

THE IMPACT OF PRISONER'S EMOTIONAL RESPONSIVENESS ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

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Abstract

This paper reviews the evidence on the impact of the inmate emotional responsiveness on educational outcomes. There are two main reasons why researchers in this field believe in prison education that may reduce a future criminal activity. The first reason involves the impact of the increased cognitive skills and changes in behaviour but the second reason acclaims that participants can learn how to live a crime-free life by participating in education courses. The research aim is to explore the impact of the prisoners' emotional responsiveness to learning during the learning process at Ilguciema prison. In the research the authors analyse theoretical sources and research data. The research includes the analysis of pedagogical, psycho-pedagogical literature as well as Acts of Legislation. The results were analyzed on the basis of the data from the questionnaires, observation and reflection as well. The results were analysed on the basis of the examination of the interplay of data by means of the quantitative mathematical statistical program SPSS 17.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). In the research pedagogical pre-conditions that foster the inmate emotional responsiveness have been defined. It is concluded that the inmate emotional satisfaction created by steady developmental and educative sessions may provoke emotional responsiveness as well as would diminish the inmate personality degradation; also, the psychological atmosphere would improve in prison cells and the ties with life in freedom/ outside the prison walls would be strengthened as well.

Key words: *the inmates, emotional responsiveness, prison, prisoners' education.*

Introduction

The education process in any kind of institution does not differ including schools of imprisonment, confinement and detention. The primary aim of prison education is to guarantee the imprisoned the right to education. Educators' specific task in imprisonment schools differs both in the selection of the appropriate content as well as with its acquisition. Also, the aims differ. Therefore, it is vitally important to evaluate the imprisonment school efficiency, carrying out a definite analysis considering various aspects, i.e., the number of inmates, the former education background, their age as well as the level of their emotional response. The prison environment is linked with depersonalization and dissocializing that enhances any personality's degradation. Within the study process it is possible to reduce this harmful effect by renewing and encouraging the inmates' emotional responsiveness. According to L. Vygotsky, emotional reactions are an important behavioural organizer where our feelings reveal themselves. These feelings can be guided as well as controlled (Выготский, 1999).

Thus, emotions determine our behaviour. Emotions show how the individual evaluates the opportunities of the needs satisfaction in a particular situation as well as in the perspective; therefore, emotional processes are closely linked with the motivating processes. To provoke emotions as a psychological process motivation is necessary that, in its own turn, is linked with a tense motivating force; also, the cognitive situational interpretation is essential, i.e., whether

this situation is favourable or unfavourable in order to reach the goal. To foster the emotional memory as well as emotional responsiveness is of great importance because of the personality degradation and dull emotional life in prisons.

The skill of the emotional response/ reaction is vitally important in the developmental processes of the personality. If a learner's interests are highly developed, he/she enjoys and appreciates the beautiful and the wonderful as well as the good things in life; as a result, the skills of the learner's emotional intelligence develop successfully (Ветлугина, 1967).

Scientific concepts about fostering emotional reactions in general and in particular in music favour the obvious necessity of music sessions in prisons as a developmental means of the inmates' emotional world.

Problem of Research

The concept of education in Latvia determines the following educational aim: to provide each citizen's mental as well as physical development; also, to promote the development of a free creative culture personality responsible for deeds, words and actions as well. (Concept of education development within the period 2007 to 2013, 2006). The research issue is associated with the necessity to evaluate the imprisonment school efficiency by analyzing it from different angles. The prison environment is linked with depersonalization, and dissocialising that enhances any personality's degradation. Each year about 2,500 of the imprisoned are set free. In order to increase the former inmates as well as the currently imprisoned social integration opportunities, it is of vital importance to provide them with diverse knowledge and skills; moreover, to assist to socialize in life in freedom. The study process can foster the reduction of the personality's degradation, can renew as well as encourage the inmate emotional response.

Research Focus

The possible development of inmate emotional responsiveness to learning during the learning process at Ilguciema prison is researched. The concept of education in Latvia determines the following educational aim, i.e., to provide each citizen's mental as well as physical development; also, to promote the development of a free and a creative culture personality who is responsible for his/her deeds, words and actions as well. (Concept of education development within the period 2007 to 2013, 2006) The research aim is to explore the impact of the prisoners' emotional responsiveness to learning during the learning process at Ilguciema prison.

Methodology of Research

General Background of Research

In the research the European Prison Regularities, issued by the European Council Omnibus Bureau, and the prevailing situation in prisons in Latvia are highlighted as well as the data analysis of the current situation in prisons is illustrated regarding the Regularity about 'The imprisoned and newly- amnestied persons' rights to education, work and social rehabilitation' which was issued on the initiative of the European Community within the framework of the project EQUAL, i.e., 'New solutions to promote the former inmates chances in finding a job'. The Project was carried out based on the priority of EQUAL, i.e., fostering job skills and realizing them into practise by The State Probationary Centre/ Service and the Board of Confinement Places.

In Latin *moveo* means to encourage and to challenge. In a broader sense the concept emotion is used as a personality emotional reaction that is associated not only with its psychic

component, i.e., emotional experience but, also, with specific physiological processes and changes in a human's body which are linked with the emotional experience as well. The impact of positive emotions reduces the personality degradation. O. Nikiforow defines emotions as a human's emotional state in a particular moment related to something, for instance, the on-going or the coming situation, other humans and oneself as well (Nikiforovs, 2007). Emotions trigger a response in our behaviour and outlook about the forthcoming that may occur in that particular moment. We look forward to what we wish to happen. We are selective about the things that interest us. Therefore, we can master something that brings about great satisfaction. The chief features of emotions are associated with their dependence on the situation and the subject matter; switching off the subject matter and turning to other objects and a kind of resistance to the administration; swapping in the space as well as time (Nikiforovs, 2007). Emotions are a psychic state caused by complex body reactions to outer as well as inner environmental changes. The scientist treats emotions as a phenomenon as well as a situation that reflect the real sense and the subject personal way of an emotional reaction. (Valtneris, 1998). On the other hand, emotions are the total brain reactions to the received stimuli but with an accentuated sub-cortical reaction. In all cases emotions are caused by the closest sub-cortical reaction of the right/ the left hemisphere of the brain that is linked with an active cortex reaction as well (Bitjanova, 2008). Mainly emotions depend on the traits of the central nervous system which determines humans' temperaments, i.e., the emotional part of the character, especially how likely humans are to be happy, angry etc. One of the temperamental components is emotionalism.

Regarding the imprisoned women's emotional responsiveness, it is connected with *mood*, i.e., an unstable emotional state the cause of it can be unclear. It increases or reduces a human's communication and activities at work. Direct emotions are short-termed; anyway, they express a human's joy, fears, sorrows etc. They depend on a human's needs satisfaction or dissatisfaction and the human is well – aware of the reason. Rage is a strong, uncontrolled, intensive as well as short-termed emotional state caused by an extremely meaningful stimulus for the human. Most often rage is linked with a conflict. As a rule, it is a sudden outburst of strong anger and weakens the skill to turn to other things in order to limit its degree. Actions in rage are uncontrollable as well as unpredictable.

Sample of Research

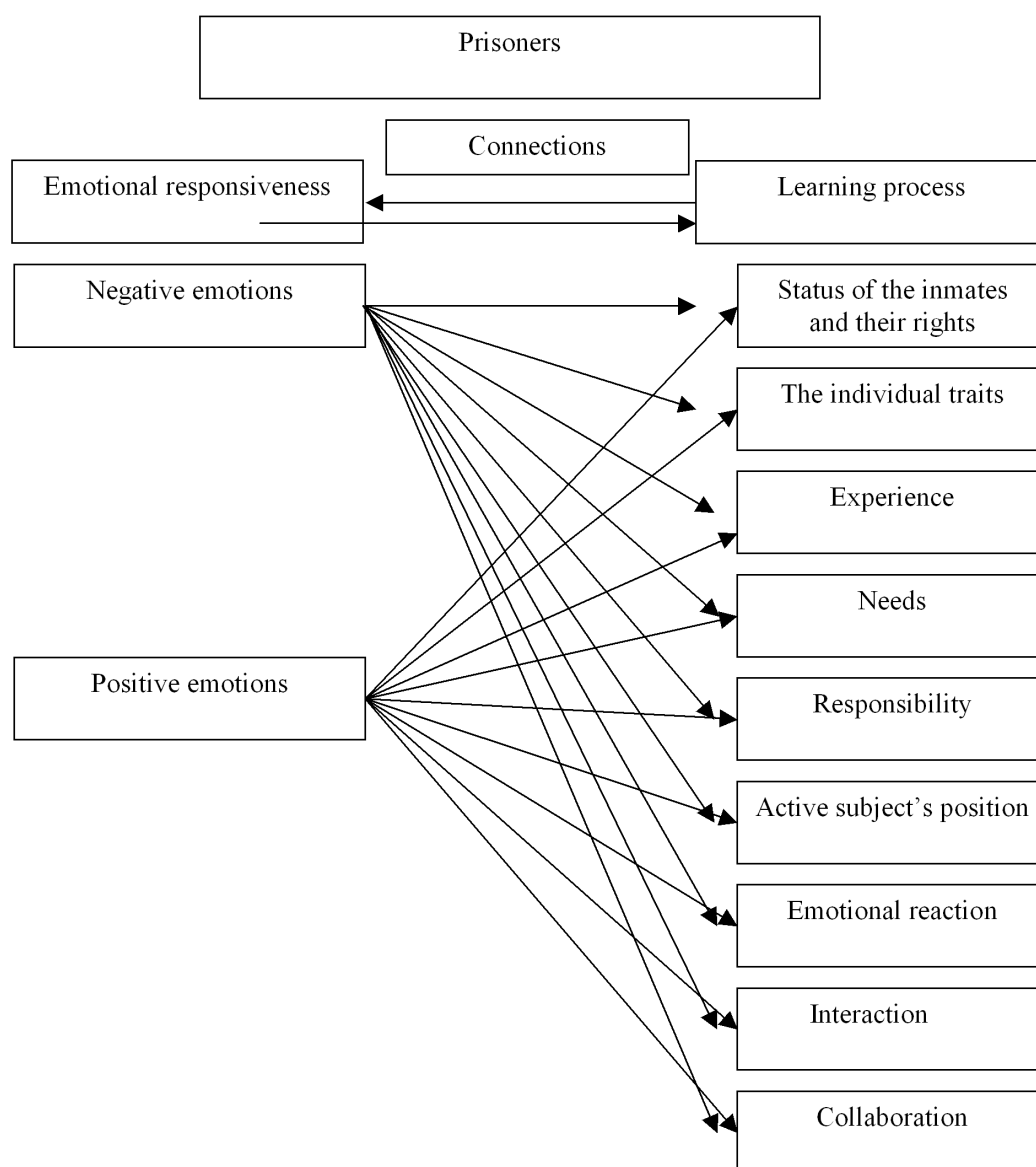
In the present research pedagogical pre-conditions that foster the inmate's emotional responsiveness have been defined. Researching scientists-pedagogues concepts about the development of the emotional responsiveness, the following conclusions can be made: understanding emotions and the causes that provoke them, it is possible to comprehend the human's development/growth, behaviour as well as social relations that are particularly meaningful for prison pedagogues. Exploring scientists - psychologists' theories about emotions, it can be concluded that emotions show up in the person's behaviour. Everything that is connected with the imprisoned satisfaction of their real needs, cause a positive emotional experience; on the contrary, everything that hinders their satisfaction evokes negative feelings. Emotions help to appreciate the on-going events in space and time, to evaluate things phenomena, either they are favourable or unfavourable, useful or harmful for the particular person. The research approved the following interactions: the Ilguciema imprisoned eagerness to learn will be more challenging, if the learning/teaching activities are of personal interest as well as meaningful for them; as a result, the imprisoned women will be much keener to do activities during the study process; also, the formation of their emotional responsiveness will be more successful.

Defined pedagogical pre-conditions that foster the inmates' emotional responsiveness (see table 1):

- the actual status of the inmates and their rights;

- taking into consideration the individual traits;
- setting up such situations within the learning process that favour the personal development and responsiveness, the inmates can make decisions, can understand his/her own needs, can shoulder certain responsibility as well as can express his/her own personal viewpoint;
- providing such learning conditions that make the inmates to react emotionally instead of memorizing merely facts, regularities and definitions;
- ensuring decent learning conditions that are appropriate to commonly accepted conditions in society.

Table 1. Pedagogical pre-conditions that foster the inmates' emotional responsiveness.



Instrument and Procedures

Theoretical methods include the analysis of pedagogical, psycho-pedagogical literature as well as Acts of Legislation. Empiric methods involve questionnaires, observation and reflection. The research respondents were asked to evaluate their basic skills. To be exact, they were asked to evaluate their skills needed daily as well as in the labour market, for example, reading skills, writing skills, doing sums/ maths skills, as well as their knowledge of Latvian. The skills were assessed according to the scheme: good, satisfactory, low level of knowledge/skills. Further research explores the reasons why the inmates do not acquire general education in prisons at all. The respondents could choose more than one answer in the opinion poll (the lack of a general education programme; the lack of a specific education programme for a definite imprisoned person; also, the current prison regularities do not promote any kind of study process). In the research the observation method was used. The researchers acted in the research environment in order to explore the impact of emotional responsiveness to learning during the learning process at Ilguciema prison and its possible development. The results were analysed on the basis of the examination of the interplay of data by means of the quantitative mathematical statistical program SPSS 17.0 (*Statistical Package for Social Sciences*).

Data Analysis

The research was carried out in order to explore the level of the inmate emotional responsiveness at the very start of the research and its developmental dynamics. The objectives of the research are to find out the influential factors that promote the inmate emotional responsiveness as well as possibilities of its successful development.

EQUAL research respondents were asked to evaluate their basic skills. The answers were sorted out; the decisive factor was whether Latvian is or is not their native language; those respondents, whose native language was not Latvian, were asked to evaluate their knowledge according to the mentioned scheme, i.e., good, satisfactory and low. The data in Table 1 show the respondents' high evaluation of their reading skills, for instance, nearly 60% evaluate them as good and 34.5% evaluate their reading skills as Satisfactory. 8.1% consider their reading skills are on a low level. The inmates assessed their maths skills as well. About a half of them, (51.7%) assesses maths skills as good; more than one third has satisfactory level of knowledge in maths whereas 10.6% admit their level of maths skills is Low. Writing skills are assessed more critically than reading and maths skills. 43.7% admit their writing skills are good (it is less than half of the total number of the respondents; likewise, a similar number of the respondents, 43.5% to be exact, admit their knowledge is satisfactory. 12.8% of the respondents have poor writing skills. As regards the analysed data about the respondents' knowledge of Latvian, 29% of them consider Latvian as their native language; 24.5% evaluate their knowledge of Latvian as good whereas 32% evaluate their knowledge of Latvian as satisfactory. 14.3% of the respondents evaluate their knowledge as low.

Comparing the respondents' answers who are Latvians with the answers of the representatives from other nationalities, it can be concluded that Latvians have a higher evaluation of their basic skills than non-Latvians. After analyzing the obtained data correlation with the respondents' education level, it should be acknowledged that those respondents who studied at schools with the study process in Latvian, the overall education level is higher, therefore, it can be acclaimed, with a certain conditioning, that the differences in self-evaluations / self-assessments are objective; moreover, there is no reason to doubt the Latvian respondents' higher level of basic skills.

Further research explores the reasons why the inmates do not acquire general education

in prisons at all.

The respondents could choose more than one answer in the opinion poll therefore the number of answers exceeds a 100 %.

The obtained EQUAL questionnaire-based data highlight the main reasons why the inmates do not obtain general education in prisons, i.e., the lack of a general education program; a lack of a specific education programme for a definite imprisoned person; also, the current prison regularities do not promote any kind of study process. Around 1/10th of the respondents face a bad health condition whereas 1/5th of the respondents are pessimistic about the chances of getting a well-paid job. 4.9 % of the respondents dislike learning whereas each fourth of the respondents do not see any sense of learning. On the other hand, 13.3 % of the respondents have obtained general secondary education, consequently, there is no necessity for them to master general education programme but they would be willing to master definite subjects or to acquire another programme, for instance, a higher education program as well as a vocational education program.

The Ilguciema prison is the only prison where women are imprisoned in Latvia. It is a prison with partly- closed cells (solitary confinement) as well as with freely-open educative departments for juvenile and detention departments. Collaboration with Riga No. 1 Evening Secondary School and Riga Vocational School No. 34 ensure the imprisoned women to acquire general and professional education. Right now 43 women are acquiring general basic education but 56 women are acquiring the trade of a dress-maker, a hair-stylist or a chef. Since 1947 the Ilguciema prison building houses a detention centre, solitary confinements as well as an open prison. In partly-closed prison cells the sentenced women are kept for having committed a serious crime intentionally as well as the women sentenced for a petty crime that had been committed unintentionally; also, the women who are imprisoned instead of paying a fine as a punishment and persons who are sentenced to a definite period of time in prison because of not serving the additional punishment, i.e., police control etc.; also, those who are taken from open prisons due to habitual commitment of tough and rough behaviour; the inmates who have been moved from juvenile punishment centres after reaching the age of 18, if they have committed a dreadful or a serious crime. Police are on the beat to provide a constant surveillance in partly-closed prisons. Police are on the beat three times a day; at 8 am, at 4pm as well as before bedtime at 9 pm.

Women often commit their crimes suffering from emotions whereas men commit crimes intentionally and they are well-planned in advance. Women have taken up stealing in order to make both ends meet in the family, mostly in despair.

The girls live on two floors, 4 or 6 of them in each room. Bunk - beds are tidy and full of soft toys. In each room there is a smooth table decorated with colourful magazine cuttings. Several girls have decorated their desks with framed (made by themselves) photos of their relatives or boyfriends. Girls are allowed to make 6 phone calls; they have to do with writing letters at other times. The Internet is not available for them because it is not easy to check what they read or write in the e-mails. The chief inspector reveals the truth, i.e., mainly the girls are from badly - off families; occasionally off-springs from well-off families turn up. The prison guard shows us around adding: 'Girls are girls; they have a space for keeping school as well as their favourite high-heeled shoes'. "They address the guards as educators / teachers.

The chief inspector Regina Martinena emphasizes that they are as if they were their mothers and teachers (Non-flying bird world or the report/newsletter from the Ilguciema prison, 2007).

Women enjoy organizing different events as well as campaigns. "They regularly figure out a singing contest, a masquerade or dancing. All of them can sew; as a result of it, new apparel is ready in a fortnight! They also do a lot of handicraft and send knitted socks, scarves and sweaters to the orphanage.' In the report women's talent of painting is pointed out; their

paintings were once exhibited in a popular Art Gallery. The prison guide shows us fabulous photos of the imprisoned women dressed up in ancient clothes; the photo session for the women with a low self-esteem was a kind of present from a Riga-based photo studio.

Results of Research

The research results and the observation show that education as well as culture events are cultivated in prisons. In such a way the imprisoned acquire knowledge and skills which would be necessary after the imprisonment; moreover, it would greatly favour their competitiveness in the labour market as well as it would definitely reduce the impact of isolation; also, it would certainly promote their integration into the community as well as it would do away / decrease their degradation process; learning would foster a better discipline and safety in prisons; also, it would improve the psychological climate as well; the right to education would be implemented according to EC of Civil Rights and protection of basic rights in Act 2 about the humans' right to education; it would diminish the risk of social disintegration (in accordance with the Convention accepted in 1998 by EC of Civil Rights and protection of basic fights). The promotion of the inmates' emotional responsiveness within activities is topical in order the inmates had ties with on-going events outside the prison walls as well as could emotionally react to the latest developments and to enhance the development of a better psychological environment. Depersonalization, desocialization and regularities within the prison environment do much harm to any emotional expressiveness at all. It explains the urgent necessity of educative sessions to promote the aspect of emotional responsiveness. The overall description of music lessons in Ilguciema prison. Riga Evening Secondary School, in other words, general education institution implements general basic education as well as general secondary education programs. Art is one branch of education needless to say. Music education is definitely a fundamental in it. In the school year of 2008/2009 in Ilguciema prison school there were 5 classes all in all: class 5, class 6, class 7, class 8 and class 9 with the total number of 30 learners. As regards their age, 26 of them or 82% were of lawful age whereas 4 learners or 18% were juvenile. The inmates from class 6, 7 and 8 participated in the research. It should be mentioned the study process was conducted in a mixed-age group. All age singers have had a certain experience in singing, the background of the musical and vocal level is different therefore the teacher's main duty is to explore the inmates attitude to music sessions in general, i.e., whether they might be meaningful for them at all; next, to conclude whether a further developmental emotional responsiveness may be within singing as well as listening to music sessions. The aim of the research is to find out the level of the inmate emotional responsiveness at the very start of the research as well as its developmental dynamics. In such a way we hypothesize to reveal the influential factors that affect the inmate emotional responsiveness as well as the possibilities to foster its development. The questionnaire was aimed at exploring the meaningfulness of music in inmate life in general; the following questions are included, for example, whether music matters in their life; what is their music preference, either it is vocal music or instrumental music; the choice of songs they sing willingly. The obtained answers (question No 1) make us conclude music is of great value in inmate daily life. One learner remembers the childhood and the first music impressions associated with singing in the choir as well as the first concert at the Ave Sol concert hall. Two learners explain that music is rather important for them as it helps to overcome moodiness as well as loneliness. 3 learners admit music fosters memories of everything that has been sad and even depressive. 4 learners appreciate music as the top means in their prison life as it calms them down, helps to overcome insomnia and even favours a sound sleep first and foremost. Music makes the world go round! 5 learners consider music as a source of inspiration to consider matters of great importance. 6 learners confess that music favours the development of joyful mood as well as it is a good way of relaxation. 8 learners point out that music is soothing, thus

it helps to evaluate 'the real on-going processes in life. 8 learners assert music is very important indeed. It assists to forget the bad happenings and create new feelings. Music sets them free. Music can remind of a certain pleasant event, too. It can make us laugh and cry; nevertheless it makes us feel good. 9 learners affirm music helps to calm down, to get rid of negative emotions as well as to think about their life in particular. The obtained answers to the question No 1 and the overall analysis confirm that music is meaningful for the inmate as well as it is interlinked with their emotional responsiveness. All inmates acknowledge the positive impact of music. It means that the emotional responsiveness favours the inmate link with the real life outside the prison walls. The obtained answers to the question No 2 about listening to music helped to find out the inmate music preferences. It can be concluded that nearly all inmates prefer current music genres. Only two of them listen to classic music. As regards music instruments, their preferences are the saxophone, the trumpet and the violin. The obtained answers to the question No 3 and the data analysis approve the inmates' eagerness to sing. The inmates enjoy well-known singers and sing songs in Latvian, English as well as in Russian. The majority sings songs from the repertoire of current Latvian singers. It can be concluded from the respondents' replies that the inmates sing their favourite songs in their leisure time. A few inmates keenly sing the songs that have been mastered during music sessions. The inmates' attitude to the questionnaire was different. For instance, one inmate expressed her dissatisfaction, but replied to all questions. The other inmates replied willingly and gave thoughtful answers. During the third research stage the developmental emotional responsiveness was explored within music sessions. While mastering songs with the inmates, the selection of songs should be treated carefully. That can be explained by specific work environment as well as the inmate life experience. It should be kept in mind one and the same song may cause controversial emotions while the emotional responsiveness is being focused on. During the research it was attempted to compare the development of the emotional responsiveness while listening to songs and while singing songs.

9 inmates took part in the experiment and listened the song 'To the Child'. SP1 associated this song with her childhood and experienced feelings of peace and silence. SP2 experienced peace and sadness at the same time: the song arouses sadness, but on the other hand, it is soothing at the same time. SP3 learners describe their emotions in the following way: the song arouses emotional peace, soft feelings, generosity and love. This song provokes eagerness to sing it to my child. SP4 the song makes them think of their native place. The song is educative; it is a good lesson'. SP5 make them think of their parents, especially about their fathers: 'The father would always remember the child's face. Singing the song made them recollect their childhood experiences. It aroused my wish to go home'. SP6 find the song lyrical but the emotional state is becoming sad and gloomy. SP7 evaluated it as a moving song. SP8 admit it caused negative emotions. The reply to the question: 'What kind of emotions do you have while singing this song?' SP9 replied that the song created a gloomy atmosphere. Singing this song makes us think of something more joyful in order to feel merrier. Thoughts have wings and fly home or to any other close spot. SP9 find the song 'emotionally neutral'. Though, at the same time it calms me down and even inspires. My heart starts beating faster as it describes our Fatherland. Before listening to this song, I felt a little depressed whereas after listening to it, my heart is calm. The lyric is touching and I will always remember it. The results of the questionnaire confirm the inmate developmental emotional responsiveness, i.e., overall peaceful and joyful emotions after listening to the song 'To My Child', though, emotions of sadness and anger were also observed. Thus, the importance of the choice of the appropriate repertoire that promoted emotional responsiveness as well as reinforced positive emotions should be emphasized. The comparison of emotional responsiveness while listening to the song and singing the song shows the emotional increase of sadness as well as anger. Within the developmental process of emotional responsiveness the inmates should verbalize the emotional experience in order to get rid of it. The inmates unconsciously personalize the heroes of the song as well as compare

the created emotions by the song with their own experience. In other words, due to the melody and the lyrics, a ‘holiness’ is being created. When music is reinforced with words and words are reinforced by music, the inmate emotional responsiveness is being developed. The inmates regularly reflect on the provoked feelings, thus they themselves foster the development of the emotional responsiveness that, in its own turn, favours the improvement of the psychological atmosphere in prison cells; also, it reminds them of positive events and emotions in freedom; moreover, it diminishes estrangement from the real life as well as promotes positive mutual relations as well. The research results have interpreted quantitative with programme of data analysis SPSS. 16 learners took part in the research. As a result of the developmental process of emotional responsiveness during the music lessons, scores improved significantly. 13 learners have improved their marks at the end of the music course. The assessment was done after the first and the second terms (Figure 1). The assessment results show that students have improved their skills for about 5% (Figure 1). The results show importance of the impact of prisoner’s emotional responsiveness on educational outcomes.

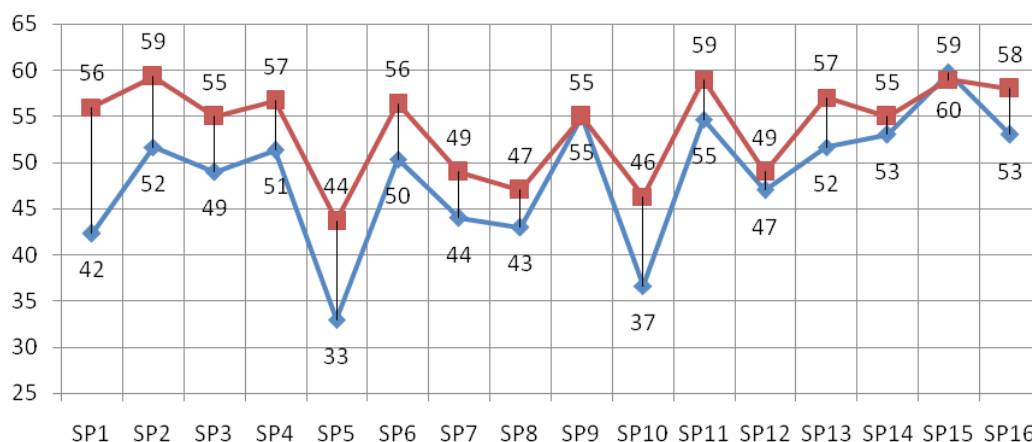


Figure 1: Assessment results (1. Term); Assessment results (2. Term).

Discussion

It is essential to continue the research with the analysis of scientists’ concepts in pedagogy as well as psychology that fundamentally clarify the developmental necessity of emotions as well as the emotional responsiveness in a human’s life; also, it is of vital importance to continue the research on the opportunities/ possibilities to promote the development of the emotional responsiveness within the study process in the prison environment. The issue is how to help the inmates not lose the chance of making contact with the world outside, how to diminish the personality degradation and how to better the psychological atmosphere in prison cells. However, education may be fundamental to other correctional goals. It may be a prerequisite to the success of many of the other kinds of prison rehabilitation programs. The more literate the inmate, the more he or she may benefit from all other forms of training. Thus, the link between correctional education and successful post release outcomes may have many paths which analysts do not consider during evaluation of education programs independent of its other influences. The field needs a design that insures equivalent levels of motivation and achievement.

Conclusions

Emotions help to appreciate the on-going events in space and time, to evaluate things and phenomena accordingly, either they are favourable or unfavourable, useful or harmful for the particular person. The research approved the following interactions: the Ilguciema imprisoned eagerness to learn will be more challenging, if the learning/teaching activities are of personal interest as well as meaningful for them; as a result, the imprisoned women will be much keener to do activities during the study process; also, the formation of their emotional responsiveness will be more successful. In the present research pedagogical pre-conditions that foster the inmate emotional responsiveness have been defined.

It is concluded that the inmate emotional satisfaction created by steady developmental and educative sessions may provoke emotional responsiveness as well as would diminish the inmate personality degradation; also, the psychological atmosphere would improve in prison cells and the ties with life in freedom/ outside the prison walls would be strengthened as well.

Exploring and researching the inmate emotional responsiveness and its ways of developing, it can be concluded:

- the inmates are willing to do activities independently;
- listening to music or singing a piece of music challenges the inmates in case the composer's experience is linked with real life situations; moreover, the expressed feelings in the piece of music are similar to the inmate former emotional experience;
- the inmates search for mutual interconnection of regularities in music, nature as well as society;
- creative, artistically-oriented mind and imagination are developed as well;
- the inmate concentration span is being developed as well;
- the inmate positive attitude to art is being developed;
- the inmate positive aesthetic world outlook is promoted;
- music lessons are crucial in order to develop the inmate emotional responsiveness and the personality.

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