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What Makes an Efficient Adult Inmates' Trainer?

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Abstract
Second Chance Schools operating under the strict framework of the prison are an innovative educational institution in the field of Adult Education and confirm the invaluable value of corrective education. The peculiarities of the prison area and the socially vulnerable group of trainees require the staffing of Second Chance Schools Prisons with adult trainers equipped with appropriate skills and abilities to meet their complex, demanding and expanded educational role. This article analyzes the profile of an effective adult trainer of incarcerated individuals through a case study in Greek Second Chance Schools in Prisons. Specifically, it explores the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes that an trainer must possess in order to be effective in their role. Semi-structured interviews (convenience sampling) were conducted with 13 trainers at two Greek Second Chance Schools operating within correctional facilities. The data were analyzed using thematic content analysis. As the research indicates, the essential knowledge required for trainers includes the principles of adult education, the principles of educating vulnerable social groups, and knowledge of intercultural education. Key skills identified include communication, the ability to perceive the needs of inmate learners, and the management of problems and conflicts. Trainers consider fundamental attitudes to be acceptance, respect, setting boundaries in the trainer-trainee relationship, and humor.

Keywords: Corrective Education, Second Chance Schools in Prison, Adult Inmates' Trainer

1. Introduction

Inmate education plays a crucial role in changing prisoners' behaviors and preparing them to live harmoniously within both the prison environment and, later, in the wider community. The ultimate objective of such educational programs is to break the "cycle of crime" by addressing the root causes of criminal behavior and equipping prisoners with the tools necessary for rehabilitation and successful reintegration (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010, p. 23). Over time, it has become widely accepted that adult education for prisoners is essential not only for their personal development, but also for their successful social reintegration, contributing significantly to reducing recidivism and preventing future criminal activity (EC, 2011).

In Greece, the concept of corrective education has been integrated through the introduction of Second Chance Schools (SCSs) in prisons, as part of efforts to modernize and improve the correctional system. These schools are

specifically designed to provide inmates with the opportunity to complete their basic education, something many may not have had the chance to pursue outside the prison system. The initiative is grounded in the fundamental principles of Adult Education, which emphasize learner-centered approaches and acknowledge the diverse needs of adult learners. The primary aim of Second Chance Schools is to address social exclusion by offering prisoners— often a vulnerable and marginalized group—the chance to gain educational qualifications, which are critical for their successful reintegration into society. By tailoring educational programs to the individual characteristics, needs, and learning styles of inmates, these schools aim to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to re-enter both the workforce and society in a meaningful way.

The importance of adult trainers in correctional settings cannot be overstated. Trainers working in prisons, as well as those engaged with other socially vulnerable groups, have a profound impact on the rehabilitation and educational outcomes of their students. These trainers are tasked with navigating the complex challenges that prisoners face, including limited literacy, past trauma, and psychological or social barriers that may hinder their learning. Their role is not just to impart knowledge, but to provide a supportive, motivating, and structured learning environment that fosters personal growth and skill development. To effectively engage with incarcerated learners, adult trainers must be equipped with both formal qualifications and practical experience, as their work often involves addressing multifactorial barriers to learning—such as low educational attainment, lack of prior social support, and systemic marginalization—while working within the constraints and unique challenges of the prison environment (Papaioannou, Anagnou & Vergidis, 2016).

Moreover, the educational process in correctional facilities is inherently rehabilitative, as it not only provides academic knowledge, but also instills critical life skills, enhances self-esteem, and promotes social responsibility. Through tailored programs, adult trainers help prisoners build the competencies necessary for their reintegration into society, including emotional regulation, problem-solving, and communication skills. In this way, the role of adult trainers transcends traditional teaching; they become key figures in the rehabilitation process, providing inmates with the resources and guidance needed to reshape their futures.

2. The Role of the Adult Trainer in Correctional Settings

Adult trainers in correctional facilities, as well as those working with other socially vulnerable groups, play a vital role in the educational and rehabilitative processes of these populations. Their approach is grounded in adult education methods, which are tailored to meet the specific needs of adult learners who often face a complex array of personal, social, and psychological challenges. The trainer's role is multifaceted and requires a combination of formal qualifications and practical experience to effectively engage with learners who face multifactorial barriers to learning—such as limited literacy, prior trauma, and societal marginalization—and to operate within a framework of constraints and challenges that are both unique and demanding (Papaioannou, Anagnou & Vergidis, 2016).

Adult education in correctional settings is not just about imparting academic knowledge, but also about fostering personal growth, skills development, and reintegration into society. These trainers must work within a constrained environment that often includes limited resources, restricted access to teaching materials, and constant security concerns, all of which make their work challenging. Despite these challenges, adult trainers play a crucial role in shaping the lives of incarcerated individuals, helping them overcome barriers, and encouraging positive change.

The role of the adult trainer in prisons is central to the success of educational programs that aim to reduce recidivism and support the rehabilitation of incarcerated individuals. Jarvis (2006, pp. 71-72) outlines the numerous roles that an adult trainer must fulfill. These include being a mediator of knowledge, an instructor, a counselor, a mentor, and even an administrator. This broad spectrum of responsibilities requires trainers to engage in a wide range of activities, from delivering formal lessons to addressing the psychological and emotional needs of the learners. As such, the trainer must possess not only expertise in the subject matter but also a deep understanding of the learners' life experiences, the psychological impacts of incarceration, and the unique social challenges they face.

Moreover, the role of the trainer cannot be defined in a rigid, static way, as it is continuously shaped by evolving social, economic, and political conditions, as well as by the policies set by the institutions and organizations that offer educational programs (Caffarella, 1994). For example, as new research in adult education emerges, prison trainers may adopt innovative pedagogical strategies, such as incorporating technology or providing more learner-centered and individualized instruction. These changes require flexibility and ongoing professional development to ensure that trainers can meet the diverse needs of their learners.

In correctional settings, trainers are responsible for providing educational opportunities that can significantly impact the future of incarcerated individuals. These opportunities often include literacy and numeracy programs, vocational training, and life skills development (Frey, 2014). The goal is to equip learners with the necessary skills to reintegrate into society successfully upon their release. Trainers must design their lessons in a way that connects to the learners' real-world needs, ensuring that the knowledge gained is practical and immediately applicable in their daily lives. This might involve offering courses that focus on basic skills such as communication and problem-solving, as well as vocational training in fields such as construction, culinary arts, or computer literacy (Stephen, 2012).

Adult trainers in prisons also need to apply adult learning principles to their teaching practices. These include promoting self-directed learning, acknowledging the importance of the learners' lived experiences, and encouraging critical thinking. By doing so, trainers help learners build confidence, develop a sense of agency, and understand the value of education as a means of personal empowerment (Tzatsis et al., 2019 a). Additionally, by creating a safe and supportive learning environment, trainers can facilitate social inclusion and help reduce feelings of isolation, a common challenge in correctional settings. Building trust between trainers and learners is crucial, as it enables the creation of a rapport that encourages inmates to engage more fully with the educational process (Cleere, 2021; Vandala, 2019).

2.1. The Challenges of the Work of the Inmates' Adult Trainer

The profession of inmate trainers is increasingly challenging, with little professional recognition (Sayko, 2005). According to Carr (2001), the legal reality in prisons poses risks not only to trainers' lives but also to their careers. These challenges stem from various barriers within prison education, including pre-existing social and educational inequalities (Tsimboukli, 2008), and both internal and external obstacles (Muñoz, 2009). In light of these factors, research identifies three main types of challenges faced by adult trainers in prisons: (a) cultural shock, (b) deficiencies in knowledge and skills, and (c) existential and philosophical crises (DelliCarpini, 2008; Jurich, Casper & Hull, 2001).

One of the first and most immediate challenges is the experience of cultural shock. Inmates' trainers are often unprepared for the cultural shock they experience in prison environments, which arises from misunderstandings of prison culture and the resistance of both inmates and staff to change (Patrie, 2017). As a result, the challenge of managing this shock is significant, given the pervasive negative attitudes towards outsider trainers.

Furthermore, deficiencies in knowledge and skills contribute to the difficulties faced by inmates' adult trainers. The heterogeneity of the inmate population complicates teaching, as many trainers lack expertise in communication, human behavior, and specialized teaching techniques (Patrie, 2017). Moreover, many are unprepared to handle inmates with learning disabilities, behavioral issues, or physical disabilities (Ely, 2011). Additionally, some trainers use outdated teaching methods that are not suitable for the prison setting (Gehring & Wright, 2006; Desir & Whitehead, 2010).

In addition to these practical challenges, trainers often face existential and philosophical crises due to the nature of their dual roles. Trainers must reconcile their roles as both teachers and reformers (Wright, 2004). This internal conflict, coupled with the toxic culture of the prison, can lead to burnout (Wright, 2005). To address this, trainers must also navigate the complexities of the correctional system, a challenge that requires time for reflection and the guidance of experienced colleagues (DelliCarpini, 2008; Hurkmans & Gillijns, 2012).

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To meet the unique demands of teaching in correctional settings, adult trainers must possess specific competencies. These include not only a strong knowledge of adult education principles but also a set of psychosocial skills that are essential for working with this particular population (Ryan et al., 2021). Resilience, empathy, patience, and conflict management skills are crucial for maintaining a positive and supportive learning environment, especially given the emotional and psychological challenges faced by many incarcerated individuals (Gelana & Hindeya, 2014). Moreover, trainers must be adaptable and creative in modifying their teaching strategies to fit the prison environment, where restrictions on time, space, and resources often make traditional classroom instruction difficult (Stephen, 2012; Tzatsis et al., 2019 a).

In addition, trainers need to be skilled in fostering a sense of hope and motivation among their learners. Many inmates may come to educational programs with limited belief in their ability to succeed, making it essential for trainers to create an atmosphere of encouragement and possibility. By helping learners see the value of education as a means to a better future, trainers play a key role in helping to break the cycle of recidivism and promote long-term personal change (Cleere, 2021; Vandala, 2019).

Ultimately, the adult trainer in correctional settings is instrumental in the reintegration of incarcerated individuals into society. The trainer's role is not only to impart knowledge and skills but also to facilitate personal growth, encourage social inclusion, and support the emotional and psychological healing necessary for successful reintegration. Despite the many challenges faced in correctional environments, adult trainers help to transform lives by providing hope, opportunity, and a path to personal and social renewal. By addressing the complex needs of incarcerated learners and leveraging their skills and competencies, trainers play a key role in reducing recidivism, promoting rehabilitation, and ultimately helping inmates become active, productive members of society (Hall, 2015; Vandala, 2019).

3. Second Chance Schools in Greek Prisons

There are currently 13 SCS in Greek prisons. More specifically, in 2004, the innovative institution of SCS was also introduced in prisons, and the first school operated in the Judicial Prisons of Larissa. Since 2005, SCS has been established in several prisons in the country, such as: Korydallos Attikis, Korydallos Prisoners Hospital Branch, Grevena, Trikala, Nigrita Serres, Diavata Thessaloniki, Patras, Eleonas Thebes, Domokos Fthiotida, Malandrino Fokidas, Chania Crete and Corfu.

The requirements for prisoners to register and attend classes at Second Chance Schools in Prisons are that they must submit their primary school diploma or an equivalent certificate if they are foreign nationals (a formal criterion). Additionally, prospective student-prisoners must be "disciplined and cooperative." This second criterion indicates that the prison environment overshadows the school within the prison (Alevizopoulos, 2015, p. 52). The "reward" for the prisoner-students, which also serves as an incentive for their participation in the Second Chance Schools in Prisons, is outlined in Article 38§8 of the Penal Code and in Presidential Decree 107/2001 ("Beneficial calculation of days of sentence for convicts-defendants"), as amended by Presidential Decrees 75/2005 and 126/2014. Prisoners who adequately attend or complete educational programs or other educational courses are granted a beneficial calculation of their sentence. Therefore, every day spent in the Second Chance School in Prisons is counted as two days of sentence reduction. Furthermore, the prisoner-students have the opportunity, as individuals who have been taught privately, to take exams within the prison and obtain a High School diploma. If they wish, they can also attend Higher Education Institutions after successfully participating in the national entrance exams.

3.1. Second Chance School in Malandrino prison

The Detention Facility in Malandrino has been operating since 2001. The Second Chance School at the Malandrino Prison was established in 2015. At the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, seventy-eight (78) prisoner-students were enrolled, but due to transfers and releases, the number decreased, and sixty-five (65) continued their studies. Forty (40) were in the First Cycle and twenty-five (25) in the Second Cycle. Their nationalities were as follows: twelve (12) Albanians, eight (8) Algerians, eight (8) Iranians, seven (7) Egyptians, seven (7) Pakistanis, six (6) Russians, six (6) Greeks, five (5) Arabs, four (4) Iraqis, and two (2) Roma. Seven (7) individuals from last year's graduates have continued their studies in high school as individually taught students, and all of them were promoted. During the 2019-2020 school year, graduates of the Second Cycle received an ECDL (European Computer Driving License) certification after exams. Out of the eighteen (18) who participated, seventeen (17) successfully obtained the certification.

3.2. Second Chance School in Domokos prison

The Domokos Prison has been operating since 2008. Since the beginning of its operation, the Domokos detention facility has had full infrastructure for the operation of a school within the prison, and thus the Second Chance School (SCS) has been operating from the start.

During the 2020-2021 school year, a total of forty-nine (49) students were attending the two cycles of the SCS. Twenty-three (23) in the First Cycle and twenty-six (26) in the Second Cycle. Specifically, in terms of their nationalities, the prisoner-students came from: Albania (17), Greece (10), Afghanistan (5), Syria (4), Bulgaria (3), Pakistan (3), Iraq (2), Algeria (2), Ukraine (1), Latvia (1), and Georgia (1). Their age range was from sixty-five (65) to twenty-two (22) years.

The teaching staff consists of six (6) trainers in total: three (3) permanent teachers on secondment for the 2020-2021 school year, two (2) women and one (1) man, and three (3) part-time trainers, two (2) women and one (1) man.

During the 2018-2019 school year, one graduate successfully gained admission to a Higher Technological Educational Institution for Nursing through the national entrance exams. In this case, the SCS operated as an

examination center in September 2019. In the 2019-2020 school year, three (3) graduates were selected by the Hellenic Open University and enrolled in the undergraduate program in Studies on Greek Culture. In the same academic year, five (5) graduates enrolled in the First Year of the General High School of Domokos as individually taught students. Four (4) were promoted, and one (1) was referred for reassessment. Additionally, three (3) graduates enrolled in the Second Year of the General High School of Domokos as individually taught students (two (2) were promoted, and one (1) was referred for reassessment).

In the summer of 2019 (2018-2019 school year), a Summer School was operated through ARSIS, where classes in creative writing, choir, computer science, human rights, and shadow theater were held. In collaboration with APICCO, theatrical play and yoga classes were also offered. These extracurricular activities were a fortunate opportunity for the prisoner students and teachers, which unfortunately could not be continued in the 2019-2020 school year due to the restrictive measures imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

4. Method

This section presents the research methodology.

4.1 Research question

Our research question was: "What are the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that the trainers in the sample consider essential for the effectiveness of their work?"

4.2 Research Method -Research Tool

The data collection method was qualitative, because the purpose of the research is to investigate and understand a central theme (Creswell, 2011). The research strategy followed is a case study, since it concerns trainers in two particular SCSs, that of Domokos and Malandrino Prisons during the school year 2019-2020. According to Robson (2010), a case study is more a research strategy than a research method and focuses on a phenomenon in its context. This strategy was chosen, because the SCS educational framework and the prison environment are very important and also difficult to be accessed by the researcher (Yin, 2003). According to Mason (2003), the data collection technique or better the data production technique was the semi-structured interview, a tool that enables the sequence of questions to be modified (Cohen & Manion, 1994), the choice of emphasis in the most essential aspects of each respondent (Fylan, 2005; Robson, 2010), but requires critical communication skills from the interviewer (Galletta, 2013). Therefore, this tool has been chosen as the most appropriate to highlight the views of the participants.

4.3 Sample

The participants of the survey were the inmates' adult trainers of the SCS of Domokos and Malandrion Prisons during the school year 2019-2020. The participants in the study (convenience sampling) consist of thirteen (13) trainers from the Second Chance Schools of Domokos and Malandrino. Of these, five were men and eight were women. Regarding age: eight were in the 35-44 age range, four were in the 45-59 age range, and one was over 60. Regarding educational level, twelve hold a master's degree, four of them hold a second master's degree, one has a PhD, and one holds only a bachelor's degree. I n terms of specialization, three of the thirteen are philologists, two are mathematicians, two are English language philologists, one is an economist, one is a computer science teacher, one is in social sciences, and one is a psychologist. Undoubtedly, the participants in this survey do not represent the entire population of adult inmates' trainers of SCS in Greece, and consequently, the research results are not generalizable.

4.4 Data analysis method

For the analysis of the collected data, content analysis was used. This is a research method that employs a set of procedures, methods, and techniques to draw valid conclusions (Weber, 1990, p. 9). It is a research technique that

systematically and objectively leads the researcher to verifiable and valid conclusions derived from written texts and the decoding of interviews (Krippendorf, 1989, p. 7-9). Furthermore, the thematic content analysis allows quantification of the results (Trowler, 1996; Vamvoukas, 2002), which was attempted in this research.

(1)

5. Results

This section portrays the research results.

5.1. Prerequisite Knowledge for Trainers to Respond Effectively to the Education of Adult Prisoners

According to the opinions of the participants, the knowledge required for trainers to better fulfill their role as trainers for incarcerated adults and the frequency of their references are shown in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1: Categories of Required Knowledge and the Number of References by Trainers from Domokos and Malandrino

Categories of Knowledge	Number of References
Principles of Adult Education	13
Education of Vulnerable Social Groups	9
Good knowledge of the subject matter, teaching competence, and pedagogical competence	3
Special Education	2
ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) Knowledge	2
Experience	2
Intercultural Education	1
Applied Criminology	1
Knowledge of Psychology	1
Knowledge of the functioning of the penal and correctional system	1
Willingness for personal exploration	1
N = 13	

As derived from the data analysis, all trainers consider knowledge of the Principles of Adult Education as essential for carrying out their educational work. In response to a related question, Trainer E9 states that an adult prison trainer must: "certainly possess knowledge of the Basic Principles of Adult Education, as these individuals require a differentiated form of teaching to capture their interest and primarily to help them forget the difficulties they face in their daily lives. The knowledge provided must also have practical content so that they feel it will benefit them during their eventual release." Similarly, Trainer E6 mentions: "They should know and apply practices that are suitable for adults."

Nine (E1, E4, E5, E7, E8, E10, E11, E12, E13) out of the thirteen trainers emphasize that, alongside knowledge of Adult Education, they should also possess knowledge of educating vulnerable social groups. For example, Trainer E1 says: "You definitely need to know about Adult Education and, of course, education for vulnerable social groups." Trainer E4 highlights the importance of managing vulnerable groups, stating: "And knowledge related to managing groups, vulnerable groups, is what we should focus on when working in a prison environment." Trainer E11 shares a similar perspective: "They must have training in Adult Education, they must have training in this area, and also knowledge of group management, and of course, training in vulnerable social groups, I think that is essential." Similarly, Trainer E5 says: "Obviously, there should be specialized seminars, which should be at various levels… both in terms of handling prisoners and in terms of teaching methods, considering the materials available in these particular schools because the learning process there cannot be separated, everything is interconnected, the educational process is not autonomous from the 'social' life of the prisoners."

In addition to the above, two trainers mention that prison trainers must also have knowledge of special education. Trainer E12 specifically mentions: "You need to have knowledge of special education to recognize the differences. There needs to be tolerance for diversity, both as a mindset and as an approach to teaching, human beings, and society." Trainer E13 adds: "You should have knowledge of special education because, in some way, special education and the prison context somewhat… overlap."

Three (E3, E5, E6) trainers speak about the importance of having a strong knowledge of the subject matter and pedagogical competence. Trainer E3 provides a characteristic response: "First of all, I must have knowledge of my own subject, because in this way, if someone has a good understanding of their subject, they can motivate the group of learners." Meanwhile, Trainer E10, in addition to pedagogical competence, emphasizes the importance of knowledge in inclusive education and psychology for prison trainers: "It would be good for all adult trainers to have pedagogical competence and knowledge of psychology, definitely intercultural education in the sense of inclusion because not all trainers working in this field are familiar with it." Trainer E8 also mentions the importance of intercultural education: "There needs to be an education, especially intercultural education, because prisoners come from many different countries."

Two (E6, E8) trainers emphasize the value of ICT knowledge for prison trainers, stating: E6: "It is also very important for the trainer to have ICT knowledge because presentations are done using computers, videos, and so on." E8 also mentions: "It is very important that the trainer can use audiovisual materials. Knowledge and use of ICT help a lot."

Some trainers (E5, E13) mention that the experience of trainers in prison education is valuable, but not a cure-all. For example, Trainer E5 states: "Experience is important, of course, in relation to the will of the governing authorities regarding how a prison and a school within a prison should operate." Trainer E13 points out: "Experience definitely matters, but you can accumulate many years of teaching without actually engaging in any meaningful education."

It is worth noting the opinions of two trainers regarding the necessary knowledge related to the functioning of the penal system in the field of correctional education. Trainer E11 mentions: "I think training in the penal system, in the correctional part, is necessary... a little bit of criminology to understand these people." Furthermore, Trainer E13 adds: "I think training in applied criminology is essential, because I want to get into the mind of the offender! I believe that if we don't put ourselves in their shoes, we cannot approach them, no matter what we do."

It is important to underline the opinions of some trainers (E2, E8, E13) that, apart from formal qualifications, trainers must love what they do and have a willingness for personal exploration and engagement with the education of prisoners. Characteristic responses include: E8: "Knowledge of Adult Education is necessary, but I don't think it's the most important. The most important thing is to be sensitive, to have empathy, to care for the troubled prisoners, to care, to hurt, and to want to help. You have to dedicate yourself, you dedicate yourself in there. Without dedication, you accomplish nothing, you leave empty-handed." Similarly, Trainer E13 states: "Some knowledge... but this might be a bit risky, such as psychology or perhaps sociology. It would definitely be more helpful, but I think this would help any trainer in any educational setting. Being able to understand the classroom, its dynamics, knowing its history, the relationships, and so on. So, beyond formal qualifications, the most important thing is personal exploration and personal involvement with the subject, with the understanding that this is a unique group of learners, who may be considered vulnerable, and unfortunately, they may become vulnerable even towards the trainers."

From the above, it is clear that, according to the opinions of the trainers from the Special Vocational Education Centers (SDEFs) of Domokos and Malandrino, the knowledge required for carrying out their educational tasks includes the following: Principles of Adult Education, Education of Vulnerable Social Groups, a combination of both, strong knowledge of the subject matter, special education knowledge, ICT knowledge, experience, intercultural education (inclusive education), applied criminology knowledge, sociology, knowledge of the functioning of the penal and correctional system, and finally, a willingness for personal exploration.

5.2. Prerequisite Skills for Trainers to Respond Effectively to the Education of Adult Prisoners

The analysis of the data, as derived from the responses of trainers to the related question, highlighted the following categories of skills that trainers need to possess in order to perform their educational work more effectively, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Trainer Skills for Implementing Their Educational Work

Skill Categories	Number of References
Communication	5
Empathy	5
Ability to perceive the needs of the incarcerated learners	4
Problem, conflict, and stress management	4
Use of technology	2
Organization	2
Flexibility - Creativity	2
Engaging interest	1
Goal setting	1
Mutual respect	1
Teamwork	1
Sensitivity	1
N = 13	

Through the qualitative analysis of the data gathered, communication emerged as a fundamental skill for trainers, as it defines the relationships between the incarcerated learners and the trainers. Five (E1, E4, E6, E7, E11) out of the thirteen trainers mentioned this skill, emphasizing it as the most important. Specifically, E11 states: "I think that the key skill is communication... You have to treat each learner differently, you have to somewhat understand them psychologically, get to know them, in order to communicate... to understand and empathize with their problems." Similarly, E1 emphasizes not only communication but also creativity, teamwork, and flexibility, saying: "Another skill is creativity, to get them involved in the process of creating. For example, we ask them to write poems... Communication is an important skill... the skill of teamwork, where the trainer should feel part of the group with the learners, seeing them as a team... Flexibility is necessary because prisoners can easily misinterpret things, so in those moments, you need flexibility to ease the situation and avoid making them feel uncomfortable."

The next important skill highlighted by the analysis of trainers' responses is empathy. Five (E3, E4, E7, E11, E13) out of the thirteen trainers emphasized the importance of this skill for understanding the world of prisoners from their perspective. E11 states: "A key skill for the trainer is empathy, to understand their problems, to feel their situation. The most important thing is that all their problems come into the classroom, they can't leave them behind." Similarly, E13 adds: "Empathy is a very important skill because their psychology changes, and the trainer needs to recognize this." E4 further emphasizes: "I insist on empathy because I believe that our effort to understand the difficult situation these people are in is the foundation of building a balanced relationship."

Some (E8, E10, E13) trainers also mention the importance of the ability to manage problems and conflicts that arise, as well as managing the trainer's own stress with confidence. E13 explains: "Crisis management skills are necessary because conflicts can arise easily, even within the school environment, which is the worst case, but even more so in the classroom or within the group. Also, stress management skills are essential because prison is a stressful environment and this can negatively affect the trainer if they enter the classroom anxious. If a trainer with no prior experience in prisons enters with high anxiety, it will immediately pass to the students and create a bad precedent in the classroom, so confidence is also essential." E10, citing an example, highlights the importance of

resolving conflicts promptly and correctly: "You need to be able to resolve conflicts because it has happened to me in class, where students were arguing, and I had to manage the situation right then and there."

Four (E6, E9, E8, E13) out of the thirteen trainers mention the importance of the trainer's ability to perceive the needs and problems of the incarcerated learners. E9 states that this ability is key to the effectiveness of the educational work, highlighting mutual respect among all involved during the educational process: "The ability to understand the learners' demands and needs is important, and certainly, we must also have mutual respect and understanding of their problems in order to carry out our work effectively." E13 adds that this should be done individually: "The ability to perceive each learner's individual needs should be individualized, or at least grouped in small groups."

Two (E4, E10) trainers believe that technology skills are also important. E10 specifically states: "The trainer must certainly possess computer skills; I consider this self-evident." E4 believes that using technology significantly aids in the educational process: "Using technology helps a lot because you can do many things within the classroom using a computer or a television, so I think this is a fundamental skill."

In addition, trainers mention the importance of organization, goal setting, and engaging the interest of the incarcerated learners. Specifically, E6 states that the trainer must be: "Organized, with clear goals from the start, with a plan for what they want to teach, what they want the learners to learn, and what they aim to accomplish. They must also make the lesson interesting and engaging."

In summary, the skills that trainers at the Domokos and Malandrino Prison Education Centers believe are necessary for them to be effective in their educational roles are communication skills, problem-solving and conflict resolution, empathy, creativity, flexibility, sensitivity, mutual respect, the ability to perceive the needs of incarcerated learners, goal setting, engaging interest, and technology use skills.

5.3. Attitudes of trainers during the educational process

From the relevant interview question about trainers' attitudes toward incarcerated learners, thirteen categories of attitudes emerged, with their frequency of mentions presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Trainers' Attitudes

Trainer's Attitudes	*Number of References*
Understanding-Acceptance	3
No Prejudices	3
Sincerity	3
Boundaries between trainers and prisoners	3
Fearlessness	2
Seriousness-Stability-Consistency	2
Love, kindness, humor, discretion	2
Openness	1
Respect	1
Morality	1
Sensitivity	1
Friendliness	1
Fairness	1
N = 13	

Three (E1, E4, E11) out of the thirteen trainers emphasized the importance of understanding the difficult situations that incarcerated learners face in prison. For instance, E1 states: "There must be understanding. We need to

understand the difficulties these people face... the prison environment is not one of the best, the conditions they live in are very difficult, so I can't just tell a learner the next day 'why didn't you study' if I know they're on medication or are a drug addict. So first and foremost, I need to understand the difficulties they have inside their cell." They also stressed the importance of accepting their differences, as E11 connects this with respect for diversity, openness, and sincerity without fear: "The trainer must accept diversity. One of the characteristics of this school is multiculturalism. Most of the learners are foreign, of different ages, there are Muslims, Christians, and atheists. In any case, different knowledge, cultures, and mentalities. I think you must be open, respect diversity, be sincere in your relationship with them, and never promise things you can't deliver, don't say big words, don't be afraid, show genuine interest. They greatly appreciate this." Additionally, E8 and E9 point out that the trainer must be fair and not racist. E8 says: "They should be fair, treating everyone equally without discrimination, whether they are Roma, illiterate, or dirty. They were very impressed when I hugged all of them, they really needed to feel embraced. It was very important for them. I mean, you must show real interest in these people, be fair, and treat everyone equally, not be racist." E9 adds: "Our attitude should radiate respect, not fear or indifference." Concerning the attitude of the trainer regarding prejudice, E10 says: "You shouldn't think of the learner as a prisoner. You shouldn't be prejudiced. First, treat them as an adult learner, then consider they are incarcerated. Because the latter means you must be more careful with your behavior since some things that might not be offensive to us could be to them. You shouldn't be racist; it's very difficult for a racist to come into a prison education center."

Some trainers (E2, E4) mention that they should be friendly to the incarcerated learners but with boundaries. E2 states: "The most important thing is to be friendly but not a friend. They weigh you up. You have to be friendly, of course, because if they sense hostility, you won't be able to engage with them. But you must draw a red line and never let anyone cross it. This is difficult at times because they might misunderstand you." For a different type of clear boundary-setting attitude, three (E6, E9, E10) trainers mention the importance of maintaining proper distance. E9 says: "We need to maintain the necessary distance between the trainer and the learners so that the work can be done properly, while understanding the peculiarities and reactions of the people involved." E6 adds: "There must definitely be a boundary-setting attitude; the rules should be clear from the start so that no one crosses them."

6. Conclusions

From the analysis of our research data, the following conclusions emerged regarding the required knowledge, skills/abilities, and attitudes that an adult trainer of incarcerated individuals needs to have:
A) Regarding the required knowledge: All the trainers in the sample consider the following knowledge to be essential:
- Principles of adult education,
- Principles of educating vulnerable social groups (Tsimboukli & Fillips, 2010),
- In-depth knowledge of the subject matter, teaching methods, and pedagogical competence of the adult educator (Patrie, 2017; Tzatsis et al., 2019b),
- Knowledge of special education,
- Knowledge of ICT (Information and Communication Technology),
- Experience in Second Chance Schools in Prisons,
- Knowledge of intercultural education (Vergidis, Asimaki & Tzintzidis, 2007; Magos & Simopoulos, 2010),
- Knowledge of applied criminology, psychology, sociology, and knowledge related to the functioning of the penal and correctional system (Wright, 2005),
- Willingness and readiness on the part of educators for personal exploration and development.
B) Regarding skills: The trainers in the sample stated that they must possess:
- Communication skills (Patrie, 2017),
- Ability to perceive the needs of incarcerated learners (Tsimboukli & Fillips, 2010; Papaioannou, Anagnou & Vergidis, 2016),
- Empathy (Tsimboukli & Fillips, 2010; Tzatsis et al., 2019b),

- Skills for managing emerging problems, conflicts, and stress (Tzatsis et al., 2019b),
- Technology skills,
- Good organization and preparation for carrying out their educational duties,
- Flexibility and creativity,
- Ability to inspire collaborative spirit, teamwork, and mobilize the interest of prisoners (Tzatsis et al., 2019b).

C) Regarding attitudes: The trainers mentioned that their attitude towards the incarcerated learners is determined by:

- Understanding and acceptance (Wright, 2005; Desir & Whitehead, 2010; Tsimboukli & Fillips, 2010),
- Respect (Papaioannou, Anagnou & Vergidis, 2016),
- Boundary setting in the trainer-trainee relationship,
- Honesty (Ely, 2011),
- Rejection of stereotypical views and not presenting fear (Tzatsis et al., 2019b),
- Seriousness, stability, and consistency in the educators' behavior, as well as humor (Tzatsis et al., 2019b),
- A love of politeness and discretion (Touloumi, 2016),
- Ethical, open, friendly attitude, and sensitivity (Ely, 2011; Touloumi, 2016; Tzatsis et al., 2019b),
- A fair attitude of the trainers.

In conclusion, education in prisons inherently has many particularities, which makes the work of the adult educator of incarcerated individuals particularly demanding. As emerged from our research data, and is confirmed by the relevant literature, the educator must possess many characteristics in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to perform their work effectively. This makes both the careful selection of educators and their targeted professional development, in line with their educational needs and the demands of their role, highly important.

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