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## PRISON EDUCATION

Emma Lin



**Prison, defined by Merriam Webster as “a place of confinement especially for lawbreakers”. An area made to rehabilitate members of society whose legal violations have garnered corresponding consequences. Yet to properly achieve this, facilities must apply the old adage that knowledge is power, that they impose the power of proper rehabilitation through the transfer of knowledge, specifically in the form of prison education systems.**

Zoukis 11 defines prison or inmate education as “an expansive term encompassing any educational activities [including] vocational training and academic education [in order to] prepare the prisoner for success outside of prison and to enhance the rehabilitative aspects of prison.” Such programs first appeared as early as the 18th and 19th centuries, with their original beneficiaries receiving basic literacy and moral instruction from religious organizations. (MBA, “What Is Prison Education and Why Should We Care?”) While social reintegration was a primary objective, these early trials adopted a spiritually-transformative focus, and authentic college programs would appear only a century later. From there, the objective shifted instead to academic and vocational education along with instilling a sense of hope and purpose amongst inmates. The modern system remains much the same, save for the addition of tailored programs for specific persons (e.g. juvenile substance abuse).

As aforementioned, prison education has 2 main components: academic and vocational training. The former, provided through free literacy or GED classes, teaches inmates reading, writing, and basic arithmetic. These courses aim to level the academic proficiency of prisoners, who often comprise a severely-undereducated demographic; upon completion of official GED tests (equalling a high school diploma), individuals may continue to Adult-Continuing Education programs, which are inmate-instructor lead and for learning specialized fields (examples include personal finance, journalism, and languages). Beyond here, prisoners may even participate in college-level courses usually delivered courtesy of prison partnerships with local colleges and universities. Executed via correspondence, such courses require fees (unlike the other 2 options) of hundreds of dollars, needing prisoners to procure funding either by themselves, family, or an organization. The latter half, vocational training, is more straightforward: a correspondence-based program for teaching inmates career foundations differing by institution at a significantly lower cost than their academic educational counterpart.

The benefits of prison education can be summarized into 3 main points: self-improvement, building community, and reducing disciplinary action. Though self-improvement constitutes academic benefits, its emotional implications must not be negated: using education to instill faith in an offender’s ability to succeed in life helps not only to validate an individual’s capacity for success but also empower them to do so, leading to the road of rehabilitation and lowering their risk of recidivism. Building community is easily achievable; a population of educated individuals with specialized skills can foster a sense of purpose in providing for another using their respective newfound knowledge. Reduced disciplinary action ties into self-improvement, seeing as individuals may view their future as separate from crime upon attaining confidence through education.

In conclusion, prison education is crucial in reducing the cyclical nature of recidivism, and contributes to a more humane and enjoyable quality of life for incarcerated individuals.



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## THE WORLD'S REVOLUTION: AI IN HEALTHCARE

Morgan Dinh

***Early diagnosis with pinpoint accuracy. Treatments tailored to your unique genetic makeup. Virtual assistants catering to your every need. This sounds like distant dreams for the healthcare industry - a mere envisionment of a futuristic world. But in 2024, it's our new reality ushered in by artificial intelligence.***

AI's history with healthcare dates back to over 50 years ago. In the early 1970s, AI joined the medical field with "MYCIN" - an AI program that was developed at Stanford University to help medical professionals treat blood infections.

Fast forward to the present, the AI healthcare market is expected to reach USD 36.1 billion by 2025, demonstrating the substantial value these technologies bring to the healthcare sector. The world can expect many more AI medical developments to come, transforming the way we understand, diagnose, and treat diseases.

### Medical Imaging and Diagnosis

AI-enhanced medical image analysis is transforming disease detection and diagnosis. In radiology, pathology, and cardiology, AI enables rapid and accurate identification of abnormalities, from tumors to early signs of eye disease. By analyzing data from CT, MRI, and PET scans, AI can recognize patterns undetectable by the human eye, leading to early disease detection and timely interventions. In surgery, AI enhances precision through combining preoperative and real-time data to support surgeons with decision-making. In cancer treatment, AI-driven 3D modeling from imaging data allows for detailed surgical planning and real-time guidance, minimizing risks. AI's integration into medical imaging not only speeds up image interpretation but also facilitates personalized treatment plans, optimizing healthcare delivery and improving patient outcomes. As AI continues to evolve, the enhancement of accuracy and efficiency in medical imaging will transform the healthcare field.



### Personalized Medicine and Treatment

Personalized medicine has improved healthcare by focusing on individual differences in genetic makeup, lifestyle, and environmental factors to develop targeted treatments, enhancing patient outcomes. The integration of AI has further revolutionized personalized medicine, enabling the analysis of vast amounts of data to create precise treatment plans. Currently, one of AI's most prominent roles in personalized medicine includes optimizing treatment plans for cancer. Companies like xCures use AI and expert knowledge to create tailored cancer treatments, addressing the issue of increasing treatment variants. AI enhances preventive care by identifying individuals at higher risk of diseases, allowing for early interventions. Its continuous learning ability ensures that treatments evolve and improve over time, where transparent regulations allow for concerns regarding privacy, data security, and algorithm bias to be addressed.

### Virtual health assistants

AI-driven healthcare virtual assistants have significantly evolved from the early video-conferencing systems of the pre-2010 era, which first allowed digital connections between patients and healthcare professionals. Modern AI healthcare assistants now offer a wide range of capabilities, including scheduling appointments and handling administrative tasks, thereby reducing the workload on human staff and allowing them to focus on more complex tasks. These virtual assistants can perform routine functions such as asking about symptoms, providing medical advice and redirecting urgent cases to emergency care - all of which can reduce waiting times, ease the burden on doctors, and ensure continuous, 24/7 patient monitoring. Despite their benefits, virtual health assistants raise privacy concerns - necessitating practices for the storing of sensitive patient data. On the economic side of things, the market for AI healthcare virtual assistants is rapidly growing, with projections indicating a compound annual growth rate of 26.29% from 2019 to 2029.



***The future of healthcare, driven by AI advancements, promises improved patient outcomes and heightened efficiency. In a world where technology meets medicine, AI is redefining the future of healthcare as we know it.***



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## RESOLVED: LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES SHOULD PRIORITIZE INTRAREGIONAL TRADE OVER INTERNATIONAL TRADE



### Potential Arguments for the Negative Side

#### 1. Limited Participation in Global Value Chains

- “Latin America’s participation in global value chains is limited because many countries are more focused on exporting raw commodities rather than intermediate or final goods.” - [IMF](#)
- Explanation: This demonstrates that Latin American countries might miss out on the benefits of participating in global value chains, such as access to cutting-edge technologies and advancements if they prioritize intraregional trade over international trade.

#### 2. Market Size

- “As of 2021, Latin America accounts for about 8.37 percent of the global population and is home to 656 million inhabitants. The region’s aggregated gross domestic product amounted to approximately 4.3 trillion U.S. dollars in 2020.” - [Statista](#)

**Explanation:** Although it’s substantial, the internal market size of Latin America is still smaller than that of other regions. This limited market size might be insufficient to support diverse industries, and international trade allows access to a wider consumer base exports.



Phuong Quach

### Definition of key terms:

- Latin America:** the region of the Americas where Spanish, Portuguese, or French, all derived from Latin, are dominant languages.
- Prioritize:** to treat something as more important than something else.
- Intraregional trade:** buying and selling of goods and services between countries within the same region.
- International trade:** exchange of goods and services between countries (in this context: trade between Latin American countries and countries outside of Latin America).

### Potential Arguments for the Affirmative Side

#### 1. Dependence on foreign investments:

- “Latin American economies are particularly vulnerable to capital outflows due to their dependence on foreign investments to fund development projects and local economic activity.” - [Deloitte Insights](#)
- “On average, 72% of total exports in the largest Latin American countries last year were linked to commodities.” - [Americas Quarterly](#)
- “According to UNCTAD, 14 out of 33 countries in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region are commodity-dependent, meaning commodities account for 60% or more of their total merchandise export revenue.” - [UN Trade & Development](#)

**Explanation:** These reveal that the region is greatly dominated by exports, evidently in the export of commodities specifically to international markets. This dependence is a weakness since Latin American economies are increasingly subject to regular changes in global commodity markets and geopolitical conflicts that can interrupt the flow of imports and exports.

#### 2. Geopolitical tensions:

- “Latin American nations are faced with two forces—a 20-year Fed rate peak and a dramatic Chinese slowdown—each with its own unique challenges and opportunities. A robust US economy and a Chinese growth slowdown have brought Latin America to an economic crossroads. A strong economy and a more expensive US dollar would affect emerging market currencies and lead to capital outflows seeking less risky assets in the United States.” - [Deloitte Insights](#)

**Explanation:** This shows the impact of geopolitical tensions on Latin American economies. They can insulate themselves from such external shocks and ensure more stable economic growth if they prioritize intraregional trade.



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## WHY CAN'T THE NEXT GENERATION READ?

Helen Anderson



***It's been a common theme on the internet lately that generation alpha, the generation born from 2010-2024, can't read. Teachers on social media, even those who have been teaching for decades, have reported that they've never seen such low performance in schools and that this generation is having unprecedented difficulty in basic skills such as reading, writing, and math. Test scores from the fall of 2022 showed that the average performances of 13 year-olds regressed back to levels from the 1970s, but why?***

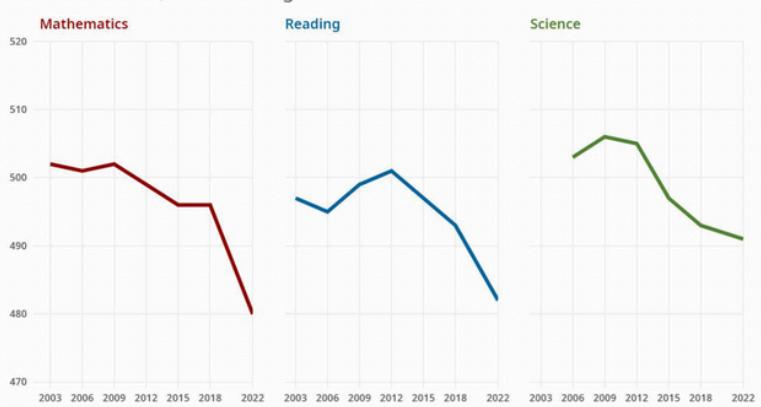
One of the main factors that people tend to blame is technology. Gen Alpha is the first ever generation that has been born in a completely digital era, and data shows that children ages 2-4 are getting an average of two and a half hours of screen time daily which goes up to three hours for ages 5-8. And although the idea and discussion around attention spans is quite nebulous, and some think that the idea of shrinking attention spans is just misrepresentation, there has been a trend over the years. In 2004, the average attention span was 2 and a half minutes, in 2012, 75 seconds, and in recent years, 47 seconds. It would make sense that a generation of children raised on technology and with decreasing attention spans would be performing worse in school, as they are constantly distracted by their devices.

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### Trends in mathematics, reading and science performance

PISA test scores, OECD average



However, there are a lot of people opposed to this idea. Yes, there have been a large number of "iPad children" in recent years, however, the results of studies on the correlation between screen time and academic performance have been inconclusive. Some experts rather believe that this downturn is a direct result of Covid over anything else. With the roughly two years spent in lockdown and online learning, it not only allowed children to be behind on material and still slip past teachers, but it also prevented them from learning the basic social and emotional skills required for human interactions. Struggling to read isn't the only problem this generation is being accused of, as many teachers say that Generation Alpha is horribly behaved, rude, and disrespectful. Spending developmental years stuck inside could have prevented them from learning how to interact with others, especially when it comes to collaboration, and manners.

Moreover, the question is not just about what the root of this problem is, devices or Covid, but whether or not it's even that serious. It's common knowledge that every generation is terrified of the generation after it. Older people are always worried about what's wrong with "kids these days" and then those kids will do the same thing to those who come after them. When books began to be widely distributed, parents were worried how they would affect children, and a few decades later, parents were urging their children to read because television was ruining their minds. It's plausible to say that this is just another repetition of those same concerns, but the data is still there. Statistically, children have been performing worse, but it's unclear so far whether this will turn out to be a small hiccup, or a serious trend that's only going to worsen.

