

Tamil Nadu Open University, Chennai
Best Practices: Rehabilitation of Prisons Inmates by way of providing Education and Skill

A path-breaking initiative in the reform and rehabilitation process of prisoners is all set to take off at the Central Prisons in the State of Tamil Nadu. Learner Support Centres at Prisons and a Community College in the name of Mahatma Gandhi for offering Academic Programmes and Skill Development and Training Programmes has been functioning for more than a decade in all the Central Prisons.

The Additional Director General of Police and Inspector General of Prisons, No.1, Gandhi, Irwin Road, CMDA, Tower II, Egmore, Chennai – 600 008 by default is the Coordinator for Tamil Nadu Open University and who will coordinate with TNOU and other Voluntary Organisations to offer education to the prisons inmates.

The first-of-its-kind jail project in Tamil Nadu and probably the entire country, the Mahatma Gandhi Community College, affiliated to Tamil Nadu Open University, offer vocational Programme, including InDesign, Refrigeration and Air-conditioning, Fashion designing, Multi-media, Animation and Catering, to the 14,000-odd prisoners incarcerated behind the high walls.

“The objective is to empower prisoners with equal knowledge, education and life-coping skills and inculcate in them a positive attitude, so that upon their release they become eligible for employment, get assimilated in society in a smooth manner and do not revert to crime,” The classes will be conducted by teaching faculties from assigned community colleges of Tamil Nadu Open University and infrastructure such as examination halls and laboratories and other support systems will be created inside the prison.

Upon completion of the course, the inmates will be awarded a certificate and the prisons department will make all efforts to find suitable employment for them. It will function alongside the regular college offering conventional degree courses

Mahatma Gandhi Community College has been function since 2011 and managed by the Department of Prisons, Government of Tamilnadu in all the 9 Central and 2 Special Prison for Women. ICRDCE has been entrusted with the responsibility to administer and monitor the entire scheme in collaboration with local Community Colleges. It is recognized by Tamilnadu Open University (TNOU). So far we have trained 1210 prison inmates for last four batchers.

S. No.	Central Prison & Place	Name of the Community College
1	Central Prison, Puzhal -I, Chennai	ICRDCE, Chennai
2	Special Prison for Women, Puzhal	YWCA Community College, Chennai
3	Central Prison, Vellore	Development Community College, Arani
4	Central Prison, Salem	Sharon Community College
5	Central Prison, Coimbatore	C.S.I. Coimbatore Diocese Community College, Coimbatore
6	Central Prison, Cuddalore	Immaculate Community College, Cuddalore
7	Central prison, Trichy	SWATE Community College, Karur
8	Special Prison for Women, Trichy,	SWATE Community College, Karur
9	Central Prison, Madurai	Sivagangai Community College, Sivagangai
10	Central Prison, Palayamkottai	Palayamkottai Community College, Palayamkottai

The details of number of Prisons Inmates who pursued Vocational and Skill Training Programmes are as follows:

Batch	Year	No. of Students	Applied for Exam	Appeared for Exam	Exam Results
I	January 2011 to December 2011	261	204	185	175
II	January 2012 to June 2013	292	263	220	218
III	January 2013 to June 2014	295	270	253	230
IV	January 2014 to June 2015	190	185	159	139
V	January 2015 to June 2016	100	85	85	81
VI	January 2016 to July 2017	72	72	65	62
Total		1210	1079	967	905

An on average every year more than 300 Prisons inmates admitted to Degree and Skill development Programme of TNOU for more than a decade. Some of Prison inmates who have qualified and some of them who are teacher are also used to handle counseling and practical sessions at the Prisons. Mobile lab has been set up to provide hands on training to the Prisons inmates for the skill training programmes at Central Prisons.



Prisons Inmates during AC Technician hands on training at Prison

The individual skill has been tested after practical sessions at Prison to find the level of skill obtained by the Prisons inmates.



Women Prison inmates during Theory Classes of Beauty Therapist Programme

After completion of the Degree and Skill training Programme from Tamil Nadu Open University, the Prisons inmates after the punishment period and got released from the Prisons become entrepreneurs or employed. Some of the Prison inmates have got employment in the relevant industries. The TNOU Education has helped the Prisons inmates as part of rehabilitation to the Prisons inmates in the State of Tamil Nadu.

Since the TNOU Programmes in vernacular language the Prisons inmates find it easy to complete their Programme successfully. The Government of Tamil Nadu also supports the TNOU in the form of issuing Government Order for the rehabilitation of Prisons inmates in the State of Tamil Nadu.

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Tamil Nadu Open University has 209 Prisons Inmates who have completed their Degree and 925 Prisons Inmates who have Certificate Programmes in the last 14 years. TNOU offers 81 UG and PG Degree Programmes, 21 Skill Development Programmes and over all 130 different Educational Programmes through Open Nadu Distance Learning.

From the year 2007 the TNOU has established Learner Support Centres especially in the 9 Central and 2 Special Prison for Women.at Chennai, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Madurai, Playamkottai, Pudukottai, Salem, Trichy and Vellore and offers Degree Programme to the Prisons Inmates.

In the same way Mahatama Gandhi Community College has been started in the Year 2010 at all 9 Central Prisons and 2 Special Prison for Women and Borstal School at Pudukottai. This Community College offers Vocational Diploma Programmes and Certificate Programmes and there is age limit for pursuing these Programmes.

According to the Statistics given by TNOU to the Tamil Hindu 609 Prison inmates including 6 Women Prisoners have joined in UG and PG Programmes during the year 2007 to 2020. A maximum of 151 Prisoners from Trichy, followed by 130 at Chennai, 116 at Cuddalore, 77 at Coimbatore have joined the Degree Programmes. In same way 5 of them at Pudukottai, 19 at Vellore, 55 at Playamkottai, 56 at Madurai have joined.

Out of 156 Prisoners awarded with Degree Certificate, 6 Prisoners have completed MBA and 1 Prisoner has completed MCA and has been awarded the Degree, 46 Prisoners have been awarded other PG Degree Programme, including 4 Women Prisoners have been awarded UG Degree Programme. In total 209 Prisoners have become Degree holders.

In addition to this through the Mahatma Gandhi Community College a total 925 Prisoners have completed Certificate/Diploma programmes which includes 765 Diploma, of which 65 are Women Prisoners and 160 Male Prisoners have been trained in Skill Training.

The Vice Chancellor of TNOU Prof.K.Parthasarathy informed that Prison Inmates have been given an opportunity to pursue Degree Programme by TNOU and with 50 percent concessions for degree Programme and 10 percent Fee Fee concessions for Vocational Diploma programmes. During the COVID-19 situation the prisoners unable to pay the Examination Fee, the TNOU has given waiver for payment of examination fee to the Prisons inmates.

After completion of the Degree or Diploma by the prisoners, they get a social recognition once they come out of Prisons.

Tamil Nadu Open University, Chennai

Best Practices: Quality Self Learning Materials (SLM) for TNOU Learners

Self-Learning is an essential thing in everyone's life. Self-Learning is an arising form of learning that has emerged due to the availability of learning resources online. Self-learning enables you to learn what you want when you want, and how you want.

Self-learning is the new form of learning that is equipping people with skills that are relevant to their daily activities. However, this can be a challenging form of learning even for the brightest students since it requires lots of discipline.

Self Learning Material plays an important role in Distance Education. It is the main bridge between distance learner and distance educators or instructors. According to UGC regulations on Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020 (Annexure VII), "Self-Learning Material means and includes contents in the form of course material, whether print or non-print, which is inter-alia self-explanatory, self-contained, self-directed at the learner, and amenable to self-evaluation, and enables the learner to acquire the prescribed level of learning in a course of study but does not include textbooks or guide-books." The success of Open and Distance Education programmes depends on the quality of Self Learning Material.

TNOU intention is to show that the experience gained in face-to-face teaching can be utilized effectively for the new assignment of writing for distance learners. TNOU Self Learning Materials Policy document is to help course writer acquire reasonable skills/confidence to write Self Learning Materials and revise those materials.

It is a fact that the success and effectiveness of distance education systems largely depends on the study materials. Thus, in developing Self-Learning Study Materials, the Course Writers have a crucial role to play. Writing for Open and Distance Learning is a more challenging task and quite different from that in face-to-face teaching or writing for a Book or a Journal. Self Learning Materials depend on exploring the various means and ways of communication to suit it to the needs of learners.

Revision of self-learning materials is as important as the development of the materials for the first time because of two reasons. Every distance teaching course needs to be updated from time to time to incorporate the developments in the field of study or discipline.

The other reason is to review the performance of the courses in the light of the feedback that you get from the students, tutors, academic counsellors, experts and others in order to make the course more relevant, learner friendly and academically rich.

It is also envisaged that the TNOU's Self Learning Material policy will play a more central role in supporting self-study and learners as individuals, guided by the aligned or outcomes expressed curriculum. In this regard, the policy of SLM strengthens the link between industry, institutions and learners. They provide advice on learning strategies, delivery procedures (what to do), resources and cautions and the need to link learning materials to outcomes expressed or aligned curricula of TNOU programmes.

The TNOU-SLM policy also acts as a source of reference designed to help self study material developers.

The Self Learning Materials for TNOU programmes have been designed with the approach of two-way communication between the learner and content. The content of Self Learning Materials is presented in an interactive, conversational format with dialogue and personal system of writing method which will create the nature of interactivity in Self Learning Material.



TNOU Self Learning Materials as per SIM Format

The Self Learning Materials of TNOU is involved the learner actively through various experience-based activities and assignments. The Self Learning Material is structured on the Learning Outcome based Curriculum Framework (LOCF)

The Self Learning Material is encouraging the learner to apply new knowledge and skills. TNOU ensures the following and prepares the Self Learning materials in the 2020-2021.

- Programme Project Report (PPR) as per UGC-DEB ODL and OL Regulations-2020 along with the detailed syllabi has been prepared as per the TNOU Common Regulations of UG/PG/PG Diploma/ Vocational Diploma/Diploma/Certificate/Short-Term Programmes.
- Approval of Board of Studies / Adhoc Board of Studies, Academic Council and Syndicate of TNOU.

- Approval of Course Writer for developing the SLM, Content Editor (Subject Expert) verification the English and Tamil Version of the SLM.
- Language Editing, Proof reading of the English/ Tamil Version of the SLM and also the SLM prepared according to TNOU -SLM Policy.
- The SLM has been checked for Plagiarism and certified by the Assistant Librarian of TNOU or the Officer concerned .
- The SLM been formatted as per the SLM Policy of TNOU and UGC - ODL & OL Regulations 2020
- The ISBN Number has been obtained for the SLM and the provision for TNOU OER Repository
- The SLM has been converted into e-Book and finally a message to the students for motivation by the Vice Chancellor of TNOU.

At present (March-2022) TNOU has prepared 326 Course Materials in English Medium and 117 Course Materials in Tamil Medium at Short Term, Certificate, Diploma, Vocational Diploma, Advanced Vocational Diploma, Under graduate and Post graduate based on the SLM Policy of TNOU.



M.A. Tamil Self Learning Materials

Tamil Nadu Open University, Chennai

Best Practices: Empowering and Educating Persons with Disabilities (PwD)

Teaching is one of the most favoured professions across the globe. There are around 85 million teachers spread worldwide. On an average, a teacher influences more than 3000 students in his teaching years. There are various transformative teachers and special education teachers are one of them who teaches Children with Special Needs (CwSN).

It is said that every child is different irrespective of his abilities. In special education every child is addressed in different ways and in different environments. In Special education, there is more than just a unique way of education and the saying of "one size fits all" does not exist. According to Spastics Society of India there are around 20 million children with emotional, mental disabilities, difficulty of learning, and other physical disabilities.

As per the announcement of Government of Tamilnadu during 2010, Persons with Disabilities(PwD) prospective learner who are desiring to pursue higher education, they can be exempted from paying the tuition fee the as per Tamil Nadu State Government GO issued in the year 2010.

The Tamil Nadu Open University proudly records that a total of 2637 PwD learners have been awarded Degree at various level viz. 1840 in UG degree, 791 in PG degree, 2 in M.Phil Degree and 4 in Ph.D . Of the UG degrees 192 learners were in B.A (History), 153 in B.Com, 149 in B.Ed, 138 in BBA, 121 in B.Lit,110 in B.A (English), 92 in BCA and of the PG degrees were 99 in Tamil,87 in English and 78 in History.

Further,46 PwD have completed PG Diploma, 317 in Diploma, 72 in Vocational Diploma, 23 in certificate and 12 in short term course. In total 3,117 PwD learners have been benefited by the TNOU programmes. Out of which 1252 are women and 1855 are men.

B.Ed. Special Education is an specialized 2-year degree programme and not everyone is able to access it. It needs certain requirements and mindset to complete a degree in Special Education. To opt for a Bachelor Degree programme in Special education the individuals need to have an efficient way of learning and understanding of things and situations.

The Tamil Nadu Open University has offered the B.Ed (Special Education) with recognition of UGC on and RCI from 2008. The intake capacity of 500 learners in specialized area of Mental Retardation(MR), Visual Impaired(VI) and Hearing Impairment(HI) are offered.

Moreover, the 3,664 learners has been admitted in the B.Ed (Special Education)programme from 2008 to 2018, of which 3,257 have successful completed their degree which includes 207 PwD learners.

The Tamil Nadu Open University has been providing a lot of facilities to the PwD learners in writing their Term End Examination, concessions such as tuition fee waiver and other infrastructure facilitates at the TNOU Campus.

Special Education teachers are responsible for developing the skill and ability in the PwD students to help the students reach their own success in life. Teachers in this field are supposed to be in contact with the students' parents to give updates about their behaviour and academic progress. Monitoring students' behaviour whether emotional, psychological, or social plays a crucial role.

There are immense opportunities for those having a Bachelor's Degree in Special Education. Every year there are many openings for teachers in the Special Education field. As per the research findings, there are about 38, 600 openings every year on an average in this field. The job opportunities for Special Education teachers are estimated to grow at about 8 percent by 2030. Being a Special Educator is very different from a usual educator. All the points mentioned above would aid a B.Ed. pursuer to take a step further in his/her career by keeping the situations and conditional requirements of the Programme.



A five day Continuing Rehabilitation Education (CRE) Programme on Training to be a Teacher was organised by the School of Special Education and Rehabilitation, Tamil Nadu Open University from 26th to 30th August,2019 at TNOU, Chennai. Special Educators from Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu have participated in the five day Continuing Rehabilitation Education Programme which is self-sustained and self-funded. Honourable Vice-Chancellor, Prof.K.Parthasarathy, Tamil Nadu Open University, has inaugurated the five day Continuing Rehabilitation Education Programme at Tamil Nadu Open University.



Induction Programme for the newly joined B.Ed Special Education Students was organized by the School of Special Education and Rehabilitation (SOSER) and Student Support Services Division on 07.03.2020 at Tamil Nadu Open University, Academic Block. TNOU Vice-Chancellor Prof.K.Parthasarathy along with Faculties of School of Special Education and Rehabilitation, Chairman Faculty of Education, Controller of Examinations of TNOU and Prof.S.Mohan , Former Dean from Alagappa University participated in the Induction Meeting organized by Tamil Nadu Open University.



Tamil Nadu Open University, Bachelor of Education (Special Education) students admitted during January 2020 are participated in the Induction Programme organised by Tamil Nadu Open University.

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