

The Development of the Correctional Education Teacher Decision-Making Scale (CETDM Scale)

Jonathan E. Messemer, Ed.D.

Assistant Professor
Cleveland State University
College of Education and Human Services
CASAL Department – Julka Hall 265
2121 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2214, USA

Thomas Valentine, Ed.D.

Professor
The University of Georgia
College of Education
Department of Lifelong Education, Administration and Policy
Rivers' Crossing, Room 407
850 College Station Road
Athens, Georgia 30602, USA

Abstract

The majority of adult correctional education literature is directed toward inmate outcomes. The researchers found no empirical studies, which focus upon those who teach in the United States prison system. The purpose of this study is to discuss the development and testing of the CETDM Scale. The CETDM Scale measures the following six dimensions of influence: prison administrators, correctional officers, other correctional educators, inmates, classroom characteristics, and security/safety. The CETDM Scale also measures the level of power correctional teachers believe they have to make instructional decisions in the classroom. The findings from a study of 427 correctional education teachers suggests that the reliability for all seven factored groups warrant Cronbach alpha levels of .80 or greater. The study also discusses the issue of item deletion and its influence upon the rate of reliability among the seven factor groups.

Keywords: Correctional Education, Teachers, Teacher Decision-Making, Teacher Power, Dimensions of Influence, Reliability, Item Deletion, Survey Development

1. Introduction

Adult educators for more than two hundred years have been providing educational training to inmates in prisons throughout the United States. Throughout time, the educational programs for inmates have evolved from adult literacy and faith-based programs to expanded offerings that include numerous options for the following subject areas: General Equivalency Development (GED), vocational, college, professional development, psychosocial development, pre-release, and self-help programs. Although, the array of educational opportunities has increased for inmates, the level of resources available for providing such programs has remained either constant or decreased in number. For example, when the federal government passed the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (1994), this limited the amount of funding states had to use for educational programs for inmates, especially the college programs as inmates were restricted from using Pell grant dollars to pay for tuition. Although, Messemer (2003) found that a majority of the states had found other options for supporting college programs for inmates.

Since 1994, state budgets for educational programs for inmates has remained stagnate, thus requiring many states to furlough its full-time permanent teaching staff and rehire teachers as full-time temporary personnel. Correctional education teachers, often referred to as “volunteer teachers,” never teach more than 40-hours per week and have little to no benefit packages (e.g., health insurance, retirement plans, vacation pay, and sick leave) attached to their position.

The overwhelming majority of the correctional education literature focuses upon the outcomes of inmate participants as well as the types of programs offered and not on those who teach in the prison system. Because the social landscape has changed for correctional education personnel during the last 15-years, the writers sought to conduct a research investigation that focused upon those adult educators who taught in correctional facilities.

2. Purpose Statement

The purpose of study was to develop the *Correctional Education Teacher Decision-Making Scale (CETDM Scale)*, which sought to measure the dimensions that influenced teacher decision-making in the adult correctional education classroom and to measure the level of power correctional education teachers believe that they have to make such decisions. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to discuss the development of the *CETDM Scale* with respect to the measure of reliability among the six dimensions of influence and the reliability measurement for the power index. The direction of this investigation is predicated by the following two research questions:

1. Do the six dimensions of influence and the power index for the CETDM Scale warrant acceptable reliability measurements?
2. Does the deletion of scale items increase the level of reliability among the six dimensions of influence and the power index?

3. Conceptual Framework

This study sought to expand upon the current research relating to the factors that influenced the teachers' decision-making process (Cannata, McCrory, Sykes, Anagnostopoulos, & Frank, 2010; Chapel, 1990; Clear, 1968; Frost, 2010; Guo, Justice, Sawyer, & Tompkins, 2011; Hicks, 1990; Marks & Nance, 2007; Owens, 1981; Smylie, 1992). However, the foundation of this study is rooted in the concept that multiple groups of interests drive all adult education programs. Kotler and Fox (1995) suggest that every educational undertaking has several *publics* and that institutions should strive to have positive relations with most or all of them. The term *publicis* defined, as “a distinct group of people and/or organizations that has an actual or potential interest in and/or term *public* would often be referred to as a *stakeholder*. Cervero and Wilson (1994a, 1994b, 2001, &2006) made a similar argument, but they added the process of *negotiation* to the planning model. They suggest that the success of an educational program is dependent upon the program planner's ability to negotiate effectively with the key stakeholders who come to the planning table with numerous interests (Caffarella, 2002; Cervero & Wilson, 1994a, 1994b, 2001, 2006; Wilson & Cervero 1996a, 2001). This concept of negotiation is based upon Forester's (1989) notion that all program-planning activities are bound by the relationships among numerous dimensions of influence. Forester (1999) suggests that when the educational program planner is engaged in the process of negotiation, he or she is attempting to learn the important “strategies that will or will not work, to learn about responsibilities and obligations as they assess proposed norms of action, and to learn about themselves and the others with whom they might act” (p. 202).

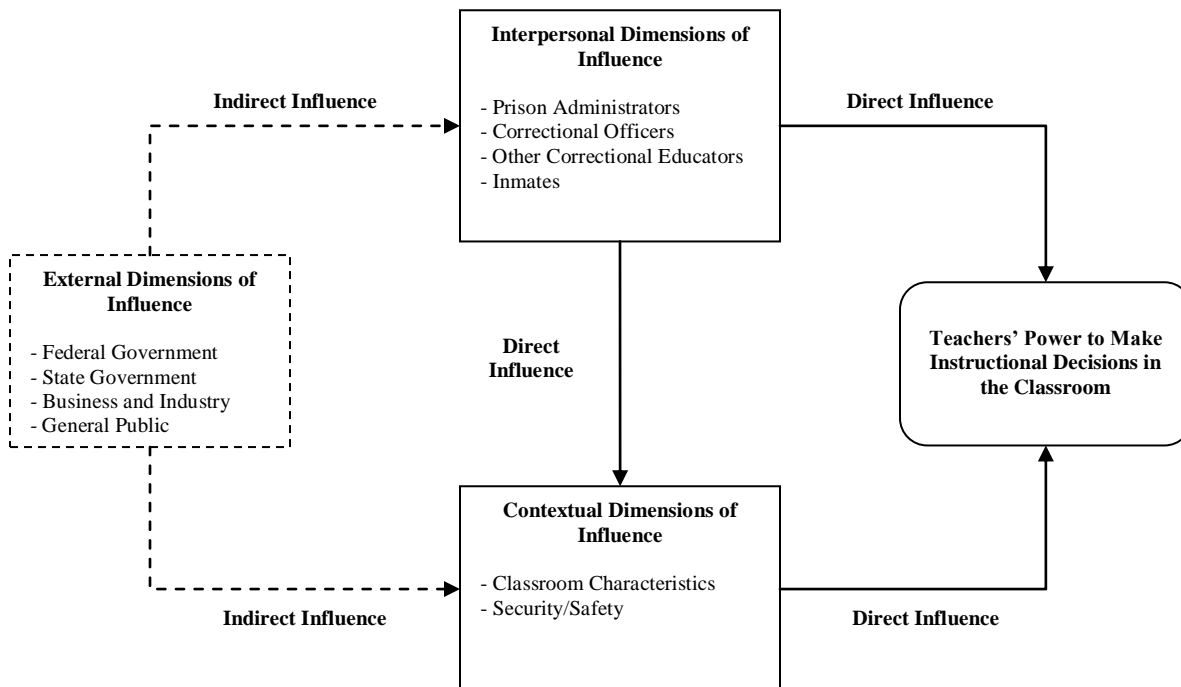
Adult education institutions vary enormously in the extent to which they employ centralized planning. In large corporate settings, training may be developed and implemented from a central site. Within less formal settings of adult education, a significant amount of instructional planning resides not with a centralized planner, but rather with the teacher. For example, an extreme case of this would be a literacy program that has no stated curriculum, but only stated students, whereby the teacher is in a position with only his/her own recourses to select, develop, and structure the program materials. The situation in correctional education varies significantly, but it seems to fall somewhere between both extremes. For example, in some states, either a state department or state organization might decide the curriculum within the correctional education classroom. In other states, there is considerable autonomy on the part of the teacher. More importantly, it would be a rare correctional education program if teachers did not have some degree of freedom to do what they believe they should do in the classroom setting.

There are three broad dimensions of influence affecting the teachers’ decisions within the correctional education classroom. The three broad dimensions include *external dimensions of influence*, *interpersonal dimensions of influence*, and *contextual dimensions of influence*. A model depicting these three dimensions of influence is illustrated in Figure 1. The researchers developed this model from many formal and informal conversations with correctional administrators, teachers, inmates, and correctional officers during the past eight years. The *external dimensions of influence* represent those individuals who work outside the prison facility. The external dimensions of influence consist of three distinct categories: (1) the state and federal governments, (2) business and industry, and (3) the general public. The level of influence the external dimensions have upon the decision-making process of correctional education teachers is only indirect. The direct line of influence external dimensions have upon correctional education is toward the interpersonal dimensions of influence and the contextual dimensions of influence. Within the planning model (see again Figure 1), the external dimension influence is represented by dashed arrows because they only indirectly influence teacher decisions. Because the external dimension influence upon teacher decisions is mostly indirect, the researchers decided to eliminate this group from this study.

The second area, *interpersonal dimensions of influence*, represents those individuals who are involved with the daily operations of a correctional education program at the local prison facility. Four distinct groups represent the interpersonal dimensions of influence: (1) prison administrators, (2) correctional officers, (3) other correctional educators, and (4) inmates. For the purpose of this study, the teachers represent the central players in determining what goes on within a correctional education classroom. Therefore, the underlying assumption is that the teachers need to negotiate directly with each of the remaining four interpersonal dimensions. With the use of solid directional arrows, the planning model (see again Figure 1) illustrates the direct influence that the interpersonal dimensions have over the correctional education teachers’ decision-making process.

Figure 1

Influences on Teachers’ Power to Make Decisions in the Correctional Education Classroom



The third area consists of the *contextual dimensions of influence*. In adult education practice, the process of negotiation between the educational program planner and the other program stakeholders is just one aspect of the planning model. According to Höghielm (1986), adult educators also need to focus upon the educational resources available and the contextual constraints, which affect the program planner’s ability to develop educational programs. This theoretical position is evident in other adult education program planning models (Dean, Murk, & Del Prete, 2000; Murk & Walls, 1998; Murk & Wells, 1988; Sork, 2000).

After careful consideration of these program-planning models, the researchers concluded that there are two contextual dimensions of influence, which affect the teachers' decisions within a correctional education program: (1) classroom characteristic influences and (2) security/safety influences (see again Figure 1). When developing a plan of instruction the teachers should be aware of many classroom influences, such as the instructional materials, the level of technology in the classroom, the size of the classroom, student enrollment, the type of furniture in the classroom, the classroom layout options, and the accessibility for inmates with physical disabilities. However, unlike many other adult learning environments, it is vital for teachers within a correctional education program to be fully aware of the many security influences. When developing a plan of instruction, the teachers must do so within the boundaries of the prison's policy toward security. In addition, the teachers need to continuously be aware of the current social climate between the inmates and develop an instructional plan that will insure the safety of both the inmates and the teaching personnel.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the contextual dimensions of influence have a direct affect upon the decisions-making process of teachers within the correctional education classroom. The contextual dimensions of influence are indirectly affected by the decisions and policies made from the external dimensions. However, the internal dimensions of influence have the most direct line of influence upon the contextual dimensions of influence. It is assumed that majority of power within the prison environment that has an influence upon the contextual dimensions of an educational program comes from both the prison administrators and the correctional officers. Although, it would be naive to assume that the correctional education teachers and the inmates did not have some influence over the contextual dimensions.

Finally, in order to test the strength that each dimensions of influence had upon teacher decision-making, the researchers developed a construct that measured the level of power the correctional teachers' believed that they held in making instructional decisions in the classroom. The remaining sections of this paper will be devoted to describing the process that researcher used to develop the questionnaire for this study and to describe the rate of reliability for each of the dimensions of influence.

4. Research Methods

The purpose of this section is to discuss the various research methods incorporated in directing this investigation. The researchers will divide the research methods section into six areas of discussion. These six areas of discussion will include the following: (1) instrument development, (2) development of the response scale, (3) piloting the questionnaire, (4) final CETDM Scale, (5) sample, and (6) data analysis.

4.1 Instrument Development

The researchers designed the questionnaire to measure the dimensions that influence the teachers' decision-making process in the correctional education classroom and to measure the teachers' power of instructional decision-making. The development of the instrument was a protracted process that spanned the course of two years. It is worth noting that during the course of the instrument development process, the research questions went through a considerable number of revisions. For example, originally the researchers envisioned conducting an exploratory study allowing them to map the dimensions of influence, using an exploratory factor analysis. However, the further the researchers worked in developing the item pool; it became clear to them that the exploratory methods would not be necessary. After considerable brainstorming and review sessions with adult educators and correctional educators, it became apparent to the researchers that the many items that they had gathered fell into recognizable categories. The researchers subjectively derived inductive groupings to set the categories as previously depicted in the central column of Figure 1. Since the researchers decided to focus the investigation toward teachers only, then they felt that it was important to exclude the external dimensions of influence from the questionnaire (see Figure 1). As much as the external dimensions of influence had some affect upon the educational practices within the prison facility, they believed that it represented only an indirect affect upon the instructional decisions teachers made in the classroom.

In developing the preliminary item pool, the researchers focused upon situations in correctional education that may occur due to the influential relationships between many stakeholders within a prison facility (e.g., Cervero & Wilson, 1994a, 1994b, 2001; Forester 1989, 1999; Wilson & Cervero, 1996b, 2001). The first step involved the development and refinement of the preliminary item pool.

The focus of this procedure was to develop items that could potentially represent the key issues that influence the role of the teacher in the correctional education classroom. The preliminary item pool consisted of 402 items designed to identify the common characteristics that influence the development and planning of educational programs for inmates in prison. The researchers developed these items from three primary sources: (1) a review of the adult education program planning and correctional education literature, (2) informal interviews with correctional education administrators, teachers, correctional officers and inmates, and (3) a brainstorming session with a group of eight adult educators.

Although our work focused on the interpersonal influences that stakeholders had on the teachers' decision-making, it increasingly became apparent throughout the brainstorming sessions and the informal interviews that other constraints had a major influence on what teachers did in the classroom. The constraints that appeared the most were the two contextual factors: classroom characteristics and security/safety. Consequently, we added the two contextual factors to the model (see again Figure 1) and developed item scales to measure the factors. It was at this point when the terminology changed from measuring the influence of stakeholders to the measuring the dimensions of influence. The researchers also developed six additional items to measure the power teachers believed they had in making decisions in the correctional education classroom. The researchers reflected upon the research of Yang (1996) and Yang, Cervero, Valentine, and Benson (1998) while they brainstormed and repeatedly refined six items that they believe capture the concept of the power index. Two of the six items were written as negative items in order to test for a false/positive statistic as recommended by Spector (1992).

4.2 Development of the Response Scale

The goal of the researchers was to develop a response scale that would best measure the attitudes of the survey participants regarding the factors that influence the teachers' decisions in the correctional education classroom. There were several formats considered for this study, but the final decision was to use a six-point Likert scale bounded by "Strongly Disagree" (1) and "Strongly Agree" (6). The researchers chose this type of rating scale because of its potential to "have good psychometric properties – that is, a well-developed summated rating scale can have good reliability and validity" (Spector, 1992, p. 2). The respondents' were asked to rate each of the items based upon the following set of instructions: *Please reflect upon your own teaching experiences in a correctional facility. Then decide the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.* After reading the questionnaire instructions, the respondents were asked to rate each of the questionnaire items using the six-point scale.

4.3 Piloting the Questionnaire

The purpose for piloting the questionnaire was to address the following three areas of concern: the *rate of response* (Jaeger, 1984), the *rate of reliability* (Borg, Gall, & Gall, 1993; Cronbach, 1951; Fraenkel&Wallen, 2003; Jaeger, 1984; Kerlinger, 1986; Spector, 1992), and the *identification of bad items* (Jaeger, 1984). The pilot study resulted in 64 completed questionnaires, representing a 42.7% rate of response, from the teachers who held membership in the correctional education association. The researchers tested the internal-consistency of the seven subscales using a Cronbach (1951) alpha method (e.g., Fraenkel&Wallen, 2003). The results identified fourteen pairs of items exhibiting a correlation greater than .70, which is an acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficient (e.g., Borg et al., 1993; Fraenkel&Wallen, 2003; Spector, 1992). Because, no cases illustrated items that were judged redundant, the researchers did not make any changes to the items. All of the sub-scales had a rate of reliability which was $\alpha > .80$.

4.4 Final CETDM Scale

The CETDM Scale consists of a 46-item scale measuring the six dimensions of influence and the level of teacher power to make instructional decisions in the classroom. The first part of the final questionnaire consists of measuring six dimensions of influence, which include prison administrators (Items 1-6), correctional officers (Items 7-12), other correctional officers (Items 13-18), inmates (Items 19-28), classroom characteristics (Items 29-34), and security/safety (Items 35-40). The second part of the final questionnaire consists of measuring the teacher power index consists of six items (Items 41-46), with Items 45-46 written as negative items in order of testing for a false/positive statistic. The third part of the final questionnaire consists of numerous variables designed to record the personal and professional characteristics of the participants.

4.5 Sample

The researchers conducted a random sample from those individuals who held membership in the Correctional Education Association, who resided in the United States, and whose professional title was teacher, instructor, and/or professor. The purpose of targeting this population was to be able to generate a database of teachers who were currently teaching inmates in prison. The sample for the final study consisted of 427 correctional education teachers, thus resulting in a 69.3% actual rate of response. The sample consisted of a slight majority of female teachers (52.7%) who taught inmates in prison. In contrast, the overwhelming majority of 88.3% the sample consisted of teachers who were White. Whereas, persons of color represented only 11.7% of the teacher sample, with the African-American teachers consisting of 54.0% of the minority sample. The teachers in the sample had a mean age of 51.7 years and had a mean of 9.4 years of experience teaching inmates in prison. The educational background for the sample consisted of 59.7% of the teachers holding a master's degree or higher, with 4.7% of the teachers holding a doctorate. In contrast, nearly 8.7% of the teachers held less than a bachelor's degree.

4.6 Data Analysis

The data for this study was stored in SPSS 14.0 in order to analyze the results. The rate of reliability among the six dimensions of influence and teacher power was measured using the internal consistency method. The internal consistency method was employed using the Cronbach alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951). Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) and Spector (1992) suggest that an acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficient is .70 or higher for most studies administered in educational settings. When measuring the rate of reliability among the six dimensions of influence and teacher power, the researchers also looked at the Cronbach alpha coefficient for each of these seven factors when specific items are deleted from the questionnaire. The purpose for conducting this measurement was to determine if the Cronbach alpha coefficients increased by more than 3.0% among the seven factors when item deletion occurred.

5. Research Findings

In this section of the paper, the researchers will discuss the results from testing the reliability measures for the six dimensions of influence and teacher power as well as the strength of the individual items among these seven factors. First, the researchers will discuss the findings with respect to the first research question, which measures the rate of reliability among the six dimensions of influence and teacher power. Secondly, the researchers will discuss the findings of the second research question that measures the inter-correlation between the six dimensions of influence.

Q1: Do the six dimensions of influence and the power index for the CETDM Scale warrant acceptable reliability measurements?

The researchers retested the measure of reliability for the seven sub-scale areas in order to see if the dimensions of influence for the final study held strong as in the case of the pilot study. Like the pilot study, the researchers used the Cronbach (1951) alpha levels for each of the seven sub-scale areas of influence and teacher power. Each of the six dimensions of influence warranted acceptable alpha levels greater than .80 (see Table 1). The six dimension of influence sub-scale that warranted the greatest alpha level was the *other correctional educators'* sub-scale, which had a Cronbach alpha level of .91. In contrast, the six dimension of influence sub-scale that warranted the lowest alpha level was the *inmates'* sub-scale, which had an acceptable Cronbach alpha level of .82. The four remaining dimensions of influence sub-scales: *correctional officers*, *public administrators*, *classroom characteristics*, and *security/safety* warranted acceptable Cronbach alpha levels of .85, .86, .86, and .88 respectively. Finally, the sub-scale pertaining to teacher power warranted an acceptable Cronbach alpha level of .80.

Q2: Does the deletion of scale items increase the level of reliability among the six dimensions of influence and the power index?

According to the findings, the rate of reliability will decrease if any one of the items were deleted from the *correctional officers* ($\alpha = .82$ to $.84$), the *other correctional educators* ($\alpha = .88$ to $.91$), the *inmates* ($\alpha = .78$ to $.81$), and the *teacher power* ($\alpha = .75$ to $.80$) factor groups. However, it is important to note that there were four items among these four factor groups, where if deleted, the rate of reliability for each of the four factor groups would have remained the same as it was prior to item deletion.

For example, if Item-5 (“When making instructional decisions, I consider the requirements imposed by the educational administrators.”) was deleted from the CETDM Scale, then the rate of reliability for the *prison administrators* dimension of influence would have remained at the current Cronbach alpha level of .86. Secondly, if Item-13 (“When making instructional decisions, I consider the recommendations from other correctional educators.”) was deleted from the CETDM Scale, then the rate of reliability for the *other correctional educators* dimension of influence would have remained at the current Cronbach alpha level of .91. Thirdly, if Item-34 (“When making instructional decisions, I consider the instructional materials available for the class.”) was deleted from the CETDM Scale, then the rate of reliability will remain the same as the current Cronbach alpha level of .86 for the classroom characteristics dimension of influence. Fourthly, if Item-46 (“Sometimes, I feel that I do not have the opportunity to be creative in my classroom.”) was deleted, then this would result in the rate of reliability remaining the same as the current Cronbach alpha level of .80 for the *teacher power* index.

The findings suggest that there are three items on the CETDM Scale, which the authors need to be cognizant of its negative influence on the rate of reliability. For example, the findings suggest that if Item-6 (“When making instructional decisions, I consider the academic expectations of the educational administrators.”) was deleted, then the *prison administrators* dimension of influence will warrant a 1% increase in its rate of reliability to a new Cronbach alpha level of .87. Likewise, if Item-33 (“When making instructional decisions, I consider the level of technology available for inmates.”) was deleted, then this would warrant a 1% increase in the rate of reliability for the classroom characteristics dimension of influence with the new Cronbach alpha level of .87. Finally, the findings suggest that if Item-39 (“When making instructional decisions, I consider the current social climate among the inmates.”) was deleted, then this will also result in a 1% increase in the rate of reliability for the Security/Safety dimension of influence with the new Cronbach alpha level .89.

Table 1: Reliability of the Seven Sub-Scales for the Final Study (N=427)

Dimensions of Influence and Power	Item Numbers	Scale Mean	Scale SD	Mean Item Mean	Alpha
Prison Administrators	1-6	22.28	7.07	3.71	.86
Correctional Officers	7-12	17.24	6.75	2.87	.85
Other Correctional Educators	13-18	26.17	6.64	4.36	.91
Inmates	19-28	39.40	8.65	3.94	.82
Classroom Characteristics	29-34	26.90	6.10	4.48	.86
Security/Safety	35-40	27.52	6.87	4.59	.88
Teachers’ Power	41-46	28.91	5.54	4.82	.80

Table 2: The Measurement of Reliability for the Six Dimensions of Influence and Teacher Power with Respect to Item Deletion (N=427).

I. Prison Administrators: Factor Mean = 3.71 SD = 1.18 Cronbach Alpha = .86		
Items	Current Item Mean	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted
1 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the prison warden's attitude toward inmates.	2.73	.83
2 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the prison warden's attitude toward the correctional educators.	2.83	.82
3 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the prison warden's attitude toward the educational programs for inmates.	3.07	.82
4 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the attitudes of the educational administrators.	4.17	.84
5 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the requirements imposed by the educational administrators.	4.81	.86
6 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the academic expectations of the educational administrators.	4.67	.87
II. Correctional Officers: Factor Mean = 2.87 SD = 1.13 Cronbach Alpha = .85		
Items	Current Item Mean	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted
7 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the correctional officers' attitudes toward the inmates.	2.19	.82
8 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the correctional officers' attitudes toward the correctional educators.	2.22	.82
9 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the correctional officers' attitudes toward security.	4.19	.84
10 – When making instructional decisions, I seek input from correctional officers.	2.10	.83
11 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the control correctional officers have over the physical movements of inmates.	3.81	.83
12 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the power correctional officers have over the classroom environment.	2.72	.82
III. Other Correctional Educators: Factor Mean = 4.36 SD = 1.11 Cronbach Alpha = .91		
Items	Current Item Mean	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted
13 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the recommendations from other correctional educators.	4.53	.91
14 – When making instructional decisions, I seek input from other correctional educators about classroom problems.	4.56	.89
15 – When making instructional decisions, I have group discussions with other correctional educators.	3.86	.89
16 – When making instructional decisions, I discuss teaching strategies with other correctional educators.	4.41	.88

Table 2 (Continued)

Items	Current Item Mean	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted
17 – When making instructional decisions, I collaborate with other correctional educators.	4.37	.88
18 – When making instructional decisions, I discuss with other correctional educators issues regarding inmates.	4.42	.89
IV. Inmates: Factor Mean = 3.94 SD = 0.86 Cronbach Alpha = .82		
Items	Current Item Mean	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted
19 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the gender of inmates.	3.23	.79
20 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the race/ethnic diversity among the inmates.	3.53	.78
21 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the religious diversity among the inmates.	2.97	.79
22 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the inmates' life experiences.	4.22	.79
23 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the inmates' opinions about the class.	3.59	.80
24 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the inmates' criminal history.	2.12	.81
25 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the inmates' learning needs.	5.50	.81
26 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the inmates' purpose for attending class.	4.58	.81
27 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the number of hours per week the inmates attend class.	4.39	.80
28 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the learning disabilities of some inmates.	5.26	.81
V. Classroom Characteristics: Factor Mean = 4.48 SD = 1.02 Cronbach Alpha = .86		
Items	Current Item Mean	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted
29 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the number of inmates in the class.	4.65	.84
30 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the room size.	4.36	.81
31 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the classroom layout.	4.37	.81
32 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the type of furniture in the classroom.	3.74	.83
33 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the level of technology available for inmates.	4.58	.87
34 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the instructional materials available for the class.	5.19	.86

Table 2 (Continued)

VI. Security/Safety Factor Mean = 4.59 SD = 1.14 Cronbach Alpha = .88		
Items	Current Item Mean	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted
35 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the level of classroom security.	4.27	.87
36 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the prison's policy toward security.	4.78	.86
37 – When making instructional decisions, I consider my own safety.	4.73	.86
38 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the safety of the inmates.	4.85	.86
39 – When making instructional decisions, I consider the current social climate among the inmates.	4.45	.89
40 – When making instructional decisions, I consider previous security concerns at the prison.	4.43	.85
VII. Teachers' Power Factor Mean = 4.82 SD = 0.92 Cronbach Alpha = .80		
Items	Current Item Mean	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted
41 – I feel I can do what I want to do in my own classroom.	4.50	.76
42 – I decide what learning assignments the students will do in my classroom.	5.28	.76
43 – I decide which subject matter to cover in my classroom.	4.91	.76
44 – I decide the teaching methods to use in my classroom.	5.35	.76
45 – Sometimes, I feel like other people are really making the important decisions in my classroom.	4.58*	.75
46 – Sometimes, I feel that I do not have the opportunity to be creative in my classroom.	4.29*	.80

*Mean scores following the reversal of negative item scores

6. Discussion

The purpose of this article was to discuss the development of the CETDM Scale. In addition, the researchers discussed the process in measuring the reliability of the six dimensions of influence and the teacher power index. The researchers also set out to determine if specific items on the CETDM Scale had a tendency to lower the rate of reliability among the six dimensions of influence and the teacher power index.

The findings of this study indicate that the development of the CETDM Scale have led to the discovering of a number of positive outcomes. The first positive outcome from this study is that the research findings suggested that each of the six dimensions of influence and the teacher power index warranted acceptable reliability measurements, with Cronbach alpha levels equaling .80 or greater. A second positive outcome from this study is that the researchers were able to determine that if any item on the CETDM Scale was deleted from the questionnaire that it would result in a decrease in reliability rates among the six dimensions of influence and the teacher power index, with exception to three specific items. In the case of these three items, if the researchers deleted the items from the CETDM Scale, it would only warrant a 1% increase in the Cronbach alpha levels for the following three dimensions of influence: prison administrators, classroom characteristics, and security/safety. Because the increase in the Cronbach alpha level was less than 3%, the normal methodological standard in this case is to not delete the items on the questionnaire, especially since the Cronbach alpha levels well exceeded the standard acceptable level of .70 (Fraenkel&Wallen, 2003; Jaeger, 1984; Kerlinger, 1986; Spector, 1992). In addition, the researchers decided to keep these three items as part of the CETDM Scale, because they believed that they could also justify the construct validity for all three items.

These researchers believe the most important outcome derived from this study is that we now have a reliable questionnaire that will measure the dimensions that influence the decisions teachers make within the correctional education classroom. This is important for the fact that if the correctional education teachers can understand the dimensions that influence what they do in the classroom, then they will be better equipped to develop a plan of action that will allow them to make the necessary adjustments in order to provide the best learning environment for the inmates. For example, we may find that the level of social networking that the teachers engage in with one another (e.g., other correctional educators) may have a positive influence on the decisions they make in the classroom. If the teachers and/or researchers find this illustration to be true, then this outcome will only serve to benefit the inmates' adult learning needs. For this illustration, the other correctional educators serve the role as mentors for the teacher in question. Fenwick (2003) would likely suggest that the other correctional educators would serve as the coach for the teacher (e.g., learner), in that they will "want to foster critical reflection on experience and challenge learners' assumptions while validating personally constructed knowledge" (as cited in Merriam, Cafferella & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 169).

Secondly, we may learn that the prison administrators have the ability to influence the teachers' instructional decisions as it applies to the needs of the educational programs, such as the educational resources necessary for the teacher to provide the best learning experience for the inmates. Therefore, if the teachers had a better understanding of the social context of their relationship with the prison administrator, then they might have the ability to strategize a plan that would allow the teachers to negotiate effectively between their own interests and the interests of the prison administrators (e.g., Cervero & Wilson, 1994a). Cervero and Wilson (2006) also suggest that many program planners fail to judge only the needs assessment from the standpoint of benefiting the learner. However they clearly state that "planners should also assess political needs" (p. 114).

In addition to identifying the influences on teacher decision-making, the CETDM Scale will allow us to understand the impact these dimensions of influence have upon the level of power the teachers perceive themselves having in the classroom. In fact, in some correctional environments, we might simply find out whether correctional education teachers view themselves as even having power. In some respects, we need to view the teacher as a program planner. Forester (1989) suggests that "only if the practical context of power relations, conflicting wants and interests, and political-economic structures are assessed clearly can planners respond to real needs and problems in anything approaching an actually rational, if not textbook-like, way" (p. 7). Forester also continues to say that "if planners understand how relations of power shape the planning process, they can improve the quality of their analysis and empower citizen and community action" (p. 27). He warns that if we fail to ignore those in power, then we only stand to set ourselves up for failure.

While the benefits in the CETDM Scale far outweigh the negatives, the researchers want to acknowledge that this questionnaire is not without its limitations. A potential limitation for the CETDM Scale is that the researchers did not develop a third contextual dimension of influence or an interpersonal dimension of influence, which measured the impact the teachers' critical reflection of their life, academic, and/or professional experiences have upon their classroom decisions (e.g., Brookfield, 2005; Daloz, 1986; Fenwick, 2003; & Mezirow, 1990). The power of teacher experiences upon classroom decision-making and learning activities was highlighted in the empirical research of Frost (2010) and Guo et al. (2011). Correctional education teachers are likely to model their teaching styles from their previous academic and professional experiences, including how and by whom they were mentored. In fact, the teachers' mentors could very well represent another set of stakeholders, either direct or indirect.

In closing, the researchers believe that they have developed a reliable measurement regarding the dimensions that influence teacher decision-making in the correctional education classroom and the impact such influences have upon teacher self-efficacy. We trust that this research will assist teachers and administrators of adult and correctional education to understand the factors that influence the teachers' activities in the classroom. While we feel this article has made a significant contribution to the adult and correctional education literature, our hope is that this study will encourage more adult and correctional educators to conduct additional empirical research on teacher decision-making.

7. References

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