

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

### A STUDY OF OFFENDERS' PERCEPTION AND MEANING OF LEARNING READINESS AS COMPARED TO THE SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS SCALE AND THE ODDI CONTINUING LEARNING INVENTORY

By

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The purpose of this study was to determine the self-directed learning and continuing-learning readiness of offenders as compared to nonoffenders. The researcher administered Guglielmino's Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS), Oddi's Oddi Continuing Learning Inventory (OCLI), and the researcher-created questionnaire used for group discussions, to adult offenders ( $n = 63$ ). The research showed a distinct difference between offenders and nonoffenders ( $p < .01$ ) relating to the offenders' self-directed learning readiness and propensity for continuing learning. Unique to this study was a quantitative and qualitative research design and the quantifying of text derived from transcripts of group discussions.

The study showed that offenders scored lower than nonoffender populations when compared with results of other studies relying upon both the SDLRS and the OCLI.

Qualitative results indicated that offenders do not take responsibility for their own learning and possess many severe barriers to learning and fully reintegrating into their communities. The researcher theorizes that offenders experienced many more extreme crises, imbalances, and discontinuities during their intellectual and social development, and cannot compare with nonoffender populations for the purposes of applying social and educational strategies.

The dissertation proposes the use of a transitional model of delivering Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Educational Development (GED) instruction during and after incarceration that allows for the differences between a behaviorist orientation in a prison setting and a constructivist orientation, which an offender experiences after release.