

Nudging Towards Desistance Through Cognitive Behavioural Transformation: Insights from the Visualisation Exercise in the Unnati Reformation Programme

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This article presents an analysis of 648 narratives and pictures collected from 72 prison inmate participants. The analysis focuses on time and space themes, and was carried out using Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools. The time dimension includes past experiences, present experiences, and the future the participants imagined. The space dimension concentrates on the actual experience of living in prison. Text analysis using NLP has resulted in the clear emergence of risks and protective factors on term-to-term co-occurrence. Transition from the past to the present, and then to the future reveals a shift towards cognitive behavioural reconstruction, while the sentiment analysis graphs clearly reflect a movement towards desistance, which is indicative of likely reduction in recidivism.

Keywords: Cognitive Behavioural Reconstruction/Transformation, Desistance, Natural Language Processing (NLP), Recidivism, Reformation, Sentiment Analysis, Unnati, Visualisation.

Prison barracks are integral to the living and walking spaces of the incarcerated ecosystem. It is within these high walls and locked gates that the prison inmates reflect, introspect on their lives, and often go through soul-searching. They interact with other inmates and engage in a self-dialogue regarding freedom, punishment, family, fairness, and unfairness in the legal system, etc. Schimd & Jones (1991) assert that incarcerated inmates' experiences consist of "a running self-dialogue, a heightened state of reflexive awareness" (p.418). This reflexive self-dialogue often involves inmates focusing on questions like: "Who was I?", "Who am I now?", "Where am I now and why am I here?", "What would be my future like when I am out of prison?" etc. Their experiences are both ontological and phenomenological in nature. Ontological insofar as they relate to the inmates' Being, and phenomenological because they also

involve reflections about myriad phenomena affecting their lives in the past and the present, and perceived to be impacting the future also. It is against this backdrop that a Cognitive Behavioural Reformation programme called Unnati is implemented in the Prisons of Telangana (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Unnati: Reformation Within High Walls and Locked Gates!

A Cognitive Behavioural Change (CBC) reformation programme for prison inmates began in 2015 (Beena, 2019). Before Unnati, the status of inmates was: Imprisoned > Released > Rearrested > Resentenced > Back in Prison. The Unnati intervention programme was initiated with a strong will to radically alter this situation. The aim was to bring about cognitive behavioural change in inmates. The desired outcome was reduction in the rate of recidivism and offending behaviour

among inmates. The change strategies are based on the 5R's model:

Unnati 5R's Model



All the training modules of Unnati are categorised into the 5R's. The modules unfold in a synchrony and are highly interactive with a focus on resonant learning. This is to help the inmate participants understand the consequences of offending acts and activities. The 5R processes unfold gradually in a linear manner, to ensure cognitive behavioural change that is gradual and sustainable. Participants receive training in each module through workshops.

One of the important features of Unnati is that 70% of the programme is conducted by long-term convicted prisoners who have been trained to become Unnati facilitators.

The reduction of recidivism in Telangana from 10.06% in 2015 (TNN, 2015) to 1.5% in 6 years bears evidence to the success of this programme.

Visualisation is one of the modules of the Unnati Programme. The other modules are resetting of goals, alcohol addiction prevention, suicide prevention, modules from the Peace Education Programme (designed by Prem Rawat) on choice, dignity, hope, inner strength, etc. Visualisation is one of the most engaging activities for the inmate participants of the programme. The session is aimed at creating situations where they gently nudge themselves towards desistance.

A pathway to guide prison inmates in cognitive change, re-socialising and mainstreaming constitute the features of the 5R's model of Unnati. Morgenstern (2011)

emphasised the importance of re-socialisation, adding that the individual should be prepared to ensure that their re-entry into the society outside prison is smooth. The Unnati data reflect that recidivism reduced as the released inmates 'remained responsible' to their own behavioural contract to 'return not to prison'.

A. Cognitive Behavioural Restructuring

Cognitive restructuring is a critical component of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). CBT "is a form of psychological treatment that has been demonstrated to be effective for a range of problems including depression, anxiety disorders, alcohol and drug use problems, marital problems, eating disorders, and severe mental illness ... There is ample scientific evidence that the methods that have been developed actually produce change" (APA, 2023).

Three core principles guide CBT. The first one states that flawed and/or unsupportive thinking patterns are at least partially responsible for psychological problems. The second one emphasises that learnt patterns of unsupportive behaviour are responsible for psychological problems at least partially. The third one follows as a logical corollary from these two: It is possible for people with psychological problems to learn more efficient and effective ways of coping with their problems, which enables them to have greater control on their life.

Learning to change thinking patterns, thus, is a key element of CBT, the technical term for which is cognitive restructuring. In a nutshell, it involves learning to identify inaccurate and/or negative thoughts, and replacing them with alternative thoughts that are accurate and positive. Becoming aware of the emotions triggered by flawed and/or negative thoughts is important to be able to substitute those thoughts with rational responses that also change the associated emotions towards positivity (Traeger, 2013).

B1. Cognitive Transformation for Desistance

Applying cognitive transformation for developing desistance has been tried elsewhere. Giordano, Cernokovich, and Rudolph (2002), for example, studied desistance among female and male adolescents in conflict with law in the state of Ohio, USA. According to them, cognitive restructuring towards desistance offers a more “agentic” perspective on desistance as it highlights “the important period when actors make initial attempts to veer off a deviant pathway” (p.992). In this emphasis on the actor’s agency in embracing change, these researchers differ significantly from the social control theory of desistance.

Giordano, et al. (2002) claimed that four types of interconnected cognitive transformation take place in the desistance process. The first and most significant one is ‘openness to change’ which indicates that the actor is prepared internally to embark on the restructuring journey (p.1000). The second component consists of “hooks for change”, which are external opportunities and/or positive influences that help the actor to desist from deviant behaviour. However, the mere presence of such hooks is not enough by itself; the actor needs to have the motivation to grab one or more of those hooks for those external inputs to become catalysts of change. The relationship between the actor and the external environment must be reciprocal (Ibid, pp. 992, 1000-1001). The third type of cognitive transformation that happens is the emergence of a “replacement self”, which indicates a change in how one sees oneself. When the actor grabs the relevant hooks for change, it becomes possible for the actor to visualise this emergent self, which is more attractive than the deviant one (Ibid, p.1001). The fourth type of cognitive restructuring “involves a transformation in the way the actor views the deviant behavior or lifestyle itself” (Ibid,

p.1002). This constitutes the capstone as the “desistance process” is “complete when the actor no longer sees these same behaviors as positive, viable, or even personally relevant” (Ibid).

Cognitive transformation within the Unnati programme is more in line with this agentic view than with the social control approach. Prison inmates are already in a situation of near-total control within the high walls of the locked prison barracks. If control alone could lead to desistance through cognitive restructuring, the recidivism rate should have been automatically low, with no need for an initiative like Unnati. The authors of this article agree with Giordano, et al. (2002) that to achieve sustainable behaviour change, in this case towards desistance, the cognitive transformation process needs to happen through the actor’s agency, rather than through social control.

B. Visualisation

Visualisation, also described as imagery rescripting, is an important tool for cognitive restructuring. The aim of imagery rescripting is to transform the negative meanings associated with distressing personal memories. The process involves visualising specific memories in the present tense, and intervening with them to alter the distressing/traumatic elements associated with them (Stopa, 2009; Norton & Abbott, 2016).

C1. Concept of Visualisation in Unnati

Visualisation as implemented in the Unnati initiative involves the process of reflection, self-selection of stimuli (pictures), and responses in the form of written narratives. The participants have to place the selected pictures in three different time zones of their life: past, present, and future, and explain the reasons for the same in their written narratives. This is a unique adaptation of the imagery rescripting process for prison inmates. It has some similarity with the guided imagery technique used in psychotherapy to

address a variety of behavioural issues, but this visualisation activity is not the same. Felix, et al. (2018) describe guided imagery as: “a mind-body intervention that uses the patient’s own imagination and mental processing to form a mental representation of an object, place, event, or situation perceived through the senses. It is considered a relaxation technique that focuses on the interaction between brain, mind, body and behavior” (p.2). This description clarifies how the Unnati visualisation process differs from guided imagery. Firstly, this visualisation is not for patients, nor is it for relaxation. The aim here is the promotion of behavioural change towards desistance using the participants’ own imagination of their past, present, and future timescapes.

Visuals in the form of drawings and clippings from printed materials placed in different time zones play a key role in this visualisation activity. Every chart containing visuals and the accompanying narratives represents a meaningful creation, personalised and specific to each participant. Ideas, feelings, and emotional experiences of the participants get laid down on the canvas of time and space. The Unnati programme has conducted the visualisation exercise for more than 10,000 inmates over a span of 6 years, asserts founder Beena (2022). This experiential activity helps participants visualise their own transition and transformation, thereby creating a cathartic effect. The debrief session after the exercise provides the participants with an opportunity to showcase their childhood behaviour, suffering, and repentance for offending acts, both to self and other peers present. They can also express sympathy for the victims of their offences, and arrive at a behavioural contract towards a responsible and lawful future. This module helps in scaffolding the desistance process not just for the present, but for the future also, stresses Beena (Ibid).

The present study reports the findings from implementing the visualisation module with 72 prison inmate participants. Conducted in a workshop mode, the aim was to nudge the participants towards desistance. The time dimension in the process involved tracing the experiences of the inmate participants about their past as they captured it in retrospect; the present as they reviewed it, and the possible future they idealised and forecast. There was, thus, a transcendence from the past to the future via the present. The space dimension involved the prison and its barracks. The participants engaged themselves in focused ideation, deliberating about the space they are in, their daily routine activities, and their length of stay in the prison.

Objectives

- a. To identify risks and protective factors of participants through the visualisation training session.
- b. To analyse participant responses using NLP (natural language process) tools to understand inmate experiences at the given time and space of being in prison.
- c. To compare the data generated from the three time periods of the visualisation charts to indicate the efficacy of the 5R model of Unnati in reducing the recidivism rate.

Method

Sample

For this study, prison authorities randomly selected 72 male inmates from three different prisons in the state of Telangana, India: Central Prison, Cherlapalli; Central Prison, Hyderabad; and District prison, Nalgonda. Three types of prison inmates are represented in this sample: Under Trial, Convicted, and Detinue.

Procedure

For visualisation, the fifth session in the Unnati training programme, each participant received a chart paper and relevant stationery. They were instructed to draw lines and divide the chart into three equal parts representing past, present, and future. A pile of newspapers and magazines were made available to the participants. They were asked to select pictures to express their experiences, and represent their life in past, present and future timescapes. First, they had to paste their selected images to the respective columns. Then, they were instructed to write why and how each picture represents their life experiences in past, present, and future. Each chart, thus, represented a customised presentation of how a participant experienced his life in the prison space through the three time zones. Once all the participants completed their tasks, a debrief session followed.

Observations made by the presenter as well as by other participants were noted, and significant expressions were recorded.

Results and Discussion

The activity of visualisation is deliberately introduced at a point where participants are gently nudged towards engaging in self-reflection about their criminal behaviour, and set non-criminal goals for their future. Though it is an individual activity, displaying their narratives to the group and the debrief is an open confession to remain crime-free, and be responsible to self, family, and society. While conducting the visualisation training activity for this study, it was observed that an internal dialogue, and an interaction with the self and others, take place among the participants. The debriefing of pictures and narratives affect their emotions and learning outcomes significantly, as detailed in the following sections.

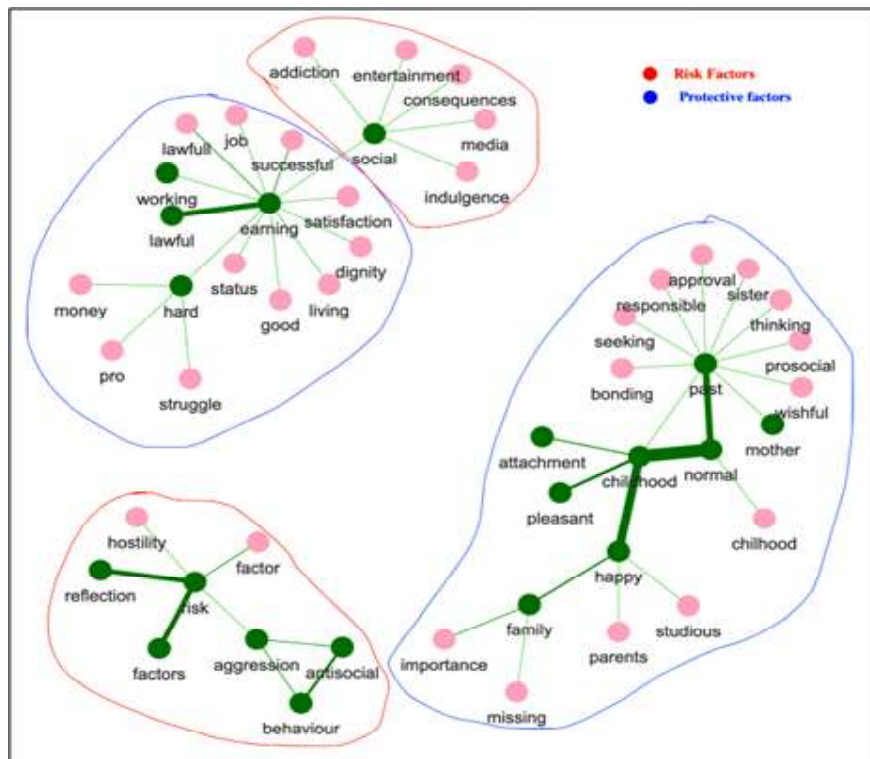


Figure 2. Term-to-term Co-occurrence for Past Experiences

Participants' Past Experiences

Inmates' responses to their past experiences provided insights into their risk behaviours, which, in their own reflection, constitute the reason for being in custody i.e., their present situation.

Figure 2 represents the term-to-term co-occurrence of words/terms used by inmates with reference to their past experiences. Words that occurred frequently in their narratives are represented in green, signifying central nodes. Words in pink represent peripheral nodes as they are connected to the central nodes.

It is to be noted that in Figure 2, word clusters are encircled in blue and red lines. Words encircled in blue refer to positive experiences from the past, which constitute protective factors that could have protected the participants from committing offences. Indeed, several participants expressed that they had experienced normal childhood, were attached to parents and other family members, were happy with friends, and had a pleasant schooling experience. Some were studious and hardworking, earned lawfully, etc. These positive central and peripheral nodes designate prosocial activities that they themselves identified as protecting them from veering towards various offences.

However, the protective factors were perhaps not strong enough for them to completely inhibit the offending acts, so that they could indulge in certain risky antisocial activities. In their own assessments, participants claimed that some of their life experiences led them to criminal ideas and actions, without a full understanding of the consequences of those offences. Nodes representing aggression, antisocial behaviour, offences, hostility, addiction, etc are encircled in red to signify risk factors that facilitated committing a crime.



Figure 3. Word Cloud for Past Narratives

The Word Cloud for past narratives as seen in Figure 3 clearly emphasises risk behaviours in terms of substance abuse, antisocial behaviour, negative peer influence, etc. It is relevant in this context to refer to a 1979 national survey in the US involving 12,000 prison inmates, to reflect the connection between addiction and crime. About 33% of the respondents "had drunk very heavily just before they committed the offense for which they were convicted" (Kalish, 1983, p.1). About 20% of them had been heavy drinkers every day in the year preceding their incarceration. Summarising her findings from published articles, Roizen (1997) found that 86% of homicide offenders, 60% of sexual offenders, and 37% of assault offenders were drinking at the time of committing the crime. She further discovered that up to 27% of women and 57% of men involved in marital violence were also drinking at the time of the offence, and so were 13% child abusers (pp.7-40).

Participants' Present Experiences

Figure 4 presents the term-to-term co-occurrence matrix for the present time period. Family, prison, life, and jail constitute the central nodes. Peripheral nodes associated with family are missing family members, and feelings of sadness because of being in prison. Peripheral terms linked to prison are feeling lonely, acceptance of their offending behaviour, regret, commitment to not repeat the offences, etc. Terms closely related to

present life situation also refer to new learnings from the Unnati programme, thinking about ways to cope in life, about starting a new job, reflecting on their current life situation, etc.

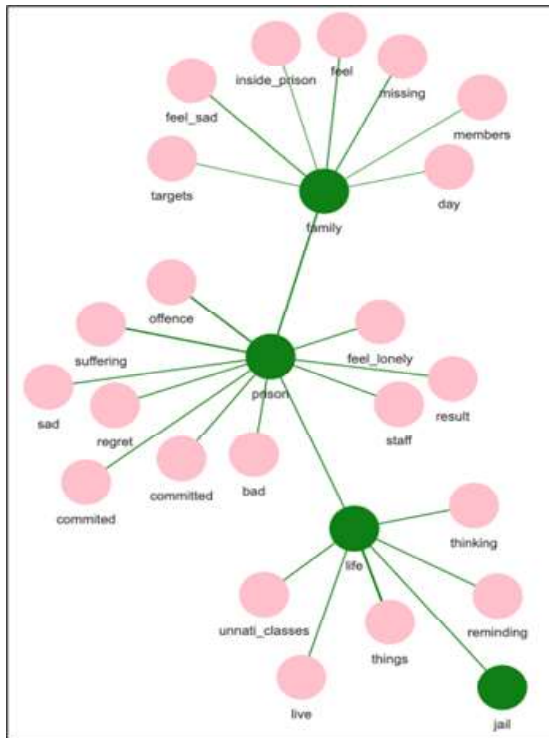


Figure 4. Term-to-term co-occurrence matrix: Present experiences.

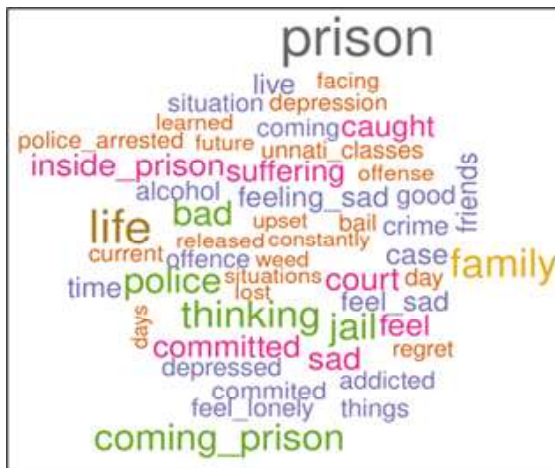


Figure 5: Word Cloud for Narrative about the Present

From figure 5 reflecting the Word Cloud for the present, the most prominent word that emerged is 'prison'. It is where the inmates suffer. They are upset and feel sad about being in the prison. Several expressed feelings of depression as their life constantly revolved around courts and seeking bail. Several of them accepted that they had committed a crime due to which they were inside a prison, and expressed feelings of guilt. The participants seemed to be in a state of turmoil as they reflected on the crimes committed, and what life could be like without the offences. It is clear that participants had learnt about crime and its consequences from the Unnati programme. In their narratives about the present, participants claimed that alcohol and other forms of substance abuse along with negative peer influence were responsible for them being in custody. Peer association and influence is one of the most important predictors for delinquency (Beena, 2019). Farrington (1986) also notes that juvenile delinquents who associate with other delinquents persist as adult offenders.

Thoughts of the inmates were found to be about their family members who were far away from them. This made them feel anxious, sad, and guilty for making the family suffer. However, participation in the Unnati programme emerged as a positive aspect of being in prison. Unnati sessions on resetting of goals, prevention of alcohol abuse, etc were marked as influencing their motive to give up crimes and get mainstreamed. The participants highlighted during the debrief that going through the Unnati programme had helped them reflect on their ideas and plans for committing the offences for which they were in prison.

It is important to note that several inmates were able to identify the causes of their crime and realise that custody and present struggles were inevitable consequences of their crimes. In the process of reflection, they

had also demonstrated acceptance of their individual roles in executing the criminal activities. Some of them have also expressed guilt and regret towards the victims and their families. They acknowledged that their present condition enabled them to empathise with the victims and their families. Some of the participants even expressed a desire to apologise to the victims' families, and extend reparation, if they got the opportunity.

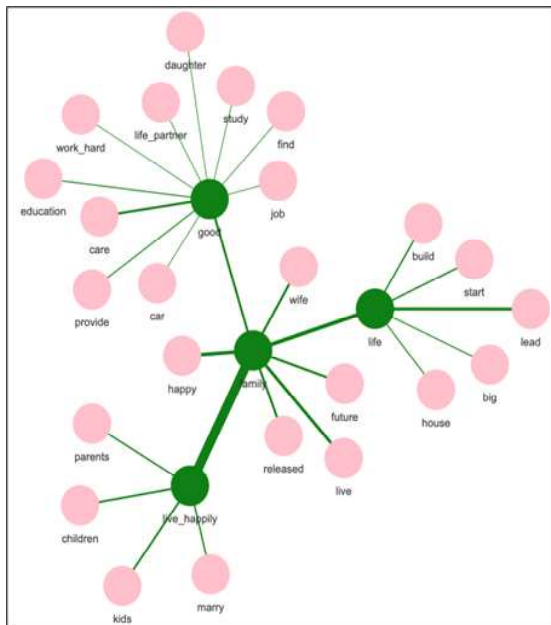


Figure 6. Term-to-term co-occurrence matrix for future expectations of the inmates.

Participants' Imagery of the Future

From Figure 6 representing the term-to-term co-occurrence matrix for the future, the central nodes that emerged are family, to live happily, life, and good. Assessing and understanding their past and present behaviour while imagining life after release is set and committed on the charts: They would refrain from crime, and move on as responsible individuals. In this session, the participants tended to make behavioural contracts for themselves to refrain from both substance abuse and crime.



Figure 7. Word Cloud for Future Narrative

As Figure 7 depicts, major themes that emerged for the future are to live happily; be responsible towards the family; and take care of parents, wife, and children. It also reflects resetting of goals like finding a job, start business, to earn lawfully, etc. In addition, they mentioned that they would refrain from committing a crime, and strive towards living peacefully. This appeared to be their behavioural contract for future. The frequently recurrent terms were mother and family. It is inferred that there is a deep sense of returning to the mother, making up for the period of separation, and a promise to remain responsible towards her. A son taking care of his mother is the most laudable and socially desirable behaviour in the Indian ecosystem. One of the hardcore recidivist criminals who became an Unnati participant stated this in plain language: "If I can please my mother by being responsible, I feel that I have pleased the entire world."

By expressing and exposing the narrative (chart) in front of 30 fellow inmates in the class, the participant poses a challenge to himself, and makes a commitment that he believes to be binding on him: He must live

up to this positive image in order to restore dignity for the present and future. This is how the visualisation process facilitates cognitive reconstruction, image rescripting, and re-socialisation, which enables the participant to transform his identity from a criminal to a gentleman.

It is, however, relevant in this context to refer to an unpublished research (Cynthia & Beena, 2023), which shows that disturbed family relations have a significant impact on indulging in crime and returning to the prison. The present data indirectly testifies to that as there is a strong desire to live as a responsible family member. A happy family life is one of the most critical elements that acts as a protective factor, and facilitates desistance from indulging in any further offending behaviour. Keeping in view this importance of the family, a special parent-inmate interaction called *Special Mulaqat* (meeting) is conducted within the Unnati programme.

In the context of this study, it is necessary to point out that most narratives indicate strong ties with the family in the past, which is something the participants desire to return to. Being in the company of fellow inmates does not fulfil the need to be with one's own family and community. The participants clearly defined being back with the family and serving the larger community as the markers of their future happiness. This is what cognitive reconstruction is all about: a dynamic process that facilitates a shift in thoughts and feelings to imagine a future very different from the present.

Sentiment analysis for past present and future

The three following graphs represent data analysed using Sentiment Analysis software. Each narrative in the form of words and sentences is taken as an 'index' by the sentiment analysis tool (represented on the y axis). Then each index is interpreted as a

positive or a negative experience, which are called as sentiments. Therefore, each index/line represents sentiments that could be positive (0 to 10, on x-axis) or negative (0 to -10, on x-axis). For each time period, the indices varied from 180 to 200. It is important to note that the length of the indices/lines in the graph are varied. The longer they are, stronger is the sentiment, implying that the length is proportionate to the strength of the sentiment.



Figure 8: Sentiment Analysis of Narratives for Past recollections

In the sentiment analysis of the past, as reflected in figure 8, the number of index lines are more on the positive side. That indicates that the participants' past experiences were largely positive. The data shows consistency with figures 2 and 3, where family, happy childhood, working hard, normal life, etc, emerged as protective factors responsible for deterring and discouraging offending behaviour. However, a few indices reflect negative sentiments also, which indicate the risk factors that allowed the crime to happen.

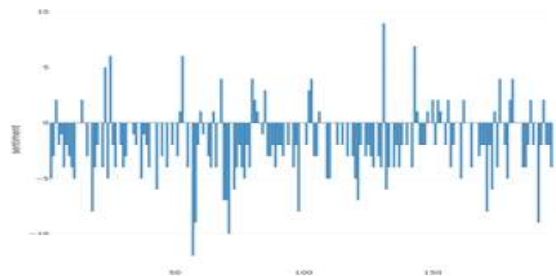


Figure 9. Sentiment Analysis of narratives for the Present.

Sentiment analysis of the present, as shown in figure 9, depicts overwhelmingly negative sentiments, with very few positive ones. It indicates that the participants' current

state of imprisonment is causing emotional turmoil in them, causing them to reflect on their good and bad behaviours. This realisation influences their feelings and attitude: Indulging in crime, risk taking, and offending behaviour are not worthy. Such attitudes likely lead to cognitive restructuring and positive change in their behaviour. The negative sentiments recorded through this tool actually constitute a positive factor as they facilitate inmates' reformation and desistance. It may be noted that in the Figure 9 the longest line for negative sentiment was "facing complications due to crime". In course of their reflection about different criminal acts, participants' thoughts related to partial denial of the crime, to not being caught for other more serious crimes – but being in custody for a lesser crime, about others who were involved in the crime and are absconding, etc. Such thoughts prevail generally in the inmates but during Unnati sessions, such thoughts are subjected to discussions and debates, with both the peer group and the facilitators contributing to cognitive, emotional, and behavioural restructuring towards desistance. Some of the positive sentiments that emerged are commitment, self-reflections, learning to earn, participation in Unnati, realising the importance of family and money, and feeling strongly about not committing a crime again. These positive sentiments strongly influence behaviour change by the inmate himself.

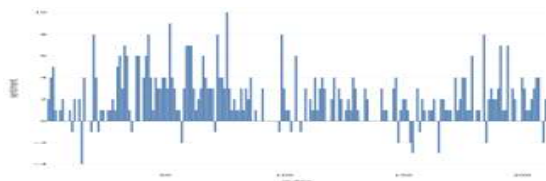


Figure 10. Sentiment Analysis for their Future

Figure 10 indicates sentiment analysis for the future. The sentiments are predominantly positive in nature which could help in paving a new pathway for their future. The sentiments recorded refer to being with the

family, earning lawfully, progressing in life socio-economically, providing education to children, taking care of parents, etc. The highest positive sentiment recorded was: "It is my dream to have a big home and live a comfortable life. I hope to achieve it." This is a clear pointer towards desistance.

Participants were found to get absorbed in the process of visualisation, which always happens. It appeared as though they got transported to their life experiences, reliving some of those, and emerged out of it with strong emotions and motivations to change. Especially when they were reviewing the present scenario in the prison, and imagining their stay outside the prison with the family.

According to Gerrig (1993/2018), when individuals are transported through narratives, they engage in a process of 'anomalous replotting' if they experience an unhappy ending. They actively think about possibilities that could have changed the outcome. He calls this anomalous as the person creating the new plot knows fully well that the events in the narrative are already there, and cannot be wished away. Yet, they indulge in a replotting to generate an ending more to their liking. Following Gerrig's theory, Green and Brock (2000) postulated the transportation-imagery model of narrative persuasion. According to them, when an individual gets absorbed in a narrative (extent of transportation), it greatly effects their beliefs and attitudes.



Figure 11. Inmate Expressing his Current State in the Prison Through the Analogy of Being Crushed in a Stone Grinder.

For this study, the authors would like to connect the Unnati visualisation exercise to the concept of transportation-imagery. A detailed analysis of the individual charts has clearly demonstrated that visuals or pictures from the 'present' timeframe of the charts often reflect feelings of sadness, fear, guilt, shame, and other negative emotions, indicating their unpleasant experiences inside the prison. On the other hand, their ideations on the future largely reflected happy and pleasant sentiments. This is closely related to the study conducted by Holmes and Mathews (2005), where they described that people underwent an intense emotional experience as negative feelings increased in response to negative scenarios. This corresponds directly to the participants' experience of anguish while narrating their present situations. For instance, a participant of the present study used the analogy of being crushed between two grinding stones (which are used in India to grind grains in India), to convey how he felt in the prison (Figure 11). That same participant's pictures and narratives in the future section have shown that he would like to be part of family, taking care of his wife and children.

The above studies support our understanding that as participants transcend from the Past to Present to Future, they experience change. It is seen from the Word Cloud and sentiment analysis, in the future part of the charts, majority of the pictures and narratives appear to be somewhat idealistic with lofty goals. However, every participant had shown a desire to restart activities in life with their families and new jobs.

The debrief for each participant undertaken after the completion of the visualisation task was found to be highly impactful as each one presented to the entire class. The debrief seemed to help the participants in restoring empathy and hope. As already presaged, some participants clearly expressed remorse and guilt related

to the impact of their offending acts on the victims. It is worth mentioning here that visualisation is a precursor to the session on 'Resetting of Goals'.

Emphasising the agency of offenders in desistance, Vaughan (2007) argues: "... desistance can only be grasped through an understanding of the agent's ultimate concerns – the commitments that matter most and dictate the means by which he or she lives" (p.390). He puts forward the concepts of the feared self and the respectable self in this context, which are plainly witnessed in the process of resonant learning through the visualisation session. Bad behaviour, and offending acts in the past are now shunned; getting married, setting up a home, living happily with children and family as a respectable person are openly declared in front of the other participants. All the participants who present their charts equally face challenging eyes and critical comments from fellow inmates. It has been envisaged by the Unnati programme that reflections and insights into risks taken in the past, the consequences of which are experienced in the present, provide a shift, and help inmates make new cognitive behavioural change connections. This has shown remarkable results in reforming inmates, not only through being obedient inmates in the prison serving their term, but also in helping them to remain responsible and not return to prison with another crime. The pictures and written narratives echoed their feelings and sentiments providing a structured content and functionality in the epistemological/ cognitive realm: behaviour change is possible, i.e., there is a scope for desistance.

Conclusion

The qualitative analysis of the visualisation activity carried out with 72 male inmates in three different prisons of Telangana has revealed the experiences captured in the past, present, and future time

zones, and the current living space – the prison. This study has presented three types of analyses of the responses collected in the form of pictures and narratives: term-to-term co-occurrence, word cloud, and sentiment analysis. The main conclusions arrived at from the data analysis are encapsulated below:

- Term-to-term co-occurrence revealed some of the risk factors like aggression, substance abuse, risk-taking behaviour, negative peer group influence, etc, which had contributed to criminal behaviour.
- Protective factors like stable family relationships, good schooling, lawful earning, etc, had held them back from indulging in offending acts on many occasions.
- Expressions through pictures and narratives followed by a debrief provided an opportunity to the participants to deliberate on cognitive behavioural changes and consider the possibility of desistance.
- The visualisation exercise as a component of the Unnati 5R module contributes significantly in promoting desistance.

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