

Deviance Detectors: A Study on Reoffending Rates and Rehabilitation Programs; Individual Impacts

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Abstract

- This project explores the role of **rehabilitation programs outside of prison** in reducing reoffending rates.
- We conducted **qualitative interviews** with clients at *Project Peaceprints* in Buffalo, NY.
- Our research was guided by literature on music therapy, sports programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, and community sentencing.
- Using **semi-structured interviews**, we gained insight into how support in **mental health, employment, and education** influences reentry outcomes.
- Findings suggest that access to these programs significantly **reduces recidivism** by offering structure, resources, and emotional support.

Introduction

In recent years, the criminal justice system has emphasized the importance of rehabilitation over punishment. As incarceration rates remain high, programs that support reentry have emerged as important tools in reducing recidivism. Our project investigates how access to rehabilitation programs outside of prison, such as those focused on mental health, education, and employment affect reoffending rates. By conducting qualitative interviews with clients from Project Peaceprints in Buffalo, NY, we aim to understand how such interventions impact individuals' ability to reintegrate and avoid future incarceration.



Lit Review and Theoretical Motivation

Research Question: How does access to rehabilitation programs outside of prison influence reoffending rates?

Hypothesis: Having an increased access to rehabilitation programs will likely decrease reoffending rates, providing mental health, education, and employment support.

- Based on our recent literature review, music therapy (Tuastad & O'Grady 2013), sports programs (Jugl et al., 2021), cognitive behavioral therapy (Beaudry et al., 2021) and prison rehabilitative programs along with community sentencing (Arbour 2024) have driven our research project.
- All the work we have researched through, example being Project Peaceprints have made it a meaningful contribution to this type of field.


11:15 pm





Analytical Strategy

We employed a **qualitative research method** to explore why individuals believed they were reincarcerated and to identify the factors influencing these beliefs. A **semi-structured interview** format was used, guided by a prepared **interview schedule** that ensured consistency while allowing flexibility to pursue relevant follow-up questions.

- This method was selected for its ability to yield rich, in-depth data through participants' personal narratives.
 - To maintain **validity**, we emphasized interviewer **reflexivity** throughout the research process. Bella was chosen as the interviewer due to her outgoing nature and demonstrated ability to remain neutral, which helped participants feel comfortable sharing detailed responses.
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Data Collection and Sampling

We went to peaceprints to collect data

We sat in on a staff meeting where we were able to get their data

We then were able to conduct our in depth interviews on clients

We sat in a conference room with them one on one

We gave them a consent form and asked if it was ok that we recorded and took notes

We were able to speak to 5 different clients

4 in person

1 over the phone

They ranged in age, crime, and progression

Every story was unique but helped us to prove how much peaceprints has impacted recidivism rates here in Buffalo

How did incarceration impact your mental health and outlook on life?

Who or what has been the most supportive during your transition into rehab?

How have rehabilitation programs affected you after being incarcerated?

Has there been any negatives about the program that have impacted your progress or for the most part has it been positive?

Would you recommend this program to other individuals that have been recently released from prison?

How did you get involved with peaceprints? Did someone get you involved or did you have to find it yourself?

Examples of questions we asked

Results

All 5 interviewees reported that Peaceprints helped them avoid reoffending.

- Support systems offered structure and accountability.
- According to the Peace Prints organizations, recidivism in Erie County went from 81% to 7.5% after developing and growing this program.

- **Common themes across interviews:**

Employment support helped with stability and purpose.

Mental health services improved coping and reduced stress-related triggers.

Educational programs empowered participants with new skills.

Mentorship and staff relationships built trust and motivation.

- **Variation in client background and progress:**

Participants differed in age, crimes committed, and stages of reentry, but all emphasized the personal impact of consistent, supportive resources.

- **In-person interactions were especially meaningful.**

4 out of 5 interviews conducted face-to-face provided deeper insight into the emotional and social value of the programs.





Sydney getting her linkedin on
Baddie getting into the job market

Questions?



Deviance detectors forever have a connection with peaceprints



Unfortunately there is nothing to report on John and Angelina

Emily had to leave early but here she is



Wind 1
Sydney 0



Bella drove to the wrong location and was 10 minutes late
Driving 1
Bella 0
She went to an abandoned house



Citations

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