The Impact of Higher Education on Recidivism of Female Prisoners

Abstract

There is evidence to suggest that female inmates released from the United States penal system lack the necessary skills and training needed to become successfully acclimated back into society (Davis, 2002). Training incarcerated women to adapt to the changing needs of society will impact their lives tremendously by enabling them to gain employment, receive promotions, and compete with their counterparts for jobs. Legislators and higher education administrators need to rethink the development of higher educational training in the United States penal system and find ways to help women inmates come out of prison and become productive citizens in society. Additionally, realizing that higher education can considerably reduce the number of female inmates reentering the penal system, correctional planners should make higher education more available to this segment of society (Taylor, 1992).

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of or the opportunities for higher education in women’s prisons and how crime and the return rate to prison can be reduced as a result of this form of rehabilitation. This study investigated the academic support given to female inmates and the impact of these efforts for successful reentry into society.

This study found that only 25.3% of the individuals who received education while incarcerated went back to prison. Conversely, 72.6% of the individuals who did not receive education went back to prison. This suggests that education had a positive effect on these participants.