourages all prisoners to use their time in prison constructively
- Provision of education in prisons
 - Provision of prison education in Scotland is 'contracted out' and currently offered by two national learning providers (non-degree providers) (Scottish Parliament, 2013).
 - Carnegie College
 - Motherwell College
- Courses typically offered
 - Education subjects: Arts programme, literacy and numeracy
 - Vocational training: bricklaying, painting, decorating, hairdressing/barbering, cleaning etc.

AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

- (a) To appraise the nature and extent of provision of prison education in young offenders' institutions.
- (b) To identify and assess the quality of resources used in the provision of prison education in young offenders' institutions.
- (c) To critically examine Scottish young offenders' engagement with prison education
- (d) To explore the prison lived experience of Scottish young offenders and assess the impact of the prison environment on offender learning.
- (e) To examine ways in which prison education in young offenders' institutions in Scotland could be improved.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What works (and doesn't), and how to motivate and improve learning in YOIs?
 - (a) What is the nature and extent of provision of prison education in young offenders' institutions in Scotland?
 - (b) What resources (human and material) are available for prison education in young offenders' institutions in Scotland?
 - (c) What is the quality of these resources? In what ways do these resources facilitate or hinder offender learning?
 - (d) How do young offenders' engage with prison education? If, at all, are there gender differences in the way male and females young offenders engage with prison education, and why?
 - (e) What is the nature of prison life for young offenders? If at all, how does the prison environment impact on offender learning?
 - (f) What should be done to improve learning for young offenders in Scotland?

RESEARCH DESIGN

- Qualitative research - critical micro-ethnography (Pane and Rocco, 2009)
- Sources of data (data triangulation)

- Examination of relevant documents
 - Official government reports
 - SPS reports and other relevant documents
 - Curriculum materials
 - Newspaper/Internet materials
- Interviews with key informants
 - Government officials in the department of corrections.
 - Prison wardens and managers
 - Teachers who teach in prisons
 - Young offenders, both male and female
 - Officials from non-government organisations
- Focus group discussions with young offenders

WAY FORWARD AND IMPACT

- Fieldwork Research
 - Phase 1: Preliminary study
 - Undertake the proposed research in YOIs between November 2016 and July 2018.
 - Aim to complete 2018
 - Phase 2: Expand the research to include data from adult prison (both male and female)
 - Provide a published account of the state of prison education in Scotland on the question: 'Does prison education work? between 2018-2020
 - Aim to complete 2020
- Impact: Professionalization of prison education
 - (a) Need to formalise and professionalise prison education within teacher education.
 - (b) Through the research unit interest my university to offer professional graduate diploma in education specialising in teaching in prisons.
 - (c) Approach the GTCS for recognition of the new qualification as a new areas for teacher professional registration.

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