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The Influence of Social Support on Recidivism of Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

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Walden University

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Walden University

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Alison Dockery

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Walden University
2019

Abstract

The Influence of Social Support on Recidivism of Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

by

Alison Dockery

MA, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, 2007

BS, Hampton University, 2005

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

Walden University

February 2019

Abstract

Individuals who are released from incarceration face many challenges with reintegration into the community, and it is important that they find stable environments to foster positive social integration. Family involved treatment programs have been shown to be successful in many areas for reentry. However, these programs lack information regarding the relationship between the individual's criminal history, risk of recidivism, and social support. This quantitative study was designed to evaluate the impact of social support on recidivism among participants. Secondary data were used from a 3-year period from a reentry program located in a large northeastern city and the Division of Criminal Justice Services. Data on social support were gathered from the family genograms completed by the family social worker prior to or immediately upon release. The individual's criminal history and recidivism risk assessment score were obtained from the Division of Criminal Justice Services and the Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS), respectively. The dependent variable was recidivism. The independent variables were perceived positive and conflicted social support, first time offender status, and risk assessment score derived from the COMPAS assessment. This research drew on the risk needs responsivity model, the good lives model, and Bowen's family systems model. Logistic regression analysis showed that there was a significant relationship between first time offender status and recidivism within the first 3 years of release, showing that first time offenders were less likely to recidivate. The findings from this study may lead to positive social change by providing data to improve post-release treatment for first time offenders.

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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to my family and friends. First, my mother and father, Ivy and Donovan, for their love, endless support, and encouragement. My sisters, Donna and Deanna, who constantly reminded me that I needed to keep working on this project so they can have the pleasure of calling me Doctor.

To my friends who have encouraged me through the ups, downs, late nights, and ramblings about my challenges with this project.

Thank you all for being my cheerleaders, providing me with your love and continuous support.

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Thank you to the reentry program administration and the staff at the program, for granting me access to the data. To the staff for helping me to pull the files out of the archives in the dark and dusty corners of the building and elsewhere.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Today, the US comprises 5% of the world population and has 25% of world prisoners. According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics (2014), an estimated 6,851,000 persons were under the supervision of adult correctional systems at year end 2014, which is about 1 in every 36 adults, 2,780 offenders per 100,000 U.S. adult residents, or 2.8% of the population (Kaeble, Glaze, Tsoutis, & Minton, 2015). United States' prisons are largely populated with individuals who are male, under the age of 40, disproportionately minority, and poorly educated.

Over 10,000 prisoners are released from America's state and federal prisons every week and return to their communities with fewer resources than when they were arrested. More than 650,000 ex-offenders are released from prison every year, and studies have shown that approximately two-thirds will likely be rearrested within 3 years of release. Durose, Cooper, and Snyder (2014) tracked 404,638 prisoners in 30 states after their release from prison for a 5-year period. The researchers found that about two-thirds (67.8%) of released prisoners were arrested for a new crime within 3 years, and three-quarters (76.6%) were arrested within 5 years. More than a third (36.8%) of all prisoners who were arrested within 5 years of release were arrested within the first 6 months after release, with more than half (56.7%) arrested by the end of the first year.

Most individuals are released from jail or prison and return to their communities to face numerous challenges such as education, housing, employment, and family relations. Incarceration affects not only the individual, but also the family and community. There are numerous reasons as to why individuals may recidivate and return

to prison. Those who are released back to the community are likely to recidivate due to committing a new crime or violating the rules of their supervision (Ostermann, 2012).

One area that researchers have found to foster successful reentry is social support and involvement. Social support contributes to helping formerly incarcerated individuals secure housing and employment (Fontaine, Gilchrist-Scott, & Denver, 2011). There is a lack of previous research that studies the influence of an individual's criminal history and risk assessment scores, in combination with family intervention program information and assessments (Fontaine, 2011; Fontaine, Gilchrist-Scott, Denver, & Rossman, 2012). In this research, I sought to fill that gap.

The potential social implications of this study include an improved understanding of how social support influences positive reentry into the community after incarceration. Individuals face many challenges, and familial support and strains can be influential on positive and negative behaviors. Previous researchers have investigated the importance of implementing services and treatments tailored to the needs of individuals (Fontaine, 2011; Fontaine et al., 2012, Charkoudian, Cosgrove, Ferrell, & Flower, 2012). Upon release from incarceration, an individual faces challenges with education, employment, housing, and financial support. Researchers have shown that social support is influential in reducing recidivism rates, but there is a lack of knowledge about how an individual's criminal history and risk assessment scores affect recidivism. In this study, I sought to add to the current literature by evaluating the impact of criminal history, recidivism risk assessment, and social support information.

Background of the Study

The United States has the highest incarceration rates in the world. When individuals are released from jail or prison, they return to the communities where they are likely to recidivate. Individuals released from prisons are likely to recidivate within 3 years of their release as a result of committing a new crime or violating the rules of their supervision (Cooper, Durose, & Snyder, 2014).

Incarceration affects a multitude of the individuals' connections including their community, family, and the individual themselves. When individuals are incarcerated they are removed from their communities, which leads to destabilization and concentration effects (Drakulich & Crutchfield, 2012). The influx and decrease of community members leads to unstable community relationships, increased concentrations of unemployed or underemployed individuals, and less civic participation and representation (Drakulich & Crutchfield, 2012).

The effects on family members and support systems of those who are formerly or currently incarcerated are also far reaching. Families of incarcerated individuals suffer from a loss of emotional wellbeing and also a strain on economic resources (Hannon & DeFina, 2012). The absence of a family member can lead to emotional and social isolation, and researchers have found a decrease in the marriage rate of communities impacted by high incarceration rates, but no decrease in the amount of child bearing (Clear, 2009). Previous research has established that the children of incarcerated parents have increased aggression and delinquency, decreased educational attainment, increased social isolation and stigma, and poor mental and behavioral health (Shannon & Uggen,

2012). Families become vulnerable to various psychosocial threats. Because the remaining parent is now the main source of income for the family, the children may lack supervision (Clear, 2009; Hannon & DeFina, 2012). Hyper-incarceration also may impact children by normalizing incarceration as an inevitability, thereby diminishing their fears of going to prison.” (Hannon & DeFina, 2012).

When an individual returns to the community from incarceration, they are likely to face a number of challenges. Depending on their release stipulations, they may be restricted in where they can live and where and when they can work, and they often face restrictions or regulations in areas such as employment, licensure, housing, voting, and receiving public assistance or benefits (Ewald, 2012).

Previous research on social support has mostly been qualitative in orientation, such as face-to-face interviews and case studies. Limitations of these methods are the small sample sizes and potential biases (Mowen & Visher, 2013). Much of the previous research also focuses on contact between the individual and family. In general, research has shown that family plays a central role in the lives of the formerly incarcerated (Charkoudian et al, 2012).

Incarceration has an effect not only the individual, but also the community and families. There is a growing corpus of literature that shows the importance of social support to those who have been formerly incarcerated, but additional investigation is needed to understand the influence of an individual’s criminal history and perceived social support. Increasing the understanding of community reentry staff about why social

support is important will contribute to integrating family systems into reentry services to help reduce recidivism and promote reintegration into society.

Social support and family involved treatment programs have been shown to be successful in many areas, but there is a lack information that also includes information about the individual's criminal history, recidivism risk assessment, and their perceptions of available social support (Fontaine, 2011; Fontaine et al., 2012). In this research, I sought to add to the current literature by assessing criminal history, recidivism risk assessment, and family intervention program information.

Problem Statement

Incarceration is an appropriate penalty for those who violate the rules and laws of society. A challenge that individuals face upon release is returning to their communities and becoming productive citizens. Incarceration has devastating and long-term effects on an individual and contributes to the poverty rate, long term unemployment, lack of education, exclusion from federal and state welfare benefits, and increased negative consequences that are passed on to their children, partners, spouses, and families (Hamilton, 2010; Ostermann, 2012; Shannon & Uggen, 2012).

Individuals released from incarceration generally face many challenges, such as finding stable employment and securing housing (Wildeman & Western, 2010). To assist with reintegration into the community, it is important that individuals find stable environments to foster positive social integration. With this research, I hoped to add to the scholarly understanding of what characteristics of parolees associated with social support are predictive of successful reentry.

Social supports play an important role for a successful community reentry by providing tangible support and resources (Fontaine et al., 2012). Previous research on social support has relied mostly on qualitative research, such as face-to-face interviews and case studies. Limitations of this method are the small sample sizes and potential selection bias (Mowen & Visher, 2015). Research has shown that social supports plays a central role in the lives of the formerly incarcerated by assisting them with housing and referrals to employment opportunities (Charkoudian et al., 2012).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to add to the current literature on the importance of social support for formerly incarcerated individuals. In the study, I focused on evaluating data collected from a family reentry program located within the greater New York City area. Data analysis included a review of participants' risk of recidivism, the amount of perceived social support, and actual recidivism data.

The dependent variable was recidivism among participants. The independent variables I considered in this study were perceived positive and conflicted social support, and risk assessment scores derived from the COMPAS assessment. COMPAS is an assessment tool used with offenders to support treatment, programming, and case management decisions. It relies on both static and dynamic data to generate risk and need results.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In this research, I evaluated the characteristics of parolees associated with social support and successful reentry. The dependent variable of the study was the recidivism

rates of individuals in the reentry program. The independent variables I analyzed consisted of the contributing factors of participants in a community reentry program and individuals who were enrolled in the family reentry program.

The research questions (RQs) are as follows:

RQ1: Is perceived positive social support, as measured by the family genogram, related to recidivism within the first three years of release from incarceration?

*H*₀1: Perceived positive social support is not significantly related to recidivism.

*H*₁1: Perceived positive social support is significantly related to recidivism.

RQ2: Is perceived conflicted social support, as measured by the family genogram, related to recidivism within the first 3 years of release from incarceration?

*H*₀2: Perceived conflicted social support is not significantly related to actual recidivism.

*H*₁2: Perceived conflicted social support is significantly related to actual recidivism.

RQ3: Is risk of recidivism, as measured by the risk of recidivism score on the COMPAS assessment, related to recidivism within the first 3 years of release from incarceration?

*H*₀3: The risk assessment score is not significantly related to recidivism.

*H*₁3: The risk assessment score is significantly related to recidivism.

RQ4: Is being a first-time offender related to recidivism within the first 3 years of release from incarceration?

*H*₀4: Being a first-time offender is not significantly related to recidivism.

*H*₁₄: Being a first-time offender is significantly related to recidivism.

Theoretical Foundation

This research was based on two criminal justice theoretical models and one family support model: the risk needs responsivity model, the good lives model, and the family systems theory. The risk needs responsivity (RNR) model was first developed by Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge (1990) to reduce recidivism. The RNR model integrates frustration, aggression, and strain theory while also giving due attention to self-regulation, personality, attitudes, associates, and criminal history (Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2011). RNR is based on three principles: the risk principle, the need principle, and the responsivity principle. The risk principle involves matching the level of program intensity to offender risk level with intensive treatment for high-risk offenders and minimal intervention for low risk offenders. The need principle is based on targeting criminogenic needs, or needs that are functionally related to criminal behavior, and includes antisocial attitudes or substance abuse issues. Last, the responsivity principle is based on matching the style and mode of intervention to the offender's learning style and abilities.

The good lives model (GLM) was developed by Ward et al. (2012) and augments the RNR principles of effective correctional intervention (Willis, Prescott, & Yates, 2013). The GLM theorizes that individuals offend because they are attempting to secure a need or a valued outcome in their lives; some individuals attempt to fulfill these needs in a criminal manner (Purvis, Ward, & Willis, 2011). GLM is a strength-based model where interventions focus on helping the individual gain the skills that he/she needs to obtain a

valued need or outcome and assists individuals with obtaining them in a pro-social manner rather than via a criminal offence. Both theoretical models take into account the challenges that individuals face when they reenter the community, and both are framed in terms of addressing deficits and acquiring skills.

Family systems theory views families as living organisms and stresses boundaries, rules, expectations, and behaviors that help the family maintain equilibrium. Bowen posited that families profoundly affect members' thoughts, feelings, and actions. Individuals seek out the others attention, approval, and support, and react to the needs expectations and upsets of others (Kerr, 2000). These connections and relations make family members interdependent. A change in an individual's functioning can predict and affect the functioning of others within the family system.

Nature of the Study

This was a quantitative study using secondary data obtained between 2012 and 2015, from a New York City Reentry Program. I gathered data on social support from the family genograms completed by the family social worker prior to or immediately upon release of a participant. Family genograms were completed by the social worker with the client and were used to help identify and evaluate relationships (positive or conflicted), and support systems across generations and within family systems. This variable for perceived social support using the genogram was the number of individuals that were identified as positive or conflicted. Positive support includes individuals identified by the client who are instrumental or helpful with their reintegration into the community. Examples of positive support are individuals who assist with emotional, financial, or

material well-being. Conflicted support are relationships having interpersonal tension or struggles. Family genograms reflect the client's point of view of family composition, relationships, and patterns.

In this study, I focused on evaluating the impact of social support on recidivism rates among participants. Included data was the individual's criminal history and the Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS) Risk and Need Assessment scores. The COMPAS Risk and Need Assessment is a fourth generation assessment tool that is used by reentry service providers with offenders to support treatment, programming, and case management decisions (Zhang et al., 2011). COMPAS relies on both static and dynamic data to generate risk and need results. Static risk factors are typically historical, unlikely to change, and not amenable to intervention efforts. Static data used to calculate risk of recidivism include criminal involvement: age at first arrest, current age, severity, and versatility of criminal history. Dynamic factors, by contrast, may change over time and include substance abuse, criminal personality traits, and criminal associates (Fass, Heilbrun, Dematteo, & Fretz, 2008). These static and dynamic factors are also included in the calculation of the risk of recidivism score.

I obtained demographic data from both the database of the family reentry program and the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services. Recidivism information was tracked by myself, using data from the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services and The Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.

I analyzed data using SPSS version 21.0 software. I used logistic regression analysis to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions. Logistic regression is suited for testing hypotheses about relationships between categorical outcome variables and one or more categorical predictor variables (Peng, Lee, & Ingersoll, 2002).

Definitions

Case management: Social workers or mental health workers who help to connect, secure, and coordinate continued social, mental health, medical, and other services for a client upon release. The staffs at the reentry program also monitor clients' use of services.

Community supervision: When individuals are incarcerated it is assumed that they are receiving treatment services to prepare them for release from prison. To improve public safety, they are followed by supportive services (parole or probation) in the community to facilitate successful completion of their sentence. The individual is assigned an officer who supervises them in the community post release. The officer ensures that the individual follows the stipulations and directives that were given to them as requirements of their release from prison.

Offender: An individual found guilty, convicted, and sentenced for a criminal act and remains under the jurisdiction of a releasing authority.

Recidivism: Going back to previous behaviors, specifically criminal or antisocial behaviors, that result in losing the privilege of remaining in the community after being sentenced to a period of probation, supervised release, and/or parole due to a new arrest or conviction and/or violating release conditions (Bernstein & Dworakowski, 2014).

Reentry: The time after an individual completes his or her prison or jail sentence and is released into the community.

Reentry court: Reentry courts are specialized courts that seek to reduce the recidivism of ex-offenders and thereby improve public safety.

Reentry program: A program that provides services to recently released offenders and/or recently released parolees. The reentry program engages individuals pre-release and refers clients to community treatment programs (substance abuse, life skills, education, cognitive behavioral, etc.) as deemed necessary by risk and needs assessments and their parole supervisors (Seiter & Kadela, 2003).

Risk scores: Scores based on a series of static measures: age, gender, and criminal and corrections history. The risk scores reflect the probability that an offender will reoffend (Casey, Elek, Warren, Cheesman, Kleiman, & Ostrom, 2014).

Risk and needs assessment: A tool used to assess a broad range of offender risk and personal factors that are influential and supportive to formulating an individual's treatment, programming, and case management decisions (Fass, Heilbrun, Dematteo & Fretz, 2008).

Social support: I defined social support using Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow's theory consists of five categories of needs, and some needs must be met before others. Maslow's categories of needs must be met in the following necessity-based order: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belongingness needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1954). Social support are any individuals identified by

the client who are instrumental or helpful with their reintegration into the community and meet any of the categories of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Successful completion of supervision: Termination or expiration of the supervision period without revocation by the releasing authority.

Unsuccessful supervision completion: Parole cases that have been closed due to an undesired outcome of being rearrested, reconviction, and revocation. I examined these outcomes were examined at 12 months and 18 months post-release on parole and across several categories of arrest and conviction, including violent felony and drug charge.

Assumptions

I made some key assumptions that could have influenced the outcome of this study. The first was that family information collected by the social workers were accurately recorded at the time of collection. I also assumed that the participants were accurate in the description and understanding of who and what social supports were. Although this study was limited to offenders under community supervision in the Upper Manhattan area encompassing the four community districts that cover East, Central, and West Harlem, as well as Washington Heights and Inwood, I assumed that the results of this study would be generalizable to offenders in other geographical areas.

Scope and Delimitations

In this research, I explored social support of those who had been formerly incarcerated. Researchers have shown that social support is important to successful reentry and decreases recidivism for those who have been incarcerated. These past studies have been qualitative in focus with small sample sizes (Fontaine et al., 2011;

Fontaine et al., 2012). This study was the first to attempt to research social support and reentry using a quantitative focus that included the use of risk assessment tools, parolee self-reported documents of perceived social support, and recidivism data from the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, the Division of Criminal Justice Services, and a reentry program from a large northeastern city.

I selected the focus of this study due to the lack of supportive research in relation to how social support influences recidivism. Successful reentry for formerly incarcerated individuals can positively influence family relationships, economic status of the individual and their family, and increase community safety and cohesiveness (Charkoudian et al., 2012; Dowden & Andrews, 2003; Visher & Travis, 2003).

This research included data from individuals who were released under parole supervision to Upper Manhattan, encompassing the four community districts that cover East, Central, and West Harlem, as well as Washington Heights and Inwood. My findings can be generalized to individuals who are returning from incarceration to the community. When individuals are released from incarceration, social supports are significant to successful job-related, educational, and family reunification.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. The first was my inability to account for additional variables that may affect supervision and recidivism failures. I assumed that there could have been additional variables that affected supervision failures that were not captured in the data set such as housing stability and employment requirements, which were set as conditions of the participant's parole.

An additional limitation was the nature of the social support variable. The social support measurement was determined by the number of individuals that the parolee identified as being supportive upon release with the social worker. In this study, social support was viewed as the number of positive or conflicting individuals and was not assessed for the quality or types of interactions over time.

Significance of the Study

My goal for this study was to add to the current literature by assessing criminal history, risk assessment scores, and family intervention program information and assessments. I hoped to contribute to positive social change for individuals who are returning to communities by increasing knowledge and understanding of how social support can improve social conditions by promoting the worth, dignity, and development of individuals, communities, and reentry organizations.

Significance to Theory

There are many consequences for individuals who violate societal rules. Incarceration is the primary form of penalty. The RNR model holds that helping offenders is beneficial to both the individual and the community, and the best way to effectively intervene and work with individuals is through compassionate, collaborative, and dignified human service intervention that targets change on factors that predict criminal behavior (Polaschek, 2012). The GLM theorizes that individuals offend because they are attempting to secure a need or a valued outcome in their lives. Some individuals attempt to fulfill these needs in a criminal manner (Purvis, Ward, & Willis, 2011). Both

theories seek to assist offenders with addressing negative behaviors and fulfilling needs in positive, pro-social ways.

In this research, I used these two theories to address the lack of understanding of community reentry providers about what characteristics of parolees, associated with social support, are predictive of successful reentry. Successful reentry has the ability to repair communities fractured by the prison's revolving door, strengthen families, and improve individual autonomy and motivation. Findings of this research may positively impact the way case management staff and post-release supervision staff interact with parolees and their families.

Significance to Practice

Most of the literature on offender reentry centers on the individual. Most research has shown that close social relationships have a significant influence on success or failure, but researchers lack an understanding of why and how social supports influences recidivism. In this research, I hoped to fill the gap in knowledge of how close social interaction and involvement has the ability to positively influence community reentry. Increased knowledge of how social support influences recidivism has the potential to impact the services that individuals are offered when they are assessed by providers for their needs and risks.

Offender assessment tools have been utilized since the first half of the 20th century to judge whether an offender was going to be successful or fail within the community if released from jail. Today offender assessments take into account both static and dynamic risk factors. Understanding the strength of the influence that social support

has on these factors can increase the knowledge of providers and result in better integrated treatment plans.

Significance to Social Change

With this research, I hoped to improve the social conditions and supports for individuals released from incarceration. Increasing the scholarly understanding of social support and how criminal justice factors intertwine can promote individuality, self-worth, community ties, family maintenance, and development. The knowledge obtained from this research can also be beneficial for reentry workers, case managers, parole officers, and program staff who work with released individuals. The insight provided by this study may be used to develop new ways of supervising offenders who are under parole supervision.

Summary and Transition

Individuals released from incarceration face many challenges upon reentry. Over 800,000 individuals are released from incarceration each year, and an additional 200,000 are placed on supervision. Post-release research has shown that there are many significant effects of incarceration on the individual, family, and community (Hamilton, 2010; Ostermann, 2012; Shannon & Uggen, 2012). Many reentry programs and services utilize the RNR and the GLM. Family can contribute by providing returning individuals social support and social control, which can help to reduce recidivism. This support plays a central role in the lives of the formerly incarcerated.

In Chapter 2, I provide a detailed exploration of the various effects of incarceration and how it relates to offending, the individual, community, and families. I

also explore the RNR and GLM theoretical framework and address how an increased understanding of social support can contribute to successful reentry.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

When individuals are released from incarceration they face many challenges upon reentry, such as education, housing, employment, and family relations (Wildeman & Western, 2010). The Bureau of Justice Statistics examined patterns of recidivism for prisoners released in 30 states in 2005. The Bureau found that from 2005 to 2010, about two-thirds (67.8%) of released prisoners were arrested for a new crime within 3 years, and three-quarters (76.6%) were arrested within 5 years (Cooper, Durose, & Snyder, 2014). The New York Department of Justice estimated that about 840,700 adults were on parole in 2010, and 1.1 million offenders were either placed on or released from supervision during the year (Glaze, 2011).

There are numerous reasons as to why individuals may recidivate and return to prison. Ostermann (2012) stated that a majority of formerly incarcerated individuals (67.8%) who return to the community are likely to recidivate within 3 years of leaving prison as a result of committing a new crime or violating the rules of their supervision (see also Pew Center on the States, 2011). Family support and family involved treatment programs have been shown to be successful in many areas, but lack information on the individual's criminal history and assessment of recidivism, in addition to family intervention program information and assessments (Fontaine, 2011; Fontaine et al., 2012). The purpose of this research is to add to the current literature on the importance of social support for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Literature Search Strategy

I searched PsycINFO, SAGE Premier, PsychARTICLES, and SocIndex research databases for materials to review for this project. The following search terms were used: *reentry, incarceration, recidivism, social support, family support, family genogram, risk assessment, crime, parole, parolee, prison release, risk needs responsivity (RNR) model, the good lives model (GLM), and Bowen family system theory.*

Research has shown that there is a relationship between social support and successful reentry for individuals released from incarceration (Charkoudian et al., 2012; Fontaine, 2011; Mowen & Visser, 2015). Although there is research showing the importance of social support, there is a lack of studies addressing individuals' criminal history and risk assessment scores, in addition to family intervention program information (Fontaine, 2011; Fontaine et al., 2012). In this research, I sought to examine these additional variables and the importance of social support as factors related to successful reentry.

This chapter begins with a discussion about incarceration statistics and the effects that incarceration and reentry has on the community, family, and the individual. I also discuss and compare theoretical frameworks on social support. These frameworks include the RNR model (Bonta & Andrews, 2007), the GLM (Barnao, Robertson, & Ward, 2010), and the Bowen family systems theory (Haefner, 2014). The chapter concludes with a review of offender assessment tools and how they have evolved over time. The assessment tool that I used in this research was the COMPAS, which I also review in this chapter (Brennan, Dieterich, & Ehret, 2009).

Incarceration Statistics

Previous studies have shown the importance of services including drug treatment, education, and employment assistance programs for individuals returning home after incarceration (Hamilton, 2010; Luther, Reichert, Holloway, Roth & Aalsma, 2011). Incarceration has an effect on more than just the individual; it also impacts the community and families. There is a growing body of literature that shows the importance of social support to those who have been formerly incarcerated, but additional investigation is needed. This study will contribute to scholarly understanding of integrating family systems into reentry services to help reduce recidivism and promote reintegration into society. With such understanding of how social supports and involvement affect recidivism rates increases, stakeholders can better target interventions.

On December 31, 2013, the United States held an estimated 1,574,700 persons in state and federal prisons, an increase of approximately 4,300 prisoners (0.3%) from 2012 (Carson, 2014). As of January 2014, New York State had 53,565 incarcerated individuals, with 45.8% from the New York City region (Bernstein & Dworakowski, 2014). The most recent statistics of those incarcerated in New York State showed that 96% of them were male, with approximately half being Black, one quarter being Hispanic, and another quarter being White (Bernstein & Dworakowski, 2013).

In April 2011, the Division of Parole and the Department of Correctional Services merged to form the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (Bernstein & Dworakowski, 2013). The Division of Parole and Correctional Services were merged to improve public safety by providing a continuity of appropriate services and to facilitate

successful completion of individual sentences (Bernstein & Kim, 2012). In 2012, there were 22,815 individuals released to community supervision, which was a 10% decrease from 2003 statistics (Bernstein & Dworakowski, 2013). A majority of the individuals who are supervised by DOCCS are minority, poorly educated, underemployed, and concentrated in New York City (Bernstein & Dworakowski, 2013). DOCCS began using the COMPAS supervision model in January 2012. Individuals placed on parole supervision are assigned a supervision level, 1 through 4, which determines reporting requirements that are assigned by evaluating a number of risk factors for absconding, risk of any arrest, and risk of violent felony offense (VFO) arrest (Bernstein & Dworakowski, 2013). The effects of incarceration can be seen in the community via state and city census counts, state and federal funding, collective efficacy in neighborhoods, economic stability, and employment prospects (Drakulich & Crutchfield, 2012; Fontaine, 2011; Mauer, 2004; Shannon & Uggen, 2012).

Incarceration and the Community

Federal, state, and city representation and funding are dependent upon the population of individuals who live in the community. When the United States Census Bureau conducts the national census, prison populations are counted in the counties where the jail or prison is located, which increases the population count for that county and decreases it where the inmate will be returned after release. The census count influences the amount of federal and state funded public assistance and aid that is released to certain communities. The constant influx and decrease of formerly incarcerated individuals in communities has a large effect on the economic stability of the

community (Shannon & Uggen, 2012). As the level of incarceration increases, neighborhoods become more destabilized as people cycle in and out of prison on a regular basis (Mauer, 2004).

High rates of incarceration in specific urban neighborhoods result in concentration effects, compounding disadvantageous conditions that can have many negative consequences for those in the community (Drakulich & Crutchfield, 2012). Researchers have found that communities that have high levels of incarceration have lower levels of collective efficacy, which refers to the differential ability of neighbors to realize a common goal, disruptions of community relationships, and reduced civic participation (Drakulich & Crutchfield, 2012). Incarceration forces individuals to be removed from communities while simultaneously returning others, disrupting relationships that can be built within the community and developing a sense of informal social control (Drakulich & Crutchfield, 2012). Increased concentrations of unemployed or under-employed individuals can foster situations that are conducive to increased crime due to a wealth of free time and feelings of having little to lose by participating in criminal activities (Drakulich & Crutchfield, 2012).

Effects of Incarceration on the Family

Incarceration has a far-reaching effect on the community and the families of those who are incarcerated. Clear (2009) stated that incarceration reduces the likelihood of marriage, with an individual's probability of being married dropping by 50% following incarceration. Moreover, it decreases the rate of marriage within a year of the birth of a child by at least one-half. Although men who have been incarcerated are less likely to get

married compared to men who have not gone to prison, they are just as likely to have children (Wildeman & Western, 2010).

Incarceration breaks families apart, strains economic resources, and can weaken parental involvement with children while often leading to emotional and social isolation (Clear, 2009). Incarceration affects family dynamics by increasing the ratio of adult women to men who are in affected communities. This increases the number of women who become heads of household, causing women to become single mothers and the sole source of income for the family (Hannon & DeFina, 2012). Due to the decrease and instability of income resulting from incarceration, there is increased financial strain on the family. This loss of income can have detrimental effects on housing, and countless other financial responsibilities (Hannon & DeFina, 2012).

Children of incarcerated individuals often have increased aggression and delinquency, decreased educational attainment, increased social isolation and stigma, as well as poor mental and behavioral health (Shannon & Uggen, 2012). Families also become vulnerable to various psychosocial threats. With the remaining parent now the main income of the family, children may lack supervision when that parent is working (Clear, 2009; Hannon & DeFina, 2012). The loss of a parent to incarceration affects the earning capacity of the remaining parent, because childcare needs can significantly decrease the time and flexibility needed to find and keep a job (Hannon & DeFina, 2012). The extreme rates of imprisonment that children see in their communities can affect them by normalizing incarceration and diminishing their fears of going to prison (Hannon & DeFina, 2012).

Incarceration, Recidivism, and Social Support

Depending on the state, when individuals return from incarceration they may be limited in where they can live depending on their crime of conviction, income, and family residence (Pinard, 2010). After an individual is released from incarceration, he/she faces additional penalties known as collateral consequences, or collateral sanctions, that include federal, state, and municipal sanctions that place restrictions or regulations in areas such as employment, licensure, housing, voting, and receiving public assistance or benefits (Ewald, 2012). Individuals who have been incarcerated often find it difficult to obtain employment, are often offered low wages, and can experience unstable employment.

Researchers have found that the family plays an important role in an individual's successful community reentry (Fontaine et al., 2012; Mowen & Visher, 2015). Individuals who return to the community report that family is a crucial factor for successful reentry because once back home they depend on their families for housing, food, money, referrals, and/or information pertaining to finding employment (Fontaine, 2011; Fontaine et al., 2012). Family can affect recidivism rates by providing returning individuals social support and social control, which can help to reduce recidivism (Charkoudian et al., 2012).

Previous research on social support has mostly been qualitative and has involved face-to-face interviews and case studies. Fontaine et al. (2012) used qualitative and quantitative data from approximately 180 formerly incarcerated persons, their family members, and case managers to see whether and how family and social support networks

may serve as resources for practitioners and policymakers to reduce recidivism and lead to better reintegration outcomes. Data was gathered from surveys of formerly incarcerated persons' family members, administrative and programmatic data, and focus groups with family members and program participants from both the treatment and comparison group (Fontaine et al., 2012). Fontaine et al. found that it was very difficult to engage family members in the reentry process, and they also had challenges with isolating the effect of family-inclusive case management on the outcomes of the individuals and family members who participated. They also noted that information about the formerly incarcerated individuals risk of recidivism, perceptions of their family member support, activities and services received was not included, and it was considered a limitation of the research. Much of the previous research has included interviews with individuals and family members and has been focused on the amount of contact between the individual and family and how that has affected successful reentry (Fontaine et al., 2012; Naser & La Vigne, 2006; Visher, 2004). In general, research has shown that family plays a central role in the lives of the formerly incarcerated (Charkoudian et al., 2012; Dowden & Andrews, 2003; Visher & Travis, 2003).

Theoretical Frameworks

The (RNR) model was first proposed by Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge (1990) and was developed to assess and rehabilitate criminals. The RNR model argues that helping offenders is beneficial to both the individual and the community, and the best way to effectively intervene and work with individuals is through compassionate, collaborative,

and dignified human service intervention that targets change on factors that predict criminal behavior (Polaschek, 2012).

RNR outlines three principles that address both the central causes of persistent criminal behavior and the broad principles for reducing engagement in crime (Polaschek, 2012). The three principles are the risk principle, need principle, and responsivity principle. The risk principle consists of matching the level of program intensity to offender risk level with intensive treatment for high-risk offenders and minimal intervention for low risk offenders. The need principle is based on targeting criminogenic needs, or needs that are functionally related to criminal behavior, and includes antisocial attitudes or substance abuse issues. Lastly, the responsivity principle is based on matching the style and mode of intervention to the offender's learning style and abilities. The responsivity principle has two parts, specific responsivity and general responsivity. Specific responsivity involves providing a service that considers the specific characteristics of an offender, such as their strengths, learning style, personality and motivations (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). General responsivity uses cognitive social learning methods to influence behavior, such as prosocial modeling and the appropriate use of reinforcement and disapproval (Bonta & Andrews, 2007).

Bonta and Andrews (2007) began with the three principles of Risk Need and Responsivity and then expanded and developed the Central Eight risk/needs factors. The RNR model divides dynamic risk factors into a hierarchy that has the big four and the moderate four. The big four in the RNR model consist of a history of antisocial behavior, antisocial personality pattern, antisocial cognition, and antisocial associates (Caudy,

Durso, & Taxman, 2013). The moderate four are family/marital circumstances, school/work, leisure and recreation, and substance abuse (Caudy et al., 2013).

The big four are key casual risk factors to be addressed in treatment. The moderate risk factors are environmental and influence recidivism rates directly by providing opportunities for criminal behavior and indirectly by interacting with the big four (Grieger & Hosser, 2013). For offender rehabilitation to be consistent with the RNR model, it is necessary to know the offender's risk level and criminogenic needs. Criminogenic needs are dynamic (changeable) risk factors that are shown to affect recidivism (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). Individuals may have many needs that require treatment, but not all of their needs are associated with their criminal behaviors, thus these needs are incorporated under the major predictors of criminal behavior referred to as "central eight" risk/needs factors (Bonta & Andrews, 2007).

Researchers have looked at the role of RNR on individual levels, showing the importance of targeting specific individual criminogenic needs. Vieira, Skilling and Peterson-Badali (2009) examined matching services to individuals based on their risk for recidivism, their criminogenic needs, and responsivity factors including mental health functioning, cognitive functioning, and cultural/language issues. They found that when present needs and services were matched, it was linked to lower rates of recidivism events and reduced offense risk. This research contributes to supporting evidence of the sensitivity of risk/needs instruments to the changes of an individual's criminogenic needs over time. Targeting offenders' specific dynamic risk factors improves criminal justice outcomes (Brooks Holliday, Heilbrun, & Fretz, 2012).

Table 1 lists the central eight factors, the risk associated with the factor, and where the focus of treatment should be to address that risk (Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006). A central assumption to RNR is that criminogenic needs are dynamic and the central eight risk factors address the dynamic needs of the individual.

The RNR model is useful in both the assessment and treatment of offenders. Treatments that have used the RNR model have been associated with significant reductions in recidivism, and have been found to be applicable for different correctional populations, including sexual offenders, juveniles and female offenders (Andrews et al., 2011). Correctional interventions are most useful when they target specific criminogenic needs, and assessments are needed to help identify these needs that will help result in changes that will reduce recidivism (Caudy et al., 2013). Identifying the dynamic and static risk factors that are related to recidivism are essential to reducing risk of recidivism. Dynamic risk factors are characteristics that can change, such as substance abuse and negative peer associations (Yesberg & Polaschek, 2015). Static risk factors are predictive, but cannot be reduced through correction intervention and therefore offers

Table 1

Risk Needs Responsivity (RNR) Model

Factor	Risk	Dynamic need
History of antisocial behavior	Early and continuing involvement in a number and variety of antisocial acts in a variety of settings	Build noncriminal alternative behavior in risky situations
Antisocial personality patterns	Adventurous pleasure seeking, weak self-control, restlessly aggressive	Build problem-solving skills, self-management skills, anger management and coping skills
Antisocial cognition	Attitudes, values, beliefs, and rationalizations supportive of crime; cognitive emotional states of anger, resentment, and defiance; criminal versus reformed identity; criminal versus anti criminal identity	Reduce antisocial cognition, recognize risky thinking and feeling, build up alternative less risky thinking and feeling, adopt a reform and/or anti criminal identity
Antisocial associates	Close association with criminal others and relative isolation from anti criminal others; immediate social support for crime	Reduce association with criminal others, enhance association with anti-criminal others
Family/marital circumstances	Two key elements are nurturance and/or caring and monitoring and/or supervision	Reduce conflict, build positive relationships, enhance monitoring and supervision
School/work	Low levels of performance and satisfactions in school and/or work	Enhance performance, rewards, and satisfactions
Leisure/recreation	Low levels of involvement and satisfactions in anti-criminal leisure pursuits	Enhance involvement, rewards, recreation and satisfactions
Substance abuse	Abuse of alcohol and/or other drugs	Reduce substance abuse, reduce the personal and interpersonal supports for substance-oriented behavior, enhance alternatives to drug abuse

little insight into the types of interventions that will be most effective for different offenders (Caudy et al., 2013).

When both static and dynamic risk factors are combined, it creates an individual's global risk assessment. An individual's global risk assessment is significantly correlated with recidivism, as it combines the factors that are used to determine the likelihood of an individual reoffending and returning back to the criminal justice system (Caudy et al., 2013; Taxman & Caudy, 2015). Dynamic risk factors are factors that are prone to change and include substance use, peer groups, and employment. These factors may be susceptible to influence through programming and supervision (Miller & Maloney, 2013). In contrast, static risk factors are factors that are historical and non-changeable, such as an individual's age at their first offense, criminal history, past recidivism, or past drug treatment. These factors have historically been used to assess long-term recidivism. The RNR model reinforces the hypothesis that dynamic risk factors and needs are directly related to recidivism.

The Good Lives Model (GLM) theorizes that individuals offend because they are attempting to secure a need or a valued outcome in their lives. Some individuals attempt to fulfill these needs in a criminal manner (Purvis, Ward, & Willis, 2011). GLM is a strength-based model where interventions focus on helping the individual gain the skills that he/she needs to obtain a valued need or outcome and will assist individuals with obtaining them in a pro-social manner rather than to criminally offend.

The GLM is broken down into primary and secondary goods. Primary goods are certain states of mind, personal characteristics, and experiences that are valued by an

individual. Secondary goods or instrumental goods provide concrete means of securing primary goods and take the form of approach goals. The attainment of secondary goals can be achieved through both prosocial and anti-social means. Ward and colleagues proposed nine primary goods that were later expanded to eleven (Willis, Prescott, & Yates, 2013). The primary goods, secondary goods, and definitions are provided in Table 2 (Willis et al., 2013).

The key difference between GLM and RNR is how criminogenic needs are understood, included, and addressed in treatment. The risk needs responsivity model argues that crime results due to personal, interpersonal, and community settings that are favorable to crime (Looman & Abracen, 2013). The Good Lives Model states that criminal behaviors arise due to an individual trying to relieve a sense of incompetence, conflict, or dissatisfaction due to not acquiring desired human goods (Looman & Abracen, 2013). Looman and Abracen (2013) reviewed both the RNR and GLM models and argue that both models are similar although the assumptions underlying the models are at odds, the GLM model uses the language of positive psychology while the RNR model is more focused on addressing an individual's deficits. The goal of both models is to assist clients to attain common life goals in pro-social, non-offending ways, while simultaneously targeting risk reduction (Willis et al., 2013).

The Bowen family systems theory was first developed by Bowen (Papero, 2014). Bowen had the view that current family patterns and problems tend to repeat over generations (Haefner, 2014). Family systems theory views families as living organisms

Table 2 - The Good Lives Model (GLM)

Primary Good	Definition	Possible Secondary/Instrumental Goods
Life	Looking for physical health and/or staying alive and safe	Pursuing a healthy diet, engaging in regular exercise, managing specific health problems
Knowledge	Seeking knowledge about oneself, other people, the environment, or specific subjects	Attending school or training courses, self-study, attending a treatment or rehabilitation program
Excellence in play	Striving for excellence and mastery in hobbies or leisure activities	Participating in a sport, playing a musical instrument. Arts and crafts
Excellence in work	Striving for excellence and mastery in work	Being employed or volunteering in meaningful work, advancing ones career
Excellence in agency (autonomy and self-directedness)	Seeking independence and autonomy, making one's own way in life	Developing and following through with life plans, being assertive, having control over other people, abusing or manipulating others
Inner peace	The experience of emotional equilibrium; freedom from emotional turmoil and stress	Exercise, meditation, use of alcohol or other drugs, any other activities that help manage emotions and reduce stress.
Relatedness	Sharing close and mutual bonds with other people, including relationships with intimate partners, family, and friends	Spending time with family and/or friends, having an intimate relationship with another person.
Community	Being part of, or belonging to, a group of people including relationships with intimate partners, family, and friends	Belonging to a service club, volunteer group, or sports team; being a member of a gang
Spirituality	Having meaning and purpose in life, being a part of a larger whole	Participating in religious activities (e.g. going to church, prayer), participating in groups that share a common purpose (e.g. environmental groups)
Pleasure	The desire to experience happiness and pleasure	Socializing with friends, watching movies, sex, thrill seeking activities, drinking alcohol, taking drugs
Creativity	The desire to create something, do things differently, or try new things	Painting, photography, and other types of artistic expression; participating in new or novel activities

and stresses boundaries, rules, expectations, and behaviors that help the family maintain equilibrium and the status quo or homeostasis. Bowen posits that families affect member's thoughts, feelings, and actions. In Bowen's original study he argued that when we think more in terms of changing the parental relationship than in change in psychotic symptoms, we will also see a change in the patient, irrespective of the immediate psychotic symptoms (Fleck & Bowen, 1961). Individuals seek out the others attention, approval, support, and react to the needs, expectations and upsets of others (Kerr, 2000). These connections and relations make family members interdependent among one another. A change in an individual's functioning can predict and affect the functioning of others within the family system, for example, when some family members get anxious or upset the same emotions can spread to others within the family.

The Bowen family system includes eight interlocking concepts, these concepts were developed to explain the complex interactions and emotions within the family unit (Kerr, 2000). The concepts include: triangles, differentiation of self, nuclear family emotional process, family projection process, multigenerational transmission process, sibling position, emotional cutoff, and societal emotional process. For the purposes of this study, only those concepts that are most applicable and focuses on interdependence and social relationships and are discussed, which are differentiation of self, multigenerational transmission process, and emotional cutoff.

In Bowen's theory, differentiation of self is based on emotion, where families are highly interdependent in relation to the family members thinking, feeling, and functioning. Feelings are often mutual between family members due to unconscious

reactivity that has become a pattern of response within the family (Kolbert, Crothers, & Field, 2013). Individuals who demonstrate fusion, or togetherness with others, have difficulty distinguishing between emotional and intellectual functioning. They are likely to hold others responsible for their happiness and to make decisions that will alleviate the anxiety of themselves and others, and they contain a pretend self that is motivated by the approval of others. Family members who are more individual (more differentiated) or are less emotionally connected to the family, have a more solid sense of self, are able to withstand conflict, rejection, criticism, and are comprised of clearly defined beliefs, convictions, and life principles (Haefner, 2014; Kolbert et al., 2013).

Multi-generational transmission process is family projection that continues through multiple generations. Multigenerational transmission process is the orderly and predictable relationship process that connects the functioning of family members across generations (Kerr, 2000). This includes emotions, feelings, and subjectively determined attitudes, values, and beliefs that are transmitted from one generation to the next (Kerr, 2000; Miller, Anderson, & Keals, 2004). Bowen's theory posits that the general level of functioning is relatively stable across generations. This is based on prolonged association and the deep inclination that human beings imitate one another (Kerr, 2000; Miller et al., 2004). The transmission happens on several levels, ranging from conscious teaching and learning of information to the automatic and unconscious programming of emotional reactions and behaviors. Individuals who are highly differentiated have unusually stable nuclear families and contribute much to society. The poorly differentiated, or more emotionally connected individuals, have chaotic personal lives and depend heavily on

others to sustain them (Kerr, 2000). A key implication of the multigenerational concept is that the roots of the most severe human problems as well as of the highest levels of human adaptation are generations deep (Kerr, 2000).

Emotional cut-off is used to describe the way that individuals may manage their emotional attachments to parents or other important family members. Individuals may move away geographically or significantly reduce their contact with family members that cause them unresolved emotional issues. Emotional cut-off can function to bring an individual immediate comfort, but in the long run it is not functional for the individual. When an individual manages their emotional attachment to the parent or family member by emotional cutoff, the intensity of that relationship increases (Haefner, 2014; McCollum, 1991). Bowen has stated that the transfer of unresolved emotional issues from previous generation is the primary cause of emotional disturbance (McCollum, 1991). Bowen's idea of cutoff represents a common way that unresolved emotional issues are dealt with and develop across generations.

Evaluation Tools

Offender assessment tools that have been used to assess risk of recidivism have evolved over time, as can be seen when comparing those that were used in the early twentieth century to now. First generation assessments were first used in the first half of the twentieth century and based on professional judgment. Correctional staff and or clinical professionals would assess offenders and judgments were made as to whether they would or would not be successful in the community. Second generation assessments were first used in the 1970's and were based on evidence-based tools. These assessments

were based on actuarial risk assessment instruments that considered individual items that were found to demonstrate an increased risk of offending, these items were given quantitative scores, summed up, and the higher the score the higher the individual was at risk for offending (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). A shortcoming of these assessments is that they were atheoretical and the items that were not based on criminal history, but instead focused on behavior or items of a historical nature (i.e. history of drug abuse), not accounting for any positive change in the individual (Bonta & Andrews, 2007).

Third generation assessments are evidence-based and dynamic. They were first used in the late 1970's to early 1980's (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). Criminal history items are still very important, but these assessments now include dynamic items that investigate the offenders' current and ever-changing situation (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). Third generation assessments are sensitive to changes in an offenders' circumstances and also help to provide correctional staff with information as to the needs that should be targeted in their interventions (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). Lastly, fourth generation assessments are now systematic and comprehensive, and began being used in the early 2000's. These assessments integrate systematic intervention and monitoring with the assessment of a broader range of offender risk and personal factors that were not previously measured but are important to treatment (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). Fourth generation assessments account for an individual's risks, strengths, and needs, they also include reassessments that can include service plans, service delivery, and intermediate outcomes (Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, 2006).

The COMPAS Risk and Need Assessment is a fourth-generation assessment tool that is used with offenders to support treatment, identify appropriate patient programming/services, and case management decisions. COMPAS is characterized by a broad selection of explanatory theories which include the General Theory of Crime, Criminal Opportunity/Lifestyle Theories, Social Learning Theory, Subculture Theory, Social Control Theory, Criminal Opportunities/Routine Activities Theory and Strain Theory (Northpointe, 2012). COMPAS consist of a broad range of risk and need factors, incorporation of strengths/resiliency perspective, while using advanced statistical modeling. COMPAS relies on both static and dynamic data to generate risk and need results, the use of these measures allows for assessment of change over time as behaviors change. The dynamic risk factors are included to allow for the overlay of previous assessments and to be able to see a visual change in risk and needs scores. Static risk factors are typically historical, unlikely to change, and not amenable to intervention efforts; dynamic factors, by contrast, may change over time (Fass, Heilbrun, Dematteo, & Fretz, 2008). The COMPAS provides separate risk scores for violence, recidivism, failure to appear, and community failure. Additionally, it also provides a Criminogenic and Needs Profile for the offender. This also includes information about the offender with respect to their criminal history, needs assessment, criminal attitudes, social environment, and additional factors such as socialization failure, criminal opportunity, criminal personality, and social support (Fass, Heilbrun, DeMatteo & Fretz, 2008). After an individual completes the COMPAS assessment each module has a risk score that assists the program staff on addressing or referring the individual to appropriate services,

reassessment over time assists community reentry providers with tracking change over time.

Family genograms are used to help identify and view problems and relationships (positive, conflicted, or neutral), and to help recognize support systems across generations and within the family system. The family genogram is a graphic representation of a family similar to that of a family tree. The diagram depicts important relationships that are coded using a standardized format. Family genograms are able to provide information about typical stage issues, concerns, and tasks that informs treatment (Nutt & Stanton, 2011).

Summary and Conclusion

Incarceration impacts more than just the individual. Effects can be seen in the community, family systems, and, of course, directly on the person who was formerly incarcerated. Social support has been shown to be an important factor for those who have been released. A social connection gives the individual accountability and also resources to help remain in the community. The Bowen family systems theory posits that families profoundly affect member's thoughts, feelings, and actions, individuals released from incarceration can be positively affected and motivated by family support upon release.

Social support definitions include communication, levels of closeness/attachment, engagement activities, and co-parenting. Previous research on social support and reentry found that social support was significant in the successful reentry of individuals (Charkoudian et al., 2012; Fontaine, 2011; Gilchrist-Scott, & Denver, 2012; Mowen & Visser, 2015). However, those studies did not account for the clients' risk of recidivism,

reentry experiences post release and perceptions of their family member support, activities, and services (Fontaine, Gilchrist-Scott, Denver & Rossman, 2012).

The Risk-Need-Responsivity Model and the Good Lives Model both take into account the different risk factors that may lead to recidivism and have goals to work with clients on individual levels and tailor treatment to what the client needs. In chapter 3, I will provide information on the design of this quantitative study, the identification of participants, measurement instruments, and details of the research methodology that was used.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

In this chapter, I provide a description of the research design, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods. I used a quantitative research design to evaluate the impact of social support on recidivism rates among participants. I used secondary data obtained between 2012 and 2015 from a reentry program in a large northeastern city. . Data on social support was gathered from family genograms completed by the family social worker prior to or immediately upon release. Family genograms are completed by the social worker with the client and are used to help identify and evaluate relationships (positive or conflicted), and support systems across generations and within family systems. The perceived social support variable was measured using the family genogram to assess the number of individuals that were identified as positive or conflicted. Positive support includes individuals identified by the client who are instrumental or helpful with their reintegration into the community. Examples of positive support are individuals who assist with emotional, financial, or material well-being. Conflicted supports are relationships that are identified as having interpersonal tension or struggles that oppose the individual's goals of successful reentry. Family genograms reflect the client's point of view of family composition, relationships, and patterns.

Data included participants' criminal histories and the COMPAS Risk and Need Assessment scores. The COMPAS assessment is a fourth-generation assessment tool that is used with offenders to support treatment, programming, and case management decisions (Farabee et al., 2011). The COMPAS relies on both static and dynamic data to

generate risk and need results. I obtained demographic data from both the database of the reentry program and the Department of Criminal Justice Services. Recidivism was tracked using data from the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

Research Design and Rationale

I explored the relationship between involvement of social supports and recidivism rates among participants. Specifically, I investigated the effectiveness of the reentry program in reducing recidivism rates among parolees in the Harlem, New York area.

I used logistic regression analysis to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions about positive and conflicted social supports. Logistic regression is well suited for describing and testing hypotheses about relationships between a categorical outcome variable and one or more categorical or continuous predictor variables (Peng, Lee, & Ingersoll, 2002). The categorical variables in this research were first time offender, reported number of positive connections, reported number of conflicted supports, rearrest, and initial COMPAS risk of recidivism score.

Research Questions

The purpose of this research was to add to the current literature on the importance of social support for formerly incarcerated individuals. The dependent variable was recidivism among participants. The independent variables were perceived positive and conflicted social support and risk assessment scores derived from the COMPAS assessment, which is an assessment tool that is used with offenders to support treatment, programming, and case management decisions that relies on both static and dynamic data to generate risk and need results. The research questions are as follows:

RQ1: Is perceived positive social support, as measured by the family genogram, related to recidivism within the first three years of release from incarceration?

*H*₀1: Perceived positive social support is not significantly related to recidivism.

*H*₁1: Perceived positive social support is significantly related to recidivism.

RQ2: Is perceived conflicted social support, as measured by the family genogram, related to recidivism within the first 3 years of release from incarceration?

*H*₀2: Perceived conflicted social support is not significantly related to actual recidivism.

*H*₁2: Perceived conflicted social support is significantly related to actual recidivism.

RQ3: Is risk of recidivism, as measured by the risk of recidivism score on the COMPAS assessment, related to recidivism within the first 3 years of release from incarceration?

*H*₀3: The risk assessment score is not significantly related to recidivism.

*H*₁3: The risk assessment score is significantly related to recidivism.

RQ4: Is being a first-time offender related to recidivism within the first 3 years of release from incarceration?

*H*₀4: Being a first-time offender is not significantly related to recidivism.

Methodology

Participants and Eligibility

Participants in the study were individuals released from the New York State Department of Corrections. All participants were 18 years or older and were returning to

the Upper Manhattan (Harlem) area of New York City. Exclusion criteria for participants were those incarcerated for arson and sex offenses, and individuals with a diagnosed Axis 1 disorder. These individuals were excluded due to additional parole requirements for these populations of parolees. I used data collected from 2012 to 2015.

Sampling Procedure

I selected participants from a list, compiled by the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), of individuals being released to the Upper Manhattan area. Participants on this list were randomly assigned to the reentry program, making participants in the program a true control group. From the list of randomized participants, the senior parole officer determines if the potential participant is medium- to high-risk using a validated risk score generated by New York State. This risk score is based on static factors like gender, age of the person at most recent arrest, and criminal background. Participants are screened by risk scores obtained from DCJS. Clients who have a DCJS risk score at or above 6 are accepted into the program; although it is possible that a few clients accepted could have scores below this threshold. Once accepted into the program, program staff visit the participant in prison or mail information to the participant pre-release, if possible, to inform the individuals of their acceptance into the program and to begin pre-release engagement. Pre-release engagement includes completing an intake assessment, signing consents and releases, and administering the COMPAS tool to provide a more informed assessment of the client. The COMPAS assessment, intake interview, and additional assessment tools determine services provided to clients. In this research, I

focused on the COMPAS risk of recidivism score, family genograms, and DCJS recidivism data.

Data Collection

I used secondary data from a reentry program from a large northeastern city, which included both static and fluid variables. Static variables included information such as age, race, and gender. Fluid variables included perceived social support, which was derived from the family genogram completed by the participant. The COMPAS scores were obtained at four intervals: baseline (this measure was taken within a week of release from incarceration), 30 days, 60 days, and 90 days. The participants' housing status at entry and discharge were also obtained. Dichotomous variables that I considered include referrals to a substance abuse programs, employment programs, educational programs, mental health programs, cognitive behavioral treatment, and their employment status upon discharge.

I defined successful reentry for participants in the reentry program as an individual not being rearrested or committing a violation of their terms of release within a 3-year period. Clients who successfully return to society are less likely to reoffend, are able to contribute to their family, and contribute to society and the community by obtaining stable employment.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

The Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions

COMPAS is an assessment tool used with offenders to support treatment, programming, and case management decisions; it relies on both static and dynamic data

to generate risk and need scores. Static risk factors are typically historical, unlikely to change, and not amenable to intervention efforts. Dynamic factors, by contrast, may change over time (Fass et al., 2008). The COMPAS was developed by Northpointe Institute for Public Management (Northpointe, 2012).

The COMPAS is comprised of five types of scales: basic scales, higher order scales, validity tests, professional judgments, and risk scales. Risk scales are provided for four outcomes: violence, recidivism, failure to appear, and community non-compliance. The COMPAS risk scales rely on two types of data: data gathered from an offenders' official record by a criminal justice professional, and offenders' responses to questions administered via either a paper and pencil survey or interview with a professional (Skeem & Eno Loudon, 2007).

The COMPAS software uses actuarial formulas to compute risk scores. The two main variables are how high the offender's scores are across scales, relative to normative data, and an estimate of the offender's "risk" of violence, recidivism, failure to appear, and community non-compliance (Skeem & Eno Loudon, 2007). After administering the assessment, a computer printout is generated for each client, with their specified level of risk—low, medium, or high—as well as a list of services that would be appropriate to address their needs.

Brennan et al. (2009) examined the internal consistency and predictive validity of the COMPAS scale on a large sample of point of pre-sentence investigation (PSI) and probation cases. They found that about 60% of the scales reached acceptable levels of internal consistency and predictive validity. By convention, alpha coefficients of .70 or

higher indicate satisfactory reliability (Brennan et al., 2009). Ten out of 15 of the scales had internal consistency with alpha scales equal or greater than .70. Three scales that did not reach significance but were close to an acceptable range were current violence, family criminality, and residential instability.

To assess the predictive usefulness of the COMPAS, Brennan et al. (2009) used the area under the receiver operating characteristic curve (AUROC). The area under the AUROC is a widely used statistic for assessing the measurement of the discriminatory capacity of a classification model (Jiménez-Valverde, 2012). AUROC has become the preferred way to measure accuracy due to its independence across base rates and selection ratios that allow it to provide clearer comparisons across different predictive instruments. AUROCs in the .50s are considered to have little or no predictive validity, those in the .60s are considered weak, those approaching or above .70s are minimally acceptable, and those in the .80s are strong (Farabee, Zhang, Roberts, & Yang, 2010). The predictive validity of the COMPAS models produced AUROCs mostly in the range or .70 to .80. Specifically, Brennan et al. (2009) found that 16 out of 27 cells examined for AUROC reached .70 or above, a smaller set of cells were in the .66 to .69 range.

These findings support earlier validation studies by the developers who found that the COMPAS recidivism risk model for probationers achieved satisfactory accuracy, with AUROCs of 0.72 and 0.74 over a 24-month outcome period (Brennan, Dieterich, & Oliver, 2006). In a pilot study with California's parole population, the COMPAS developers found encouraging results on the psychometric properties of the instrument (Brennan et al., 2006). Using data collected from a sample of 1,077 (male $n = 786$ and

female $n = 291$) soon-to-be-released inmates from California institutions, as well as from a composite norm group of 7,381 (male $n = 5,681$ and female $n = 1,700$) individuals, COMPAS developers found satisfactory scores on measures such as internal consistency, concurrent and criterion validity, and construct validity (Farabee et al., 2010; Zhang, Roberts, & Farabee, 2014). The instrument was able to perform rather consistently across diverse offender subpopulations in three outcome criteria, and the COMPAS also appeared to measure identical or similar constructs on selected scales with the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R), a widely recognized commercial risk/needs assessment instrument (Farabee et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2014). The COMPAS needs scales showed that the scales had strong test-retest reliability, with coefficients ranging from .70 to 1.00, and a mean of .88.

Family Genograms

An additional tool used to help with individuals and reentry into the community is the use of Family Genograms. Family genograms can be used to view problems and relationships (positive, conflicted, or neutral), helping to identify possible support systems across generations and within family systems. Genograms are also used to track and monitor family patterns, and it can also help to clarify to the case manager and client information about the family in a broader context (Butler, 2008). Genograms use symbols to describe the functioning and relationships within a family system. Symbols can represent different information about employment, education, mental health, involvement in the justice system, and other relevant details (Butler, 2008; Vera Institute of Justice, 2011).

Coupland, Serovich, and Glenn (1995) argue that the reliability of the family genogram cannot be assessed because it does not measure anything. Instead, the genogram is a heuristic tool that assists therapists and workers to obtain information and processes for the purpose of hypothesizing and planning interventions. The literature on genograms demonstrates the use of the tool through many case examples, giving the tool face validity, however there is little literature involving the psychometric properties. The family genogram is beneficial and has been used by therapists to assist in understanding the client's family history and influence on their functioning. Using the family genogram can help to show the influence of a client's family on their functioning, relational patterns, and the type of family he forms.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using SPSS version 21.0 software for statistical analysis. Logistic regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis and answer the research questions. Logistic regression is well suited for describing and testing hypotheses about relationships between a categorical outcome variable and one or more categorical or continuous predictor variables (Peng, Lee & Ingersoll, 2002). The statistical results derived from the analysis will determine whether or not a significant association exists between the variables: social support, first time offender, and recidivism.

I conducted a power analysis using the software G*Power to determine the ideal sample size (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner & Lang, 2009). The specific statistical test being used is a logistic regression analysis. A two-tailed test will be used with a α (error probability or significance level) chosen based on the standard of .05. The default power

(i.e., the probability of detecting a “true” effect when it occurs) of .95 was chosen indicating that 95% of the time, a statistically significant association between the groups would be detected. The resulting suggested sample size was 159.

Ethical Procedures

Permission to conduct this research was obtained through the parent company of the reentry program, who requested to not be identified in this research. In order to address the purpose and specific research questions of this study, permission to use existing, de-identified data to evaluate successful reentry was requested and granted. I had no direct contact with any of the clients or the raw data. All raw data was obtained by the caseworkers. This addresses all of the ethical concerns related to recruitment materials and data.

Summary

Many research studies have supported that social support is important to the successful reentry of individuals that have been formerly incarcerated. However, previous studies have not been able to account for the client’s risk of recidivism, reentry experiences post release and perceptions of their family member support, activities, and services (Fontaine, Gilchrist-Scott, Denver & Rossman, 2012). This study utilizes a quantitative method. The research design seeks to explore the relationship between involvement of family and recidivism rates among participants. The study seeks to investigate the effectiveness of the reentry program on reducing recidivism rates among parolees in the Harlem, New York area.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the impact of social support on recidivism rates among participants. In the study, I sought to better understand the relationship between recidivism and an individual's perceived positive social supports, conflicted social supports, and the risk of recidivism score on the COMPAS risk of recidivism. The study consisted of 161 participants, but only 78 participants completed the initial COMPAS risk of recidivism assessment.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

I investigated the following research questions and their respective hypotheses:

RQ1: Is perceived positive social support, as measured by the family genogram, related to recidivism within the first three years of release from incarceration?

H_01 : Perceived positive social support is not significantly related to recidivism.

H_11 : Perceived positive social support is significantly related to recidivism.

RQ2: Is perceived conflicted social support, as measured by the family genogram, related to recidivism within the first 3 years of release from incarceration?

H_02 : Perceived conflicted social support is not significantly related to actual recidivism.

H_12 : Perceived conflicted social support is significantly related to actual recidivism.

RQ3: Is risk of recidivism, as measured by the risk of recidivism score on the COMPAS assessment, related to recidivism within the first 3 years of release from incarceration?

H_03 : The risk assessment score is not significantly related to recidivism.

H_13 : The risk assessment score is significantly related to recidivism.

RQ4: Is being a first-time offender related to recidivism within the first 3 years of release from incarceration?

H_04 : Being a first-time offender is not significantly related to recidivism.

Data Collection

My study was approved by the Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB approval 08-03-17-0274987) on August 3, 2017. Archival data collection included identifiable electronic data of parolees who participated in the reentry program between 6/1/2012 and 1/1/2017. I physically collected identifiable family genogram data by going to the site and obtaining the hard copy records. I then submitted the data to the NYS DCJS to be deidentified and connected to the criminal history and recidivism data. Criminal justice history and recidivism data covered the years of 2003 to 2018. DCJS data was compiled and received on June 7, 2018. Data was collected for a total of 236 participants. After removal of incomplete cases, a final sample size of 161 respondents was included in the final analyses; however, only 78 of these participants completed the initial COMPAS risk of recidivism score.

Results

Descriptive statistics for the sample and results of the logistic regression analysis are presented in this section. I calculated means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages for the predictor variables. I conducted logistic regression with first time offender, reported number of positive connections, reported number of conflicted supports, rearrest, and initial COMPAS risk of recidivism score. I used archival data from the reentry program located in a large northeastern city. . Upon discharge from state correctional facilities, participants were assigned to be supervised by parole officers in the Upper Manhattan Area. Participants were also assigned case managers who worked with the parole officers to assist with program placement and services. Upon participants' intake to the program, case managers completed with participants the family genogram and COMPAS risk of recidivism score.

Descriptive Statistics

There were 161 participants in the study; however, only 78 of these participants were given an initial COMPAS risk of recidivism score. In this section, I describe the sample, which consisted of 161 individuals who completed the family genograms, with regards to their demographic information, as well as the study variables. The demographic variables includes age and if the participant was a first time offender. The study variables included: (a) rearrest within 3 years of intake, (b) reported number of positive social connections, (c) COMPAS risk of recidivism score, and (d) reported number of conflicted social supports.

All participants were male. Table 3 and Table 4 show the frequency data for age and race respectively. The average age for participants was 22 years old with a standard deviation of 2.074. Of the 161 individuals, 70% were identified as African American and 30% as Latino.

Table 3

Frequency Data for Age

Age group	Frequency	Percent
17 - 21	67	41.6
22 - 25	87	54.0
26 - 28	7	4.3
Total	161	100

Table 4

Frequency Data for Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Black	113	70.2
Latino	48	29.8
Total	161	100

Tables 5 to 8 show the frequency data for the study variables used in the analysis. Table 5 presents the rearrest data, showing that of the 161 studied participants, 58.4% of the participants were rearrested within 3 years after their intake. Table 6 shows that of the participants, 39.8% were first time offenders. Table 7 shows that 3.7% reported no social support, 57.1% reported having 1 to 3 positive social supports, 26.7% reported having 4 to 6 social supports, 7.5% reported having 7 to 10 social supports, and 5% reported having 11 or more social supports.

Table 5

Frequency Data for Participant Rearrest within 3 Years

Rearrest	Frequency	Percent
Yes	94	58.4
No	67	41.6
Total	161	100.00

Table 6

Frequency Data for First Time Offender

First time offender	Frequency	Percent
Yes	64	39.8
No	97	60.2
Total	161	100.00

Table 7

*Reported Number of Positive Social Supports**

Number of positive supports	Frequency	Percent
0	6	3.7
1-3	92	57.1
4-6	43	26.7
7-10	12	7.5
11 +	8	5.0
Total	161	100

Note. Positive social supports included family, friends, and acquaintances.

Table 8 shows that 91.9% reported no conflicted supports, 7.5% reported one conflicted support, .6% reported having 3 conflicted social supports.

Table 8
Reported Number of Conflicted Social Supports

Number of conflicted supports	Frequency	Percent
0	148	91.9
1	12	7.5
3	1	.6
Total	161	100

Note. Negative social supports included family, friends, and acquaintances.

Table 9 shows that more than half (53.8%) of the participants had COMPAS risk of recidivism assessment categorized as medium risk of recidivism. Of the remaining participants, 19.2% were classified as having a low risk of recidivism and 26.9% were classified as having a high risk of recidivism.

Table 9

COMPAS Risk of Recidivism Level

Recidivism risk level	Frequency	Percent
Low	15	19.2
Medium	42	53.8
High	21	26.9
Total	78	100

Evaluation of Statistical Assumptions

I measured the dependent variable of recidivism at the categorical level. The independent variables were number of positive supports, number of conflicted supports, and first-time offender status. Prior to conducting the logistic regression analysis, I also assessed the assumptions of skewness and kurtosis, normality, and multicollinearity. I compared the calculated values for skewness and kurtosis to the guidelines established to indicate if the data distribution differs from a normal distribution. The results are shown below in Table 10.

Table 10

Results of Skewness and Kurtosis

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
Conflicted support	4.928	31.321
No. of pos. connections	2.767	9.173
COMPAS recidivism score	.161	-1.008
Rearrest	-.343	-1.906
First time offender	.423	31.321

Examination of the correlation between the variables revealed there was not a significant correlation between them. I checked for absence of multicollinearity using variance inflation factors (VIFs) values for the predictor variables. Each VIF value was below 10, indicating that the assumption of multicollinearity was met, as shown in Table 10. Thus, there were no concerns over multicollinearity.

Table 11

Multicollinearity Eigenvalue and Condition Index

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index
1	1	3.190	1.000
	2	.886	1.897
	3	.520	2.478
	4	.342	3.055
	5	.062	7.167

Table 12

VIF Values for the Predictor Variables

Variable	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
First Time Offender	.981	1.019
Conflicted Support	.892	1.121
No. of Connections	.896	1.116
COMPAS Risk Recidivism	.981	1.019

Logistic Regression Analyses

I used logistic regression because it allows for the prediction of categorical outcomes with two or more categories. The first logistic regression analysis had four possible predictor variables that included COMPAS risk of recidivism score, number of reported positive social supports, number of reported conflicted supports, and whether the individual was a first-time offender. The outcome variable was whether participants recidivated. The Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit was significant ($p < 0.05$) indicating the model was correctly specified. Additionally, the $-2 \log$ Likelihood = 92.716 and the Nagelkerke R squared = .205. The independent variable of first-time offender status was found to be significant. The unstandardized $B = -1.539$, $SE = .513$, $Wald = 9.005$, $p < .01$. The estimated odds ratio supported the finding that first times offenders are nearly 90% less likely to be rearrested $Exp(B) = .215$, 95% CI (.079, .586). The independent variables of COMPAS risk of recidivism score, number of positive supports, and conflicted supports were not significant ($p > 0.05$).

Table 13 shows the ordinal logistic regression model summary table of the factors contributing to risk of recidivism, as measured by the risk of recidivism score on the

COMPAS risk of recidivism, with the Cox and Snell R Square and Nagelkerke R Square values. Both of these are methods of calculating the explained variation of the model. Taking into account both methods, the explained variation in the dependent variable based on the model ranges from 15.2% to 20.5%. Table 14 shows the frequency of individuals based on if they were a first-time offender and if they were rearrested.

Table 13

Model Summary of Factors Contributing to Risk of Recidivism

Step	-2 Log Likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	92.716	.152	.205

Table 14

First Time Offender Status and Rearrest Frequency Table

	Rearrests	Frequency	Percent
First Time Offender	Yes	27	42.2
	No	37	57.8
	<i>Total</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>100</i>
Repeat Offender	Yes	69	71.1
	No	28	28.9
	<i>Total</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>100</i>

Table 15 shows the variables in the equation table. As observed, the only significant predictor was first time offender status, $p < 0.05$, with an Exp(B) value of .215. This meant that a first-time offender was 77.5 times less likely to recidivate within the first three years of release.

Table 15

Variables in the Equation Table of Factors Contributing to Recidivism

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
Step 1	First Time Offender	-1.539	.513	9.005	1	.003	.215	.079	.586
	COMPAS Risk of Recidivism	.148	.108	1.865	1	.172	1.159	.938	1.434
	Conflicted Supports	-.128	.656	.038	1	.845	.879	.243	3.179
	Positive Supports	.077	.065	1.394	1	.238	1.080	.951	1.226
	Constant	-.170	.753	.051	1	.821	.843		

A second logistic regression analysis was conducted using all 161 individuals and three predictor variables: number of perceived positive social supports, number of perceived conflicted social supports, and if an individual was a first time offender. The outcome variable was whether participants recidivated. The Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit was not significant ($p > 0.05$) indicating the model is correctly specified. Additionally, the $-2 \log$ Likelihood = 203.367 and the Nagelkerke R squared = .122. The IV first time offender was found to be significant ($p < .05$). The result was an unstandardized B = 1.281, SE = .343, Wald = 13.966, $p < .001$. The estimated odds ratio favored a positive relationship of an individual being 3.60 times more likely to not recidivate if they were a first time offender, Exp (B) = 3.602, 95% CI (1.839, 7.053). The independent variables of number of positive perceived supports, number of perceived conflicted supports, and COMPAS recidivism score were not significant ($p > 0.05$).

Table 16

Model Summary of Factors Contributing to Risk of Recidivism

Step	-2 Log Likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	203.367	.091	.122

Table 17

Classification Table of Factors Contributing to Recidivism

	Observed	Predicted		Percentage Correct	
		No Rearrest	Yes Rearrest		
Step 1	No Rearrest	No Rearrest	36	31	53.7
		Yes Rearrest	23	71	75.5
	Overall Percentage				66.5

Table 18

Variables in the Equation Table of Factors Contributing to Recidivism

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
Step 1	First Time Offender	1.281	.343	13.966	1	.000	3.602	1.839	7.053
	Conflicted Support	.012	.499	.001	1	.981	1.012	.381	2.690
	No. Of Connections	.052	.048	1.218	1	.270	1.054	.960	1.157
	Constant	-.612	.324	3.569	1	.059	.542		

Summary

In Chapter 4, I provided a detailed explanation of the study, including data collection and data analysis. The first logistic regression found that first-time offender status was statistically significant predictor of recidivism. There was no statistically significant relationship between positive or conflicted social supports, COMPAS risk of recidivism score, and recidivism.

The second logistic regression analysis again showed that there was a significant relationship between first time offender status and recidivism. There was no significant relationship between positive social supports or conflicted social supports and recidivism. In Chapter 5, I will include a thorough interpretation of the results of the study, discuss the limitations of the study, provide recommendations for future research, and highlight the implications for social change.

Chapter 5: Implications, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Much of the previous literature on reducing recidivism offers explanations on how family members can play important roles in reducing the likelihood of criminal offending (Taylor, 2016). My research fills the gap regarding the lack of information on the influence of an individual's criminal history, risk assessment scores, and post release intervention program information that includes data about perceived social supports (Fontaine, 2011; Fontaine et al., 2012).

Participants in the study were released from the New York State Department of corrections returning to the Upper Manhattan (Harlem) area of New York City. I obtained archival data from the years 2012 to 2015 from the reentry program. Data on social support was gathered from family genograms completed by an assigned family social worker prior to or immediately upon release. Data included the participants' arrest histories from the period 2012 to 2018, which was obtained from the New York State DCJS and the COMPAS risk of recidivism score.

After release from incarceration, individuals are likely to recidivate within 3 years, which can be attributed to many factors including committing a new crime or violating the rules or their release (Ostermann, 2012). Results from this research showed that individuals who were first time offenders were significantly less like to reoffend within a 3-year period of release from incarceration. There was no significant relationship between positive social supports, conflicted social supports, COMPAS recidivism score, and recidivism.

Interpretation of the Findings

I conducted this study to evaluate the characteristics of parolees associated with social support and predictive of successful reentry. The variables that I investigated were being a first-time offender, perceived positive social supports, perceived negative social supports, and risk of recidivism assessment score.

The results of the study showed a significant relationship between being a first-time offender and recidivism. Those who were found to be first time offenders were significantly less likely to be rearrested within the 3-year period that was examined for participants. There is limited research that focuses on adult first-time offenders and recidivism; however, some researchers have found that first-time offenders have lower rates of reconviction, commit fewer crimes, and perpetrate less serious offenses (Bagaric & Alexander, 2014; Harris, 2011; Thompson et al., 2014). Harris (2011) reviewed the limited research on adult first-time offenders and found consistency with respect to the effects of situational factors on adult-onset offending, such as employment, marital or family relations, and living accommodations.

The GLM holds that individuals offend because they are attempting to secure a need or a valued outcome in their lives, and some individuals attempt to fulfill these needs in a criminal manner (Purvis et al., 2011). Individuals who have a later onset of criminal offending previously relied on accumulated social capital to overcome initial forays into delinquent activity. For others, such actions have more formidable and longer lasting negative effects that reinforce criminal pathways (Harris, 2011). Being a first-time offender is considered a mitigating factor during the sentencing phase for many

individuals (Freer, 2013). This finding is important because it could be used to argue in favor of sentencing reforms that recognize the data that supports the disproportionately lower rate of recidivism of offenders with no, or a minor, criminal record (see Bagaric & Alexander, 2014).

I found no statistically significant relationship found between positive or conflicted social supports and recidivism in this study. Social supports were examined using data that was collected by an assigned social worker at the reentry program. The social worker interviewed the participant a few weeks or days prior to release at the local prison facility, or post-release at the reentry program. The family social worker then completed a program intake, which included the COMPAS assessment and a family genogram, from which I collected the social support data. The social workers did not interview those who the participant identified as supportive. Previous researchers studying social support and reentry collected data via focus groups with participants and family members, in person interviews with family and the participant - together and independently, and self-administered surveys (Arditti & le Roux, 2015; Grieb et al., 2014; Naser & La Vigne, 2006). Including identified social supports in the post-release interview could be beneficial in assessing the level and types of support that are provided. I did not do this in my study.

One hypothesis for the incongruent finding of no significance for social supports is the variability in how researchers define social support. As Bohmert, Duwe, and Hipple (2018) explained, social support can be expressive and instrumental, and it can occur at different social levels (individual, community, or society). Social support can be given

formally by institutions or agencies, or informally by friends and family. Last, the perception of support received may vary from the objective support given (Bohmert et al., 2018).

In terms of the family systems theory, social supports can lead to both positive and negative impacts on those who are released. Bowen theorized that families profoundly affect members' thoughts, feelings, and actions. Individuals seek out the others' attention, approval, and support, and react to the needs expectations and upsets of others (Kerr, 2000). Pettus-Davis et al. (2018) noted that participation in social networks is critically important, particularly after an incarceration experience because it can help to buffer stress and provide predictability, purpose, and a sense of stability and belonging. Positive social supports have been found to foster integration into the community, but negative social support from family—particular high levels of conflict—can increase drug use and stress, leading to new arrests (Pettus-Davis et al., 2018).

I found no significant relationship between the participant's COMPAS risk of recidivism score and actual recidivism. The COMPAS is an assessment tool used with offenders to support treatment, programming, and case management decisions, and it relies on both static and dynamic data to generate risk and need scores. The recidivism component of the COMPAS assesses a defendant's risk of committing a misdemeanor or felony within 2 years of assessment from 137 features about an individual and the individual's past criminal record (Dressel & Farid, 2018). Dressel and Farid (2018) suggested that aspects of the data may be correlated to race, which can lead to racial disparities in the predictions. COMPAS scores appeared to favor white defendants over

black defendants by under predicting recidivism for white and over predicting recidivism for black defendants (Dressel & Farid, 2018). This continues to be a source of disagreement and is attributed to a debate over algorithmic fairness.

A limited number of the participants in this study were given follow up assessments at 3 and 6-month periods. Future researchers may also benefit from investigating if some participants' COMPAS risk of recidivism score changes at the 3 or 6-month period post release.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations of this study. The first was the inability to account for additional variables that may affect supervision and recidivism. I assumed that there could be additional variables that affect supervision failures that were not captured in the data set, such as housing stability and employment requirements, which were set as conditions of the participant's parole. Other researchers have also taken into account the quality of the parolee-parole officer relationship and how it may have an effect on the likelihood of recidivism in both positive and negative ways (Chamberlain, Gricius, Wallace, Borjas, & Ware, 2017). Parole officers can illicit immediate positive change by assessing the individual's real time needs and referring them to services to help prevent the participant from getting a violation or new arrest.

An additional limitation is the nature of the support variable. I determined the support measurement by the number of individuals that the parolee identified as positive or conflicted social support upon release. The parolee's social worker did not determine whether the individuals identified as positive or conflicted were biologically related to the

individual or if they were considered a support due to a close relationship. Previous research has differentiated between types of social support such as emotional and instrumental support (Taylor, 2016) or criminal peers versus noncriminal peers (Mowen & Boman IV, 2018). The importance of defining the type of relationship was shown in Mowen and Boman's (2018) study, which showed that associating with criminal peers tends to increase odds of recidivism and offending. Additionally, there was also a lack of variability when conflicted supports were assessed. Positive versus conflicted supports were determined solely by the participants in this study. Of the 161 participants, only 13 individuals reported having any conflicted supports. I assumed that upon release the focus of the social worker was on positive supports and that there was not much attention or discussion of those who would be classified as being conflicted supports to the participants.

Last, the individuals included in the study were from the limited geographic area of the Upper Manhattan area. The results of this study may not be generalizable to other areas or populations. Additionally, all of the participants were male, and of African American or Hispanic ethnicity, which was a reflection of the geographic area in Upper Manhattan that the participants were taken from.

Recommendations

Due to the limited geographic location of the participants, it would be beneficial for future researchers to widen the scope of the study to analyze other geographical areas and to include individuals of different ethnic and racial backgrounds. Lockwood, Nally, and Ho (2016) noted that residential segregation and economic inequality have

noteworthy impacts on racial disparities in recidivism among ex-offenders when they returned to the community. According to the NYC Health Department (2015) statistics from 2015, 29% of residents in the location of program participants were living below the federal poverty level, and it was the second-poorest neighborhood in Manhattan. The ethnicity of participants also lacked diversity. In this study, 62% of participants were African American/black and 23% were Hispanic (New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, 2015).

There are numerous challenges when returning to the community post-incarceration. Lockwood et al. (2016) stated that this includes an array of underlying socio-economic problems, especially in urban communities. Ex-offenders, particularly those who are African American, are more likely to have higher recidivism rates because they usually return to neighborhoods inundated with poverty, unemployment, and crime (Lockwood et al., 2016).

Knowing the nature and type of the relationships could contribute to understanding the quality of support that is received. For example, it would be beneficial to include if the support was biological (i.e., mother, brother, sister) or a close relationship (i.e., girlfriend or family friend) to the participant. Furthermore, information about the characteristics of the family system, such as frequency of contact and type of support provided (i.e., financial, housing, and emotional) could also lead to a greater understanding of the level of support during reintegration into the community (Cross, Nguyen, Chatters, & Taylor, 2018).

Parole officers are influential and important to the parolee and their supports, thus their relationship with the parolee is a very influential one. Parole officers have discretion in recommending revocation for a violation of parole conditions, while one parole officer may violate an individual for a charge another may not. There are few studies that examined the effect of the quality of the relationship between parolees and their parole officer on reentry outcomes such as recidivism (Chamberlain et al., 2017). When parolees perceive a positive relationship with their parole officers they may report feeling more loyalty and accountability towards them, which can also lead to better rapport and communicating their treatment and service needs (Chamberlain et al., 2017). Chamberlain et al (2017) also noted that a negative or ambivalent relationship may lead to more challenges and put the individual at a disadvantage for voicing their needs, asking for assistance and implementing effective behavioral change.

Grattet and Lin (2016) discussed the importance of understanding why some parolees have certain behaviors and the response of their parole officers and case managers. Incorporating extenuating factors such as social supports, housing needs, and additional challenges can influence the outcomes of if an individual may be violated or recidivate. When taking into account only the individual's risk factors, those who were assigned to more intensive supervision had an increased likelihood of being violated and returning back to incarceration. Likewise, certain categories of offenders, such as sex offenders or those with two strikes in certain states, experience elevated violation hazards under intensive supervision (Grattet & Lin, 2016). There are also some parole officer characteristics, as well as regional and bureaucratic factors, that contribute to the chances

that a parole violation will be given. Grattet and Lin (2016) argued that there are additional complex factors such as individual, institutional, and geographic (i.e. cultural) factors that lead to violations of parole, marking a significant advance from the conceptualization of parole violations as simply the product of offender-level criminal risk factors.

Future researchers should also examine data on what the new charge or parole violation was as this might contribute to further understanding of risk of recidivism. Having a better understanding of the types of violations or new arrests charges can have important implications for policy analysis. Knowing the charge of the new offense which leads to incarceration is an important dimension when conducting analysis of interventions intended to reduce recidivism, whether those interventions occur prior to release or while the person is under post release supervision (Gaes, Luallen, Rhodes, & Edgerton, 2016).

Implications

Historically, researchers have found that social supports have a significant effect on successful reentry, which demonstrates the benefits of incorporating supports in reentry plans. Taking into account the particular findings of this study, social supports were not a significant factor within this study population. The variables of first time offenders and recidivism was found to be significant. One hypothesis for the incongruent finding of no significance for social supports is the lack of a concise definition of what social support is.

The findings from this study may benefit and lead to implications for social change in reference to sentencing reforms that take into account data that supports the disproportionately lower rate of recidivism of offenders with no, or a minor, criminal record. (Bagaric & Alexander, 2014). Recidivism rates are important to policy makers and government officials due to the investments on improving public safety, reducing corrections spending, and having the ability to reinvest those savings into strategies that can decrease crime and further reduce recidivism (Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2014).

The RNR model is based on the social psychology of offending, which theorizes that individuals and social/situational factors intersect to create values, cognitions, and personality orientations that are conducive to criminal conduct (James, 2015). The GLM assumes that individuals fashion their lives around their core values, their criminal conduct is a result from flaws in their life plans and how they pursue their core values and life priorities (Ward, Yates, & Willis, 2011).

Family systems theory views families as living organisms and stresses boundaries, rules, expectations, and behaviors that help the family maintain equilibrium and the status quo or homeostasis. By merging the family systems theory, risk needs responsivity model, and good lives model we can derive an understanding of criminal behaviors and causes. An individual's social supports has the ability to affect a person's goals, priorities, and influence the mode that they use to achieve them in either a positive or criminogenic way.

Conclusion

The results presented here establish that there was a significant relationship between first time offender status and recidivism within the first three years of release. First time offenders were less likely to be rearrested within this time period. Additionally, there was no significant relationship found between positive supports, conflicted supports, risk of recidivism score and recidivism. It is important that future research consider a more concise definition of social support and seek a better understanding of the quality of support. Lastly, including information on the types of charges or violations that lead to rearrest can have implications for program development and better services to help serve participants. Gaining a better understanding of the positive characteristics of first time offenders, social supports and recidivism can help influence the way that a community, parole officer, a case worker, and support or family members interact and work with individuals upon return from incarceration.

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