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Programs That Impact Juvenile Recidivism Beyond Mandatory Sanctions

John M. MARRAS
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Walden University
2022

Abstract

Programs That Impact Juvenile Recidivism Beyond Mandatory Sanctions

by

John M. Marras

MA, Florida State University, 2017

BS, University of South Florida, 2014

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Criminal Justice

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Abstract

Recidivism, especially juvenile recidivism, has been a major concern for the United States. In fact, 10.6% of the total U.S. population was composed of juveniles between the ages of 10 and 17 in the year 2009. The statistics have shown that juvenile recidivism is one of the key issues in the country that needs to be addressed. The purpose of this study was to isolate the youth programs that affect juvenile recidivism beyond their successful completion. The theoretical foundation of the study derived from Agnew's general strain theory, which suggests focusing on factors that lead to delinquency and the commission of a crime. The research questions of the study focused on understanding the relationship between sanctioned programs and their impact on juvenile recidivism. A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed through the use of secondary data, which provided inputs and outputs of juvenile justice programs in the state of Florida. Descriptive statistics, frequencies, a *t*-test analysis of variance, and an abbreviated ANOVA were applied. There were no statistically significant differences in the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation. The findings suggest that among the seven different programs scrutinized for this study, the strategies of education, multisystematic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, and functional family therapy for the offenders to reduce recidivism should be part of the juvenile justice system. Findings can lead to positive social change by informing juvenile justice practitioners and policymakers about the importance of motivation as an effective tool to affect juvenile recidivism beyond the completion of sanctioned programs.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents for their endless love, support, and encouragement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

I begin this chapter with a discussion of the dissertation topic: the programs that affect juvenile recidivism beyond mandatory sanctions. After discussing the topic, I explain the importance of the study, discuss why the study was conducted, and outline the implications for positive social change. Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature that highlights the theoretical basis of the research, which is Agnew's (1985) general strain theory. This theoretical framework is applied to analyze the topic further and set a basis for the research method based on the existing literature. Chapter 3 defines the research methodology (i.e., the quantitative cross-sectional method), which is the statistical design that builds the rationale of the study. Then Chapter 4 outlines the results, based on the methodology and research design in the form of statistics and a *t*-test analysis to explore the correctness hypothesis. Finally, Chapter 5 contains a well-versed discussion of the study, along with an interpretation of findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and conclusions, in accordance with the methodology.

Background of the Study

Many journal articles are available in different databases online related to criminal justice and the topic of juvenile recidivism. The keywords searched for in the current study included *recidivism*, *juveniles*, *delinquency programs*, *youth*, *risk factors*, and *general strain theory*, published in the databases such as SAGE Journals, Criminal Justice Database, EBSCO, and the Thoreau Multi-Database Search. The first paper

collected was an informative article related to the strain theory of delinquency, which was the basis of this research. According to the strain theory of delinquency, crimes only occur when people are unable to achieve their aspirations through authentic means, and they are provoked to use illegitimate means of goal achievement (Agnew, 1985). This implies that crimes have existed since the beginning of human existence due to the inability to achieve one's goals. Similarly, Agnew (2001) elaborated that strains are one of the causes of crime and implied that when people think they are being unfairly treated, they are considered high in magnitude and are associated with having low social control. Then they feel pressurized or pumped to get involved in criminal activities. This implies that societal strains are one of the key causes of damage to society. Moreover, one of the common misperceptions that people still believe is that socioeconomic status (SES) is related to delinquency, but this relationship is not as strong as it was once perceived (Agnew et al., 2008). However, researchers have highlighted that economic problems are real factors affecting higher delinquency (Agnew et al., 2008). This means unstable economic circumstances are a reason for youth to become emotionally unstable to the extent that they commit a crime. This is the background basis for the selection of Agnew's theory for juvenile recidivism and how it verifies the relationship with economic problems as a reason for delinquency.

The second aspect needed to highlight the importance of the research topic is the factors related to juvenile recidivism. Barnert et al. (2015) conducted in-depth qualitative reviews in Los Angeles among 20 recidivist offenders and found their homes, schools,

and neighborhoods were unsafe and chaotic for them; all this chaos incited the youth to commit crimes, again and again, and end up in jail. Another causative factor of juvenile recidivism was being exposed to a violent environment. Basson and Mawson (2011) gathered statistics from South Africa and the United States and conducted in-depth interviews of three juvenile offenders aged between 13 and 19 who stated they had experienced violence and were convicted of assault. They added that the phenomenon of court-ordered sanctions was characterized by external events that provoke violent behavior in youth (Basson & Mawson, 2011). In another examination-based study, Calley (2012) evaluated risk factors for recidivism according to the residential treatment for juvenile offenders. The researcher stated that type of offense plays an important role in recidivism, where substance offenders were likely to recommit crimes in comparison to sex offenders (Calley, 2012). Two other factors responsible for recommitting crimes are school and parental-induced stress. Lucero et al. (2015) applied a cross-sectional quantitative study using an ecological framework examining risk and the protective factors for early delinquency at the individual level and within the family and school microsystems of a diverse, national sample of 2,824—largely non-White 9-year-old children from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, a national panel study that follows a cohort of new parents and their children. The research results concluded that school belonging and parenting stress were predictors of early delinquency (Lucero et al., 2015). Moreover, Hay et al. (2018) conducted a tool-based study using the Residential Positive Achievement Change Tool; this tool helps determine the pattern of recidivism

and calculates the risk factors. The research was conducted among juveniles in Florida, where the researchers noted a positive relationship existed between the validity of this tool and other factors' involvement (Hay et al., 2018).

Another important aspect of the research is the study of programs for reducing the impact and prevalence of recidivism. Juvenile recidivism is an exponentially increasing issue that demands the attention of authorities. The literature has shown that juvenile delinquency and recidivism in the United States is a high-profile issue. The current situation is a growing concern and is making it difficult for the country, and programs like boot camps are neither productive nor effective (Paretta, 2018). The results of Paretta's (2018) study indicated that public officials must pay attention to institutional factors while under their control and implement policies that are empirically supported. In this case, a combination of cognitive-behavioral training and automated phone calls can reduce recidivism, and the results of the program revealed probationers who answered at least half of the calls and completed cognitive behavior training were less likely to recommit crimes and less likely to be arrested again (Burraston et al., 2013). Butler (2010) also conducted a phenomenological study focusing on juveniles life-without-parole. The juveniles' narratives and backgrounds were first studied. For this program, 11 juveniles were interviewed, and the findings indicated three main categories of juveniles: nonviolent criminal, star-crossed, and reality assaulters (Butler, 2010).

Finally, I evaluate the theoretical aspect of the topic before proceeding toward the importance of the topic and the gaps in the research. Parker et al. (2014) applied a cross-

sectional mixed-methods analysis through detailed triangulation. The researchers combined Lambert's (1967) deviance typology and Bernard's (2009) interaction theory, where the first step was the interaction between school resource officers (Parker et al., 2014). The results showed that fewer offenses were statistically correlated with being charged with more severe crimes, and race/ethnicity was statistically correlated with not having a record of the case facts in the database (Parker et al., 2014). This reveals that social relationships can be responsible for juvenile recidivism. This aspect has been addressed by previous researchers, who found that school relationships, learning challenges, discipline procedures, and parent-school relationships contribute to future juvenile delinquency (Sander et al., 2010). Sander et al. (2010) also noted the importance of discipline policies, the central role of advocacy to obtain appropriate school services, that classroom experiences affect outcomes, and importance of having nonjudgmental support for youths and parents. This infers there is a need for change in the surroundings and society to limit the impact on juveniles and reduce recidivism rates in society.

However, none of the resources above addressed the importance of new programs apart from the mandatory sanctions. Researchers have discussed the causes and theoretical approaches, but none of them have found the importance of programs to reduce juvenile recidivism. Therefore, using a quantitative approach, I evaluated the importance and impact of programs for reducing juvenile recidivism, despite the mandatory sections. Moreover, the qualitative aspect of this research is explored through the literature review. This is because qualitative literature is available but quantitative is

not. Therefore, this research is essential for describing the importance of programs in reducing juvenile recidivism in the United States, especially in Florida.

Problem Statement

A concern that has plagued us for decades is juvenile recidivism. Burraston et al. (2013) reported that, in 2009, juveniles between the ages of 10 and 17 comprised 10.6% of the U.S. population but accounted for 14% of all arrests, 15% of all violent arrests, and almost 25% of all arrests for property crimes. To address this issue, in this research, I outline the importance of using programs for reducing juvenile delinquency.

The numbers associated with juvenile recidivism are staggering, and the issue continues. Recidivism is one area that can affect arrest rates. Hay et al. (2018) found that roughly 70% of youths were rearrested for new offenses within 2 years of their release, and 50% of those youths received a conviction or adjudication, whereas the remaining 20% returned to jail or prison. Burraston et al. (2014) combined cognitive-behavior training and automated phone calls to reduce recidivism. They used a sample of 70 juvenile probationers in a mixed-method study to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The quantitative analysis included survival analysis to minimize the risk of rearrests the year following the completion of cognitive classes and a negative binomial regression to estimate the treatment group's impact on total rearrests. The qualitative analysis included exit interviews at the end of the trial year. The theoretical foundation was grounded in a theory that explains the internal processes that lead to behavior modification: the character development model. The program results showed that

probationers who answered at least half of the cell phone calls and completed cognitive-behavior classes were 79% less likely to be rearrested (Burraston et al., 2014). The results of the quantitative and qualitative studies reveal a need for such programs, along with the sanctions imposed by laws. This study adds to the claim that the problem is severe, and it needs to be addressed because there are many loopholes in the literature.

The gap in the literature involves effective programs that affect juvenile recidivism beyond court-ordered sanctions. According to Schubert et al. (2012), “Sanctions connected with an institutional stay can often deter an individual from future antisocial activity” (p. 87). This implies that sanctions are only rules that people take for granted. What is needed are programs that can teach the young to be at their best behavior to overcome risk factors and excel in society.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to isolate which court-ordered sanctions are affecting juvenile recidivism. In this study, I isolated the successful programs that affect juvenile recidivism beyond court-ordered sanctions, such as the use of cell phones and cognitive-behavior therapy, noted above, and mentoring and monitoring programs. This cross-sectional quantitative study drew upon organizations’ secondary data, whose intervention techniques can affect juveniles beyond court-ordered sanctions. Using secondary sources, I discovered the importance of programs that can affect juvenile criminal activity beyond court-ordered sanctions and show the laws do not

always guide or direct people. Rather, it is guidance and mentorship that train minors to avoid recommitting crimes, despite their situations or exposure to risk factors.

Research Question and Hypotheses

The research question (RQ) limits the research to a significant aspect that needs to be found through either a qualitative or quantitative study. For this purpose, this dissertation is based on one research question and two hypotheses:

RQ - Quantitative: Is there a difference in the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation:

H_{01} : There are no statistically significant differences in the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation.

H_1 : There are statistically significant differences in the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation.

These two hypotheses are the two possibilities that can happen while exploring and calculating the overall quality of court-order sanctions and their impact. Thus, after the application of the methodology and quantitative analysis, the results indicate that one of the hypotheses is correct.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation of this research topic derived from Agnew's (1985) general strain theory (GST), which helps in determining the factors that affect delinquency and lead to the commission of a crime. Agnew et al. (2008) conducted a factor evaluation study and argued that SES is perceived as an influential factor, but

economic problems are more prone to be associated juvenile recidivism. This concept suggests that people who are underprivileged or belong to lower socioeconomic areas face a hard time accepting their reality, such that they manipulate the resources available to them, which results in crime issues such as robbery and theft.

GST focuses on the stress perceived by people. These stressors are different kinds of strains that can damage people's thought processes, resulting in them committing crimes, especially juveniles, who have a difficult time managing their stress (Agnew & Brezina, 2019). Song (2020) conducted a cross-sectional and longitudinal study among Korean adolescents. The data from the National Youth Policy Institute of Korea in 2003 and 2007 were analyzed from the non-Western perspective of GST, which suggested that strains from school add up through social status strain and the aggressive behavior of youth, which causes them to become delinquents (Song, 2020). Therefore, this theory is directly related to juvenile recidivism, and it can be applied to juvenile organizations, standard procedures, and the staff to highlight the efforts in presenting opportunities such as education, schooling, jobs, positive reinforcement, reducing risk factors, mentorship, and consent to complete the program implementation, as well as checking in on juveniles after graduating from the programs.

The theoretical foundation, comprehension, and isolation are considered essential elements of the juvenile programs missing in many organizations, where the limitations of the programs may result in negative behaviors. For this reason, these limitations need

to be addressed to instill positive behaviors in juveniles during their sentences and beyond to ensure they do not recidivate.

Nature of the Study

This study involved quantitative research with a cross-sectional design that allowed statistical evaluation of the changes required in programs to reduce juvenile recidivism. Among the broad range of research designs, this one was the most feasible because the cross-sectional quantitative study was the most effective tool to apply to a social issue that is damaging a particular human segment of society due to lack of proper training programs, along with mandatory sanctions affecting juveniles in the state of Florida (see Watson, 2015). A few guidelines provided by Walden University narrate that research is an examination of data at a single point in time. I thus conducted the data collection on one occasion with either the same or different subjects or subject groups (see Walden University, 2010, p. 6). The quantitative analysis helped in the research because it allowed for pinpointing the organizational programs that affect recidivism beyond the mandatory sanctions imposed by lawmakers.

The data collection method used for this study was analysis of secondary data from existing research papers. Extracting data and applying statistical methods allowed testing for a null or alternative hypothesis. The variables associated with the research study were youth, mandatory sanctions, programs, and recidivism. Among these variables, youth and recidivism were independent variables, whereas mandatory sanctions and programs were dependent variables that depended on the behavior of the

youth and other external variables such as society and the economy. For this reason, a cross-sectional descriptive design provided a wealth of knowledge to the RQ. Realizing these differences was an opportunity for proper cross-sectional analysis to further exploit the variable factors among organizations that contribute to reducing recidivism beyond sanctioned programs. This implies that sanctioned programs are not enough to reduce recidivism, and there is a need for change in programs to effectively train and motivate juveniles not to recidivate and foster a welcomed addition to society.

Definitions

The following are a few definitions of the keywords used in the research, and they also include the definitions of independent and dependent factors of the research.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA): A statistical method where the values of variance are tested to check the validity of the hypothesis (Lin et al., 2017).

Cross-sectional study: A type of quantitative research where a particular population is analyzed at a particular time (Watson, 2015). In this research, the population selected were the people of Florida, and the time was a variable because the data used involved secondary sources.

Juvenile recidivism: The recommission of crimes by minors who were once involved in criminal activity. Juvenile recidivism is a work group where the criminals lack the standard practices that every citizen normally has. They are also not appropriately trained and have not attended the programs that prevent them from recommitting crimes (Harris et al., 2009).

Mandatory sanctions: The forced laws that are to be abided by in every individual because they are a part of the legal framework of society. Research has defined mandatory sanctions as a diplomatic expression that the United Nations defined in 1945; the UN charter stated said these sanctions are imposed by the country and its law reforming agencies (Friedman, 2012).

Recidivism: The common reengagement of a person in the same crime they have committed beforehand; this is because the risk factors for those people still exist, and they have not attended programs during their stay in jail, which could have improved their outlook toward society (Johnson, 2017).

Sanctioned programs: More commonly referred to as institutional programs, they are applied nationally to all prisoners. They are general programs with no specific aspects of training a person not to recidivate (Trulson et al., 2020). Most people do not even attend these programs because they consider them useless.

Socioeconomic factors: Refer to the combination of social and economic factors that exist in society. Research has defined socioeconomic factors as social costs that make people think of their lives as a burden, and, to meet their social costs, these people undergo criminal activities, which implies that socioeconomic factors are directly related to juvenile recidivism (Oruta, 2016).

T-test analysis: A statistical analysis of nonparametric quantities. It is applied to research where the probability test fails to apply due to the unavailability of parameter-

based data. It requires a sample size, and distribution analysis is applied to it (Kim, 2015).

Youth: One of the study's independent variables. They are the research subjects, as the focus was to have effective programs for youth to prevent them from recommitting crimes. Independent variables are an important aspect of cross-sectional research because they allow the researchers to approach topics in a renegotiable way that makes them explore other factors of the topic (Lury et al., 2018).

Assumptions

The assumptions demonstrated in this research were the use of Agnew's GST, which correlated with the concept of juvenile recidivism. This assumption is elucidated through the literature review. Another assumption was that the qualitative study about juvenile recidivism and the programs existent in society have already been analyzed by previous researchers. For this purpose, the literature review includes articles that have qualitatively assessed the factors associated with juvenile recidivism and explain the programs that can help train and motivate juveniles not to recidivate.

Another assumption was that SES is not the only factor affecting the criminal activity of juveniles; economic problems are the main compelling factor for juveniles to get involved in criminal activity again. Other assumptions included the use of quantitative data analytics because there is less evidence available for quantitative analysis. For this purpose, I conducted a cross-sectional study to evaluate the quantitative aspect of the RQ. I compared the overall quality of mandatory sanctioned programs with

other programs to uncover the efficacy of other programs to motivate juveniles. Another assumption was that juvenile recidivism is common in the United States. The focus of the research was in the United States. The literature review addresses the qualitative and quantitative aspects of juvenile recidivism training programs in the United States. Moreover, the focus of the research was Florida because the quantitative analysis was conducted from this state's perspective. Therefore, all these assumptions were made beforehand to ensure the research continued smoothly, without revisiting previous research methodologies and design, which can be a waste of time for researchers.

Scope and Delimitations

The research problem addressed in this dissertation is that is there is a difference in the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation. That RQ was chosen because there is less evidence of the quality of sanctioned programs. The boundaries used for the research are that juvenile recidivism rates are higher in the United States, so Florida was targeted for this study. I analyzed the focus group using a conceptual framework, GST. This theory suggests emotional, economic, environmental, and other strains are factors that increase the chances of juvenile recidivism.

This framework is effectively used to infer that there is a relationship between stressors and juvenile recidivism. Therefore, the approach to answering the question is how using Agnew's theoretical framework programs can reduce recidivism rates. This question was quantitatively derived such that the qualitative aspects were not

investigated. Using these boundaries, the research was validly conducted with support from the existing literature. The scope of the research was valid and authentic because the boundaries were set, and the data were available from online sources. However, one limitation of the study was that the quantities might have been overgeneralized because the quantities were taken from existing sources reported and shared by Florida's government. These can be correct or incorrect, depending on the credibility of the sources. Hence, the scope of the research was apt and, according to the RQ's criteria, made it a feasible approach to challenging the question and proving the hypothesis.

Limitations

One of the potential limitations of the research was the use of the cross-sectional method, which involved data from only Florida and juveniles there. This was a limitation as to the patterns or the quality of sanctioned programs, which cannot be generalized by just relying on the results from Florida's databases. This limitation cannot be catered to for every research project, and there is a need to maintain some boundaries that keep it under the control of the researchers. Another potential limitation of the research was the use of secondary data as the quantitative data and then inferring the results using those data. The data were gathered from the statistics shared by the government, which can be either right or wrong. Therefore, it was my responsibility to determine whether the data were reliable and comparable to the data available at different times and locations. Thus, I conducted a literature review in which the articles are summarized, reviewed, assembled, and properly researched to deliver accurate findings to the readers and avoid

potentially misleading information. Another limitation of the study is that it included secondary research, without the inclusion of primary data or experimental information. Agnew et al. (2008) argued that SES is perceived as an influential factor. However, economic problems are more prone to be associated with juvenile recidivism. This focus of the research on financial strains as a reason for juvenile recidivism was another restriction met while evaluating the research articles and conducting the quantitative analysis. Finally, the most common limitation faced by most criminal justice studies is finding research that accords with the RQ and belongs to the specific timeframe. Therefore, a few limitations of the study and its design can affect the internal and external validity of the results.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it addressed this issue from the quantitative aspect, which previous studies have not done. For this reason, I analyzed the quantitative aspect and uncovered the much-needed results. The outcomes of this research provide a detailed insight into the process by which organizations perform sanctioned programs that affect juvenile recidivism. This study can help juvenile justice policymakers and practitioners recognize the strengths of sanctioned programs that affect juvenile recidivism beyond the completion of mandatory sanctions. Moreover, this research could effect social change by informing juvenile justice practitioners and policymakers regarding the importance of Agnew's GST as an effective tool to affect juvenile recidivism beyond the completion of successful sanctioned programs. Therefore, next I

include a discussion of the significance of the theory used, the practical implementations, and social change.

Theoretical Significance

The theoretical framework used in this study was Agnew's GST, which suggests that strains are one of the key reasons for youth to recommit crimes. These crimes can be of any nature, whether murder or sexual offenses. The theory was the basis of the research because I collected the data and the literature through this theoretical framework. No researcher has yet analyzed the quality of sanctioned programs. This potential contribution of this study can advance the knowledge of criminal justice reforms that the justice practitioners and policymakers should underscore because it addresses the impact of stressors in the lives of juveniles. Juveniles are intolerant to stressors, and they show instant response to any changes that exist around them (Agnew, 2001). This is the reason juveniles are involved in criminal activities at a greater rate (Agnew, 2001). Hence, the research problem of juvenile recidivism and the impact of sanctioned programs and other interventions advance in light of Agnew's theory. Additionally, the theory is significant and related to the topic, so it can be effectively used to review the literature and apply the research methodology.

Practical Significance

The purpose of the research design is to promote new interventions the policymakers and justice practitioners should devise and implement. The study showed that a gap exists between the quality of sanctioned programs and other interventions that

potentially contribute to the change to which the research aspired. The practice elucidated in this research involved the use of unsanctioned policies that can improve the attitudes of people and make them more optimistic and less likely to recommit criminal acts. I used a quantitative cross-sectional study to show the differences in the quality and address the policymakers that they need to change their practices to motivate and treat the minds of youth who are suffering from financial strain. Through this research, I try to attract the attention of policymakers that they need to manage the economic strain in the lives of youth because these strains have a serious impact on their personalities. Hence, the research from a practical point of view narrates a why policymakers should make changes and announce certain unsanctioned programs that are suitable for juveniles and cater to the emotional deficiencies that lead them to commit crimes.

Significance to Social Change

I conducted this research in a bounded scenario, where the cross-sectional quantitative analysis was designed to determine the quality of the sanctioned programs in Florida and uncover whether there was a sudden need to instill positive social change. Juvenile recidivism is a social issue that is of much concern in the United States. Florida as a state is no exception. For this reason, I restricted this research to only one state, so the results from this state will be comparable. Moreover, because the secondary data collected came from government sources, they are still reliable. The results revealed that reforms are needed because the rate of juvenile recidivism is exponentially increasing, and there is a need for change to bring positivity to society. The interventions suggested

at the end of the study come from relevant evidence and are designed to effect positive social change. Therefore, despite the scope of the study being bounded, it is important to note that the research is significant because it implies and enforces a positive social change in society that can reduce the rate of juvenile recidivism in the United States, and, if the suggested interventions are applied accurately by other countries, then positive social change is possible in other countries as well.

Summary and Transition

Chapter 1 outlined the basis of the research and highlighted the importance of unsanctioned programs in the lives of juveniles. This chapter introduced literature that identified the social issue in the country and highlighted that the statistics demand proper action taken by policymakers and justice practitioners. First, I explained the problem statement and purpose of the study through relevant, credible information. After this step, I conducted a background of the research topic to develop an idea about the current trends related to juvenile recidivism that exist in society. This background helped in hypothesizing the research results and allowed me to propose a RQ that is explained with the help of a literature review and effective use of the methodology. Chapter 1 also contained an introduction to the terminology used in the paper. The data collection method involved secondary sources, where the data from the existing research papers were analyzed to perform statistical analyses. In Chapter 1, I also explained the methodology of the new research, which was a cross-sectional quantitative study. At the end of the research, along with inferring the true hypothesis, I propose suggestions to

policymakers and justice practitioners. The next chapter addresses the literature review and introduces the topic, analyzes historical literature and literature on the theoretical foundation, and presents thorough research on the conceptual framework to describe the findings of the existing literature and set a basis for the next research steps.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review was to provide a basis for the research: an analysis of existing research papers to identify gaps that exists in the literature. The research has provided quantitative evidence on the quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect the rate of juvenile recidivism. Nevertheless, before the RQ is evaluated, I analyze the existing research in this section. The following is a historical analysis, theoretical foundation, and conceptual framework in light of published research papers. This section includes valid information from research papers that could relate to the focus of the study.

Historical Literature

This chapter begins with historical literature and moves to the current literature to identify the gaps in the study, providing effective programs that affect juvenile recidivism beyond court-ordered sanctions.

According to Bernard and Kurlychek (2010), the term “juvenile delinquency” first appeared in the city of New York in 1819; before this time, youth who recommitted offenses were named “stubborn children,” “poor vagrant children,” or simply “young criminals” (Bernard & Kurlychek, 2010). Despite 1819 being the year when the term “juvenile delinquency” was recognized, until 1899, only one juvenile court was established in Chicago. Prior to 1899, juvenile children were tried in adult courts but typically received lesser punishments than adults with the same offenses. This showed

that, until 1899, there was no representation for juveniles in courts, and they had to face trials at the same places as adults. Penn (2001) wrote that the aim of the new juvenile court was to prevent ill-mannered and habitual youth from going through similar criminal justice sanctions as adults. He added that juvenile court proceedings were significantly changed from adult courts, such that they were less accusative, as only the judge had autonomy (Penn, 2001).

These courts did not allow the intervention of the jury during the trial, which provided judicial discretion while issuing decisions in accordance with testimonies and the reviewed evidence (Penn, 2001). This shows that juvenile courts aimed to provide leniency to youth and allowed judges to see their crimes in a different light.

U.S. Legal (2021) studied the case of Mr. Crouse that occurred in 1838 when the court had to rule over the incarceration of his daughter. Mary Ann Crouse had not committed any crimes, but she was at a house of refuge against her father's wishes; due to the settlement with her mother, she left the house because her mother thought her to be unruly and unmanageable (U.S. Legal, 2021). The court held her in the house of refuge, which was a reformatory punishment rather than a jail. They said she would be reformed if she stayed there; therefore, the case showed the court had the authority to reform youth and assist families.

Another case studied was *People v. Turner*, which occurred in 1870. In this case, both parents challenged the state, who kept their child in a house of refuge because the state felt he was in danger of becoming a criminal. Although Turner won the case,

whereby the state would only intervene in extreme family cases, the verdict was largely ignored by the courts (U.S. Legal, 2021). Another incident occurred in 1905, where a juvenile was given a 7-year sentence for a minor crime that would have received a far lesser sentence in an adult court. This case was argued in *Commonwealth v. Fisher*, where the court decided the long sentence was necessary and in the child's best interests, thus broadening juvenile court discretion under the parent's patriae philosophy (U.S. Legal, 2021). Penn (2001) added that the state slowly became more involved in family life and had adapted to parents' patriae philosophy in the proceedings of the courts, which evolved the authority of the state such that they can act for the welfare of youth.

Another case is also in accordance with the landmarks ruled during the 1960s, and these milestones included the due process rights of juveniles and the juvenile justice system. Per those changes, in *Kent v. the U.S.* (1966), Morris Kent a 16-year-old, was tried in an adult court without any hearing. This decision was challenged by Kent's attorney, who said the order was a violation of the sixth amendment. This case analyzed the complete juvenile justice process, which resulted in the establishment of formal procedures in the legal system (U.S. Legal, 2021).

Another case was *In re Gault*, which occurred in 1967; GERAL Gault was a 15-year-old who was sent to an industrial school after being found delinquent for making lewd phone calls to a female neighbor. *In re Gault* addressed the separation of adult and juvenile courts and the Fifth and Sixth Amendment privileges for juveniles. The case was originally heard in a very informal juvenile court proceeding. The accused was not

represented by an attorney, and there was no transcript of the hearing. The Supreme Court ruled that the juvenile courts must protect the constitutional rights of juveniles, and rules and regulations must be imposed on the juvenile justice system. The protection of juveniles' rights upheld by *In re Gault* was further reinforced by *In re Winship* (1970), in which the Supreme Court extended the reasonable standard of doubt for guilt to juveniles. However, in the following year, the right to trial by a jury of peers for juveniles was denied by the Supreme Court in *McKeiver v. Pennsylvania*. Several reasons were presented for the denial, including the notion that the juvenile system was not meant to be an adversarial one and was instead designed to be less formal and, therefore, more protective of juveniles' privacy. The Supreme Court justices also felt allowing juvenile trials by jury would be an indication that the juvenile courts had lost their usefulness (U.S. Legal, 2021).

The analysis of all these cases resulted in the creation of the juvenile court, which infused a new sense of hope for reformers. The decisions that were made in the past all resulted in different outcomes, depending on either idealistic or realistic proof of a system that is manipulated. The justice system has been moving between a punitive and nurturing one in a harmonic motion for decades (U.S. Legal, 2021). This is evident from the hundreds of studies that Robert Martinson reviewed in 1974, which examined the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs. Martinson, in "nothing works," applied a "vote-tallying" method that counted the number of studies that had reduced the rate of recidivism and the ones that did not reduce it (as cited in Wilks, 2004). Martinson added

that, despite there being some programs that have resulted in moderate successes, there has yet been a program that has made the mandatory correction to satisfy the needs of society and devise proper ways to reduce recidivism by a significant amount (as cited in Wilks, 2004). This assessment suggested that cuts in treatment and prevention programs provided an opportunity to embark on disciplinary crime control.

Regarding crime control programs for juveniles, a program was designed in the 1970s named “Scared Straight.” Scared Straight and other programs like it, however, are often discouraged because the program advocates for realistic depictions of life in prison that can help in daunting juvenile offenders from committing crimes (Petrosino et al., 2013). The rekindling of the punitive era and now a belief in “getting tough” on crime spawned support and a need for programs like Scared Straight from the 1970s and well into the 1990s.

The government has also played a role in responding to public outcries without the support of scientific evidence or a blatant disregard of findings that contradict the popular public beliefs. The 1980s, coined “The Overt Politicization Period,” were driven by criminal justice policy that ignored research findings against particular policies. This era ushered in a punitive, or “getting tough,” period, which has continued through the 1990s and the past decade. Blumstein (1994) wrote that crime is one of the consistent issues that distress the public. Any nostrum that addresses this public concern and conveys some short-term promise seems to gain widespread support in the political environment. Most of these are associated with being “tough” because toughness seems

to be a panacea that has political appeal (Blumstein, 1994). Despite evidence that toughness may well be counterproductive, the punitive efforts remain intact (i.e., training programs should be mandated for reducing juvenile recidivism).

In the light of the historical literature, the popularity of juvenile recidivism programs may complicate the situation. The nurturing rehabilitative era has returned for delinquents, but the system in place to deliver that result is unable to conform—not due to effort. As mentioned, many issues plague the juvenile justice system. Ideas, theories, and remedies fall short in transforming a system that is overwhelmed with old, current, and upcoming cases, an issue that thwarts any attempts to nurture and or rehabilitate children proactively. According to Bonnie (2012), “under the rehabilitative model, judges prescribed individualized treatment based on the needs of the offender, presuming that treatment would correct youthful criminal tendencies” (p. 463). The best rehabilitation occurs in well-run centers with trained employees who possess the skills necessary to help juveniles achieve their goals. The National Research Council Panel on Juvenile Crime, determined youth detained within overcrowded facilities have increased chances of physical injury and mental health problems, with lower educational attainment than peers treated in the community (McCord et al., 2001). Overcrowding does not allow staff to nurture juvenile developmental skills and life goals, causing youth to be more likely to recidivate (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006). In an effort to address this problem, policymakers have joined together to implement alternative programs to replace detention centers.

A few of the changes and recommendations gathered from historical analyses are that children respond favorably to immediate discipline, and the lapse in reaction to action may decrease the impact of the offense and the byproducts of deterrence. Imposing immediate sanctions and discipline are a must with children, whether remanded for holding in a detention center or told to remain at home under a parent's supervision. These are not adults who typically contemplate their mistakes and fate; rather, they are children still developing cognitive functions. Supervision or lack of is a key issue that, in most cases, lands children in front of a judge. If probation officers cannot provide supervision while children are paying back their debt to society, it is expected that the child will most likely continue in their old ways.

Literature Search Strategy

This study involved secondary research, so the literature review was one of the most important aspects of the study. Thus, the sources were gathered from Google Scholar and published journals by qualified researchers. Moreover, I analyzed websites with historical cases for review purposes, which allowed for making inferences that were helpful while collecting the data and applying the research methods. To obtain accurate articles and journal papers, Google Scholar was the main search engine used, and the search keywords were *recidivism*, *juveniles*, *delinquency programs*, *youth*, *risk factors*, and *general strain theory*. I looked up these terms via search engines in different combinations to find the relevant research articles for review. The data also helped answer a wide range of questions that arose due to the investigation of the RQ or the ones

initially displayed in the introduction. One of the key sources that helped in the analysis was the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ), and various research papers and reports from the juvenile justice department were selected for review. The literature review includes journal articles, peer-reviewed articles, dissertations, websites, and reports published to analyze juvenile recidivism from both qualitative and quantitative aspects. The literature review does not include research papers from far back in the past; instead, the range was set from 2018 onwards—the last 5 years. This allowed me to obtain the latest literature and avoid including old programs and laws in the paper. Therefore, the scope of the literature review was adequate for secondary research. Thus, the research is not merely the factors that affect juvenile recidivism or the statistics of juveniles in the United States but the programs initiated for youth that help in determining the gaps in the existing research.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical basis for this study was Agnew's (1985) GST, which is one of the key theories that highlights the factors that lead to delinquency and commission of crime, especially the social and economic strains that affect recidivism rates. Agnew et al. (2008) reflected that SES and crime are not strong factors behind the increased crime ratio; rather, economic reasons make them commit crimes. People who have fewer opportunities or are lower in economic status feel a sense of deprivation, which they counter through unethical means like theft and stealing (Agnew et al., 2008). Research has created a relationship between crime prevention programs and Agnew's GST,

suggesting that crime prevention programs are an effective way to reduce juvenile recidivism in the country (Agnew, 2017). Researchers mentioned that one of the key causes of crime is the stressors that affect people's thinking and make them recommit. The researchers implied that Agnew's theory is accurate because the only thing that provokes people is the stressors surrounding them. Still, there is always a coping mechanism for the stressors, and, in this case, it is crime prevention programs (Agnew, 2017). In this literature review section, I analyze a few programs that reduce juvenile recidivism rates.

Researchers have also tried to explicate Agnew's approach toward juvenile recidivism as wrong. For this reason, Thaxton and Agnew (2018) applied a mixed results approach to uncover the factors that affect juvenile recidivism. They used survey-based data of 6,000 juveniles and two conditionals (Thaxton & Agnew, 2018). The two conditions included the respondent's tendency to be involved in criminal activity and gang membership, and these two conditions were analyzed through the analytical framework, which suggests there are curvilinear, interactive, and nonnormally distributed factors that combine to make people commit crimes (Thaxton & Agnew, 2018). To correctly measure and interpret the conditional data of criminology, Agnew's framework provides a nonlinear approach that can cater to all the variables involved in juvenile recidivism, which made it a feasible theory to analyze the topic (see Thaxton & Agnew, 2018). Therefore, researchers have identified that the propensity of a crime is related to the factors that affect people's thoughts, and so the assumptions and conditionals of

Agnew are correct. Another study by Tostlebe (2017) enhances the importance of GST and the RQ is that monetary sanctions and recidivism have a close relationship. Since the colonial era, monetary court-based sanctions have been a part of the criminal justice system of the United States. This implies that first-time offenders can pay fines and get out of being sentenced to jail (Tostlebe, 2017). Tostlebe (2017) gathered a sample of 729 first-time offenders and applied logistic regression analyses of the monetary sanctions applied to them by the court of justice of the state of Iowa. The analysis showed that offenders are assured they can continue living their lives by paying fines. This allows them to recommit crimes (Tostlebe, 2017). Researchers shared that there is a direct relationship between recidivism and court-ordered monetary sanctions, which suggests there is a need for change in the programs. Researchers have shared that these limitations of the court-ordered sanctions can be catered through Agnew's theory, which aims to rectify the stressors and teach youth not to commit crimes.

The criminal justice system has been damaged through the use of only court-ordered sanctions because they have not considered the causes of the issue. The main cause of youth committing crimes is due to the negative perceptions they take from their homes. Adverse childhood experiences in terms of assault, mental stress, and financial instability lead to damage to youths' personalities and cause them to commit crimes to fulfill their desires (Kilian, 2021). Kilian (2021) used the literature available on the causes of juvenile recidivism and analyzed it in relation to GST. Through a list of factors, namely foster care, education, parental love, age, and gender, they applied a regression

analysis of all these factors. The research findings support that there exists a relationship between age and crime, such that children are prone to committing crimes due to the stressors they face in their homes (Kilian, 2021). This means children are stressed from an early age due to the prevalence of domestic issues, and managing these stressors during the court-ordered punishments for first-timers is the best way to avoid recidivism. Hence, GST can be applied to juvenile organizations, staff, and procedures, and the author suggests putting in efforts and providing opportunities like school, work, education, positive reinforcement, a reduction in risk factors, mentorship, and willingness to complete program implementations, as well as checking in on juveniles who have graduated from programs.

Therefore, this theory is relevant to the RQ—is there a difference in the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation—because GST provides a framework for analyzing the concept of juvenile recidivism. It will help uncover the quality of court-ordered decisions and provide a need for new programs that can help in mentoring juveniles to deter recidivism. For this reason, this theory will be a part of the research throughout of the paper, especially when conducting the literature review and applying the research methodology.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this dissertation is based on the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation. Thus, we assess the quality of court-ordered sanctions and then discuss the importance of crime

controlling programs in the light of Agnew's theory as a recommendation for the criminal justice system. The literature review revolves around this conceptual framework, where the impact of Agnew's theory on juvenile recidivism is compared with the quality of court-ordered sanctions from past and present perspectives. Piquero and Sealock (2004) found, through self-reported interviews of delinquent youth and inferred in the past, gender was associated with criminal activity, and this association was related to GST.

GST includes all the stressors that lead young people to commit crimes, and, according to the old justice system, gender is one of the stressors and causes of recidivism. They also added that the negative emotions and actions of people are solely due to sex differences, which cause people to recommit, and the judicial system is also persistent in that such people are likely to recommit (Piquero & Sealock, 2004). However, the implementation of Agnew's theory on the criminal justice system has changed due to changes in the practices and approaches of researchers. The impact of gender or sex differences cannot be denied, but modifications are needed in the way this concept is perceived. Weber and Lynch (2021) used recent data of 417 rural detained youth who had reoffended, and the researchers used a Poisson regression analysis to uncover the factors that cause recidivism. They found that substance abuse and exposure to certain social implications resulted in the recommitment of crime. In this regard, the research analyzed that, in rural areas, girls are prone to getting involved in cases such as substance abuse, and families stress out girls more, which is why more girls become reoffenders (Weber & Lynch, 2021). This means girls are not prone to be involved in

crimes by nature, but they are compelled through external factors that make them exposed to the recommission of crime.

Unlike past practices, Weber and Lynch (2021) approached the concept differently by noting substance abuse and life adversities as stressors, not gender itself. This advancement in the literature shows Agnew's theory is an open-ended explanation that is further elaborated by research such that this research can also use its postulates to uncover the factors that affect the quality of court-ordered sanctions. Moreover, this research will explicate these factors through quantitative study, but it also focuses on the solution of these factors to recommend answers that can help improve the quality of the criminal justice system and reduce juvenile recidivism rates. Therefore, this framework will be a combination of different research papers that share the postulates of Agnew, show the implementation of GST, outline a quantitative analysis of court-ordered sanctions, conduct a qualitative analysis of court-ordered sanctions, make quality calculations of court-ordered sanctions, and discuss new programs that can, along with mandatory sanctions, improve the overall judicial system.

We summarize all these aspects of the existing literature from the last 5 years to build the thesis and improvise the knowledge that the RQ is unique and needs to be answered. Moreover, the data are available in primary sources, but a secondary approach is required to examine them for effective conclusions that can be applied in the future.

Literature Review

The following will involve a review of the existing literature, along with its relationship with the RQ, to uncover the gaps and limitations in the research and apply the research methodology through proper existing knowledge.

Barnert et al. (2015), in their research paper, conducted an in-depth qualitative analysis in the form of interviews among 20 juveniles in October, November, and December 2013. The research was conducted in Los Angeles, and it aimed to determine the risk factors from the youth's perspective to understand why they recommit crimes. The interviews of these 20 youth implied that their home, school, and living areas were not safe for them, and this chaotic environment provoked them to become involved in criminal activity (Barnert et al., 2015). They shared the conclusion that, instead of seeking help from parents, teachers, and neighbors, they preferred fulfilling their needs through illegal means and ended up getting arrested for immoral behavior. One limitation of the research was it only used a small sample size from one urban area (Barnert et al., 2015). Apart from this limitation, this research fulfilled the criteria of achieving its aim. Moreover, this study answered the question regarding what are the key factors that encourage youth to commit crimes from their perspective. This will help in proving how court orders should deal with juveniles while making their decisions. Thus, there exists a problem in society and the ways parents, teachers, and neighbors treat the youth around them.

A primary source in the form of descriptive information and analysis of juvenile recidivism is presented by Humes (2015). Humes discussed the prevalent issues that continue to affect the juvenile justice system and found that backlogs, overcrowding, and delays exist in disciplining young probationers, who usually go unsupervised because they require much paperwork, and the people associated with the justice framework are overloaded with cases, so they set a priority on the ones that are funded, whereas the juvenile cases are given less preference due to funding issues and the professionalism that is required to implement the programs for imposing sanctions (Humes, 2015). This implies the judiciary and the main constituents of the juvenile justice system find it tedious to mentor young people, and, due to their negligence in these cases, recidivism prevails in society. This primary source is directly related to the RQ because it explained the quality of mandatory sanctions in the juvenile justice system. It also highlighted the issues and the system's priorities, which make recidivism a habitual occurrence in the country. Moreover, this book has no limitations because it is a primary source with explanatory information that states relevant evidence and can be used as a reference by other researchers.

Welsh and Farrington (2007) described two types of programs—after-school and community-based mentoring programs—that can be promising in preventing delinquency or repeated criminal offending. These promising programs are those where the level of certainty from the available scientific evidence is too low to support generalizable conclusions but where there is some empirical basis for predicting that future research

could support such conclusions (Welsh & Farrington, 2007). A limitation of this research is that these two programs are lacking in scientific evidence, but they are explicated through empirical data. Progress over the past years through longitudinal studies, empirical data, technology, and science has contributed to the improvement, creation, or deletion of treatment, prevention, and intervention programs. Without the support of empirical data development and application to treatment, intervention and prevention programs are a waste of valuable funding. Moving forward, it is imperative that funding is applied to evidence-based, empirically substantiated results-producing programs. A common well-known issue of delinquent behavior is the unsupervised time children have immediately after school and typically until a handler or guardian expects their presence.

Burraston et al. (2013), through a quantitative study, isolated the court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism. They answered the RQ fully and isolated the decisions of the court that affect the country's decorum. The research added information from the 2009 report whereby 10.6% of the U.S. population between the age of 10–17 were convicted, among which 14% were arrested, 15% were violent arrests, and 25% were arrested for property crimes (Burraston et al., 2013). This shows the recidivism rates are high, and the United States needs to reform its juvenile justice system to reduce the rates of juvenile recidivism. The research has provided quantitative evidence from the report and shown that court-ordered sanctions are not enough to reduce recidivism rates because the statistics are increasing over time. Therefore, quantitative research creates a basis for the need for the RQ. The only limitation of this article was that it lacks a

qualitative aspect of the study, but quantitatively it improvises the need for new programs to train and mentor youth who are under arrest or are in the detention center.

Hay et al. (2018) found that roughly 70% of youth in the United States were rearrested for new offenses after 2 years following their release from the first crime; among these, 50% of youth received a conviction or adjudication, whereas the remaining 20% returned to jail. The research, through the risk assessment tried to produce a scale that can predict the chances of reoffending among various groups across the country. The research used the residential positive achievement change tool to evaluate the static and dynamic factors that support and provide a pattern for predicted recidivism. This is a conceptual approach that allows the monitoring of youth and their behavior to prevent the occurrence of crimes in the country. The concept was especially focused on Florida because 4,700 out of 100,000 cases are from this state. This research is consistent with evaluating the recidivism rates in Florida because the focus of this study is Florida, as well as the impact of court-ordered decisions on juvenile recidivism. The research has used descriptive statistics to provide evidence for their model, but it lacked the qualitative aspect of the research topic. Therefore, the article provided detailed insights into the risk assessment tool to predict the rate of reoffending and used it as a source to find the incompetency of court-ordered decisions in reducing juvenile recidivism rates.

Schubert et al. (2012) stated that sanctions that allow offenders to stay in jail or go through mentoring programs daunt people from getting involved in illegal activity. Thus, the researchers used a sample of 519 juvenile offenders and found the personal

experiences of youth affect their decisions in life. They analyzed the cognitive and behavioral patterns of those 519 individuals and noted that individual characteristics should be controlled and monitored to improve juvenile behavior (Schubert et al., 2012). The limitations of the research include that the sample size was big, and not every individual's behavioral patterns were assessed properly, the results were not inclusive of all the factors that affect the recommitment of crime, and the research did not answer a few questions, such as the relationship among the mentioned factors and the rules that might affect the behaviors differently. Hence, if the offenders are sanctioned properly, they might not recommit crimes, and through this study, we will probe this fact quantitatively.

Berghuis (2018) conducted a systematic review and meta-analyses and came up with a program that allows juveniles to reenter society and stay optimistic enough to avoid committing crimes again. Berghuis used 8,179 titles to find nine randomized controlled evaluations to ensure this program reduced recidivism rates (Berghuis, 2018). This quantitative perspective study showed insignificant changes, with an odds ratio of 0.89, but the variability of the study is evidence that it results in a change in juveniles and affects criminal activity (Berghuis, 2018). The mixed results of the research infer there are some challenges that need to be overcome in the program, and a few changes in interventions could improve its efficacy. Therefore, this research intervention resulted in a significant reduction in recidivism rates, but there is a need for a more extensive review to improve program implementation.

Willison and O'Brien (2017), in their research paper, examined the concept of juvenile recidivism from a feminist point of view. They found, over the last 30 years, the rate of women committing and recommitting crimes kept increasing. According to stats from the year 2000, there was a 50% increase in women getting arrested, whereas only an 18% increase of men being arrested (Willison & O'Brien, 2017). This dramatic increase implies there is a need for urgent attention of the justice system toward the increase in female offenders. The researchers suggest the country's social infrastructure and culture encourage women to get involved in such activities. They also added that substance abuse and other ways to manipulate woman also result in the increased rates of convictions for women. The research provided a resolution for this issue and suggests the use of restorative justice and advocacy for incarceration by social workers can highlight these factors and reduce the rates and punishments for women by taking their circumstances into consideration (Willison & O'Brien, 2017). One of the key limitations of this research is that it is a biased opinion and written from a feminist point of view. The research can be easily discarded because of potential bias. but its suggestions are useful for the current study. The focus of this article also questions the court-ordered sanctions. The RQs also inquire about the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions.

Boots et al. (2016) argued that batterer intervention and prevention programs (BIPPs) are better than keeping juveniles in jail. They collected data from secondary sources by compiling data from different sources, and then they applied bivariate correlational analyses to the data. The data they collected came both from the results of

sending criminals to jail and allowing them to attend BIPPs. The comparison of the two sets of data showed the rate was 0.54 with the BIPPs and -0.54 when the criminals were arrested (Boots et al., 2016). This shows arresting triggers the behavioral issues more and results in negative results because more people try to recommit. However, by using BIPPs, criminals can be taught to change their behaviors and continue living their lives without feeling pressured by societal factors. The research has a few limitations, as well, which include the restriction of data from the court of Dallas only, generalized ideas of BIPPs, and the fact Hispanic ethnicity was not considered (Boots et al., 2016). However, the research ideas were comprehensive and understandable, proving the need for other programs apart from the court-ordered sanctions. Therefore, the research through secondary data identified BIPPs are a flexible and effective approach to reducing the rates of juvenile recidivism.

Ruhland et al. (2020) explained the difference between fines and fees due to probation because of people's involvement in crimes. A fine is to be paid due to the violation of state rules, but fees are to be paid to compensate for losses. The court orders these monetary sanctions after judging that crimes have occurred. The price of the fine and fee vary according to the violation that has occurred. However, the imposition of these fines and monetary sanctions is not always a good option. The fines and monetary sanctions may result in people having more debt, but perhaps it is better than being imprisoned. In 2013, Ruhland et al. (2020) noted that many juveniles, after the payment of fines, were released, but, within 2 years of their fine payments, they recidivated. This

implies that getting free by paying is increasing recidivism in the country and hampering the peace of society. The researchers verified this stance through regression model analyses using multivariate approaches. They used three approaches, and all of them have recidivism in common. The research results showed that extralegally gender and unemployment are the two factors that affect recidivism rates, and, legally, felony focal offenses, long-term offenses, and adjudications are the main factors that affect recidivism. However, there are certain limitations of this study, which include the use of only one jurisdiction from Texas, the fact the crimes were not noted, and that the specific sanctions were not mentioned in the paper. Irrespective of these limitations, the research provided enough evidence that fees and fines might be court-ordered sanctions, but they accelerate the rate of recidivism.

Ezell et al. (2018) highlighted an important aspect of juvenile recidivism, which is psychological trauma. During many juvenile trials, they noted the crimes were committed due to psychological trauma or childhood adversity, which showed their effect at some point during adolescence. To improve this aspect of juvenile delinquency, a pilot trauma-informed practice was applied at four rural courts in Michigan. After its implementation, 15 people from court staff, including judges, referees, officers, and therapists, were semi-structurally interviewed (Ezell et al., 2018). The researchers stuck to the thematic qualitative analysis of the interviews and shared the qualitative results, finding that the conceptualization of trauma-informed practices should be involved in juvenile courts, obstacles to the implementation of these practices should be avoided, and new

interventions related to trauma-informed practices should be proposed to improve the justice system's infrastructure (Ezell et al., 2018). Despite the successful suggestion of the new intervention, this study had a few limitations, which include its implementation in rural areas of Michigan, the interviewees having notable differences due to completely different roles, and finally the researchers were not able to calculate the validity score of the intervention. Nonetheless, this research article infers that court-ordered sanctions like fines and imprisonment are not the only solution for juveniles; there must be programs like trauma-informed practices to consider juveniles' mental, psychological, and physical health.

Cacho et al. (2020) conducted research among 102 juvenile offenders in Spain from a psychosocial and sociodemographic perspective. They collected data from the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory; after obtaining the data, they analyzed it psychosocially through the Million Adolescent Clinical Inventory and analyzed their results according to the standards of inventory. The results showed the risk of recidivism was 21.6% high, 31.3% moderate, and 47.1% low for the current sample (Cacho et al., 2020). They added that, to reduce the risks to the lowest level, the courts needed to consider the psychosocial effects on juveniles to understand their intellect level and problem-solving skills to assess what their mental status is and how much their thoughts support the idea of recidivating. Hence, by the end of the study, the researchers suggested considering four variables while deciding on the punishment and an intervention program for juveniles. These four variables include problem-solving skills,

performance at school, behavior, and the personality traits of offenders (Cacho et al., 2020). Therefore, the research through qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis has found the efficacy of intervention-based punishments according to people's personalities, behavior, and intellect. However, this study had one limitation: it was conducted in Spain, and the data gathered were not subjective in nature. Nonetheless, this study can be used as evidence that there are always other factors that need to be considered to prevent recommitment of crimes while court-ordering juveniles.

Feinstein (2015) highlighted one of the most important issues in the criminal justice system of America: racial segregation. White privilege since the colonization era is one of the key issues faced by people of color, and youth of color are no exception. Feinstein conducted in-depth interviews with 30 male juveniles, including 14 White male youth, 8 Native Americans, 4 Black, and 4 Latino participants. The answers from the participants reflected that White people have a dominant privilege over others because society considers them upright and reengages with them easily. However, the responses from people of color showed they were considered criminals before their crime was confirmed, making it difficult for them to reenter society, which increased the likelihood they would recidivate a crime. Therefore, the researchers suggested there should be community-based programs and punishments for juveniles to make them repent without getting cut off from society. This intervention is important for people of color because they have to face a more difficult time than Whites. This research demonstrates that other programs and ways to punish juveniles should be devised, apart from court-ordered

sanctions, because their quality is not optimum. However, the research has certain limitations, including no inclusion of women among the interviewers, the biased opinion of the interview subjects, and the nature of RQs that target racial disparity. Irrespective of these limitations, the research is useful because it provides a proper intervention to reduce recidivism by engaging people of color with the community through proper and legal means.

Another study examined the impact of operational actions taken for recidivism. Caudill and Trulson (2022) tested the lawful actions taken by justice organizations to uncover the impact on the concept of juvenile recidivism. Through historical events analysis, Caudill and Trulson (2022) tested their hypothesis on whether the use of operational definitions of recidivism result in dissimilar impacts on recidivism or are correlated with recidivism. They studied a sample of research subjects containing 10,830 juvenile offenders from a Southern state (Caudill & Trulson, 2022). The operational definitions the researchers considered were referral date, offense date, and adjudication date, because these court-ordered decisions and operations are made on these dates. The event analysis demonstrated that official decisions about juvenile recidivism affect hazard estimates significantly due to the correlation of juvenile recidivism with predicted variables for juveniles. The research focused on how juveniles are affected by the dates on which they commit crimes, receive a penalty, and when they settle with victims. All these affect criminal activity and sometimes propel criminals to recommit again. This research will answer how juvenile recidivism is affected and how the court-ordered

decisions lack in quality based on the time differences between each decision. One of the limitations of this research is that it was conducted only in a Southern state. Moreover, the sample size was large, which made it difficult to analyze every aspect of the juveniles. Therefore, this study provided insight into the factors that affect the behavior of juvenile recidivism.

Another aspect of juvenile recidivism is that there are many alternatives for arresting or detaining juveniles. Still, if people do not appear in court, they should be arrested. In this case, the researchers analyzed the fact that low-risk juveniles should be considered before sending them to a detention center (Ogle & Turanovic, 2019). Ogle and Turanovic (2019) used data from the FDJJ. They focused on 857 youth who had committed a crime in 2012 and found 340 of them were detained, whereas 517 were sent on probation. The research used a statistical approach, which shared that 81% of juveniles from the sample were low-risk offenders and 95% were low- and moderate-risk offenders, which means that the maximum of juvenile offenders were at low risk of recidivism (Ogle & Turanovic, 2019). However, getting detained or being in jail provokes them to recommit crimes because they feel disturbed by this court-ordered action. Through a bivariate analysis, the researchers further calculated the recidivism rates, where the official rate of recidivism was 0.08, the technical rate of recidivism was 0.32, and the redetainment rate of recidivism was 0.31. The results evidenced the treatment and control groups should be properly applied to juveniles to reduce these rates (Ogle & Turanovic, 2019).

The research results showed a need for some programs to effectively treat the juveniles as low-risk offenders instead of detaining them as youth. The research answers the question whether the quality of court-ordered sanctions is optimal for reducing juvenile recidivism rates. It is evident that different approaches and interventions should be devised to reduce the crime rates of youth in America. However, this research is limited only to Florida's perspective and only provides evidence that is applicable to this state. Moreover, the data used by the researchers are vast, which makes it difficult for them to fully understand, so they discussed the results generally while applying the *t*-test technique by using programs and SPSS. Hence, this research can be used as evidence that new programs should be devised, and juveniles should not be sent to detention centers because they will not make them repent but result in further crimes.

It is not well known that the effect of court-ordered monetary sanctions is one of the key reasons for increasing recidivism rates. Link (2022) studied different research papers and found that less literature is available when it comes to deriving the relationship between debt and recommitment of crime. However, the research has gathered that monetary sanctions affect the individual, family, community, and system-related goals (Link, 2022). All the aspects of society are damaged due to these monetary sanctions because they are a burden on criminals because they have to borrow money from their family or the community, ultimately resulting in accrued debts. The research highlights that the debts, social implications, and the burden caused by one offense provokes youth to commit crimes. This is because they cannot reenter society amicably

due to the differences that arise due to the commission of crimes and the financial state of the convict. The researcher used a mixed-methods research design and a sample that included men from three U.S. states (Link, 2022). They have generally discussed that debt greatly affects the recidivation of crimes by juveniles.

The research concluded that there are many loopholes in America's juvenile justice system, and one of them is monetary sanctions that affect society (Link, 2022). Therefore, there is a need for theoretical and empirical changes in court-ordered sanctions to improve the legislative framework of juvenile courts (Link, 2022). Moreover, the research has certain limitations, including the use of secondary data, a general explanation of the relationship, and a generalized decision for the country. Nonetheless, the research is effective because it shares why the quality of court-ordered sanctions is not effective and affects juvenile recidivism.

One of the major concerns that has not yet been discussed in detail in the literature review is the effect of racism in increasing the impact of juvenile recidivism. Race is a major issue in America, and it is one of the most common reasons for anxiety and depression of different people from different races. Research has analyzed the racial effect on the Latin community and underscored how cultural differences act as stressors for the Latin community (Zavala et al., 2021). They have used acculturation and respondent gender to elaborate on the driving factors that increase delinquency rates. The data the researchers used come from Dating Violence Among Latino Adolescents, where it was noticed that boys exhibit more delinquent behaviors than girls, whereas girls were

more acculturated than boys (Zavala et al., 2021). This implies depression, social support, and anxiety are the behavioral patterns that are supported by girls and are a reason for provoking them to become criminals. Another stressor noticed among the boys and girls commonly is poly-victimization, where the boys and girls perceive that they are underprivileged and not acceptable by society (Zavala et al., 2021). Lastly, the researchers linked these stressor factors with GST and confirmed the postulates of GST are parallel to the research findings (Zavala et al., 2021). Therefore, the research helps in answering whether general theory has a great influence on juvenile recidivism. However, this research has a few limitations in that its subjects were limited to the Latino community only, and other racial groups were not considered. Moreover, the data used generally explained the outcomes. Hence, the research can be used as an inference that race acts as an important aspect in increasing the stressors, which result in the continuation of crimes in socially segregated communities.

Snyder et al. (2016) highlighted another key stressor prevalent in the United States (i.e., homeless youth). In the USA, around 4.2 million people yearly suffer from homelessness due to different stressors they face from society (Snyder et al., 2016). Researchers have used the conceptualized framework of GST and explained that certain factors let people commit crimes behind every delinquent act. The researchers did not use any technical frameworks; instead, they elaborated on the existing factors and assessed them in the light of the juvenile justice system. They found racial discrimination, poly-victimization, resistance toward the LGBTQ+ community, and other violent reactions

resulting from homelessness and stress are youth's main causes of delinquency (Snyder et al., 2016). This means the stressors drive the youth toward a dead end, where they have to face legal punishments by court-ordered decisions. Therefore, there is a need for change in the juvenile justice system's policies by taking these stressors into consideration and applying proper penalties that can cause people to reflect on their wrongdoings instead of getting more stressed to recommit crimes. This research is relevant to the RQ because the researchers used a similar theoretical framework to that being considered for this study.

As with homelessness, the dispositioning of people, especially youth, from one place to another is a common issue in the United States. McKenna and Anderson (2021) studied the effect of displacement and dispositioning of youth on juvenile recidivism through a cross-sectional study using secondary data from an existing research paper. The sample included 1,102 girls who committed crimes over the last 10 years (i.e., from 2004 to 2015), and the authors conducted an analysis of the demographic information and risk assessment (McKenna & Anderson, 2021). They further investigated which of the girls recidivated within 2 years after the crime. This study has many variables such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, and residential status. Considering all these variables, the researchers found those displaced by their community had a greater recidivism rate, and those who relocated due to personal reasons and other aspects had lower rates of recidivism. Hence, this research helped in understanding that court-ordered sanctions related to displacements of girls from their community had a negative influence, which resulted in the recurrence of the criminal deed (McKenna & Anderson, 2021). The

research provided ample information and data, but its limitations include that it utilizes data from secondary sources, the results were obtained from a follow-up approach, and the recommendation was likely biased due to the surveillance effect of finding the data about dispositioned girls (McKenna & Anderson, 2021). Therefore, this research studied an important aspect of society (i.e., the shifting of youth from one place to another due to a court order), which results in turbulence and stresses in their lives, which in accordance with the GST causes outcomes in the form of recidivism. Regardless of the limitations, this research study answers the question that court-ordered sanctions like relocation are not always a good way to punish juveniles because this punishment could lead to more negative consequences in the future.

Ruback et al. (2018) described the relationship between restitution and recidivism. They suggested it is a court-ordered decision according to which offenders must pay money to victims according to the gravity of the crime they have committed. They applied different experimental conditions to their research subjects and examined who paid restitution regularly and who did not. The data the researchers used came from their previous experiment, which had 775 participants who, through different experimental conditions, were motivated to pay. They conducted interviews with 128 of those participants and examined data from the Pennsylvania State Police regarding the arrests after conducting the program (Ruback et al., 2018). From the data, they selected 712 subjects after removing the outliers according to the exclusion criteria; among these 712 people, 539 were men, 171 were women, and 62 people from this sample had missing

information, so the rest of them were analyzed (Ruback et al., 2018). The results showed only 9% of the people had paid all the restitution, and 46% paid some of the restitution (Ruback et al., 2018). This showed that women had a relatively lower recidivism rate, and they tried to pay the restitution. However, many people tried to find their way out of paying this amount to avoid becoming indebted. The research has provided insight into the court-ordered financial sanctions that affect the recidivism rate, and the research results suggested those who paid restitution were less prone to committing crimes, and most women did not recidivate. This study follows an experimental monitoring control, which has the following limitations: other interventions were not considered, the average number of paid restitutions were small, and the results unveiled other factors apart from monetary sanctions that influence recidivism (Ruback et al., 2018). Regardless, the research provided experimental evidence that monitoring court-ordered sanctions is a reasonable approach to reducing the risks of recidivism.

There is a need for emotional balancing programs to ensure juveniles are not involved in criminal activity again. Strassfeld and Cherng (2021) hypothesized that youths' educational, behavioral, and emotional aspects should be taken into consideration by courts, as court-ordered legal decisions do not always have the best outcomes. Thus, they suggested having a secure-care setting for emotionally disturbed juveniles. Statewide, Minnesota's agency data are analyzed through exploratory analyses. The court ordered many people to delocalize or displace from their communities, which segregated the society even more. Strassfeld and Cherng (2021) applied the secure-care setting to

1,092 juveniles who were emotionally unstable, such that they were not asked to relocate from their residential area; instead, they were asked to complete community hours or do other laborious work as a punishment in the light of legal laws to ensure they reenter society without facing any issues. This approach is a crude idea for now, but its implementation can improve the juvenile justice system and reduce inequality in American society. Therefore, despite being an exploratory analysis with general inferences, this study provides in-depth analyses of how court-ordered sanctions need to be revised for juveniles to help them reenter society and become socially strong to avoid becoming involved in criminal activity. The research has shown that recidivism rates can be effectively managed through the inclusion of care-based programs for youth to strengthen the criminal justice system and cleanse society from such crimes. Moreover, the research is valid from this study's point of view because it shows the quality of court-ordered mandatory sanctions needs to be improved to ensure a better version of society.

From a legal perspective, in accordance with the Second Chance Act, Calleja et al. (2016) compared the basic reentry program with a specialized reentry program. The researchers highlighted the fact that society is facing a high risk of recidivism because the rates keep increasing over the years. To cater to these issues legally, the researchers suggested using legal methods different from the usual ones to observe better outcomes. Due to the basic reentry program, the recidivism rates are not reducing; instead, increases have been noted. Thus, to approach the issue of juvenile recidivism differently, practical research was conducted where 117 juvenile offenders received specialized reentry

training, and 156 juvenile offenders received basic training; among these 273 boys, the age range was 13 to 18. The nature of the crimes committed by these boys included property crimes, sexual offenses, and crimes against people.

The research results showed the specialized reentry program taught the youth they were not outsiders in society and could continue their lives if they showed good conduct as moral citizens. The approach of the specialized program is lenient because it taught them to act morally while avoiding criminal activity. The research has also showed positive results for this program, such that, through basic training, the rate of recidivism was 24%, but, with a specialized reentry program, it lowered to 16%. Therefore, the implementation of this program is both legal and a requirement of society. However, the research has certain limitations, which include that the findings were not generalized due to the experimental design that made the research complicated, and the focus group of the research was small. Notwithstanding, the research was still sufficient to answer that the quality of court-ordered sanctions can be improved with a few changes in basic implemented programs. The factors that affect juvenile recidivism must be dealt with properly.

Hill (2015) discussed education as an important factor in reducing recidivism. The author described the correlation between educational services and adults or juvenile convicts and its effect on recidivism rates. They also referenced several studies to provide statistical evidence of how offenders who have been arrested before still commit crimes once they are released from prison or done with their respective punishments. Many

pertinent institutions suggest different rehabilitation programs and techniques help such individuals; however, the country believes education can be one of the few factors that can best help these individuals avoid being involved in crime again. Hill described that education can be utilized to help offenders develop certain habits beneficial for their well-being. Education and learning received by the convicts inside the prison helped them become better at life, which is why the inmates who underwent educational programs were less likely to undergo recidivism once they were done with their penalties. Hill also deliberated on the sort of education that can be provided to the inmates. Because these inmates usually have lower reading levels and lack fundamental reading, writing, or calculating skills, the education provided in prison can include anything ranging from GEDs to literacy classes to community college courses (Hill, 2015). The adult offenders are usually the ones who are involved in recidivism; the reason for this is that more vast rehabilitation opportunities are present for juveniles, and adult offenders generally do not undergo any specific programs. Addressing this issue of education, whether for the general population or the inmates, will surely help in countering several societal problems (Hill, 2015). Hence, providing educational services to inmates will benefit society and is also cost-effective for the state. The decision to help the inmates through education will also aid in the rehabilitative mission of the Illinois Code of Corrections and help reduce recidivism.

Summary and Conclusions

The literature explained the factors that influence juvenile recidivism. It highlighted the effects of court-sanctioned orders, with examples of orders made by the courts. It also discussed Agnew's theory and correlated it with how the quality of court-ordered sanctions is related to juvenile recidivism. Finally, the literature focused on providing a few programs that can be legally opted by the courts to reduce recidivism rates. Moreover, the research, through different reports and statistical data, shared that recidivism rates are increasing over time. The review also contained qualitative aspects such as the monitoring and controlling factors that affect juvenile recidivism and historical analysis of the rates of youth recommitting crimes. Therefore, different aspects of juvenile recidivism under the conception of Agnew's GST were highlighted through a general review approach. This review will be a basis for our study topic and builds discussion for the RQ. The review of the current literature provides evidence that there is a difference in the quality of court-ordered sanctions. These sanctions include probation and other orders as well, such as isolation and relocation of juveniles. However, the literature review has highlighted that the quality of all these traditional sanctions is worrisome because they do not help in reducing crime rates among the youth. These findings, along with secondary research analysis applying a cross-sectional methodology, will be applied to an existing data set in the next chapter. The chapter includes the research design, methodology, sampling, intervention, and instrumentation of the method applied to the secondary dataset.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

This study was a quantitative analysis isolating which court-ordered sanctions affect juvenile recidivism. For the purposes of this study, different successful programs affect juvenile recidivism beyond court-ordered sanctions. These programs could be compassionate ones like the use of cell phones, cognitive-behavior therapy, monitoring, and mentoring programs. To evaluate these aspects, I conducted a cross-sectional quantitative study using secondary data for the use of these interventions. Some interventions were defined in the above section and were included in the data collection section. The hypothesis was identified as null or the alternative using secondary sources. In addition, the analysis proved that laws and court-ordered sanctions are not enough for juveniles; they also need guidance and mentorship to prevent recidivism and become healthy additions to society. Therefore, the following section explains the research design and rationale, methodology, sampling, procedures, intervention, instrumentation of the methodology, and the research application. This chapter also addresses the data analysis plan and the layout of every research step in detail. This chapter breaks down how the following chapters apply the research methodology and explicate either the null or alternative hypothesis using a valid statistical secondary data approach. Moreover, the research method was valid and authentic because it tended to all the relevant aspects of a research design and its methodology.

Research Design and Rationale

The study variables included youth, programs, mandatory sanctions, and the people of the juvenile justice system. The youth and people in the juvenile justice system were the independent variables, and mandatory sanctions were the dependent variables. The variables used isolated the successful programs apart from mandatory sanctions and outlined their efficacy in reducing juvenile recidivism. The moderating variable was the use of Agnew's GST to relate stressors, which were one of the dependent variables in the lives of delinquents, and which should be considered while selecting an appropriate juvenile program. This study was a secondary quantitative analysis to identify the difference in the quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism and did not include probation.

Many researchers have shared the prevalence of different court-sanctioned programs apart from probation. After compiling their data, I drew conclusions to constrain the variables and find the effect of those programs on the lives of young delinquents. It also helped reveal what kind of programs are best suited for Florida youth living in diversified environments. This cross-sectional study was consistent throughout, using data from the literature review and collecting data from a few other journal papers; the secondary analysis was thus complete. First, I tabulated the data, and then they were statistically calculated to find the trueness of a hypothesis through a *t* test for a specific confidence interval. Therefore, the research design remained consistent to elucidate the quality of different court-sanctioned programs. After finding the most appropriate

program and statistical evidence for the hypothesis, Agnew's GST provided an intervention for that particular program.

The use of GST was important because it was the most appropriate theory to explain why juveniles may commit crimes. It provided a basis for training those youth properly during their probation through effective programs such as secure-care settings, phone calls, and social-cognitive behavior therapy.

Methodology

This was a cross-sectional study that collected data from different sources for a particular population. Then, in applying different methodological techniques and theoretical frameworks to that population, the RQ was answered (see Olsen & St George, 2004). The nature of the study was quantitative; I gathered numeric data for different practices and programs except for probation. The data provided efficacy and evidence about each of the programs that was considered to evaluate the quality of those programs in terms of satisfaction and changes in juveniles' behavior after attending the programs. Quantitative analysis enhances understanding and, through a rational perspective, declares a hypothesis correct or incorrect through the help of statistics (Asmus & Radocy, 2017). There are numerous statistical and mathematical techniques associated with quantitative analyses. These techniques help with devising rational conclusions that are implementable and acceptable for specific populations under study.

For this research, the sample population was juveniles in Florida. I gathered secondary data from the FDJJ and the Institutional Review Board. Once the sample was

prepared, I applied the statistical techniques of *t* test, analysis of variance, and abbreviated ANOVA per the standards of quantitative analysis to affirm the hypothesis that there was a difference in the quality of court-sanctioned programs affecting juvenile recidivism rates. First, I decided on a population sample; then, I sampled them accordingly, after which time I explained the procedure and intervention applied to that population using secondary evidence. Moreover, this process helped with understanding the risks and threats involved with the process or the factors that can affect the results of this quantitative analysis.

Population

The target population was primarily youth from the state of Florida; according to a report in 2009, 10.6% of U.S. youth from age 10 to 17 were arrested for different types of crimes, like violence, sexual harassment, and property cases (Burraston et al., 2013). This implies the situation in the United States and the quality of court-ordered sanctions needs to be assessed to apply specific interventions. For this reason, I considered an extensive secondary sample from Florida from different years and variable sample sizes from as large as 1.2 million and as small as 48 for various interventions. I selected these samples from different studies where there were court-ordered sanctioned programs, such as multisystemic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, functional family therapy, secure-care and emotional balancing programs, specialized reentry programs, educational therapy, and restitution. Most of these samples involved youth from Florida, but a few of them were from other U.S. states; one was from the state of Minnesota. I used other states

or an overall U.S. perspective to be inclusive of the general patterns and quality of the programs in use.

This study used secondary research from different published sources; the sample size was not the same for all the collected data. However, to ensure the results were uniform and testing of the hypothesis was possible, I derived a mean value for the sample to find the current quality of the court-ordered sanctions and the trueness of the hypothesis. Moreover, according to Agnew's GST, after the hypothesis was identified, I provided a set of interventions for the court-ordered sanctions to improve their quality index. Therefore, sampling was done according to the requirement of the question, where most of the research subjects were from Florida.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

I selected a random population sampling strategy because there were different court-ordered sanctions programs that needed to be assessed for their quality. Moreover, using secondary data made it impossible to sample the data in similar sizes. Thus, random sampling was done, where a different number of research subjects were analyzed for each program. Random sampling for a cross-sectional study is a much better approach. It allows researchers to assess data based on their preferences and requirements without having any sample size boundaries (Etikan & Bala, 2017). A few boundaries that are set for the research are that the data should not be older than 2005 and to only include research subjects from the United States, especially from Florida. The juvenile court system practices the programs that were considered. Moreover, researchers have already

described these programs quantitatively, so I used their samples and applied a *t*-test analysis to them.

The tools used for selecting these samples were criminology journals, the Chicago School of Law, SAGE journals, and Science Direct. I gathered the articles from these sources, so each of their samples was randomly selected. Overall, I chose $N = 7$ articles, and all the articles used different samples. The first sample used multisystemic therapy for juveniles in Florida, where 48 youth received this therapy in 2009 (see Dopp et al., 2020). The second sample involved multidimensional family therapy, where 113 youth in Florida received this therapy for 2 months (see Liddle et al., 2018). The third sample was for functional family therapy, where a sample of more than 25,000 juvenile offenders were treated that suffered from childhood trauma (see Wolff & Baglivio, 2017). The fourth sample checked the validity of emotional balancing programs like secure-care intervention among 2,022 juveniles in Florida (see Wolff et al., 2020). The fifth sample included a specialized reentry program according to the second chance act of the United States; I compared its implementation with the basic reentry program among a sample of 273 juveniles in Florida (see Calleja et al., 2016). The sixth sample was a large study in the United States, where I observed the impact of educating 1.2 million juvenile offenders for 5 years among inmates who were released in 2005 (see Hill, 2015). Lastly, I examined the impact of restitution on 775 juveniles randomly selected from the United States and drew statistical results from them. Using these random samples and quantitative analyses, the research continued to expand.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data)

I selected secondary sources from previous research for this analysis. Because this was a secondary research article, there was no primary data collection. Thus, I did not need any consent from the research participants. Instead, I gave credit to the researchers who collected that information. The area selected for the research was the United States, with particular consideration to the state of Florida. The data collection, in this case, was completed through studying the research collected and isolating data that can be used for the RQs. The procedure used for data collection was the implementation of those seven programs on a particular number of research subjects, with follow-up procedures of those interventions. The interventions used included multisystemic therapy, which suggests the criminals should not be displaced and should be allowed to reengage with the community and family in a positive way to mitigate their criminal thoughts (Dopp et al., 2020). Secondly, multidimensional family therapy is a way to treat substance abuse offenders in both in-patient and outpatient settings.

Along with professional help, the family also partakes in rehabilitating the patient (Liddle & Hogue, 2001). Third, functional family therapy allows families to help their adolescents grow in harmony and treat their adversities as children to prevent the recurrence of crime (Wolff & Baglivio, 2017). Secure-care and specialized reentry programs also improve the psyche of the patients because they enforce that extra care is given to juveniles during detention. They are taught to reenter society with confidence (Calleja et al., 2016; Strassfeld & Cherng, 2021). Finally, I explained how education and

restitution can help juveniles repent their crimes such that the quality of all these mentioned interventions were calculated to validate the hypothesis.

Intervention

This study intervention used a quantitative analysis using Agnew's theory (1985) to explain the stressors that can reduce juvenile recidivism and improve the quality of these court-ordered programs. The intervention was designed after the study results were calculated through statistical analyses. The nature of the intervention included recommendations for the juvenile justice system to improve the quality of court-ordered sanctions and reduce the risks of recidivism. The recommendations are discussed in Chapter 5 of the dissertation. The recommendation design is applicable, legal, and ethical from all aspects. The design includes proper background research on the quality differences and avoids quality deficiencies; a few practical changes are recommended. The recommendations section clearly defines the stressors, as per Agnew's (1985) theory framework, and provides a list of sufficient recommendations for each of the interventions discussed.

Archival Data

I collected the datasets from secondary sources; the sources were explained in detail in the sampling and procedures section. These sources were published journals accessed from online criminology journals. The justice system offers many programs in the legal, ethical, and societal context. Among a broad list of programs commonly used and unveiled in the literature review, I selected seven of them. Once I selected the

programs for quantitative quality assessment, I then examined published journal papers after 2015. Overall, I read 30 online journals to find the most valuable articles. After reviewing their methodology and results, I selected seven articles for this study. I then presented the results of these papers in a tabulated form to review the study results.

The selected interventions were general to provide easily applicable recommendations without going through lengthy legislative processes and making way for the juvenile justice system. Therefore, through a decisive approach, I recommended changes in existing intervention programs already in practice. Thus, I compared quality and analyzed it to find the stressors that affect youth through a secondary approach. Despite applying these programs, youth have remained uneasy and thus were likely to still commit crimes. Thus, by finding the differences in quality, I suggested changes for each particular program while considering Agnew's research.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

The collection of datasets was from secondary sources; I explained the sources in detail in the sampling and procedures section. These sources were published journals accessed from online criminology journals. The justice system offers many programs in the legal, ethical, and societal context. Among a broad list of programs commonly used and unveiled in the literature review, I selected seven. Once I selected the programs for quantitative quality assessment, I then chose published journal papers after 2015. Overall, I read 30 journals online to determine the most valuable articles. After reviewing their

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Intervention Studies or Those Involving Manipulation of an Independent Variable

The programs used in the study for quantitative analysis to measure the quality of court-ordered sanctions, except probation, included multisystemic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, functional family therapy, emotional balancing therapy, and specialized reentry programs, education, and restitution. The authors of multisystemic therapy have applied this strategy to sexual abusers. They noted the impact on juveniles in Florida, which enabled the researchers to use this clinical treatment with the help of their families to ensure the smooth reentry of adolescents (Dopp et al., 2020). Multidimensional family therapy is a controlled clinical, residential treatment that can be applied to youth, and its statistical findings were used in the research (Liddle et al., 2018). The functional family theory was applied by Wolff and Baglivio (2017) to 25,000

juveniles; the researchers studied the impact of harsh parenting that resulted in drastic effects on the youth, which led to recidivism (Wolff & Baglivio, 2017). For this purpose, the researchers used a family approach, where the family heals the early life adversities to improve the behavior of adolescents. Emotional balancing suggests developing a bond with juvenile offenders can make them feel relieved and help them overcome their trauma, preventing them from committing further criminal acts (Wolff et al., 2020). We applied the technique of specialized reentry to 156 out of 273 participants, and we noted they had a better impact and reengagement with society than those who had undergone basic reentry training (Calleja et al., 2016). Education and restitution are also court-ordered ways to reduce recidivism rates such that their quality was also observed in the study through the implementation of these techniques, which were used in the study (Hill, 2015; Ruback et al., 2018). These primary and secondary sources were used to uncover which program was the most suitable for implementation in the juvenile justice system through a comparison of the qualities of each of these programs.

Dopp et al. (2020) utilized a randomized controlled clinical trial to determine the impact of multisystemic therapy on juveniles. Liddle et al. (2018) applied the treatment of multidimensional family therapy on adolescents. Then, through a standardized observational system, they examined the results of the efficacy of this intervention on juvenile offenders, especially those arrested for substance abuse. Wolff and Baglivio (2017) used structural equation modeling to study the effect of functional family therapy on 25,000 juveniles who showed aggressive tendencies due to abusive treatment during

their childhood. Wolf et al. (2020) used administrative data of 2,022 juveniles who faced imposed placements from the court; however, this decision affected their personality because they were at risk of committing crimes again. For this reason, they suggested dealing with these young people positively and conducted a dynamic assessment that affirms the validity of this intervention in regard to avoiding recidivism. Calleja et al. (2016) used an experimental group and a controlled group, where a basic reentry program included one control group, whereas the experimental group underwent a specialized reentry program. They shared the results in the form of percentages. Hill (2015) presented a secondary source, where they used statistics from the Bureau of Justice and explained how overtime use of education in 30 states reduced the chances of juvenile recidivism. Ruback et al. (2018) used their prior experimental design and applied it to a sample of 775 juveniles randomly to determine the effect of restitution on juveniles. All the studies used different methods to evaluate the statistics related to the validity and positive results of each of the interventions/programs.

Data Analysis Plan

We analyzed the data using a *t*-test analysis of the sample and their findings. The findings of each research paper were in the form of percentages or the ratios that were tabulated. The data shared explicate the quality of the intervention used for the analysis. These researchers conducted in-depth analyses, but only required figures were used in the table in the next chapter. To apply the *t*-test and ANOVA technique, we applied the formula for the *t*-test using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). At the

same time, we utilized the ANOVA test of variance with the seven different groups (i.e., interventions accordingly). Therefore, in light of the data and techniques used, we revised the RQ and hypothesis. Moreover, a revision of the research was mandated through the literature review. The existing literature shared in-depth details about programs that the criminal justice system has for the juveniles of America.

RQ - Quantitative: What is the difference between the quality of different programs ordered by the court that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation?

H_{01} : There are no statistically significant differences in the overall quality of different programs ordered by the court that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation.

H_1 : There are statistically significant differences in the overall quality of different programs ordered by the court that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation.

These changes in the question and hypothesis were due to the findings from the programs and the details in the following sections for the calculations and results.

Next, we discuss in detail the plan for the data analysis; first, it is important to know that, to test these two hypotheses, where one is a null hypothesis, we used a *t*-test analysis and ANOVA variance test. The *t*-test is an analysis of independent and dependent factors to validate the trueness of a hypothesis based on the range of answers calculated; it defines a range that accepts or rejects a hypothesis (Gerald, 2018). ANOVA tests are also referred to as an *f* test or *f* distribution, where, using the variance ratio, we tested a hypothesis for rejection or acceptance (Kucuk et al., 2016). Therefore, we used these two statistical tests to find the hypothesis to ensure the conclusion was not made

from a single finding or calculation. Using two techniques added credibility to the research results, allowing this approach to mark appropriate and acceptable results.

Another aspect of the research was that there exists an inclusion of confounding variables such as court staff, society, and environmental stressors, which were not initially considered. However, while conducting the literature review, we noted the involvement of these factors in the framework of the research. After reviewing a few journal papers, we further noted these variables were common in many findings and studies, so their impact cannot be neglected. From Wolff et al. (2020), Hill (2015), and Liddle et al. (2018), it is clear court staff, society, and environmental factors were also important factors in inducing negative behaviors in youth, which provoke them to recommit crimes. Therefore, the involvement of covariables cannot be denied, and they were added to the tables and figures section to show their effect in statistical terms to determine whether they have a significant effect or not.

Therefore, many parameters and data were listed in the tables. For the interpretation of results, first, we created a table with seven columns, where each of the intervention times and statistical data were added. Then the data were computed according to the t -test and f -test to determine the trueness of the hypothesis. Another calculation was for the table where the factors that affect juvenile recidivism are listed. The findings from the seven selected papers for the data were added for the t -test analysis and the f -test variance analysis to uncover their significance. We estimated the parameters in this case, where an estimated mean was already decided, and there was a

true probability value over a confidence interval of 95%, so the value from the data was compared with the estimated ones to obtain results from the tabulated data. The estimated values were retrieved from secondary source results, and the values were realistic based on the observed range. The standard method to apply these formulas and techniques was followed to ensure proper implementation. Therefore, this process outlines whether the quality of these programs was different or not and whether there was a difference in the impact of the factors that affect juvenile recidivism.

This data analysis plan was followed to ensure there was no loophole in the results section, and everything was calculated per the provision of quantities from the existing sources. The data and its relevant source are cited in the table for reference, and the calculations are disseminated before writing the conclusion. Therefore, we conclude this cross-sectional quantitative study without missing any key aspects, irrespective of a few limitations that are a part of every research. The limitations of this study will be explained in the later sections. The study will continue per the data analysis plan, as described.

Threats to Validity

External Validity

Unlike the other research studies, several external validity threats are associated with this one. The first one is testing reactivity, which is likely due to the difference in the sample size of the data and the variability of the approaches used by the seven researchers. All seven approaches are different; while applying a *t*-test, false data might

affect the testing. Second, the data selection can be wrong while conducting the test. That means some values might be overly significant to confirm the test or extra small to affect the validity of the rest of the data. Moreover, one of the already visible threats is the experimental variables that appeared during the literature review. We found three variables while conducting the review: court staff, society, and environmental stressors. Moreover, the approach used in this study was the comparison of multiple programs used by juvenile courts. Seven programs were under study, and analyzing them through a cross-sectional analysis might be a threat due to the vastness of the data—which might not answer the relevant questions that arise during the research. Therefore, a few external validity threats were avoided through means of proper tabulation of the data and calculations in Excel to avoid human error.

Internal Validity

The internal validity of the results is threatened because there is a rich history available for juvenile recidivism and the programs associated with its reduction. However, the historical sources are not a part of the data; still, there is a chance that a chunk of older statistics might lie as an outlier. That can be deducted from the data when added or found because it might affect the results. Another internal validity threat is using experimental data by the authors of secondary sources. This is a threat and a possible advantage; the research will be valid if the data are valid. However, if the data are expired from their experimental stage, this could cause issues. The experimental data for this study are recent and valid, so this threat is not probable. However, it's possible the

selected data do not follow the study requirements, and sources are likely selected with biased thinking toward a particular intervention/program. However, this threat is addressed because, even if the author of this study might be biased toward one source, the author of the secondary source has gathered primary data to verify their stance logically. Moreover, every statement and all data are countered with a logical answer to avoid theoretical or imaginary inferences for the reader. Therefore, the internal threats are not too risky.

Construct Validity

Two key threats to construct validity are the improper standard selection for the hypothesis and the inability to control the unexpected variables. The standardization is an important aspect where the standard mean, variance, and confidence interval is selected prior to conducting the research (Lee, 2016). In this case, this threat was satisfied because the confidence interval was selected per standard research, but the standard mean was not selected until the data were tabulated. This approach was valid because once the data were listed, they allowed for having a mean and variance to verify the hypothesis. Therefore, this construct validity threat was effectively catered to. The second threat was the appearance of unexpected variables found while conducting the literature review. In most cases, researchers do not realize that unexpected factors have appeared, which is a red flag for the research. However, we found various factors that we controlled before computing the results. To control them effectively, we changed our approach and added them to the second table for hypothesis testing, which improved our research. Therefore,

the two threats to construct validity were attended to and avoided to the best of our ability.

Ethical Procedures

In any research framework, researchers must avoid ethical issues. If research is unethical, it will not be accepted by peers or published. The current research did not violate ethical procedures; the data used were secondary, and they required proficient citations everywhere where the information was borrowed. In this case, getting permission to use the data was not an issue because the journals selected were available online and accessible for everyone. However, we can manipulate the data to create this study. According to ethical standards, plagiarizing is not allowed, so all the borrowed information except statistics is paraphrased.

Moreover, the paraphrased information is cited following APA 7 format, properly crediting researchers' work. Therefore, the ethical issue of citing and referencing was properly documented; there was no borrowed information in this study that was not cited or acknowledged correctly. Subsequently, this study fulfills the ethical standards of research and is credible because it does not reveal any critical information or personal information about the research subjects. I obtained approval from the Institutional Review board (IRB) of Walden University, approval number 08-26-22-0758483, prior to conducting this study.

Summary

The design and methodology of this research applied to cross-sectional quantitative analyses, where seven studies that assessed the programs to reduce juvenile recidivism were used. The methodology was applied after the data collection, treatment, and study results through the *t*-test and ANOVA variance test. Those two tests were defined in this chapter, including the layout of the data analysis. The selected method was appropriate for the hypotheses testing; there was sufficient data available in the literature. The extensive literature review provided enough recent data that can be statistically studied to verify or deny the RQ. Therefore, the methodology and study design were clear; in the next section, the results will outline where the data were collected and tabulated in graphical form, then we conducted calculations to share the results of this study.

Chapter 4: Results

To evaluate the difference in court ordered sanctions, I tabulated the data of the seven mentioned papers in the results heading of this section. This section solely focuses on the data and calculations, I applied a t test to the secondary data collected. This test was applied using statistical tools to find accurate answers that can verify that the hypothesis is correct or incorrect. The method for how these steps were done and what order would be followed was explained in the previous section. A detailed research methodology and its application were also explained in the previous section, where the modified RQ and hypothesis were also added. Now the focus is on data collection in terms of the numbers and statistics that were used from each article and the treatment of that data through statistical techniques, t tests, and ANOVA variance tests. At the end of this section, it is clear if the hypothesis was accepted or rejected. Therefore, this section is the most critical because it requires proficiency in statistical analysis and proper data selection from the existing sources. Moreover, there is a need to consider the factors found while conducting the literature review as parameters of the research to state conclusions in the form of summarized results, along with the main factors that affect juvenile recidivism.

Data Collection

The following is information on the seven different types of therapies and their collected data from secondary sources. The first set of collected data came from a randomized controlled trial conducted in 2009, where 48 juvenile sexual offenders in

Florida were provided multisystematic therapy (see Dopp et al., 2020). The population sample was not large, but the results were convincing through a comparative analysis of community services. In addition, the research followed up with the subjects at a mean age of 22.9 to determine the recidivism rates.

The second set of collected data come from another randomized control trial with 113 adolescents who were court-ordered for referral treatment in 2018 (see Liddle et al., 2018). Multidimensional family therapy was applied to these research subjects. After 2 months, the therapy significantly affected these youth as recidivism rates decreased.

Functional family therapy was applied in 2017 to 25,000 juveniles using structural equation modeling; the effect of this therapy was evaluated to examine childhood adversities (Wolff & Baglivio, 2017). This helped in understanding why adolescents developed a criminal nature and how functional family therapy helped them mend their ways. This technique is applied by involving the family through proper discussions and asking them to treat children with love because they might commit crimes due to taunts and hardships.

Twenty-five thousand juveniles in the United States were provided emotional balancing through strategies such as reengagement with society and friendly ties with parents in 2020 (Wolff et al., 2020). The results did not show the significant effect of this strategy, as many juveniles did not show up for this activity and continued their lives in the same way they did in the past. The statistics related to this research are shared in the results sections, along with the application of the *t*-test analysis.

In 2011, 273 juveniles aged 13 to 17 were comparatively analyzed by dividing them into groups (Calleja et al., 2016). Here, 175 male juvenile offenders were provided specialized reentry services, and the rest of the juveniles were provided with basic reentry services. The results of this study showed that specialized training allowed the juveniles to reenter society with positive energy such that they reengaged with society and continued living as model citizens. The research has statistically shown how both techniques affected juvenile recidivism rates.

Other data used came from a secondary study employed to find the impact of education on juvenile recidivism. Here, the researchers studied 1.5 million juveniles arrested in 2015; they were educated properly about the societal norms and living optimistically (Hill, 2015). They were taught the importance of positivity in life, which reduced recidivism.

Finally, the experiment of restitution among 775 juveniles can be seen after the completion of a survey from the Pennsylvania State Police Department. These participants were fined per court orders, and, due to those fines, they became indebted. The impact of restitution as a court-ordered sanction was evaluated in this research.

The data from these seven sources were used, and the results placed in the tables in the results section. A *t* test was applied to verify the hypothesis. The data were selected carefully and were credible from Florida's perspective because the target population of this study was juveniles in Florida.

Treatment and/or Intervention Fidelity

For the treatment of these datasets, there was a need for the implementation of statistical analysis through the t test and ANOVA variance test. These two methods were hypothesis testing methods that, through a statistical approach, provided a number that explicates the correctness of a hypothesis. For this reason, I considered a few assumptions like standard mean and values. I also considered a confidence interval of 95%, and formulas were applied according to the data plotted in the table. There was no single sample in the cross-sectional study; rather, different samples from seven studies were used. Thus, first, against each study's intervention, its sample size and results in the form of a percentage were disseminated to compare with the standard values. The table was developed first. Then, using a t test, the values were placed in the formula to find the trueness of the hypothesis. The table allowed me to find the differences in the quality of each of the programs because the numeric value allows readers to see the difference in the stats and know which methodology or the court-ordered sanction is the best for youth. A proper analysis is demonstrated in the next section through the effective use of statistical methods. Therefore, the report includes descriptive statistics and the information of the tables described in written expression and with the explained results.

Study Results

I found the following statistics from journal papers published between 2004 and 2020. All these statistics were gathered after careful organization of the data and study of the sources. These sources provided experimental data and statistical results of each of

the seven therapies under consideration. These seven programs were multisystematic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, functional family therapy, secure-care and emotional balancing programs, specialized reentry programs, educational therapy, and restitution. All these programs are described with their key results and findings. After a detailed description, each of the findings were placed in the tables to calculate the data by applying the t test and ANOVA test. After that, I designed a figure for the factors that affect juvenile recidivism. It includes all the factors considered beforehand and the ones found after the literature review. I also plotted a graph accordingly to show the effect of each of the programs. This line graph helps identify the differences in the quality of the programs and uncover which programs are best for juveniles in Florida.

Dopp et al. (2020), in their research, mentioned the findings of Borduin et al. (2009). The randomized controlled trial conducted by Borduin et al. showed positive results for sexual and nonsexual offenders, where the impact was greater on sexual offenders. It was observed that the recidivism rate for sexual offenders was 46%, and, for nonsexual offenders, it was 58%, which was reduced after implementing multisystemic therapy. This therapy was applied to a sample size of 48 people. The follow-up after 8.9 years showed that only 8% of sexual offenders recommitted crimes, and only 29% of nonsexual offenders recommitted crimes (Borduin et al., 2009). This demonstrates that recidivism rates were reduced due to the implementation of this therapy. This therapy was a community-based treatment, where the court asks the community to be friendly with juveniles who reenter society to assure them that they can return to life without

being discriminated against. This therapy is more effective for sexual offenders because it is a behavioral therapy that makes youth realize they are in the wrong by getting involved in such activities.

To reduce crime rates related to substance abuse, multidimensional family therapy was provided to the largely male 113 adolescents (i.e., around 75%; Liddle et al., 2018). These juveniles from Florida were provided this therapy; it was observed that recidivating related to substance abuse was reduced from 51% to 24% among the research subjects. The research demonstrated these statistics through randomized controlled trials. The results showed that the impact of this therapy on juveniles was effective because it achieved the aim of reducing juvenile recidivism. Multidimensional family therapy was used for delinquents who have behavioral issues due to the influence of drugs in their lives; in this case, along with therapy, these criminals were provided the opportunity to receive help from their families (Shelef et al., 2005). This suggests the alliance of parents and therapist is due to a court order. The impact of this therapy was noticeable because the statistics showed a sharp decrease in the delinquent behavior of juveniles. The quality of this program was comparable with multisystematic therapy.

Functional family therapy was applied to 25,000 juveniles in the United States, where the results showed negative emotions were 37.6% probable without the use of functional family therapy. However, through the application of this therapy, the probability of juvenile recidivism was reduced to 6.1%. This shows that functional family therapy improves the delinquent behavior of many youth with different convictions.

Wolff and Baglivio (2017) identified these probability statistics using statistical analysis, and their findings were used for the comparative statistical analysis in this study.

Functional family therapy involves the contextual and behavioral analysis of juveniles. After analyzing their behaviors and family history, the therapist suggested ways the family can improve positivity in the lives of juveniles. Family trauma at a young age harms adolescents and may involve them in crimes. To help juveniles, there is a need for special recommended programs, such as functional family therapy, that guides youths to act morally while living as model citizens.

Wolff et al. (2020) applied the emotional balancing program, such that they checked the validity of emotion balancing among 2022 juveniles in the United States. They found that 65.4% of the juveniles were arrested for recidivating in 2020. Still, due to the implementation of this program, a reduction of 12.86% was found, and juvenile recidivism dropped down to 52.54% (Wolff et al., 2020). This means that emotional balancing programs can affect juvenile recidivism not at a greater significant level but at an optimum level. An emotional balancing program is a self-control program that teaches people to keep their nerves calm and remain clear-headed to maintain positive energy, guiding them toward the right path. This activity not only allows juveniles to stay calm but also to remain on the right track. Hence, this activity was assessed for its impact and compared with other programs to see which one was the most effective program for counseling juveniles and reducing juvenile recidivism.

I conducted a comparative analysis among two groups; the total research subjects were 273 juveniles. One group was a controlled group of 156 juveniles who were treated with basic reentry programs. At the same time, the other was an experimental group of 117 juveniles who were treated per a specialized reentry program. The results showed that recidivism in the controlled group with a basic reentry program was 21%, whereas, with the use of a specialized reentry program, juvenile recidivism was reduced to 16% (Calleja et al., 2016). This shows that the impact of specialized reentry programs was noticeable on juveniles, especially sexual offenders, because the technique was six times more effective than on nonsexual offenders. This program was a systematic way to properly treat juveniles, improving their cognitive development and making them realize the importance of social norms and etiquette. The program guided them regarding the different opportunities they can explore after reentry to society from jail. They were taught that people, over time, do forget and will socialize with them if they exhibit examples of good conduct. Thus, this strategy was demonstrated in the paper, and its statistics were used for the *t*-test analysis.

According to Hill (2015),

Recent research indicates recidivism rates in the United States are about 60%. The Bureau of Justice Statistics conducted a longitudinal study over a 5 year time span of inmates released in 2005 and found among the prisoners from the thirty states that participated, 67.8% were rearrested for a felony or serious misdemeanor within 3 years and 76.9% were rearrested within 5 years after release. (p. 2)

The recidivism rate before educational reforms was 79.6%. Still, after the implementation of educational reforms, it reduced to 48.4%, where 31.2% is the difference between the rate of recidivism that was inferred from the overall study (Hill, 2015). The reduction was due to the education of juvenile offenders. In the past, juvenile offenders were not easily integrated into society; society rejected them altogether. Educating offenders in a positive environment reduces recidivism rates. The country saved a lot of money, and that saved money was allocated to trials and other expenses at correctional facilities. This intervention resulted in more than a 30% reduction due to the efficacy of the intervention because education opens up the cognitive ability and minds of juveniles, which helps them see the right way to live life. Hill (2015) gathered many sources, and quantitatively explained education's positive impact through secondary data. The researcher used their statistics to apply the *t*-test analysis and justify the hypothesis.

Ruback et al. (2018) conducted an experimental study on 775 research subjects; first, they conducted a survey and found only 9% of people paid the full restitution, and 48% of people paid some of the amounts of restitution, with almost no impact on the rate of recidivism. Thus, this program was not as effective as others and did not show a change, as 159 subjects were rearrested. Moreover, 20% of people were still at risk of recidivating, which was the same as before. Therefore, the restitution program was an outlier in the study, which does not affect the results. Thus, this study was included in the data but not discussed. Restitution is a common program utilized by the juvenile justice system, where the court asks juveniles to pay for their crimes in the form of fines. This

technique is not practical, however. Many people do not pay their fines, which causes debt and may lead them to commit other crimes. Therefore, I plotted the data in Table 1 as follows: *t*-test analysis were implemented on the table data, and then the results were written afterward.

Table 1*Secondary Collected Data From the Seven Papers*

Therapy	Sample size	Previously reported value %	Value after application of the program %	Difference %
Multisystematic therapy	48	52	18.5	33.5
Multidimensional family therapy	113	51	24	27
Functional family therapy	25,000	37.6	6.1	31.5
Emotional balancing program	2,022	65.4	52.54	12.86
Specialized reentry vs. basic Reentry program	273	21	16	5
Education	1.2 million	76.9	48.4	31.2
Restitution	775	20	20	0

Note. The data of the table come from the following sources:

Calleja, N. G., Dadah, A. M., Fisher, J., & Fernandez, M. (2016). Reducing juvenile recidivism through specialized reentry services: A second chance act project. *Journal of Juvenile Justice, 5*(2), 1.

Dopp, A. R., Perrine, C. M., Parisi, K. E., Hill, M. A., & Caldwell, M. F. (2020). Evidence-based assessment and treatment approaches for adolescents who have engaged in sexually abusive behavior. *The Wiley handbook of what works with sexual offenders: Contemporary perspectives, in theory, assessment, treatment, and prevention, 265–278.*

- Hill, A. (2015). Education reduces recidivism. *Loyola University Chicago School of Law*
- Liddle, H. A., Dakof, G. A., Rowe, C. L., Henderson, C., Greenbaum, P., Wang, W., & Alberga, L. (2018). Multidimensional family therapy as a community-based alternative to residential treatment for adolescents with substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 90*, 47–56.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsat.2018.04.011>
- Ruback, R. B., Knoth, L. K., Gladfelter, A. S., & Lantz, B. (2018). Restitution payment and recidivism. *Criminology & Public Policy, 17*(4), 789–813.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12401>
- Wolff, K. T., & Baglivio, M. T. (2017). Adverse childhood experiences, negative emotionality, and pathways to juvenile recidivism. *Crime & Delinquency, 63*(12), 1495–1521. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128715627469>
- Wolff, K. T., Limoncelli, K. E., & Baglivio, M. T. (2020). The effect of program staffing difficulties on changes in dynamic risk and reoffending among juvenile offenders in residential placement. *Justice Quarterly, 0*(0), 1–28.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2020.1825774>

T-Test Results

We applied the paired t -test where two groups of the data were collected; one was the previous rate of recidivism, and the other was the current rate of recidivism. The data were assumed to have the same value of variance. Here group 1 had the previous recidivism rate before applying to the program, and group 2 had the recidivism rate after applying to the program. Table 2 shows the pair samples statistics.

Table 2

Pair Samples Statistics

Therapy values		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Therapy value before application of the program	46.6571	7	22.11657	8.35928
	Therapy value after application of the program	26.51	7	17.304	6.540

Note. Paired sample statistics showing the mean, sample size, standard deviation, and standard mean error for therapy values before and after application of the program.

The mean of group 1 was calculated as 46.657, and the mean of group 2 was 26.51; the standard deviation of group 1 was 22.117, and group 2 was 17.304 over a sample size $n = 7$, where n is the number of programs considered for the research. Table 3 shows paired differences.

Table 3*Paired Samples Test*

Therapy values		Paired differences					t	df	Sig. (2-Tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
Pair					Lower	Upper			
1	Therapy value before application of the program - Therapy value after application of the program	20.15143	13.93293	5.26615	7.26562	33.03724	3.827	6	.009

Note. Paired sample t test showing the 95% confidence interval of the difference between the two-therapy group means. The p -value and computed t -value are shown.

The paired t -test shows $t(6) = 3.827, p < 0.009$. Due to the means of the two groups and the direction of the t -value, we can conclude there was a statistically significant decrease in therapy value after the application of the program from 46.657 ± 22.12 m to 26.51 ± 17.3 ($p < 0.009$)—a reduction of 20.15 ± 13.93 . This suggests the current data shows a significant effect, and the alternative hypothesis is supported from the t -test analysis. Table 4 shows the ANOVA tests.

Table 4*ANOVA Tests*

Groups	Sum of squares	<i>df</i>	Mean square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Between groups	1421.280	1	1421.280	3.605	.082
Within groups	4731.459	12	394.288		
Total	6152.739	13			

Note. The ANOVA test showing the significance of the mean difference between the two-therapy group means. The *p*-value and computed *F*-value are shown.

The difference between groups was not statistically significant, as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(1,12) = 3.605, p = .082$). A Tukey post-hoc test was unnecessary because there were only two groups. We can conclude there was no statistically significant decrease in therapy value after the program's application. This suggests the current data show no significant effect, and the zero hypothesis was true from the one-way ANOVA analysis. Table 5 shows factors that affect juvenile recidivism.

Table 5*Factors That Affect Juvenile Recidivism*

Known factors	Factors observed from the literature review
Environment at home, school, and neighborhoods.	Court staff
Parental stress	Society
Socioeconomic findings and economic problems	Environmental stressors
Mandatory sanctions	
Restitution	
Foster care	
Age and gender	

Note. These factors were evaluated through the studies and the findings from the overall study. Figure 1 shows the cyclical steps of this quantitative study.

Figure 1

Cyclic Steps of This Quantitative Study

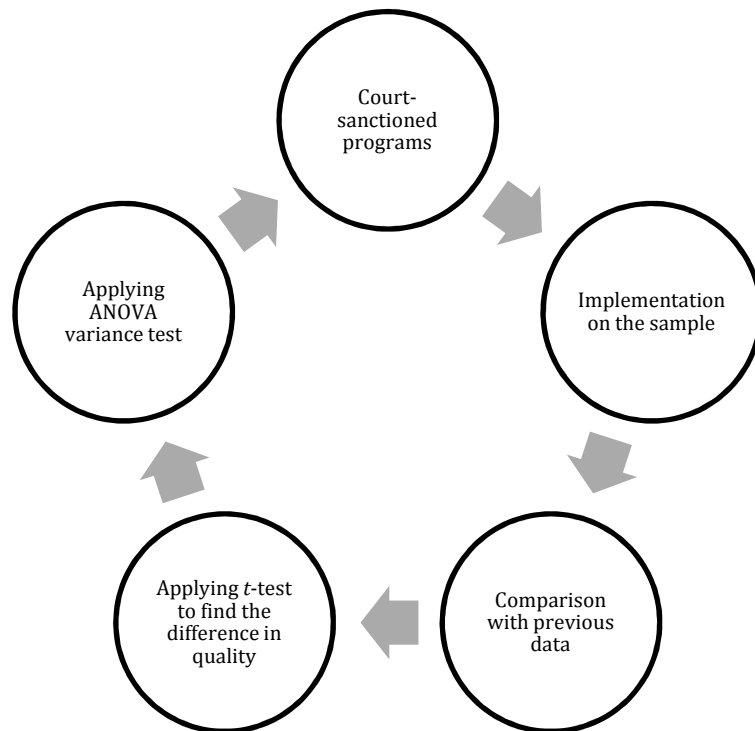
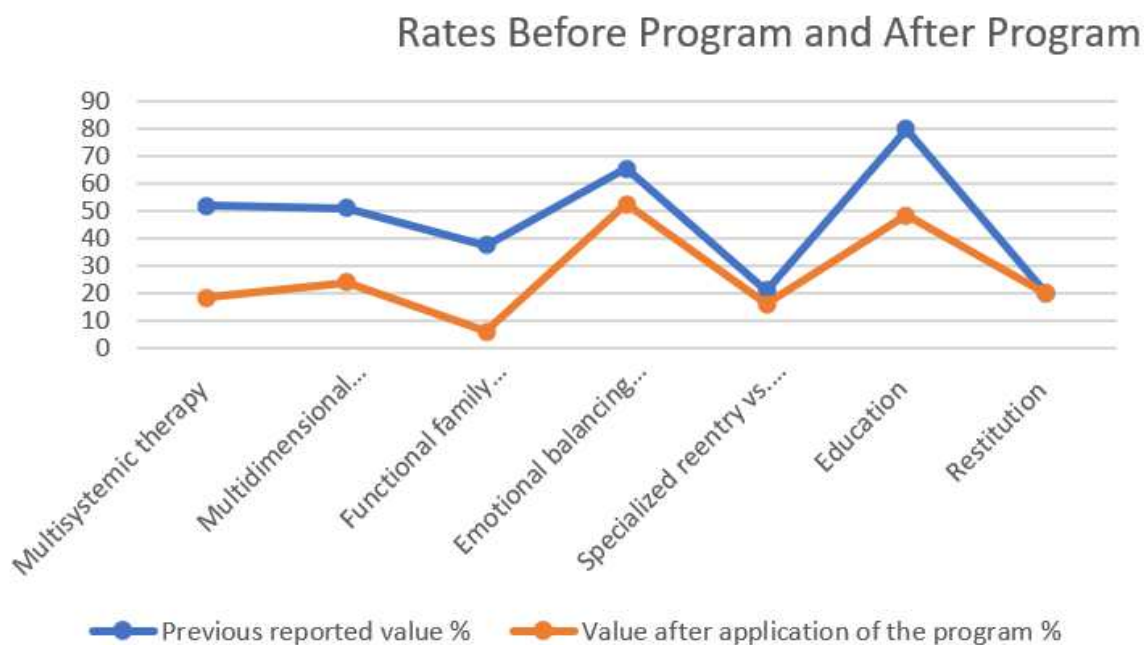


Figure 2

Line Graph for the Collected Data



Summary

The purpose of this study was to find the difference between the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions for juvenile recidivism beyond probation. The seven court-ordered sanctions for this study were multisystematic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, functional family therapy, secure-care and emotional balancing programs, specialized reentry programs, educational therapy, and restitution. To answer the RQ, we gathered data through a cross-sectional study of different journal papers that provided statistical evidence among a sample group on the impact of these sanctions on juvenile

recidivism. The *t*-test analysis and ANOVA variance test showed the *t* value and *f* values were less than the critical values, which suggests the null hypothesis is true. The null hypothesis states there are no statistically significant differences in the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation. Moreover, among these programs, there are a few that have a significant effect. However, the programs like restitution, specialized reentry, and emotional balancing programs show nonsignificant to no change. Education, multisystematic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, and functional family therapy have a significant impact. Judging from the differences in the quality aspect, there is no difference in their quality due to similar implementation and the ways opted by the juvenile justice system of Florida. Therefore, there is no difference in quality. Still, this suggests education, multisystematic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, and functional family therapy should be part of the juvenile justice system. In light of these findings, the last chapter focuses on the interpretation of these findings, the study limitations, the recommendations, the implications, and the conclusions.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Here I provide the interpretation, limitations, recommendations, and implications of the overall research, including references from other sources. Because juvenile recidivism among youth and adults is becoming a popular topic of research in criminology, it is important to thoroughly study court-ordered programs for such offenders, as well as the development of these sanctions. This research was a cross-sectional quantitative study involving statistical results to answer the question of whether there is a difference in the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation. I used a quantitative methodology throughout the paper, and data were collected through secondary data collection; data from seven different research papers were analyzed. To analyze the data, I applied a *t* test and ANOVA test and revealed that the null hypothesis was true. I applied the tests using their findings and sample; it was evident that the overall quality of these programs was not significant. The seven programs examined and used were multisystemic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, functional family therapy, secure-care and emotional balancing programs, specialized reentry programs, educational therapy, and restitution. After analyzing the results, I concluded there were no statistically significant differences in the overall quality of court-ordered sanctions that affect juvenile recidivism beyond probation. The research also endorses that, among the seven different programs scrutinized for this study from the various research papers, the strategies of education, multisystematic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, and functional family therapy for the offenders to

reduce recidivism should be part of the juvenile justice system. These findings are used for further interpretations in the following section. I explain the findings using the existing literature for interpretation and to improve the credibility of these study findings with the present literature.

Interpretation of the Findings

The above quantitative research revealed that there is no significant difference in the quality of court-ordered sanctions beyond mandatory sanctions. This study was centered around Florida, so most sources were from Florida journals. Moreover, the conceptual analysis of the study was based on Agnew's GST. The results confirmed that juvenile recidivism exists due to societal factors and the stressors that society induces in terms of politics and the economy. Agnew et al. (2008) stated that socioeconomic factors are essential stressors that affect the mentality of youth to the extent that they get involved in crimes. These crimes are due to the stresses they feel, and, from the analysis, stressors increase the rate of juvenile recidivism. A more positive impact of psychological therapies, like multisystematic therapy and multidimensional therapy, shows that people are affected by such stressors. Youth need the correct implementation of these therapies to see better results and improved quality of life.

Another aspect gathered from the conceptual framework's study and in accordance with the GST suggests the environments at home, the neighborhood, and school are also responsible for provoking youth (Barnert et al., 2015). This indicates that environmental stressors also affect the criminal activity of youth, and they need to be

catered to through proper therapies. The statistics examined since 2005 for this study identified no differences in the overall quality of juvenile stationed programs. Some of these programs were independently significant, but cumulatively they had no significant effect. In confirmation of these findings from the research and the findings from the existing research, Lucero et al. (2015) presented that an ecological framework is required. Lucero et al. used data from existing papers in their research and found that the delinquent behavior of juveniles must be addressed before it becomes too late for Americans to save their youth.

Florida is at high risk because the recidivism rate is as high as 90% (Lucero et al., 2015). Lucero et al. (2015) found that the juveniles need to be attended to properly through an ecological framework, which means a positive environment should be provided to the youth. One of the key changes in youth behavior is due to the adversities they suffered at a young age; these traumatic moments lead to behavioral changes, ultimately leading to dissatisfaction and the commission of crimes (Wolff & Baglivio, 2019). From the literature review, it is evident there is a need to determine the differences in the quality of the court-ordered programs because there is no evidence proving whether there is a difference in quality. Physically approaching different programs, one might be deluded by the fact there are differences in quality. In this regard, Perrault et al. (2017) suggested that risk assessment has been the focus of researchers for a long time, and they have been using various tools to evaluate the risks associated with juvenile recidivism.

Nonetheless, no one has assessed the quality of these programs, nor have they tested the differences between them—this aspect and the research loophole increases the study's eminence. Perrault et al. (2017) used a risk assessment framework. They suggested future prospects of their research must test the differences in the quality of the court-ordered sanctions to affect juvenile recidivism. Other researchers have also discussed the importance of the study's RQ and suggested future researchers need to focus on this topic. Tanner-Smith et al. (2016) conducted an extensive literature review on court-ordered sanctions. They shared that the quality of these programs was low and must be managed effectively by the justice system. Tanner-Smith et al. found the quality of these programs was poor, but they did not evaluate how poor and whether the quality was significantly lower or not. They did not conduct a comparative analysis; as in this research, it is evident that many programs can be compared. Finally, Butts and Ptaff (2019) suggested that, due to the involvement of nongovernmental institutes in the United States, the quality of these court-ordered sanctions has been neglected and become an even bigger issue over time.

A review of the literature is required to address the researcher's concerns and the study's limitations. Searching for the keywords or the title of this research topic produced limited findings regarding the comparative quality of stationed programs. Thus, the statistics, theoretical framework, and literature review were conducted by rearranging keywords and finding detrimental data on juvenile recidivism in Florida. These pieces of evidence show that bits of information helped select appropriate data to expand on the

RQ through a statistical approach. The research has provided ample data for statistical analysis, and the data were easily analyzed, and it was explicated that there was no significant difference in the quality of court-ordered sanctions (i.e., the seven programs).

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of this research is the use of secondary data, because primary data, through surveys and questionnaires, were not collected. In this study, I relied on the data collected by other researchers but made sure the studies were ethical, logical, and applicable. The second limitation was the use of the seven specific programs; the programs selected were probably in use by the juvenile justice system of Florida. However, these programs might not be the best court-ordered interventions, and there may be other interventions that could affect quality. Third, the focus of the study was Florida's justice system; only sources related to the United States and Florida were used. The aspects of juvenile recidivism in other countries were neglected, and the sample size used was variable according to the data selected. Another limitation was that the data time constraints were different according to the interventions and the data collected by the researchers for the relevant studies. Thus, variable time constraints over 2005 until 2020 were discussed in the previous sections and statistically analyzed.

The research data collected could have been biased from the researcher's perspective because most of the studies were from Florida's perspective, so this state's culture could have been promoted and reflected in their findings. Another limitation of the study was that it lacked a qualitative aspect because only the factors affecting juvenile

recidivism were stated and not evaluated using the research techniques. Finally, the focus of the study was the SES of juveniles rather than other stressors, so this could be a delimitation of the study. However, these are a few limitations encountered by almost every secondary research study due to the lack of primary data or experimental setup. However, I ensured the selected sources were credible and had few limitations that could affect the results. Thus, the limitations were effectively dealt with, and the results were statistically calculated to affirm the study's hypotheses.

Recommendations

After conducting the research and quantitative analysis, I verified the null hypothesis: There were no significant differences in the quality due to the loopholes in the juvenile justice system and the involvement of nongovernment staff. Thus, due to the RQ and its answer, I have a few recommendations in terms of research limitations and the implementation of the programs considered.

First, the recommendations in the light of limitations include the use of primary research, survey-based study, and the involvement of qualitative aspects. For future researchers, this could be an opportunity to use this study as motivation to gather the data through primary sources. They should collect data first-hand and use it to find differences in program quality. This approach could verify the hypothesis in an even more proper way than the secondary research. Second, future researchers should use survey-based studies and questionnaires to expound the RQ through proper procedures and techniques. This method would allow the researchers to conduct the study themselves and find

credible data to improve the authenticity and validity of the research results. This approach can be applied now as a quantitative study through secondary research, and future researchers could compare the primary results with the secondary results after their analysis. Finally, from a limitations point of view, I recommend researchers implement a qualitative analysis as well. For every research topic, both qualitative and quantitative aspects should be considered. If both aspects are not present, then the research will still be incomplete. Because the RQ has been only approached quantitatively, there is a need for qualitative analysis. Thus, surveys and questionnaires from juveniles or the court staff can be compiled to uncover qualitative aspects like the factors that affect juvenile recidivism and the ways to reduce juvenile recidivism. These recommendations are helpful if future researchers want to contribute to the vast literature on juvenile recidivism.

Next, I discuss the recommendations of the programs covered in the methodology section. In this study, I discussed seven programs, revealing that psychology-related programs significantly reduced juvenile recidivism. However, their implementation needs specific changes to improve the reduction rate. Programs like multisystematic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, and functional family therapy are rarely applied by court orders, and even when they are applied, they are not effectively conducted. There is a need for reforms in the infrastructure of these therapies. New approaches and recommendations targeting juveniles' psychological requirements may yield improved program outputs and well-balanced youths. Second, restitution as a court-sanctioned

program does not affect youth, so it must not be considered because it only results in increased financial stress on juveniles, which leads them to recommit crimes and continue living with the same mindset. This is the most practiced program by the juvenile justice system of Florida; it must be stopped because it harms both youth and the country's economy. Therefore, an instant stop on restitution can help youth have a more positive outlook on life. Finally, education and emotional balancing techniques should be improved because they do not have a significant impact; however, if they are correctly applied, the situation will be different. Education plays a vital role in grooming youth, whereas emotional imbalances are the primary reason for the commission of crimes, so these two interventions hold immense importance. However, their improvisation is rarely discussed, requiring researchers' urgent attention. Future researchers should consider these recommendations because they could motivate them to create new concepts and challenge hypotheses, preferably through mixed methods involving a conceptual framework.

Implications

This section explains the implications of this study from the individual, family, and societal/policy changes in terms of methodology, theory, and the study results. From the individual perspective, there will be no changes if youth are punished by court rulings because there is no significant impact of court-ordered sanctions. At the individual level, youth are likely to recommit crimes after being punished by the juvenile court of Florida. This is inferred from the results of this study. If the recommendations are taken seriously,

youth may better understand themselves and societal norms and seek to remain law-abiding citizens. From a theoretical perspective, if the recommendations are applied, youth will live happily without feeling endangered by society, family, school, and their neighborhood, as the stressors are no longer as impactful. Thus, according to Agnew (1985), if these stressors are catered to, individuals will refrain from committing crimes. Considering the individual impact of the recommendations from the methodological point of view, the method suggests there is no significant impact of these programs. Thus, for individual changes, the recommendations are deemed necessary to improve the lives of youths.

Changes in family are also implied per the reforms in multisystematic therapy, functional family therapy, and multidimensional family therapy. The methodological point of view suggests the impact of these therapies individually is significant, but comparing these with the other programs makes them ineffective. As suggested by the recommendations, changes are required in these therapies to ensure families are aware of the stressors and adversities the youth face and to help them avoid criminal activity. Agnew's GST also applies to family-level implications, which suggests that families should remove strains from youths' lives to ensure they grow up in positive environments and spread positivity in society. The results also manifest a need for applying these recommendations because society at the family level is getting weaker because children feel unsafe at home and in their neighborhoods, which is stressful (Barnert et al., 2015).

The literature, methodology, results, and theory infer a need to change at the family level to improve the quality of court-ordered programs.

Finally, changes are required at the organizational and policy level because the juvenile justice system of Florida requires specific changes in its practices. They need to focus less on restitution and involve education and psychological therapies to help juveniles and improve the quality of their lives. The results and methodology of this study suggest a need for changes at the policy level of society. This means changes are required for the juvenile justice system of Florida. Court staff must implement feasible interventions to improve society on a grander scale. Comparing this aspect from the theoretical aspect, stressors need to be eliminated from society. Agnew's GST suggests strain-related factors should be eliminated from the juvenile justice system of Florida. Applying these recommendations can positively affect juveniles and society.

Conclusion

The above quantitative study has provided brief findings and summaries of the existing literature. First, I analyzed different studies using various journals gathered from online sources and then studied them from the RQ's theoretical and empirical points of view. After the literature review, I collected data from seven primary sources that entailed statistics related to the application of multisystemic therapy, multidimensional family therapy, functional family therapy, secure-care and emotional balancing programs, specialized reentry programs, educational therapy, and restitution. Then I applied a *t*-test analysis and ANOVA variance test, which explicated that the null hypothesis was correct

(i.e., there was no significant impact of these court-ordered programs beyond mandatory sanctions). Thus, there is a need for reforms in these programs and their implementation in Florida to improve the overall quality of sanctioned programs and promote positive social change.

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