



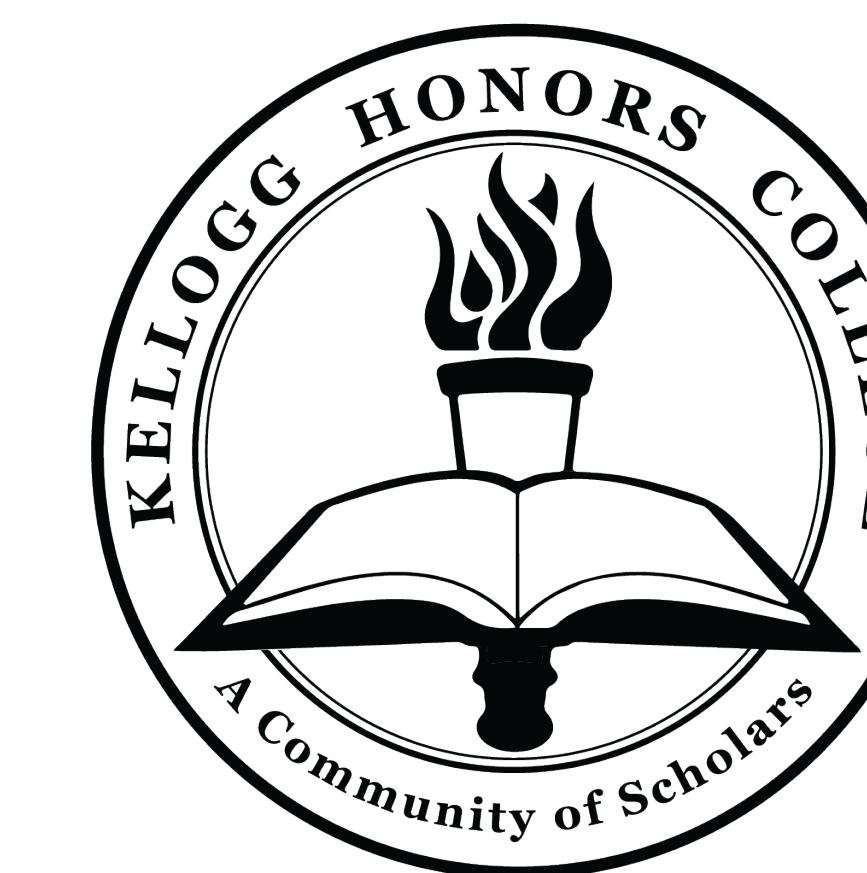
A Critical Analysis of Factors Influencing Reoffending in the

United States

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Background

1. The United States boasts the highest rates of recidivism in the world, with more than 44% of formerly incarcerated individuals returning to prison within the first year of their release.
2. Given the disproportionately high rate of incarceration within the US criminal justice system, this serious issue contributes further to the already vast incarcerated population, thus resulting in further strain on the prison administration, the justice system, and ultimately, the taxpayers.
3. With strained resources, the result is fewer resources for the rehabilitation of convicted individuals, setting them up for failure, and resulting in a cyclical loop that returns the formerly incarcerated to the justice system in droves.

Contribution to Present Literature

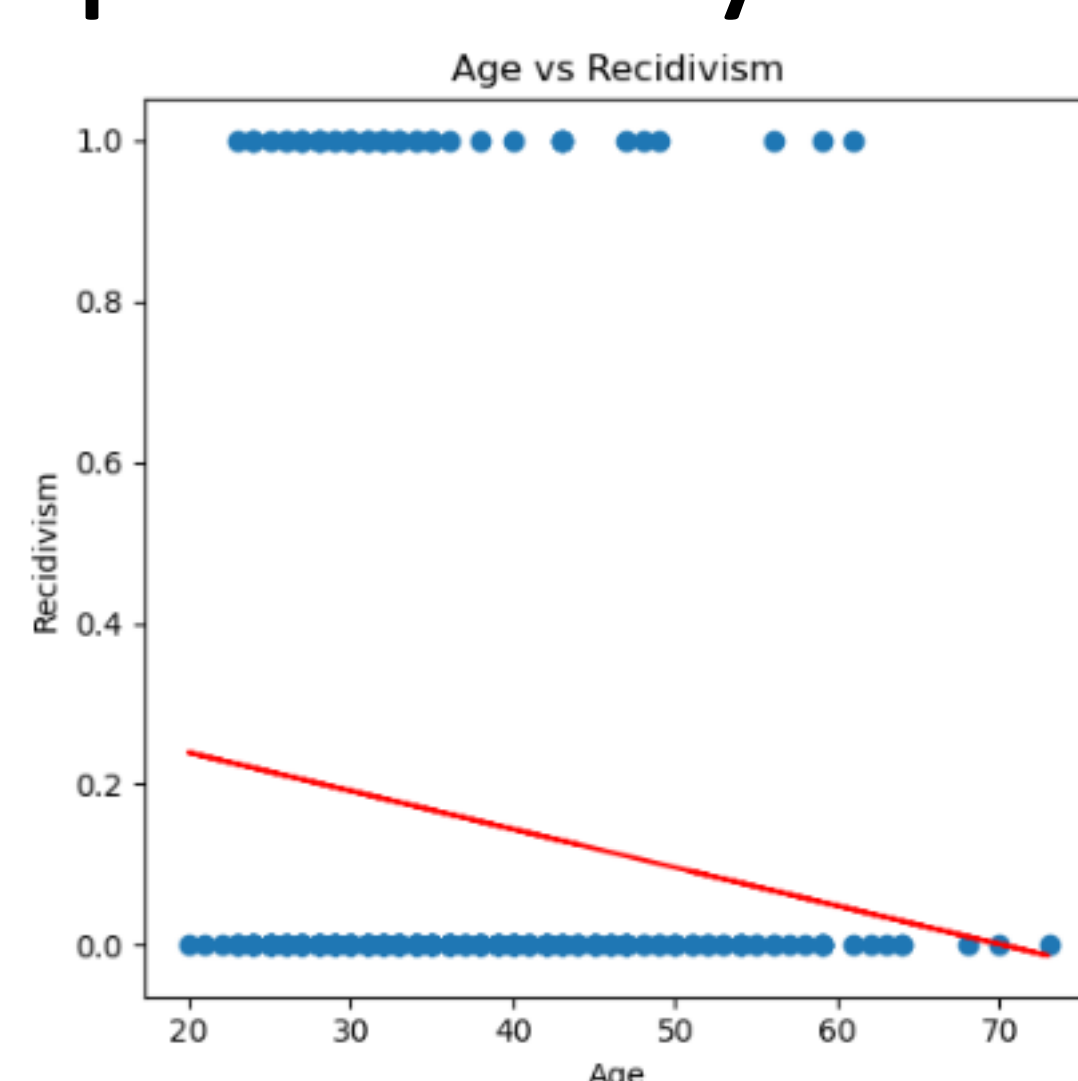
1. To date, the current literature on recidivism has been restricted mainly to the study of this phenomenon within the juvenile population.
2. Studies that do examine the effect various factors have on the probability of recidivism have focused mainly on external factors such as their interactions with society after being released.
3. This study attempts to fill the gap left by existing research by studying the effects of internal factors in the adult formerly incarcerated population.

Methods

1. This study utilizes a simple random sampling approach to locate eligible formerly incarcerated individuals in Southern California.
2. Using the inmate locator service provided by the Sheriff's Department, I located a sample population of 357 individuals who were convicted for the first time between 2019-2021 selected at random by randomizing the case number inputted into the locator service.
3. SPSS and the Matplotlib Python module were utilized to analyze collected data and visualize results.
4. Due to the nature of the hypotheses, the data was analyzed using a correlation test to test the strength of the relationships between the variables.

Hypothesis 1:

Age is negatively correlated to the probability of recidivism.

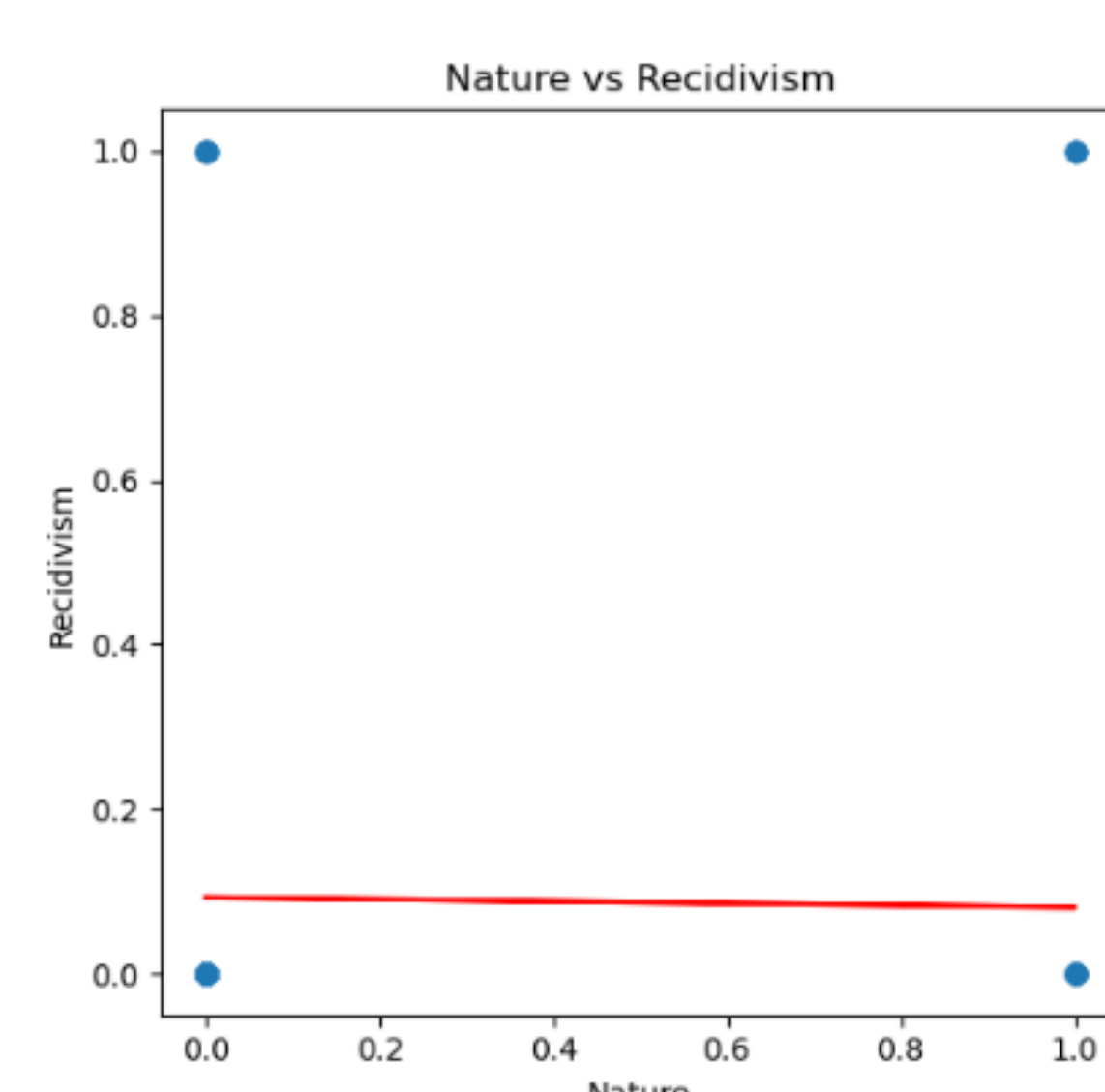


		Recidivism	Age
Recidivism	Pearson Correlation	1	-.131*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.019
	N	323	323
Age	Pearson Correlation	-.131*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019	
	N	323	323

Hypothesis Accepted

Hypothesis 2:

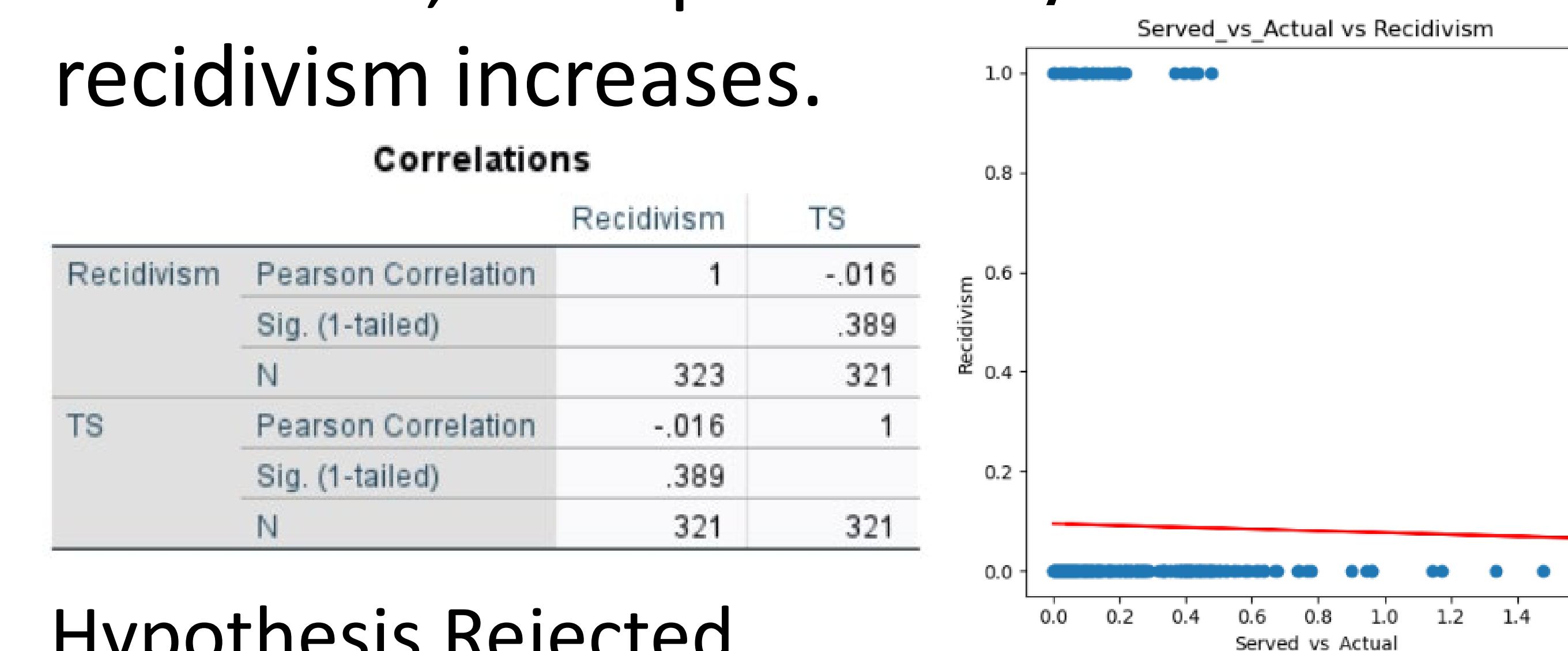
Violent criminal history is positively correlated to the probability of recidivism



		Recidivism	Nature
Recidivism	Pearson Correlation	1	-.018
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.374
	N	323	323
Nature	Pearson Correlation	-.018	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.374	
	N	323	323

Hypothesis Rejected

Hypothesis 3: As the actual versus sentenced time an individual serves decreases, their probability of recidivism increases.



Hypothesis Rejected

Measures

1. Independent Variables:
 1. Proportion of Actual Time Served
 2. Nature of Former Crime(s)
 3. Age
2. Dependent Variables:
 1. Recidivism

Discussion

1. The results of this study differ from what the literature to this point has generally agreed on.
2. This disparity could be due to the different populations that are studied. While my research focused mainly on county jail inmates, who typically serve time for misdemeanors and less serious crimes, the literature discussed earlier have mainly focused on federal populations serving time for more serious offenses.
3. Additionally, the difference in nature between misdemeanors and felonies might affect the relationship between recidivism and populations that have committed more serious felonies.
4. The difference in results between the state and county level imply that further research could be done to determine if there exists an inherent difference between more local populations and the more well-studied federal populations.

Limitations

1. Although this study aims to study recidivism on a more local level, the nature of the population make the results harder to generalize to other populations.
2. While the difference in the nature of misdemeanors and felonies may exist at the state level, the population studied was drawn from Los Angeles County, one of the most diverse areas in the United States. As such, the results of such a diverse population will be difficult to generalize to less diverse areas.