

Review of: "The Effectiveness of Prison Education in Reducing Criminal Recidivism: A Systematic Review"

Marta Sousa

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to review this manuscript. The topic under study is crucial, considering the consequences of recidivism. However, several significant theoretical and methodological problems concern me. Some ideas lack scientific evidence, as many sentences do not contain a single reference to support what is mentioned.

Some information should also be better exploited:

- "The situation is much worse in countries with medium to low incomes, which for the most part do not understand the need to invest their limited resources in crime prevention programs and the institutionalization of social reintegration of convicts as part of their criminal justice system (UNODC, 2019)." Why don't they understand the importance of investing in rehabilitation? Develop a little.

The terms used (i.e., inmates or prisoners) should also be standardized throughout the manuscript. In keeping with the field, I encourage the author to rethink the use of labels such as offenders. These old terms can be replaced with person-first language, such as individuals who have been incarcerated.

I have some doubts about the method. Why was the research limited to the last five years? What is the justification for this, and should it be presented in the manuscript? Additionally, I have concerns about the databases used. Have you considered using Scopus, Web of Science, and PsycINFO? It would be important to use these databases to reach as many articles as possible. There also seems to be contradictory information about the use of PubMed in the manuscript: Was it used or not?

The search equation is not clear, and it's unclear whether it should be the same for all databases. Also, it's not specified how many people ran the search, how many screened the paper, and how many read it in full. Was there agreement between the raters?

Wouldn't it also be useful to gather information about the characteristics of the studies (e.g., design) and the sample?

It's not clear what kind of scale was used to assess the quality of studies, and who conducted this assessment. Was there agreement between the reviewers? It would be beneficial to specify the scale used; for instance, the MIXED METHODS APPRAISAL TOOL (MMAT) is a versatile option suitable for various study designs.

Why exclude books ("Books and manuals: Books and manuals were excluded because they are not peer-reviewed and may not be based on rigorous research." but at the same time accept theses? Are the theses that rigorous?

“As a result, 10 valid studies were included in the bibliographic review.” , “Of the 11 studies selected for inclusion” Is it 10 or 11?

There is repeated information about the studies in the different sections. The studies should be described, focusing on the conclusions.

I would also suggest including a table with the information taken from the articles summarized for the reader to have an overview.

You should also include a flowchart diagram.