Nowadays attention to the function of theater in various social domains is considered by artists, sociologists and psychologists. Among the various types of theater functions, educational work and behavior modification in the form of theatrical theater and theater therapy in Iran are more than welcome. The audience of this type of theater is mostly those who feel the need to change their behavior, lifestyle, and thought. But due to the limitations of the performance of this show, such as the creation of appropriate text, the effective and efficient application space of artists in this way of communicating effectively, some social groups have less use of this type of display. The prisoners' group is less likely to participate in this way than the rest of the groups, given the special security and protection requirements. On the other hand, the prisoners' problems require that, along with the usual methods of rehabilitation and improvement of education, new and more effective methods be used and their effects published. Therefore, the functioning in prisons, which has so far been neglected, should be investigated in a scientific and analytical manner. The statistical population of this research includes 135 prisoners in Yazd province. The research results show that theater is effective in reforming prisoners.

Keywords: Rehabilitation, Prisoners, Theater therapy, Social integration.

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The Role of Theater of the Oppressed on Correction and Rehabilitation of Prisoners (Case Study: Yazd Province Prisons)

Mehrdad Jabbari*1, Abolghasem Dadvar2

Abstract

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Introduction

Theater of the oppressed addresses very tired individuals who are living on the verge of failure but they do not want to allow injustice forces to end the last word in human affairs. Theatre of the oppressed is a popular training and effort with imaginary signs and metaphors, imaginary situations, and serious games. Its creators are generally people, who are traveling in alleys, squares, courts, lodging chambers, markets, playgrounds, and hospitals since they are watching the living components of the social world meticulously, will save the events from oblivion, and change them to substitute experiences; they are selective, educable, and creative (Baim & Brookes, 2002).

Focusing on education and intervention in the personality of prisoners, the growth-centered prevention approach aims to prevent delinquency and its chronicity. Educational, cultural, and recreational programs at the Youth Detention Center are all about the concept of discipline, accountability, and healthy life-style education, designed to address the risk factors of juvenile delinquency. In other words, the focus of all these measures is the correction and rehabilitation of the prisoners. The emphasis of international documents on this issue also confirms the provision of welfare, education, and training facilities for prisoners deprived of their liberty. Therefore, the Youth Detention Center’s measures and programs are in full compliance with the goals of growth-centered prevention and provide the development goals of the criminal justice system in general and in particular (Niazpour, 2012).

The programs provide prisoners with legitimate opportunities for achieving goals through scientific and practical empowerment of prisoners. Such an approach is effective in preventing crime from the point of view of the theory of pressure.

Statement of the Problem

Theater of oppressed is an education that fully conforms to the educational objectives of the learning environment. This model was founded by Brazilian director, educator, and researcher Augusto Boal in Brazil in the 1970s and based on the educational system of Paulo Ferrera, a researcher and psychologist. In his book Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Paulo Ferrera separated the two types of education and preferred the first type:

1. Transitive learning that does not know that the learner is merely a means of accumulation of information, but actively engages in his education. This type of training is not one-sided and repressive, but by means of appropriate strategies, it is possible to provide intervention and suggestion for learners in learning, and reinforcing their sense of self-esteem and accountability by getting involved their personal experiences and insights.

2. Intransitive learning that represents passivity and refers in a pedagogical way in which the learner merely accepts the practice and knowledge of another person; he is encouraged in this system to rebuild his learning without any ingenuity.

Nowadays, attention to the function of theater in various social areas has been considered by artists, sociologists, and psychologists. Among the various types of theater functions, educational function and behavior modification in the form of theatre of the oppressed and theater therapy are more welcomed in Iran. The audience of this type of theater is mostly individual feeling the need to change their behavior, lifestyle, and thought. Due to limitations on the performance of this type of play, such as the creation of appropriate text, effective application space and the ability of artists to communicate effectively, some social groups have less use of this type of play. Due to the special security and protection requirements, the group of prisoners has a smaller share of participation than the other groups. Besides, problems of prisoners require applying new and more effective methods along with the usual methods of rehabilitation and
improvement of education. Thus, the study of the function of theatre of the oppressed in prison, which has so far been neglected, should be investigated in a scientific and analytical manner.

This research tries to examine the role of this dramatic form in correction and rehabilitation of prisoners, which we believe to be the most needed persons to this method of education. In this way, it will be possible to present applied functions for correction and education of prisoners (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

**Practices of Theater of Oppressed**

Augusto Boal, a Brazilian theater practitioner and political activist, created the Center for Comprehensive Education for Peoples (CIPES) with state support in 1986. For six months, Boal worked on a variety of theatre of the oppressed techniques, with 30 performances at the end of that year. Next year, governor of Rio de Janeiro, who was a supporter of the popular training center, failed in the election, which meant that no other government support was made for Boal (Amini, 2011). In 1989, he founded Center for Theater of Oppressed (CTO) in the city of Rio de Janeiro with the help of friends who were first members of the Popular Education Center (Danaei Fard, 2008). By 1992, the center of the theatre of the oppressed in Rio was run by personal funds; but few contracts and some training workshops were not enough to fund the CTO. Problems arose when the members of the theater of the oppressed were no longer able to attend workshops or meetings, because they did not even have a ticket to the bus. Therefore, Center for Theater of Oppressed (CTO) should end its activities. They wanted this farewell as a funeral. The funeral was held in 1992, during the election year in Rio de Janeiro. At the same time as the elections were held in Brazil, a ceremony was held at theater of the oppressed, which selected the carnival as its funeral (Agha Abbasi, 2011).

Combining two events of funeral and elections, Center for the Theater of Oppressed decided to make a more meaningful end to its burial; at the last time, they would help a party to realize this larger dream. Boal and his group proposed to the Labor Party (PT) to assist in the party's electoral campaign using theater; the party also agreed with it, but on condition that a member of the CTO was to be nominated for membership in the parliament. In this way, the theater dimension would be more influential and more beneficial. After much discussion about who could be, the Center for the Theater of Oppressed finally convinced Boal to nominate himself as a Labor Party candidate to represent the city of Rio de Janeiro. With the motto "Dare to have joy!" Boal came to the polls. In the elections, he was elected among 1200 candidates as one of the forty-two representatives and he was appointed chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of the same city. This extraordinary and unexpected event revived Center for the Theater of Oppressed and intensified Boal’s explorations to find a theater (Buchleitner, 2010). In this way, it could be employed as a tool for social policy as well as a true manifestation of that policy. For Boal, it was the best chance to put their ideas into practice. His new position as legislator gave him enough political power. However, how could Boal attract the support of other members of the parliament? The answer to this question was the Legislative Theater with its foundations, its ultimate goal, and structure derived from the theatre of the oppressed methods, especially the forum theatre method. Boal learned the right question with the forum theatre. With the legislative theater, he continued to ask questions to understand the wishes of the people; in this way he was able to fulfill these demands through law and in real life due to the power given to him because of his political position (Khaki, 2000). Boal, as he took the power and action of the performers to the people, tried to get the power of lawmaking from a few people and give it to all people so that they could decide about themselves. Accordingly, he could enable people to make a better future and dare to create such a future. During his four-year service as legislator, Boal along with his citizens succeeded in turning thirteen demands into the law for a better future (Aristizabal & Lefer, 2010). Boal’s position as a representative made sure that the existing rules are working properly and there is the possibility of creating new rules whenever needed.
Boal’s position as a legislator gave him the right to set or correct a rule. Using theatre of the oppressed, he changed the reality to ideals with the methods of the theater of the oppressed in the fictional world of theater. Then, he could have made it true, not through the practice of the show, but with real rules. Moreover, he learnt to involve people in this action. Legislative theater began on January 1, 1993, when Boal sat in the House of Representatives as one of the six representatives of the Labor Party and one of the 42 members of the City Council of Rio de Janeiro with 14 million citizens. Hence, members of the Center for the Theater of the Oppressed had the proper financial conditions. They were employed and worked for the Labor Party; their job was to turn the demands into the theater with the theater. How did Boal and Center for Theater of Oppressed invent the structure of legislative theatre? It began in May with a ten-day workshop featuring fifty members under the Center for the Theater of Oppressed in Rio, which worked in various government spheres such as education, health, culture, and etc. During those ten days, Boal showed them the main techniques of the theater of the oppressed; at the end of the workshop, the group performed a piece on the street through the forum method, which was very successful because many people participated in it and became the actor-audiences. Then, the 50 collaborators were divided into small groups at the workshop, they took the same piece of work to fifteen different communities, and they worked with the people of these communities on theatre of the oppressed (TO) methods. This made the Center for Theater of Oppressed a network with two different groups with its own goals and tasks. Although their duties were different, both were essentially seeking to ask people about their suppressions; members of society were involved in their duties through theater; in this way, they created their ideas, demands, and dependent groups of “image and forum. The first group of theatre of the oppressed transmitted their needs to the representative department. This communication was done through presence in parliament, communities or any place; it was called the department activities and acted as a theatre of the oppressed group. The relationship with the representatives’ “core” was conducted by the department. The second group is more systematic and more permanent. The core, according to its social definitions, is divided into three categories: the social nuclei that are based on the common geography, the thematic nuclei that are based on common interests, and the combined nuclei of common geography and interests. The process of legislative theatre was called “parliament in the squares” (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009). This process had five requirements. First, the jokers have a parliamentary session in the cabinet to discuss in order to specifically know what question they ask about the new law. A lawyer should be present to have enough information about legal means of that dilemma or question in order to provide people with required legal information and change suggested capabilities to legal terms (second requirement). Third, providing written information to people about the law that is to be discussed before the main discussion in order to have enough time to mull over that law and summarize their ideas about it; it enables them to share this information easily during the discussion. Fourth, the jokers of core return to their original groups and discuss the results of “parliament in the squares”. Then, the accepted proposals are announced to them. In this way, people will understand that their opinion is taken and the legislator decides based on these comments and suggestions. The last need is to document what has been done. An overview of the people's suggestions is provided so that the cabinet can use these suggestions, for example, to prepare a project.

Boal served as a legislator for several years and he was again nominated in 1996, but he did not vote again. With the start of March, many of the Jokers working in Center for Theater of Oppressed lost their jobs. Thus, Center for Theater of Oppressed became a NGO. Boal realizes theater dream as politics with the legislative theater. He called himself a legislator who never stipulated a rule. By legislative theatre, Boal becomes the only theorist in the history of theater who helps people use theater as a means by which they would stipulate rules (Tim & Preston, 2009).
Importance and Necessity of Research

The applied aspects of the play have always been the subject of Iranian culture in the past in various ways such as the display of Zar, Naqali, and Ta'ziyeh. Developing this kind of look, especially in the area of people in need of attention, such as prisoners, also increases the attention to the use of art in society and opens the way for theater artists (Danesh Paye, 2014). This bilateral effect will have a tangible result in promoting the behavior of a part of society, ie, prisoners. Moreover, many of the prisoners' problems, which need to be reconsidered and corrected indirectly, can be achieved through this; if this method is not used, the choice of an alternative method may be timely and lead to the institutionalization of the problems among the prisoners. Ultimately, this approach makes it possible to justify the introduction of various art practices in prisons, and prison authorities would have a closer attention to this issue. The need for such research is more necessary and important due to the need for new training methods for training prisoners whose ultimate goal is to organize educational practices based on modern methods in such environments; it results in lowering the rate of prisoners and not returning them after release from prison.

In the theater of the oppressed, it is believed that everyone is able to create theater because they all have a creative imagination, so everyone must participate in the process of forming and running a show. Because the theme of theatre of the oppressed is taken from the community itself, members of the community will have a great incentive to participate in this collective creativity. Theatre of the oppressed provides theater art with the public to enjoy the art of creativity and to strive to equate social relationships: relationships between performers and spectators, teachers and students, men and women, parents and children, and ultimately officials and citizens. For this purpose, seven techniques are used, each leads to the implementation of a play; drama that breaks one-sided, authoritarian and repressive relationships provides a platform for ideal dialogue and free from any tension (Zafar Ghahremani Nejad, 2015).

Research Objectives

- Providing appropriate techniques for use in prisons.
- Analyzing theatre of the oppressed in terms of pedagogy in prison.
- Analyzing theatre of the oppressed in the process of treatment in prison.
- Providing a training plan for the theatre of the oppressed workshops in prisons.
- Providing a road map for training prisoners in post-jail time.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question

How effective is the theater of the oppressed in correction and rehabilitation of prisoners?

Research Hypotheses

- Theater of the oppressed affects prisoners’ proper understanding of the situation and representation of an appropriate behavior in situation.
- Theater of the oppressed reinforces conditions for creating effective human interactions that lead to learning in prisoners.
- With the participation of prisoners in the theater of the oppressed, their social responsibility along with their individual role is strengthened.
Research Scope
This research will examine the role of theatre of the oppressed in correction and rehabilitation of prisoners, regarding the importance and place of correction and rehabilitation among prisoners. The research conducted in the prisons of Yazd province. The research has been conducted in 2017.

Research Methodology
This is an applied research in terms of its objective; it is also descriptive and correlational. In this research, the validity of all questionnaire questions will be calculated using Cronbach’s alpha test. First, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is used to examine whether the distribution of the society is normal. In this regard, if the society has a normal distribution, then the parametric statistics will be used and if the society does not have normal distribution, then the nonparametric statistics will be used. The statistical society of this research includes 135 prisoners in Yazd province; 100 subjects have been evaluated as a sample according to Cochran table.

Data Collection Methods and Tools
Field studies using a questionnaire have been used to gather statistical data in this research. Data gathering methods of this research are divided into library-based and field studies. Information about the theoretical discussions is extracted from relevant library resources including books, theses, publications, as well as audio and video sources. Information related to the research area is extracted from methods such as interviews or surveys in prisons. Note taking and questionnaire are the most common tools having been used in this research.

The questionnaire of this research is based on the theoretical model Likert that addresses research hypotheses. Questions are divided into two groups: first group, demographic questions (age, level of education, gender, record of imprisonment), and the second group is conceptual questions. In order to rate the comments of the questionnaire, a sequential scale will be used in five levels of Likert (very low, low, moderate, very high) in two columns to check the status (the amount of each factor) and the optimal situation (the importance of each factor). The scoring of this spectrum is in such a way that gives 5 to for very high and gives 1 to very low. All the indicators were directly questioned in the questionnaire, they were positively presented in the questionnaire. After designing a questionnaire, a questionnaire was distributed among 10 managers of the prisons organization in order to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire. Therefore, the final questionnaire was designed.
Assessing Normality of Variables by Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Before examining the hypothesis of the research, the normality of the variables of the research checked by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Accordingly, all examined variables showed normal distribution.

Statistical Analysis

**Hypothesis (1):** Theater of the oppressed affects prisoners’ proper understanding of the situation and representation of an appropriate behavior in situation.

**Examining the relationship between appropriate behavior and theatre of the oppressed:**

Regarding the correlation coefficient of 0.89, there is a relationship between the theater of the oppressed and the presentation of appropriate behavior by prisoners; since significance level is 0.038, which is less than 0.05, there is a significant relationship between the theater of the oppressed and the presentation of appropriate behavior by prisoners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman’s rho</th>
<th>Theatre of the oppressed</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
<th>Significance (2-tailed)</th>
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<th>Theatre of the oppressed</th>
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<td>1.000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Hypothesis (2):** Theater of the oppressed reinforces conditions for creating effective human interactions that lead to learning in prisoners.

**Examining the relationship between effective human interactions and theatre of the oppressed:**

Regarding the correlation coefficient of 0.83, there is a relationship between the theater of the oppressed and effective human interactions by prisoners; since significance level is 0.035, which is less than 0.05, there is a significant relationship between the theater of the oppressed and effective human interactions by prisoners.
### Table 2. Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman's rho</th>
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<th>Theatre of the oppressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
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<th>1.000</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### Table 3. Correlations

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Correlation statistic</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Existence of effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Effective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypothesis (3):** With the participation of prisoners in the theater of the oppressed, their social responsibility along with their individual role is strengthened.

**Examining the relationship between social responsibility and theatre of the oppressed:**

Regarding the correlation coefficient of 0.68, there is a relationship between the theater of the oppressed and responsibility; since significance level is 0.031, which is less than 0.05, there is a significant relationship between the theater of the oppressed and responsibility.

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*
Research Findings

Considering that the main issue of this study is to examine the role of theatre of the oppressed in the correction and rehabilitation of prisoners in the prisons of Yazd province, the followings are the results of this research:

- Theater of the oppressed affects prisoners’ proper understanding of the situation and representation of an appropriate behavior in situation.
- Theater of the oppressed reinforces conditions for creating effective human interactions that lead to learning in prisoners.
- With the participation of prisoners in the theater of the oppressed, their social responsibility along with their individual role is strengthened.

Therefore, there was no evidence to reject the three hypotheses with the defined attributes.

Descriptive Results of Research Variables

Examinining the relationship between appropriate behavior and theatre of the oppressed: Regarding the correlation coefficient of 0.89, there is a relationship between the theater of the oppressed and the presentation of appropriate behavior by prisoners; since significance level is 0.038, which is less than 0.05, there is a significant relationship between the theater of the oppressed and the presentation of appropriate behavior by prisoners.

Examinining the relationship between effective human interactions and theatre of the oppressed: Regarding the correlation coefficient of 0.83, there is a relationship between the theater of the oppressed and effective human interactions by prisoners; since significance level is 0.035, which is less than 0.05, there is a significant relationship between the theater of the oppressed and effective human interactions by prisoners.

Examinining the relationship between social responsibility and theatre of the oppressed: Regarding the correlation coefficient of 0.68, there is a relationship between the theater of the oppressed and responsibility; since significance level is 0.031, which is less than 0.05, there is a significant relationship between the theater of the oppressed and responsibility.

Research Results

With the explanations provided, it was found that all of the Youth Detention Center’s activities and programs have been organized to help the participants’ personality, spiritual and physical development; to pass this course, will help to educate the normative adolescents and prevent them from committing a crime. Obviously, all of these find meaning positions in the context of growth-centered prevention. In other words, the Youth Detention Center may be claimed to have affected the individual, family, and educational problems of the juvenile under the influence of growth-centered prevention teachings and it has focused its support programs on their elimination. Moreover, the international rules in this area also emphasize these issues. Therefore, as one of the most important institutions responsible for responding to adolescents in conflict with the law, the Youth Detention Center implements the goals of the growth-centered justice
system because the foundation of the system, which supports the primary goal of protecting and educating children and adolescents in conflict with the law, is derived from the teachings of growth-centered prevention. Apart from this scope, one cannot find justification for the formation of a differential treatment system for children and adolescents.

In addition, lack of insistence on the full implementation of sentences of liberty and the ability to appeal for sentence by a judge as well as predict mechanisms for suspending the execution of sentences, conditional release, and amnesty that pave the way for early departure and early release of prisoners from the Youth Detention Center are other examples of growth-center approach governing these institutions. That is to say, as the title of such Iranian institutions indicate, the primary goal for keeping the patients in check is not only their constant imprisonment at the same time but also their correction and rehabilitation; whenever this goal is achieved, there will be no reason to continue to keep them at the Youth Detention Center. In other words, the relevant issue is to reform the juvenile to prevent future crimes and their return to a healthy life. Obviously, if these significant goals are achieved, there is no justification for continuing the presence of the juvenile at the Youth Detention Center; otherwise, such an appointment will result in reverse outcomes and it is opposite to the high objectives of the prosecution system.

The findings of this study and its comparison with earlier studies show that the variables in this study are explaining the role of the theater of the oppressed in correction and rehabilitation of prisoners properly; besides, findings of the present study are consistent with the results of previous researches and studies.

**Research Suggestions**

If the goal of the Youth Detention Center programs is to turn the guilty juvenile into a law-abiding citizen, then it is important to pay attention to this issue. Juveniles need to be familiar with the concept of order and compliance, and this value should be institutionalized in them because they can learn obeying the law in the community in light of this issue. Juveniles should leave the absolute individualism approach and they must accept that a collective life requires compliance with the norms of that society, and therefore, the need for a healthy and successful community in society is to adhere to the laws, the norms of the community and respect for the rights of others. Hence, they should be prepared for normal life in society by teaching and practicing order in the Center. Therefore, the concept of order should be institutionalized, and the mere coercion is not enough. In this regard, arranging order classes in the place and inviting the relevant professors will be very useful to the juvenile because it leads the juvenile to uncover importance of the issue; accordingly, its results will be represented in the way they deal, their behavior, and their lifestyle in the Center.

In addition, planning for performing tasks is one of the ways to train discipline. In this regard, Youth Detention Center has 24-hour programs and a particular time is devoted to each activity. Sleep time, waking up, classes, and even their leisure time are determined in advance; thus, juveniles are acquainted with the concept of planning and set their work according to the program.

Strengthening the sense of responsibility in juveniles should be one of the main programs of the educators in the Center because they will be careful about their actions in the light of strengthening such a sensation. They have to learn that the consequences of their actions and accept the facts. Escape from reality does not deserve a normal citizen. Moreover, they must be made aware that they are not allowed to do anything, they have a primary responsibility for their actions, and they should not always seek to find the culprit among others. They should learn that they are responsible for environment they live in, towards themselves, and for the people around them and the community.

Hence, some focal points are given to juveniles to make them sensible about their living environment. For instance, each person is responsible to clean his own room, besides, decorating and arrangement of
dormitories are also done by the juveniles. However, the formation of the city council and the election of the mayor in the Center are also in the same line. Undoubtedly, engaging juveniles in creating a sense of belonging to the Center is very effective. Through these measures, the juveniles' indifference to the Youth Detention Center is eliminated. They learn that each person is responsible for some assets in the society. According to some legal issues, others are not always responsible for doing their work.

Creating employment at the center for juveniles is in pursuit of such a goal; they learn to use the outcome of their own work experience and do not regard others as provider of their demands. As long as there is no effort, there will not be any outcome. Thus, the concept of effort is transferred in this way to the juveniles since many of the juveniles in the Center are stranger with this concept because they have always searched to find the easiest way to achieve their dreams. Since the Youth Detention Center aims finally to make them familiar with legitimate ways to achieve goals, they should learn that the easiest way is not necessarily the most appropriate way; but legal and lawful path is always the best path. More importantly, it is not correct to achieve goal through each available path; every human being must work to fulfill his aspirations, and others should not compensate his failures. These concepts are the same as informing juveniles in the light of enhancing their sense of responsibility in juveniles. It is applicable in teaching the right life style.

It is important to pay attention to educational programs in order to set the focus programs on the goals of growth-centered prevention. A prisoner inside prison has a great opportunity to use his imagination; if this force is not used in the positive direction and in its correction, it will definitely use this force for the offense and committing a crime. Accordingly, cultural and educational programs of the Center should be aimed at changing their behavioral and ethical systems by using regular scheduling for the daily life of the juveniles.

References


