

## **The impact of “social costs” of imprisonments on recidivism. Evidence from event history analysis**

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Juvenile offenders who have been sent to prison for the first time must arrange their everyday social interactions with inmates and prison staff. They have to deal with the process of finding their position within the inmate hierarchy. Under the assumption that social integration is a basic need of offenders as well, negative subjective experiences with interactions inside the prison could be a deterrent effect of imprisonment. On the other hand, Durkheims' classical theory of anomia implies that the population of prison inmates is highly selective with respect to social integration *outside* of prison. Sociological research has shown that inside of prisons social systems emerge from interactions between inmates and these systems consist of distinct normative patterns. Moreover, these normative patterns shape a prestige order that differs extremely from the prestige order outside. At the same time, proximity to behavioural norms of delinquent subcultures increases both the probability of being arrested as well as the probability of affiliation into inmate communities.

From a rational choice perspective, these considerations lead to the following argument: the more satisfactory the social integration into inmate communities and the less satisfactory social integration outside is, the lower the “social” costs of imprisonment are. Aside from the loss of autonomy implied by imprisonment these kind of social costs are an important factor that determines the subjective and emotional sensation of imprisonment. Certainly, the level of aversion to imprisonment is negatively associated with the degree of social integration inside. Those who experience interactions that cause high levels of emotional stress due to suppression, violence and crime by inmates should be more deterred than those who take a favourable position within the internal prestige order. As a result from this, the rate of recidivism could increase, the higher the degree of social integration inside is. Using data from the Hanover Longitudinal Prison Study, this hypothesis will be investigated by constructing clusters of social integration patterns inside of the prison. In the second step, the impact of each integration pattern on recidivism will be tested by hazard rate models.

## Reference

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