



## UNDERSTANDING THE IMPEDIMENTS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF REHABILITATION PROGRAMS IN ETHIOPIA AND GHANA: THE CASE OF DIRE DAWA FEDERAL PRISON AND NSAWAM MEDIUM SECURITY PRISON

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**ABSTRACT:** *There have been enormous debates about the impacts of rehabilitation programs in prisons from diverse perspectives. While others believe that rehabilitation programs cannot disassociate a person from committing a crime, significant arguments have been for the positives of the programs. The purpose of the study was to pinpoint the major difficulties encountered in the development of rehabilitation programs in Ethiopia and Ghana. Qualitative research was conducted in Dire Dawa Federal Prison and the Nsawam Medium Security Prison, having inmates, ex-inmates, and prison administrators as participants. The major impediments common to the two settings are a shortage of financial and infrastructural support, an insufficient supply of raw materials, issues related to perceptions, and a lack of motivation to work. These findings aim at helping concerned government agencies and stakeholders work on the impediments and open the issue for advanced research.*

**KEYWORDS:** Rehabilitation, Reintegration, Inmates, Prison Cooperatives



## INTRODUCTION

In recent times, the correction system has been seen to prioritise assisting inmates in becoming law-abiding and productive citizens before re-entering the community rather than only confining them in a given compound (United States Department of State, 2014). Internationally, different systems have been employed to assist in the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners into society. Some of the rehabilitation schemes take the form of educational and vocational training as predominant in most prisons in Ghana and Ethiopia, including the agricultural programs recently introduced in Ghana. These rehabilitation schemes are considered to play a social mandate of promoting people's physical, social, and mental state and well-being to extricate them from the cycle of crime and gain society's trust.

Though different authors lay claim to the economic and psychological advantages of being involved in rehabilitation programs (Uche et al., 2015), the participation of prisoners and expansion of these rehabilitation programs in Ghana and Ethiopia are not as significant compared with the total number of inmates.

According to data from the Federal Prison Commission of Ethiopia (2017), the nationwide average participation of inmates in cooperatives is 22.5%. The Dire Dawa Federal Prison, a case selected for this study, currently has 1,300 convicted inmates under its administration. However, only around 11% of the prisoners have joined cooperatives to train specific vocational skills. Similarly, the Nsawam Medium Security Prison in Ghana, which houses over 4000 inmates in a facility intended for 717 inmates, has diverse vocational, educational, and agricultural programs. These programs aim to give inmates a skill as a means of sustenance afterlife in prison, but there are still records of about 97% of untransformed inmates upon release from prison (Akoensi & Tankebe 2020). The Nsawam Prison continuously has recorded the highest rate of arrest of recidivists even though it has more organised rehabilitation programs as compared to other prisons (Antwi, 2015)

Thus, the researchers studied the difficulties that hinder the development in participation of prisons rehabilitation schemes. The research explored the case of the Dire Dawa Federal Prison (Ethiopia) and the Nsawam Medium Security Prison (Ghana) to comprehend the impact of the identified challenges on the participation of prisoners in the rehabilitation programs. Significantly, identifying challenges faced by rehabilitation programs is crucial to developing an excellent policy to target the issue and make better use of specific rehabilitation programs.

### The Theory of Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation in the current context is mainly concerned with how a given justice system treats the inmates under its management. According to this theory, the core principle of punishment in a system should be reformatory and transform the prisoner into a better person (Mutabari & Wanjohi, 2017). A person should be punished for going against the laws of the land; however, the rationale behind the punishment should be reimbursing the victims of crime and assisting the inmate to be reformed (Nicholson, 2011).

Gamo (2013) explains that rehabilitation should be seen from two perspectives: rehabilitation as "restoration" and "social reintegration." The first one is related to positively impacting the inmate to tackle issues of antisocial thinking and equipping them with productive skills. "Social reintegration" corresponds to the reformation of individuals through rehabilitation schemes and facilitating the process of re-entering society after being isolated for a while.



According to the rehabilitation theory, humans are restricted by different social institutions from controlling their lives as they wish to ensure social order (Osayi, 2015). However, some social conditions such as poverty; inequality in accessing social services like education; unemployment; and corruption which denies some people the chance to compete for better life experiences, may trigger some recalcitrant behaviours. Hence, it is suggested that treatment strategies like education, training of skills, and behaviour-changing should be implemented, which will help a prisoner to be self-confident, productive, and law-abiding (Mutabari, & Wanjohi, 2017). The provision of the programs to inmates is about helping them and helping society save further costs and secure its safety (Uche et al., 2015).

Besides the merits mentioned hereinabove, the programs are also meant to resolve disciplinary problems caused by idleness in the prisons (Harkness et al., 2007). The inmates will be busy with different training and prison work, making them preoccupied with productive issues and reducing prison management problems.

It has been pinpointed by Heseltine et al. (2011) that the effectiveness of rehabilitation systems is much more reliant on addressing issues like the Risk principle (Criminogenic needs) and Responsivity principle. The risk principle is related to identifying the criminogenic needs of offenders before letting them into a rehabilitative program, meaning the scheme should be able to know the reasons behind the offending behaviour before assigning them to different interventions. The risk assessment procedure is also crucial in assigning rehabilitative programs to distinguish high-risk offenders from the others; since the program assignment will be different based on the need assessment (Miceli, 2009).

Besides the above principles, prison rehabilitation and reintegration programs should be delivered for a reasonable period based on the inmate's needs. There should also be continuous follow-up, and aftercare systems that will further develop the effectiveness of the programs (Gaes et al., 1999).

### **Challenges in Prison Rehabilitation Programs**

One of the major problems that rehabilitative programs encounter is financial constraints. The insufficient funding from the appropriate organ has been said to impact the availability of necessary and adequate equipment, spacing, infrastructures, and professionals, which are crucial for the delivery and operation of rehabilitative programs (Uche et al., 2015).

The other challenge is related to poor management, especially the negative attitude of prison officers towards the rehabilitation system, which impacts the enrolment rate of inmate participation in the programs (Uche et al., 2015). Besides this, lack of proper training for the prison instructors and overcrowding of prisons, which are considered to divert the attention of prison administration to focus more on security rather than the reformation of prisoners, were indicated to be another challenge (Osayi, 2015).

### **Cooperatives as a Rehabilitation program in Ethiopia's Penitentiary System**

The current constitution stipulates clearly under Article 31 that every person has the right to freedom of association for any purpose, as long as it does not violate the country's laws (Constitution, F D R E., 1995). The cooperatives in Ethiopia are established based on the Cooperative Society's Proclamation. The Proclamation provides the importance of working in cooperatives for the common good. It further defines cooperatives as societies established



voluntarily by a minimum of 10 individuals having similar interests and objectives to produce goods, provide service or engage in both activities (Cooperative Societies Proclamation, 2016). According to the above-mentioned legal framework, the Ethiopian prison system is trying to empower prisoners through education, skill training, and allowing inmates to work together as cooperatives by providing financial support (ILO, 2015).

Different stakeholders from the concerned government organ and private sector participation in the establishment and operation of the cooperatives are the main actors who work together with the prison administration; some of which are the Small and Micro Enterprises Development Agency (SMEDA), Cooperative Societies Agency, Education Bureaus, Banks, and Micro-finance institutions. (Federal Prison Commission of Ethiopia, 2017).

Data from the federal prison commission of Ethiopia for the year 2017 shows that there are 82 prisons with 84,080 prisoners under the administration of the federal government and regional states, except for three regional states, which were yet to start the formation of prison cooperatives. The same data shows that the prisons above' cooperatives currently require an estimated 36,729,026 Ethiopian Birr (712,224.30 USD) as capital. There are about 2612 prison cooperatives; however, the total number of inmates members of these cooperatives is 18,970 (Federal Prison Commission of Ethiopia, 2017). This means only about 22.5% of the inmates are organised in cooperatives which seems to be relatively small compared to the number of prisoners.

### **Rehabilitation in Ghana's penal Institutions**

The advent of western ideas introduced prison systems into the Ghanaian context. Hitherto, the traditional ways of punishing culprits who go away from social order were fines, whipping, sanctions, and killing or banishment from communities were dominant in extreme cases. With an increase in crime and the dawn of western-influence, the prison system of Ghana was inaugurated under colonial rule in 1876, with an initial punitive and deterrent goal rather than a reformatory agenda (ANH et al., 2011, Ghana Prison Service). Rehabilitative schemes already had legal backing according to section 1 of the prison decree 1972, which advocates for prisoners' confinement and welfare. However, it had not been in operation until recently (Ghana Prison service act, 1972). The Ghana prison service does not have a precise start date for the various rehabilitation programs since each prison adopted a scheme that promises to be functional rather than one tailor-made to the needs of prisoners. Thus, prisons in the agrarian community began to embark on agricultural rehabilitation programs due to the availability of resources needed to operate them. There are no clear-cut guidelines that govern the rehabilitation schemes operational in Ghana.

The Nsawam Medium Security Prison records low inmate participation in its varying rehabilitation programs, including those for formal primary and secondary education, religious programs, tailoring, electricals, doormat making, shoemaking, and many others. With over 3416 male prisoners, about ten rehabilitation programs are available, yet records an insignificant number of inmates participating in such programs (Hagan, 2013).

Thus, an attempt has been made to consider papers related to different rehabilitation and reintegrating mechanisms used in the world and the challenges identified. Therefore, having this review as a base, this study will explore the various challenges of the rehabilitation programs in Ethiopia and Ghana, taking a case study from the prisons in the two countries.



## Methodology

The study was conducted in two prisons, the Dire Dawa Federal Prison in Ethiopia and the Nsawam Medium Security Prison in Ghana. Dire Dawa prison is located in the Eastern part of Ethiopia in Dire Dawa, one of the chartered cities of the country besides Addis Ababa. (Population Stabilisation Report, 2014). Dire Dawa prison currently has around 1300 convicted inmates under its administration. This prison is selected for the study as it is one of the prisons with the lowest participation rate of inmates in cooperatives. Of the total prison population, only around 11% are organised in seven individual cooperatives. The Nsawam Medium Security Prison was established by the first president of Ghana, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, in 1960. Located in the Eastern Region of Ghana, the Nsawam medium prison was initially built to accommodate only 717 inmates but currently has about 3416 prisoners in the facility (Hagan, 2013). It is essential to use this research setting because it has the highest number of operational rehabilitation programs yet, records the meagre participation of inmates in each program.

## Target Population and Sampling

For this research, different concerned individuals in the area have been interviewed. Thus, the target populations are the prisoners and prison administrators involved in establishing and operating the rehabilitation schemes in the two settings.

The study used a convenient sampling method to select samples from the target population. This method is used since the target population is not easily accessible because of security and other related issues.

The sampling of the inmates is done in such a way that it is representative of types of crime, the number of years of imprisonment, and the rehabilitation program currently operating; in all, twenty-five inmates and two administrators were interviewed. One ex-inmate who used to be a cooperative member was also interviewed in Ethiopia to understand his experience. The researchers got access to him through the prison official selected for the study.

The study employed a qualitative research method to collect the relevant data; twenty-eight participants were selected from the target population. A semi-structured in-depth individual interview has been conducted with the selected participants. The classrooms in the prison's elementary school, located in the prison compound, were used to conduct the interviews with the inmates in Ethiopia. The church auditorium, located on the premise of the prison, was used to host interviews with inmates in Ghana.

The interviews with the prison administrators were conducted in their respective offices. The interviews lasted from 30 to 55 minutes. Besides interviews, the researchers conducted a simple non-participant observation of the places where inmates had their training, delivered their services, and produced their products; to understand the challenges during operation.

## Ethical Considerations

Before the interviews were conducted, the consent of each participant was secured. The interviewers explained the purpose of the research for the participants to make an informed decision before participating in the study. The participants' names were changed to other names or phrases to secure their confidentiality. The interviews were not voice recorded as the





researchers were not allowed to have an audiotape device inside the prisons, the researcher put in notes as conversations were ongoing.

## **Data Analysis**

### **Presentation of the Sample**

Participants in the study area were in the range of 20 to 51 years of Age; the study also tried to make sure that both sexes were well represented, considering the number of inmates in the sampling. The number of female participants is lesser than the number of male participants since females take up less than 5% of the total prison population. Among the twenty-five inmates interviewed, six were female inmates (4 from Ethiopia and two from Ghana); three of the Ethiopian female respondents had not joined any cooperative. The two Ghanaian female respondents were all enrolled in a rehabilitation program (one is inactive). The remaining nineteen are men inmates (eleven Ethiopians and Eight Ghanaians); among which, 4 Ethiopians had joined a cooperative, and three Ghanaians had enrolled in a rehabilitation program.

The study has included ten rehabilitation programs operating in the two prisons. Of these rehabilitation programs, seven are found in the men's section of the prison, i.e., Electricals, Barbering, tailoring, formal primary education, woodwork, leather works, and shoemaking. Similarly, there are three rehabilitation programs in the women's section of the prison: baking, designing, and hairdressing.

In addition to the above participants, one ex-prisoner in Ethiopia and two Prison administrators who assisted the rehabilitation programs were interviewed: thus, one in each setting.

## **RESULTS**

The study has identified issues that are considered obstacles and hindrances to developing the rehabilitation program. The issues include difficulties that the system faces from the point of formation, concerning the shortage of finance and availability of infrastructure, and problems encountered in the operation process, mainly in relation to the lack of adequate supply of raw material and market linkage. Besides these factors, the attitude of the inmates towards the program and the limitation of fields of interest were pinpointed by respondents as obstacles to the participation of the inmates. Rehabilitation programs run mainly as cooperatives in Ethiopia, while rehabilitation programs run predominantly as vocational training and formal education in Ghana.

### **Financial and Infrastructural Impediments**

In Ethiopia, cooperatives are established only by inmates, and each member needs to contribute money to join. The money is required to develop the cooperatives and buy the necessary materials and machinery. The Ghana Prison Service does not absorb the cost of rehabilitation in various prisons, although formal education and vocational training are state-approved in Ghana.

Therefore, financial issues are related to a lack of financial support for the inmates to buy the initial share and join an existing cooperative or form a new one; or buy the materials needed to personally practice what has been taught. Thus, the inmates try to get money from their families



and friends. It is difficult for inmates whose families and friends cannot afford the money and those who face rejection by family and friends. The Prison administrators in Ethiopia explained that some of the cooperatives started to lend the initial starting money to fellow inmates to join the cooperatives and later pay their debt after engaging in the cooperatives. In Ghana, some only observe what has been taught but have never had hands-on practice since they did not have the machines or materials to self-practice. Most respondents indicated that this had been a significant obstacle to the inmates' participation in the rehabilitation programs.

*"There are many who want to join our cooperative. But the problem is they don't have the financial capacity to pay for the initial share payment. Even me, I wouldn't have been able to pay for the share if I was not working as a cleaner for the Director and earned some money" (Ethiopian Inmate, Female, Traditional Embroidery and Knitting Works, Age, 25)*

*"I just stand here, I don't do anything, so sometimes I don't come because when I come, I just watch and watch and get bored, even when I am coming they laugh at me because they know I am doing nothing, but you know this place when the bosses eat and they can eat they give me" (Ghanaian Inmate, Male, Tailoring, Age, 22).*

*'I don't want to join because those you have registered are not getting space over there. They join to run away from work at the yard, now the officers have seen it, so they even reduce the number of people allowed to join' (Ghanaian Inmate, Male, Not registered, Age, 30).*

The second significant challenge that affects the proper implementation of this rehabilitation program is the lack of adequate infrastructure. First, the place of operation designated for the rehabilitation programs to train, produce their goods or deliver service is inadequate. Since the site is small, it became difficult for the rehabilitation team to take additional new members. Some of the rehabilitation team leads and Prison officers-in-charge of various programs decided to make their members work in two shifts (morning and afternoon) to let all members participate in the production process. Second, besides the inadequate operation space, the participants indicated limited machinery for the members to use. Most of the machinery already in use is not modern, and some have broken down.

*"...Since the production place is within the prison playground, it is tiny to accommodate all the members. Thus, we are not operating in our full capacity, and even if we wanted to expand the business into producing other construction materials, we are not able due to the same reason." (Ethiopian Inmate, Male, Brick Production, 36)*

*"in this barbering shop, there is only one. Plus we are 20 working in this small room, (hahaha), we work fast to give the second person chance to come in, our boss only allows those of us who have less than one year to join so that when we go home, we use the training to start life" (Ghanaian Inmate, Male, barbering, 41)*

### **Lack of Adequate Supply of Raw Material**

Some participants mentioned the shortage of raw material supply as a hindrance to their production process. Some stay idle for long without producing their products; since they cannot get the raw materials they need. Others get the raw materials through personal connections



from families of inmates; thus, the continuous and reliable supply of the materials is in question. Similarly, most rehabilitation programs have no market linkage with the outside world. Their products are only sold to the prison officials and some of visiting family members of the inmates; these customers are incidental and do not guarantee a continuous market.

*“However, it was not like we anticipated at first; it is tough to get the raw material to produce our goods. The raw materials are supposed to be bought from Addis since they are unavailable in this city. And for inmates to be allowed to go that far distance and buy the raw materials is unrealistic. Our production has been interrupted many times, making us ineffective.” (Ethiopian Inmate, Male, Leather Production, 42)*

*“How to get the leather to use is our problem, my sister brings it to me, and when I make two unless an officer helps me sell it, otherwise, I can’t sell. I make good shoes, but I want to be able to sell my goods so that I get some money before I go home” (Ghanaian Inmate, Male, shoemaking, 33)*

### **Challenges to Formal Education.**

The Nsawam Medium Security Prison authorities have introduced formal education programs that seek to give inmates who desire to assess formal education rather than vocational skills an opportunity. An official mentioned that those who join the classroom learning and remain consistent until the final year are granted the opportunity to write the final examination. Thus, the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). He added that most of the teachers for these classroom learning are their fellow prisoners who were once teachers or had attained a higher education before incarceration since they lacked the funds to employ many qualified teachers from outside the prison. Most inmates do not get motivated enough when other prisoners are teaching them. Besides that, one other challenge is the availability of classrooms and teaching and learning materials. Some of the classes are held under sheds which distorts class schedules during unfavourable weather conditions.

*“Our major problem is the classrooms; when it rains, they have to stop the classes under the shed, and that affects their learning experiences” (Ghana, Prisons Officer)*

### **Motivation to Work and Field of Interest**

The difficulty in the operation of the system is indicated by most of the responding inmates and administrators related to the low level of motivation of inmates to engage in rehabilitation programs. The prison administrators explain the lack of motivation to be mainly caused by some inmates’ feeling hopeless about their future life after prison, which will make them lazy to engage in any activity and no interest in the programs under operation. Also mentioned was that most of these training and teaching were being carried out by fellow prisoners who did not motivate them enough or serve as role models.

*“...there are many inmates who do not want to engage in any training or work. One reason for this could be not having the morale to work and being hopeless. So sometimes we even force them to take training to get the chance of parole.” (Director of the Dire Dawa Federal Prison)*





*"I have finished secondary school. I want to go to the university because my grades are good, I don't like the programs here, so I will wait and go home" (Ghanaian Inmate, Male, not registered, Age, 28)*

*"see me am 50 years and I have six more years here, what can I do again, I have to wait till I die peacefully, I pray my children do not sell out my farm, I hope to live on that" (Ghanaian Inmate, Male, not registered, Age, 50)*

Besides this, lack of motivation is mentioned to have some perceptions towards the rehabilitation program, which hold the inmates back from being part of the process. The perception can be seen by inmates and society at large.

*'a guy in prison sewed some nice suit, wanted to help him sell it, but when I tell my friends who are civilians about who made it and where it was made, they don't want to buy it; they think everything from the prison is bad, I had to give him the money, but still, the suit has not been bought. Hahaha" (Ghana, Prisons Officer)*

First, the perceptions are expressed in terms of the inmates focusing mainly on financial gain rather than the rehabilitative role. As Respondents who are members of the brick production cooperative explained, their cooperative is profitable compared to the remaining cooperatives. Thus, though the place of operation is very limited, inmates tend to want to join them not because they are interested in the construction sector but to get more money. Ghanaian respondents who have not yet entered any rehabilitation programs claimed they would have joined if a structured mechanism could help them sell off their produce. Since most rehabilitation programs are not profitable for different reasons, the inmates hesitate to join them and prefer to stay idle; thus, this perception or attitude towards the rehabilitation program is considered one-factor hindering inmates' participation.

*"I think the problem is most of the inmates focus just on the money they get from the cooperative, but for me, the skill development we are gaining from the participation in the cooperative is more than anything. Most prisoners prefer to join the brick production cooperative because it is profitable and has many customers; they refuse to join the other cooperatives since they are not that productive." (Ethiopian Inmate Male, Brick Production, 31)*

*"We bake for the prison, both male and female, but we get less money from it; the prison doesn't want to pay us well because we are prisoners', so I have to stop." (Ghanaian Inmate female, not active, 35)*

Secondly, society's perception, including the police force toward ex-inmates, is another discouraging factor. The prison administrators explained that the inmates think whatever they do in prison is useless. It is a waste of time since the community will still label them as former prisoners. In the police force, there is a tendency to consider ex-inmates as first suspects when a crime is committed within an area.

*"...there is a fear that though you work in prison, the society still thinks of you as a criminal forever, which will make life after prison difficult; because there is nobody like in prison to help you establish yourself..." (Ethiopian Inmate, Male, Leather Production, 42)*



The prison administrators understood that due to the lack of an aftercare system, the success of the rehabilitation program is in question since the recidivism rate is not reducing; the administration further indicated that from the total population of the prison, around 300 of them (approximately 23%) are recidivists in Ethiopia. Whiles in Ghana, the administration relates this problem to the fact that some of the inmates have no family to help them establish themselves at home. Thus, even if they were participating in different programs in the prison, they were not able to be a productive citizen since no one outside is rendering them support in their after-prison life.

The prison officials pinpoint that there is no way to check whether the inmates can use their cooperative experience and establish their life accordingly.

## DISCUSSION

The present research studies the various rehabilitation programs used to reform inmates to make them conformist. This study tried to identify the major factors considered hindrances and difficulties in developing the rehabilitation program in the selected case studies.

The theory of rehabilitation dictates that a rehabilitation system is considered to have two perspectives: restoring the inmates to better citizens and equipping them with productive skills. The other is social reintegration to facilitate re-entering society (Gamo, 2013). The study consequently identified the difficulties that hinder the further expansion of the rehabilitation system, looking into both the rehabilitation and social reintegration process.

One crucial factor that the study found to impact the program is a financial constraint: lack of start-up capital, machinery, and enough space for the operation of the rehabilitation programs. As understood by the study respondents and non-participant observation, these factors hinder inmates' participation in the program, among other reasons. Most of the worksites designated for the rehabilitation schemes are small, even for existing members. This finding confirms previous research conducted in the Nigerian rehabilitation prison (Uche et al., 2015).

The fact that there are only limited fields of work for the inmates is also mentioned as a factor hindering inmates' participation and overall rehabilitation success. The study helped the researcher comprehend that through internal rules, the prison administration restricted some of the inmates accused of specified crimes not to participate in rehabilitation schemes to prevent them from coming into contact with sharp objects. They also prevented more inmates from participating due to limited space and machinery. As mentioned earlier, the insufficiency of financial and infrastructural support and focusing on the financial gain of the program rather than the rehabilitative role has been seen to be the reasons for this restriction and less participation.

Another issue evident from the study participants was the lack of motivation to be part of rehabilitation programs which is thought to result from losing hope for life after prison, fear of the social stigma, and facilitators who could serve as role models. One aspect of the reintegration program is reducing the stigma against ex-inmates. The lack of this action has been noticed in the study; since some of the inmates are seen to hesitate to join the program, considering it a waste of time since they will still be labelled as ex-inmates by society. If enough



education is being carried out to the general public, then inmates can gain a sense of love, purpose, and respect to strive to be successful and respected persons in life.

Besides this, the existing legal framework is not open enough for the prison administration to go beyond the prison compound and work with other stakeholders for continuous follow-up and aftercare system to reintegrate the prisoners. This is seen to be a problem since, according to Nicholson (2011), the involvement of different stakeholders, including local businesses, government authorities, private employers, and former prisoners, is crucial for the success of the cooperatives; since they would assist the launching of the program and continuous reintegration of the inmates back to the society. Previous research has identified the mentioned challenge as a major hindrance to the success of a rehabilitation program (Osayi, 2015).

Despite the above-discussed challenges within the system, the researcher has understood from the study respondents that the existing rehabilitation programs have helped them develop different skills. The division of labour within each rehabilitation program, both in the production and administrative process, helped them strengthen their mastery of management and decision-making. The properly scheduled work time and working with fellow inmates helped them gain proper work ethics. Gunn (1972) insisted on these positive impacts of such programs and showed that they have somehow helped rehabilitate inmates in different ways to see the bright side of their future lives.

Similarly, it has been identified from some respondents that the inmates are getting mental satisfaction since they are doing something worthwhile during their time in prison. It is considered a way of showing remorse for the mistake they have committed previously. This relates to Goodman's (2012) explanation, which states that working together to produce something useful for the community is seen as one way for the prisoners to get psychological satisfaction.

In addition to psychological satisfaction, the respondents in Ethiopia mentioned that the small amount of money they get from their cooperatives helped them cover some of their miscellaneous costs and even support their families outside. Moreover, they can also save a larger share of their profit for life after prison. Thus, as explained by Weaver & Nicholson (2012), working in cooperatives is considered a way of strengthening the financial ability of an inmate.

There are limitations to this study. First, the study is conducted in one prison in each country; the researchers only managed to make a case study of one of the federal prisons in Ethiopia and one medium prison in Ghana, which will make it difficult to make a general inference about what is going on in the other prisons in the two countries; in relation to the utilisation of the rehabilitation program.

Moreover, most inmates who are either not educated or only completed elementary school can be mentioned as a limitation since addressing the questions was difficult for some inmates. However, it was attempted to conduct more interviews and disqualify those not eligible. Lastly, since the prison administration has no track of inmates after they are released, it was challenging to get ex-inmates as a respondent; the researcher only managed to get one ex-inmate from Ethiopia.



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

It might be challenging to conclude only from the data collected by the current research about the challenges prevalent in the research areas. However, it is a starting point for understanding the major problems and recommending the way forward. Rehabilitating and reintegrating inmates has been a crucial step in the judiciary systems, especially in reducing recidivism. It is recommended that it would be better if the prison administration could work well with other stakeholders in the areas, including financial institutions, government, and private businesses, concerning getting a credit service, creating job opportunities, and developing the social capital of the inmates.

The recommendation, as mentioned above, is crucial in the Ghanaian context. There is no documented legal framework to back the commercialisation of the products produced by inmates, as seen in the Ethiopian setting. Prison officers grant these permissions by their desire; this is the major difference between the rehabilitation schemes in Ethiopia and Ghana. The Ethiopian Rehabilitation cooperatives are identified in a legal framework that allows partnership with small-scale businesses, banks, and private companies. Though not fully operational, it serves as a stepping stone to increasing the impacts of these rehabilitation programs.

Building a better counselling and guidance system to study the background history of the inmate seems an excellent way to find out the causes of misbehaving and tackle the problem; to further motivate inmates to participate in the program. In relation to this, the administration seems to need to work with the media to create awareness as to the rehabilitation programs and how it is changing the lives of the inmates; to let society know what is going on in the prisons to change the perception of society towards inmates and fight the stigma.

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