Recidivism: The rate in which prisoners relapse into criminal behavior after previously spending time in jail.

Socioeconomic factors as well as prison conditions will positively correlate to recidivism.

Evidence:
- Education programs “can translate into improvements in public safety and reintegration of former prisoners into the labor force, families, communities, schools, and religious organizations”
- A $1 investment in prison education reduces incarceration costs by $4 to $5 during the first three years after an inmate’s release.
- Of the 168 graduates of the Bard Prison Initiative, an education program in upstate New York, who were released from prison, the three-year recidivism rate is less than 1%.

In 2002, there was a survey study in Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Texas, Utah and Virginia and the results of these surveys were that educational programs cut recidivism from 49% to 20%. In a 2009 report from the National Correctional Association, it says that prisoners who earn an Associate of Arts degree or an Associate of Science degree are 70% less likely to return to prison. The U.S. Department of Justice said that education programs are the best way to reduce recidivism.

Reason: America has the highest rate of crime and incarceration when compared to other countries.

Problem: The high incarceration rates are large in part due to the high recidivism rates leading to a heavy economic burden on its citizens.

Methods: Factors will be evaluated such as education programs in prison and prison conditions that could have an effect on recidivism.

Hypothesis: Socioeconomic factors as well as prison conditions will positively correlate to recidivism.

Implications: Determining important factors that cause recidivism could educate policy makers to reduce the factors which will ultimately reduce recidivism.

References:
- Psychopathy and violent recidivism.

In conclusion, recidivism is at an all time high in the United States and it continues to increase. But with education programs, the United States can reduce the rate of recidivism.

By: Maria Tsorosos
Leah Pilcher
Zoey Davis
Pedro Sierra

Impact of Prison Programs on the Rate of Recidivism