



## Psychiatry & Behavioral Science Section - 2016

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### **19 Predicting Success: A Study of Demographic Indicators of Success in Prison Career and Technology Education Training Programs**

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After attending this presentation, attendees will recognize demographic and correctional factors that serve as a predictor of success in a Career and Technology Education training program.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing results from the data analysis in an area with little previous research. A recent study conducted by the United States Bureau of Justice confirmed that correctional education is effective but calls for further research that will identify who benefits from these programs so more will be gained from taxpayer dollars.

This study's purpose was to identify students' demographic characteristics and correctional factors that indicate success in a Career and Technology Trades training program while incarcerated. In recent studies, it has been found that interventions that include career and technical training reduce the risk of post-release recidivism by 13% and effectively saves five dollars for every one dollar spent on correctional education.<sup>1</sup> Prior studies have concentrated on factors that affect the success of the correctional education program itself, including aspects of instructional organization and delivery and other types of curriculum-focused support.<sup>2</sup>

This study focused on the students' personal demographic characteristics that implicitly predicted an individual's probability to comprehensively benefit from the training program. The first phase of the project was performed by using a grounded-theory approach to analyze Oklahoma's Skills Centers' performance data from Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 to FY2015 within seven Oklahoma Department of Corrections facilities. The second phase of the study was performed by conducting descriptive and paradigmatic interviews of program instructors that highlighted tacit attributes of students. The final phase of this study was executed through the analysis of a cross-sectional survey that was completed by integral members of the Skills Centers system. By identifying demographic indicators of success for students in the programs, a selective enrollment process can be incorporated that will allow the system to invest resources first in those with a lower probability of recidivating, therefore increasing the state's return on investment.

#### **Reference(s):**

1. Bozick R., Davis L.M., Miles J.N.V., Saunders J., Steele J.L., Steinburg P.S., Turner S., Williams M.V. (2014). How Effective is Correctional Education, and Where Do We Go From Here? The Results of a Comprehensive Evaluation. *RAND*, Washington, D.C.
2. Meyer S.J. Factors Affecting Student Success in Postsecondary Academic Correctional Education Programs. *Journal of Correctional Education*. 2011: 62(2).

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#### **Recidivism, Career/Technology Education, Correctional Education**