THE TRANSITION FROM CELL BLOCKS TO STREET BLOCKS; AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLACEMENT AND RECIDIVISM.

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ABSTRACT

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The literature on recidivism often discusses a strong link to returning ex-offenders' abilities to reenter their community or family unit in a successful manner with repeat criminal behaviors. Varied survey methods used in tracking recidivism rates have shown over time that recidivism rates have stayed relatively stable. This study analyzes data from a community-based correctional facility (CBCF) and state prisons. Post-release recidivism outcomes and their relationship to placement of individuals sentenced to a CBCF facility, prison and then a step-down program at a CBCF are examined. Overall, the findings support the idea that recidivism has not one significant factor but many. Type of placement was not related to post-release recidivism. Future research is essential to plans in effective recidivism reduction approaches and successful reentry programming by drawing attention to the needs of the individuals returning to our communities.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving parents – Jeanette and David Spary.

They have given me unconditional love, understanding and the courage to be myself.

My parents gave me values and qualities that have been fundamental in becoming who I am today and who I can be tomorrow.

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INTRODUCTION

Historical Incarceration and Release Trends

For the past two decades, Ohio's rate of prison population growth mirrored that observed at the national level until 1998 when the state prison population peaked and started a three-year decline (LaVigne, Thomson, Visher, Kachnowski, & Travis, 2003). Between year-end 1982 and mid-1998, Ohio's prison population nearly tripled in size from 17,147 to 49,029 (LaVigne, Thomson, Visher, Kachnowski, & Travis, 2003). By 2001, the Ohio prison population grew by less than one and reached 45,284 (LaVigne, Thomson, Visher, Kachnowski, & Travis, 2003). Despite these, albeit small decreases, Ohio had the 7th largest prison population in the United States and the 22nd highest incarceration rate, with 398 prisoners per 100,000 residents (LaVigne, Thomson, Visher, Kachnowski, & Travis, 2003). The fluctuation in the Ohio prison population can be attributed to two main factors: increased admissions and longer lengths of stay (LaVigne, Thomson, Visher, Kachnowski, & Travis, 2003).

In 1982, the vast majority of inmates were released via discretionary means through a grant of parole from the parole board (LaVigne, Thomson, Visher, Kachnowski, & Travis, 2003). Since that time, sentencing law changes have resulted in steady declines in the proportion of discretionary releases and corresponding increases in mandatory releases at the expiration of the inmates' sentences (LaVigne, Thomson, Visher, Kachnowski, & Travis, 2003). Today, recidivism and reentry are the focus of national concern. In the past ten years, there has been an awareness brought to returning ex-offenders into communities and how they respond to the pressures of this return.

Over the past two and a half years, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) has been working to develop a more holistic and systematic approach to prisoner

reentry in which the concept of reentry underlies the assessments and programming that a prisoner receives while in prison as well as after release (LaVigne, Thomson, Visher, Kachnowski, & Travis, 2003). The development of this approach has been firmly based on the use of evidence-based practices, research, and a continuum of data collection. The current evidence-based practices (EBP) structures highlight that justice agencies should match offenders to program's and services based on their risk and need scores that are generated by Risk Needs and Responsivity scale (RNR) assessments and then assign the individuals to appropriate program or incarceration location. The types of RNR assessments used vary across agencies and counties and across the state of Ohio. The RNR tools are challenging, as they are only as successful as the resources available, which includes programs that predict the best outcomes.

RNR tools are not only designed to help criminal justice agencies, but also any behavioral health agency that is considered an integral part of an offender's rehabilitation and successful return to society. RNR assessments have three components that direct the scoring and prediction outcome. The first factor is to assess the individual using the preferred or directed assessment tools. The second part of this is to assess and match the individuals to a suitable program that can be tailored to his or her needs. Third, the assessment stage needs to include the judicial capacity to serve targeted clients.

To illustrate, the desired outcome of an individual assessment is to ascertain a risk score. A risk score categorizes an individual into low, medium or high-risk categories. This enables agencies to prioritize offenders in a more structured, intensive and controlled programming design. It also aids with informed placement decisions with low risk offenders who can also be categorized into the higher need programming when they are assessed high risk for criminogenic

needs[1]. For example, a person who is assessed as high risk for offending and committed a series of offences is more likely to be placed in a facility with specific programming for the criminogenic needs rather than a low risk offender with very little risk needs. RNR tools are going to be relied upon more and utilized more frequently in response the expected influx of offenders who will require access to behavioral health services or treatment under the Affordable Care Act, effective January 2014. RNR is expected to address the future step-down needs of exiting inmates and not just intake assessments for placement.

To date, few studies have compared post-release outcomes of offenders relative to their placement location. Placement locations vary from state prison facilities, community-based correctional facilities (CBCF), or a step-down program that consists of a CBCF shortened program, halfway house or transitional house. Research has examined types of placement versus recidivism by comparisons, typically by reviewing mandatory release from prison versus parolees who are under supervision for a period of time or individuals placed in prison versus those in a halfway house. When studies do focus on placement of the individuals, they tend to examine specific samples such as juvenile offenders or sex offenders. Little is known about the adults who do not fall into these categories. Returning offenders into any community and the impacts of recidivism is a multifaceted social issue that has created an upsurge in recidivism and reentry research. This thesis is attempting to review some of the issues associated with asserted effective reentry programs.

With the recent reentry movement, some states have started to rely upon what is known as transitional housing, where inmates are released from prison but are still under correctional

[1] Criminogenic needs as defined by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections are anti-social personality, anti-social attitudes and values, anti-social associates, family dysfunction, poor self-control, poor problem-solving skills, substance abuse and lack of employment/employment skills.

control via placements in step-down[2] programs within CBCF units or similar. The purpose of the present study is to overcome some of the above noted limitations by comparing sentenced or placed in prison only, CBCFs only, or prison first then step-down or transitioned to a CBCF in relation to recidivism post-release. To accomplish the above, this thesis will be comprised of five chapters devoted to gaining a better understanding of how placement decisions might affect post-release outcomes.

Chapter 1 reviews what is used to define recidivism and the tools created in response to an ever-increasing post release populations. Chapter 2 presents the current available literature that examines the recidivism links to placement and programming. The review of past studies in this chapter is to examine the current connection between individuals and participation in pre-or post-programming and their successes. Chapter 3 presents the methods used to analyze the data in three groups on release to determine the significance of placement and recidivism. Finally, Chapter 4 discusses the results and findings of the data analysis. Finally, chapter 5 explores the implications and limitations of the study in detail and proposes future research directions.

[2] Step-down units or step-down programs are state designed reentry and rehabilitation plans. These plans or programs are given to individuals who have completed lengthier terms in a state facility and are due for release within six months. The final six months of their assigned sentence is served in a step-down program or unit. Step-down programs or facilities are also known by the term transitional units or programs. This manuscript will use step-down and transitional interchangeably.

CHAPTER I
REENTRY
A Current Problem

The substantial growth in the United States prison system, inmate counts, and various changes in sentencing practices are relatively new phenomena with no historical evidence on how to address the issue successfully. In response, changes have occurred that assisted in overwhelming a corrections system to a crisis point that major modifications have been made to address the situation. Harsher penalties for property and drug offenses (Lynch, 2002), "three strikes legislation" (Benekos & Merlo, 1995), truth in sentencing and mandatory minimum sentencing (Petersilia J. , 2003) have all contributed to the explosion in the number of individuals sentenced to a term in a holding facility. The increase in inmate counts has been stated to be 700% between 1970 and 2001 alone (Travis, 2004). This explosive incarceration period saw an estimated 1.5 million individuals incarcerated in 2006. The long-term impact of this upsurge is that many once imprisoned persons are now returning to society and face tremendous challenges to successful reentry (Justice, 2012). In order to place this study in its proper context, some terms of concepts need to be defined.

Reentry

Reentry for the purpose of this thesis is defined as the entire process of returning an individual to a self-chosen community after completion of a sentenced term within a state facility. This is a concise definition, which refers to the idea that a returning ex-offender can resume expected roles without returning to any criminal acts.

Recidivism

Recidivism is a return to crime. For this study, the concept of recidivism is deviation in the form of crime. Recidivism has been measured in many different ways and with a multitude of different variables. There is a major importance in differentiating what kind of recidivism is measured and how it is measured. An ex-offender can reenter the criminal justice system under a new or similar criminal charge or simply can be retained by the criminal justice system on a probation or parole violation.

Recidivism: Past, Present, and Future

Recidivism is certainly not a new problem or concept, yet it is now in the forefront and has much needed attention, funding, and review. National concern is not only focused on the social costs of recidivism, but also on the economic costs that recidivism produces. In 2011, the estimated cost of corrections alone was estimated to be $52 Billion (Pew Center on the States, 2011). Much debate has been centered on the incarceration boom trend and the consequential fiscal impacts. With a declining national economic situation, focus has been redirected towards correctional outcomes, and increase pressures to public safety while also decreasing public costs associated with incarceration and rehabilitation. Correctional outcomes are considered a successfully reintegrated individual who has completed his or her sanctions and returned to his or her community showing pro-social behavior by following the expected laws and requirements of the community (Saunders, 2006).

There is very little statewide or nationwide data on post-release behaviors before mid-1990s when incarceration was booming to overcrowded proportions. Scholars have offered varied explanations as to why no such data are available. The general consensus across many articles was that the incarceration trend had focused so much time and resources on intake and

maintaining the system that exit tracking was not even considered to be an important factor in the larger picture (U.S Department of Justice, 2003).

The first comprehensive statewide recidivism study was conducted by the Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCS) in 1999 and then again in 2004. Its nearest counterpart is a study done by The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in 1994 and 2002. The ASCS survey collected data from twice as many cases as the BJS surveys and also included a "three-year return to prison" data collection that has consequently been used in much research (Pew Center on the States, 2011). However, there have been many differences in survey methods over the past 30 years, which complicates the ability of the direct comparison of any results. Although direct comparison is unreliable, one large feature has still emerged from most studies done. The national recidivism rates have remained remarkably stable and consistent over the years. The consistency in recidivism rates is often examined by excluding California's inmate population rates as this states data skews the rates. The national recidivism rates have consistently reported to be approximately 40% over the last 30 years, yet there is also conflicting data to refute these claims (Pew Center on the States, 2011).

In spite of an almost two decade decline in reported national crime rates, Ohio has witnessed an increasing rate of return to incarceration among released prisoners of 11.9% (Pew Center on the States, 2011). However, this figure was counterbalanced by the fact that a 17.7% reduction had been reported in the rate of offenders being returned to prison for technical violations. Previous research by BCJ and ODRC has reported that Ohio had a state recidivism rate of 39.0% between 1999 and 2002 and a rate of 39.6% between 2004 and 2007 (Pew Center on the States, 2011). The two recidivism figures show a lower recidivism rate than the national averages of 45.4% during 1999 to 2002 and 43.3% during 2004 and 2007. These national trends

suggest that four in every 10 nationally released individual's return to incarceration within a given period of time (Pew Center on the States, 2011). While there are varied reporting systems in every state, these figures have been considered stable since the mid- 1990s (Pew Center on the States, 2011). Yet, many states are claiming reductions in recidivism. This so-claimed decline in recidivism rates has been substantiated in any number of ways. The first explanation is related to placement of certain risks of offenders.

Logic would suggest that any sentencing county/state that sends low risk or misdemeanor offenders to prison are more likely to see lower recidivism rates and or probation violations than a state that uses prison capacity for only serious or violent offenders that are considered high risk with a higher chance of recidivism. This is also true of the variation of sanctions given to offenders where large numbers of offenders are diverted into probation sanctions or alternative programming. The diverted offender population is not going to appear in national figures if failure or revocation occurs in the diverted programming, as they are not being officially documented as being "returned to custody."

Second, the national return to prison statistics can also be influenced by individual state post-prison supervision periods. For example, North Carolina has the nation's shortest post-prison release period of between six or nine months (Pew Center on the States, 2011). Consequently, North Carolina also has the lowest probation violation rate of less than 1%, as the basic idea of if a person is not on probation, he/she cannot be returned to incarceration for a violation on a sanction that has ended (Pew Center on the States, 2011). Thus, North Carolina recidivism figures do not reflect a lower crime rate or more law-abiding citizens, but they do show how individual state requirements of post-sentence sanctions can portray lower levels of post-release recidivism than states that have longer periods of supervision.

Recidivism and Ohio

Many different researchers define recidivism periods differently. Some claim that recidivism in the first year is the most critical to measure (Petersilia J. , 2003). Others measure a completed period of three years (Mohr G. , 2013). The state of Ohio's recidivism rates are claimed to be at an all-time low of 28.7%. The national recidivism rate has been stable at the approximate 40% level at 43% level by the current Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections Director in February 2013 (Mohr G. C., House Bill 59, FY 2014-15 Budget, 2013). The same director released a recidivism figure of 31.2% of offenders released in 2011, with the rates being reported as current in December 2012 (Mohr G. C., The Communicator, 2012). The state recidivism rate is generated from a 3-year post release tracking system. This system tracks individuals in periods of 12 months, 24 months, and 36 months being considered the completion of a recidivism period. If current statistics were accurate, the estimation that 4 in every 10 individuals released from prison in Ohio returns to prison within three years of their release, then it would suggest that the system is falling short in recidivism reduction initiatives or approaches (Pew Center on the States, 2011).

Community Corrections

For the duration of this study, the term community corrections will refer to specific housing facilities that provide residential services to an individual who is under a sentenced incarceration period. These facilities are local community-based operations, yet are mainly funded with federal grant monies.

In Ohio, community corrections can be separated into three types of agencies/services, including Community Correction Acts (CCA), community-based correctional facilities (CBCFs) and Community Residential Services (Pettway, 2008). The CBCFs are the most common and

progressive facilities that are geared towards reintegration and rehabilitation of inmates. The CBCF facilities can provide an intermediate residential sanction at the front end of the system between probation and prison, called diversion, and reintegration services at the tail end of the system between prison and probation, called transitional (Pettway, 2008). These CBCF facilities follow the rehabilitation plans as laid out by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC), which is considered to be the most effective and pro-social reentry program available (Lipsey & Cullen, 2007).

Community-Based Correctional Facility

CBCFs are short-term residential sanctions that are passed down mainly from the Courts of Common Pleas as an alternative to traditional imprisonment. The first CBCF was established in Ohio in 1970 in response to the start of the known overcrowding in prison problem (Pettway, 2008). The success in this one facility saw the passing of House Bill 1000 in 1981, which authorized further funding and program placements by many more Courts of Common Pleas (Pettway, 2008). CBCF facilities are unique in the fact that they are a combined entity of state and local governing bodies. CBCFs are considered a tool of rehabilitation for an individual that appears to have a continuum of criminal activities, a positive alternative to prison for low-level felony offenders, and as a minimum-security facility. Their effort is directed towards structured treatments in behavioral based programming to jump-start or promote reentry to the community (Mohr G. , 2013).

CBCF success has encouraged the development of 18 CBCFs in Ohio, which incorporate every county within the state (See Appendix, Figure 1A), with 13 of these facilities housing both male and female offenders (Mohr G. , 2013). Each one of Ohio's CBCFs runs a highly structured program that includes assessment, treatment, and follow-up services for offenders. The main

emphasis is placed on substance abuse education/treatment, employment, community service, education, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), and transitional services in the community (Pettway, 2008).

Ohio Community Corrections Act

The Ohio Community Corrections Act (OCCA) is a jail and prison diversion program that is funded by the ODRC and the Bureau of Community Sanctions (BCS). This partnership is to enable funding from state level to local community correctional planning boards to establish programs to administer transitional control, implementing rehabilitative sanctioning, and electronic monitoring (Mohr G. , 2013) data. This funding resulted in the development of further halfway houses, transitional control via probation officers and CBCFs (ODRC, 2013). The push for evidence-based practices has been substantial in producing data of successful programs that show a reduction in recidivism and this has allowed further funding and legislation changes to be considered.

Evidence-Based Practices

With so many variables and external influences on any inmate, there is no ‘one size fits all’ solution to recidivism. In this situation, there has to be a ‘best of them’ approach to many of the possible reentry and recidivism reduction tools available. To ascertain if the best approach is being implemented, research and results need to be a decisive factor by using EBPs and this is where it comes into play. EBPs have become a required standard for many reentry designed programs that can be observed in most state or county run CBCFs in Ohio. EBPs are considered the most informed approach that allows decisions to be made regarding policies and procedures that have the best available research available. EBPs consist of three basic principles. First, there

is a definable outcome; second, it is measurable; and last, it is defined according to practical realities such as recidivism (Pettway, 2008).

The National Institute of Corrections along with many other research groups have agreed upon six factors in EBPs that are essential for any recidivism prevention program to be a success. The six components identified are (1) risk/need assessments, (2) target appropriate interventions, (3) individual motivating factors, (4) increased positive reinforcement, (5) rewiring of the brain and (6) ongoing support systems to be made accessible (Hooley, 2012). For Example, EBPs are designed to promote the development, funding and utilization of community-based corrections for appropriate offenders in lieu of incarceration. EBPs are professionally conducted and supported by the best available research evidence. EBPs that are currently used in ODRC facilities and most state CBCFs have been researched and tested with control groups and confirmed by meta-analysis results for consistency in outcomes.

More specifically, Ohio's EBP has only three elements that are considered to meet the three basic principles of EBP. These three principles are the risk principle; need principle, and finally the treatment principle. The risk principle is directs that the services are matched to an offender based on their individual risk level. The lower the risk, the lower the need for supervision and the same in reverse for high risk. The need principle is designed to look at the individual characteristics of the offender and establish the most effective and appropriate tailored intervention programs most likely to reduce risk of recidivism. Finally, the treatment principle is reported to be the most effective of the three principles in reducing recidivism rates between medium and high-risk offenders. The treatment principle identifies the most critical high risk factors and then target offenders for the appropriate programming that includes positive

reinforcements, incentives, proportionate sanctions, programs for skill development, and most importantly, those addressing criminal thinking patterns.

Efforts in Study Site to Reduce Recidivism and Improve Reentry

"Reentry means 'Going Home to Stay'" is Ohio's reentry slogan (Wilkinson, Rhine, & Henderson-Hurley, 2005). This is an encouraging slogan but often an unrealistic option when considering the hurdles faced by a returning ex-offender. Several researchers have stated that a lack of literature on recidivism reduction is due to the idea that any reoffending risk is determined individually (Kubrin & Stewart, 2006). This is an assumed answer on cause because there may be many individual level variables that could be predictive of recidivism. Legitimate employment, adequate housing, suitable community resources, and minimal experiences with negative stigma are all known correlates of recidivism. Returning offenders not only face a second period of incarceration, but the effects can also be seen in further breaks in employment, restricting access to any further educational or vocational training (Petersilia J. , 2003), and additional damage can be done to relationships that could have possibly lead to a more stable and supportive family unit. Some states, like Ohio, have begun to direct reentry efforts from prison to community-based options.

State funding for alternative incarceration or rehabilitation options has been a political battle for a long time. With Ohio currently spending $66.82 per day to house an offender or $24,389.70 per year, there is still significant pressure to reduce its current population of 50,153 inmates even further while also controlling for recidivism (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, 2013) The reform and transformation approach first became historic in 2011 with the passage of Sentencing Reform – House Bill 86 (HB 86). HB 86 was established with technical assistance from the Council of State Governments Justice Center, in partnership with

the Pew Center on the States and the U.S. Department of Justice (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, 2013). The new law aims to reduce crime and recidivism by utilizing diversion and transitional programming. The law also seeks to reduce prison crowding further, incidents of prison violence and at the same time better preparing returning ex-offenders for a successful transition back to the community (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, 2013).

It was claimed that these reforms would reduce Ohio's prison population by more than 3,700 inmates by FY 2015, at a projected savings of over $37 million (See Appendix, Figure 2A) (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, 2013). Additional cost savings are predicted to be realized throughout the criminal justice system as overall crime rates are reduced because first-time, non-violent offenders are deterred from a criminal lifestyle through effective risk assessment and programming (Mohr G. , 2013). These reforms are supposed to ease overcrowding and extensive costs associated with the Ohio prison system (Mohr G. , 2013).

Under House Bill 86, the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) now guides and informs the assessment of offenders' risk and needs. Ohio is on the cutting edge in its reliance on ORAS for use in assisting decision makers in better assessing offenders' risk profiles (Latessa, 2012). It will help guide staff more effectively in a manner that reduces recidivism. Over time, the use of ORAS will contribute to improvements in the use of predictive risk assessment tools, increased public safety and more successful community re-entry pathways for offenders in DRC. The impact of ORAS on reentry and recidivism will be discussed further in this chapter.

HB 86 not only redefined incarceration trends for all Ohio offenders, it also affected sentencing laws statewide. The impact of change was visible in increased dollar values in crimes considered a misdemeanor or felony. For example, the monetary amount involved in crime to be

considered a felony was raised from $500 to $1000 (Wilkinson, Rhine, & Henderson-Hurley, 2005). Penalty levels were lowered on powder cocaine, yet there were increased penalties for crack cocaine (US Sentencing Commission, 2007). Minor changes were made in the sentencing laws of non-support charges, escape charges, and intervention in lieu of convictions (Justice, 2012). The sentencing law changes include extensions in sentenced lengths for Felony 1 crimes and decreased time options for Felony 3 crimes (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003). HB86 also introduced the Earned Credit[3] programs for low level and nonviolent offenders, and afforded judges further discretionary power in the use of [4]Risk Reduction Sentencing (Justice, 2012).

HB 86's most significant impact on prison populations and recidivism rates is the limits on prison commitments for certain Felony 4 and Felony 5 crimes. This was implemented to retain prison space for the most serious and violent offenders, unless there is a documented parole violation or other special circumstance (Justice, 2012). Only nonviolent offenders on this level cannot be sent directly to an ODRC facility for the crime. This could be considered one element that has been fundamental in reducing prison populations and thus reflecting a different view on recidivism rates and trends. The variations can compile a very different view of what was considered recidivism before and what could be considered recidivism post HB 86.

In sum, as HB 86 in Ohio changes the landscape of sentencing recidivism rates will arguably undergo simultaneously changes in the measurement structures to enable the inclusion of changing sentencing trends. The explosion of size and population in correctional facilities can no longer be measured by simple "return to custody" measures. This global and singular

[3] Earned Credit is a creation from House Bill 86, which increases offenders' opportunities for "earning" additional Earned Credits for program participation, offers a provision for Certificates of Achievement and Employability.

[4] Risk reduction sentencing is when a court assigns a reduced term of incarceration at a state level facility, followed by a short term of incarceration at a rehabilitation unit of the courts choice. Both terms must be completed to have the sentencing requirement completed.

recording system will miss gathering valuable data as the increased population naturally produces a wider variety of reasons for offenders returning to communities and incarceration. To simplify the definition of recidivism, as whether another crime was committed or not, is no longer an accurate tool of measurement. 'What is the recidivism rate?' is impractical without being able to appraise the specifics of legitimacy. Recidivism rates are used to indicate a successful and or an unsuccessful return on state correctional investment and have long been considered a leading statistic on correctional investment's effectiveness (Pew Center on the States, 2011).

In conclusion, this chapter presented the concept of recidivism and the tools that have been designed to lower the rates. This chapter also reviewed the more localized ideas of recidivism reduction on a state level by Ohio. This chapter also reviewed the designs and potential outcomes of local community correctional facilities that have been following evident-based practices of risk reduction programs. The chapter also discussed the implications of recent house bills that have instigated changes in sentencing practices. Finally, this chapter touched upon the programs and availability of reentry programs for ex-offenders and what the social implications are for successful reentry.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

For this literature review, the areas discussed include criminal attitudes and behavior, classification and placements, release factors and associated misconduct. Furthermore, reviews on available literature included in this chapter are post prison release recidivism, post transitional/halfway housing recidivism and post CBCF recidivism. Finally, this chapter reviews the compared costs, outcomes and effectiveness of the varied placement, and subsequent recidivism.

One of many topics of discussion as to what causes recidivism is criminal attitudes and behaviors. The research on criminal attitudes, practices, and responses are vast and diverse. Much research is based on a social psychological approach with support that recidivism is causally linked to criminal behavior. Empirical research in this area lacks the theoretical and methodological rigor to test causal models of the influence of treatment on reducing pro-criminal attitudes (PCAs), and effects of PCAs on recidivism (Banse, Koppehele-Gossel, Kistemaker, Werner, & Schmidt, 2013). Crime-supportive or PCAs figure prominently among the “Big Four” criminogenic needs in Andrews and Bonta's (2010) Risk‑Need‑Responsivity Model of offender rehabilitation (Banse, Koppehele-Gossel, Kistemaker, Werner, & Schmidt, 2013) The most used approach of researching an individual’s criminal attitudes or assessing his/her risk of recidivism is to be mediated through a person’s intention to engage in a particular behavior, which is influenced by the person’s attitude toward the criminal and social influences (Simourd & Olver, 2002). Social control and criminal punishment has been linked to many theories, past and present, such as traditional theories of strain (Cloward, 1959), control (Hirschi, 1969) and differential association (Sutherland, 1947). This latter theory has linked criminal behavior and

attitudes to peer association, which essentially is going to be a key component to recidivism when a formerly incarcerated person (FIP) is released from jail or prison with no rehabilitative assistance (Simourd & Olver, 2002).

Criminal Attitudes and Behaviors

To research effective approaches to reducing recidivism, there is a need to understand such complex and perplexing positions of various criminal attitudes and behaviors within mainstream criminal research and practice that contains no uniform terminology (Index 1) (Banse, Koppehele-Gossel, Kistemaker, Werner, & Schmidt, 2013). For this review, numerous studies were consulted to determine the most encouraging EBP results, extensively researched ideas, and significant approaches to recidivism reduction. Meta-analyses provided the most insight into the research on the relationship between type of correctional placement and recidivism. The meta-analyses highlighted a quantitative index of the predictors of crime or criminal attitudes versus the narrative reports, which rarely provided this type of information. The most significant predictors of post-release recidivism were found to be criminal peers and criminal attitudes (Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996). These variables contributed most to the prediction of recidivism over other known factors, such as criminal history, institutional misconduct, social achievement, family factors, age, gender, intelligence, substance abuse, personal distress, and socioeconomic status (Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996).

Classification and Placement

In the last 30 years, there has been a significant change in the classification systems used in the sentencing and prison structures to accommodate harsher sentencing laws and increased inmate populations. Before 1980, only California used an objective classification system while the remaining states all used a subjective classification system (U. S. Department of Justice,

2003). In the early 1980s, all state prisons switched to uniformly use the objective classification system as it was made available as a fully automated system that was purposely created to enable accurate classification decisions that recorded all influencing factors for later collation and analysis (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003). The objective classification system had been researched in-depth in California during its initial operation period and was found to produce reliable and valid classification practices that ultimately, directed correctional decision as to housing and rehabilitative needs of the inmates (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003). The objective classification system breaks down into the following considerations for placements: the first function is considered to be the external classification, which determines an offender's risk level and where the offender will be placed for the best possible outcome, and the second section is known as the internal classification that is then conducted to determine what type of housing and programming would be the most appropriate for the most productive outcome (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003).

If a person is assigned to a state prison, mental health, education, medical, and unit staff evaluates each inmate. Inmate security level classification is determined through the consideration of pre-commitment variables such as: age at current commitment, current offense(s), and security level when last released from prison, history of violence, gang affiliation or drug use, and escape history. Institution assignments are arrived at by matching inmate requirements (security level, medical, education, separations, etc.) with the institution available to best meet those needs (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, 2012)

The classification and housing assignment is considered a permanent assignment for the inmate for the first 12 months of their sentence until a mandatory review is required or unless there is a cause for a reclassification process (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003). The

reclassification process only occurs when a trained and certified professional has a conflicting judgment to that of the system results and also the mandatory 12 month assessment can result in a change of status. The 12 month review of the inmate scores then indicates any possible need to increase the risk score due to behavior or conflict issues in the first 12 month period or it can also be used to lower risk assessment scores to enable an individual to be considered for transitional programs or CBCF programs (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003).

This system has had some reliability issues in the past, one major factor or faulty results and "over-classification" was found to be due to the lack of suitable and uniformed training of the administrative staffing (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003). The "over-classification" was an explosive human rights issue that was brought before several courts when prisoners with serious crime convictions had good conduct records yet remained in high or maximum security levels for excessive periods of time. This placement took away any incentive of behavioral changes to work down their risk levels and achieve any chance of early release (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003). This issue was addressed by changing the initially designed system to now comprise less than 10 decisive factors, using only officially designed documents instead of self-administered questionnaires or surveys and regular testing of the staff that are responsible for risk assessment score assignments (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003)

Release Factors and Misconduct

Within the same three-decade period of change to the classification system, there was also considerable research established on the idea of incarcerated misconduct and predictive recidivism. Prison misconduct has many problems in that it is not an action that can be predicted easily, but the use of the objective classification system has a specific scoring factor that has been successful in being able to classify potential prisoners who are likely to act in violent,

aggressive or defiant manners (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003). The creating of this identifier had a dual purpose, which is to maintain the safety of fellow prisoners and staff and to identify high recidivism risks (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003). The recidivism risk score is a simple set of predictive factors that include current age, gender, history of violence, history of mental illness, gang membership, program participation and any recent disciplinary actions (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003). These scores are then combined with additional scores gained from detainers, drug or alcohol history, history of escape, sentence length, severity of the offense and time left to serve. Together, this value creates a reclassification option if a significant period of sentence is left or can be used to assist in assigning post release community control due to the calculated recidivism risk (U. S. Department of Justice, 2003).

Prison Release and Recidivism

Petersilia (2005) discussed that a wealth of research has been documented that inmates released from prison face serious obstacles in reentry, but relatively little have examined how these problems directly related to recidivism. Petersilia (2003) had previously presented research findings and multiple study results that claimed the most influential and decisive factor in recidivism for post-release offenders without rehabilitation or pre-release programming was their criminal behaviors that are increased during a period of incarceration and untreated upon release. Petersilia is not alone in this belief; many researchers have found results like Petersilia's finding that conclude the same influence on recidivism risks. Yet, with the objective classification system, there is a risk assessment done at intake and at 12 months. When in reality, the risk assessment as a recidivism predictor would yield more useful information if done pre-release to assign programming that is individually tailored to needs. Otherwise, initial intake recidivism

scores have been confirmed with no real action to reverse the recidivism risk for prison-released individuals.

Transitional/Half-Way Housing and Recidivism

In the last 20 years, we have not only seen advancement in assessment tools, but we have also seen a huge developmental change in community based corrections or reentry facilities, which includes growing numbers of half-way housing (HWH) or transitional housing (TH) as other forms of controlled environments for completing assigned sentences. HWH or TH, both titles refer to the same idea of a specifically aimed environment that is designed for offenders or a formerly incarcerated person (FIP) to initiate a successful reintegration process while still supervising the individual, and providing continued programming and support. This environment is believed to be successful in reducing risks of recidivism when compared to standard prison release directly back into society.

HWH have several different designs for separate sub-sections of need. Some HWHs are strictly for mental health individuals, some are sober houses that are designed for only drug or alcohol recovery individuals, and others are specifically planned for returning individuals from a state prison. The returning individuals from a state prison facility can voluntarily accept a placement in a HWH or TH, and while some are sentenced to complete the initial reentry process in a HWH or TH by order of the sentencing judge who may decide that the individual needs the extra help to avoid any potential risk of recidivism.

Research is scant on HWH or TH relative to recidivism reduction. The research that is available on HWH or TH is mainly focused upon the phenomena of the NIMBY (Not in My Back Yard) or the programming integrity. The research on program integrity addresses the idea of a HWH or TH reducing recidivism, the growing acceptance of community-based programs is

an important factor of the correctional process and reentry and the growing evidence that illustrates the ineffectiveness of institutional corrections in rehabilitation and recidivism reduction (Allen, Carlson, Parks, & Seiter, 1978). HWH and TH has many advocates of their use, much research does not show any research to defined success, but to argue that the use of a transitional facility to allow the FIP to become gradually reconditioned to his community, is simply a humane action which should be standard procedure in any civilized society (Allen, Carlson, Parks, & Seiter, 1978). A very recent study was conducted in the Pennsylvania Prison system to determine if rehabilitation in community correction centers had a lower reoffending rate as compared to individuals just on probation and no incarceration time served (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, 2013). The findings in the study confirmed that inmates who are released under parole supervision are most likely to reoffend or be rearrested within three years and these high rates are due to three-quarters of the individuals having a probation violation (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, 2013). The report also states that 15% of all arrests in the state yearly are acts of recidivism; if this could be reduced to just 5% there would be a $16.5 million dollar saving in just one year (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, 2013). This same study reports that recidivism rates for those that have completed sentence in a community correctional center to be a steady decline since 2005 (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, 2013).

The rationale for residential inmate aftercare programs is to provide a transitional support system for the offender to readjust to the community from prison and, consequently, avoid recidivism (Allen, Carlson, Parks, & Seiter, 1978). Many different philosophies seem to underlie the operations of present day halfway houses and their programs. Most prevail among the treatment philosophies are milieu therapy, reality therapy, group therapy and behavior

modification, the philosophy is not dissimilar to that off a CBCF with a theoretically-based approach on correctional treatment (Allen, Carlson, Parks, & Seiter, 1978).

To measure the success of a HWH or TH, there appears to be only one reporting system that has been researched and reviewed for success of its former participants. Allen, Carlson, Parks and Seiter (1978) examined the outcome of former residents over a period of time as compared to the normal reporting system described which was to measure the recidivism rates by violations reported by an assigned probation or parole officer and any recorded new criminal charges. This method was discussed as being extremely faulty as it only registers new crimes upon arrest or documented probation/parole violations and does not reflect the real recidivism risk of an individual when they depart the programming (Allen, Carlson, Parks, & Seiter, 1978).

There is literature and research that claims a HWH or TW is a successful tool in reducing recidivism, but it is not that clear cut. For every study that finds halfway houses effective, another finds they have no effect at all, as it is believed to be because not all halfway houses are created equal (LaVigne N. G., 2010). Some house only low-risk inmates, while others welcome inmates of all assigned risk levels (LaVigne N. G., 2010). Some offer a full complement of programs and services, while others function strictly as work-release centers (LaVigne N. G., 2010). These variations in populations and services may explain the mixed findings on their effectiveness.

Community-Based Correctional Facilities

CBCFs are considered the most rehabilitative and effective reentry environment for high-risk offenders to receive tailored programming and treatment plans that will achieve the greatest recidivism, reduction upon release. One of the goals of the CBCF program is to reduce recidivism, which is the measured rate at which successfully released offenders return to prison

(Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, 2013). The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction commissioned a study from the University of Cincinnati using fiscal year 1999 data for CBCFs statewide to determine the effectiveness of recidivism reduction. The study concluded that CBCFs reduced recidivism by an average of 3% overall (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, 2013). Results consistently indicate that more than 85% of successfully released clients are not incarcerated for a new offense or charged with a probation violation which leads to incarceration within one year of release concluding that CBCFs are considered effective at reducing recidivism (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, 2013).

CBCF programming is designed and concentrated in specific areas in an attempt to address all of an individual's criminogenic needs to reduce recidivism risks. The targeted areas include chemical dependency treatment, education and employment services, marital/family/social relations, and community functioning. Cognitive skills training, cognitive functioning, gender specific training, case management, community service and drug testing (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, 2013). The monetary gain of greater availability of CBCF or CCC units and less state run mass incarceration facilities would see any state reversing the colossal debt of corrections. To enable the transition from using mainstream state facilities to more localized community corrections would also see the criminogenic needs addressed for every inmate, not just those specifically sentence to a rehabilitative environment.

The need principle stated that programs should target crime producing criminogenic needs, such as anti-social peer associations, substance abuse, lack of problem solving and self-control skills and other factors that are highly correlated with criminal conduct (Latessa, 2012). Furthermore, programs need to ensure that the vast majority of their interventions are focused on

these factors. Latessa (2012) stated that, non-criminogenic factors such as self-esteem, physical conditioning, understanding one's culture or history, and creative abilities will not have much effect on recidivism rates. An example of a program that tends to target non-criminogenic factors can be seen in offender-based military style boot camps (Latessa, 2012). These programs tend to focus on non-criminogenic factors, such as drill and ceremony, physical conditioning, discipline, self-esteem, and bonding offenders (Latessa, 2012). Because they tend to focus on non-crime producing needs, most studies show that boot camps have little impact on future criminal behavior and reducing recidivism (Latessa, 2012). Latessa (2012)stated interventions based on these need principles are very structured and emphasize the importance of modeling and behavioral rehearsal techniques that engender self-efficacy, challenge of cognitive distortions, and assist offenders in developing good problem-solving and self-control skills. These strategies have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing recidivism (Latessa, 2012). Non-behavioral interventions often used in program included drug and alcohol education, fear tactics and other emotional appeals, talk therapy, nondirective client-centered approaches, having them read books, lectures, milieu therapy, and self-help (Latessa, 2012). Latessa concluded that there is little empirical evidence that these approaches will lead to long-term reductions in recidivism (2012).

Comparing Costs, Effectiveness and Outcomes

There is currently very limited research that compares the outcomes three possible rehabilitation or reentry plans. There is research available that compares outcomes of prison reentry plans before release and the recidivism rates to the CBCF rehabilitation plans and post release recidivism outcomes. There was a meta-analysis study conducted on data from released individuals that attended transitional housing for reentry programming and individuals that

attended pre-release programming at a CBCF (Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Holsinger, 2005). Another study done by the same researchers looked at the outcomes of 44 varied diversion programs that took place in a community setting rather than an incarceration program requirement (Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Holsinger, 2005). These studies highlighted the importance of the "risk principle" and risk in this research refers to the higher risk of recidivism (Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Holsinger, 2005). There is also research that compares the recidivism rates of those released from prison and a halfway house upon completion of reentry programming. Numerous studies have reviewed public support for growing community correction implications (Cullen, Pealer, Fisher, Applegate, & Santana, 2002). Research shows that by helping the public understand that rehabilitation in effective correctional programming is essentially a public safety driven agenda and resistance to community corrections and alternatives to incarceration are then better received (Cullen, Pealer, Fisher, Applegate, & Santana, 2002). As public protection is perceived as the fundamental goal of corrections, another important step has been to demonstrate that using research to improve correctional programs can actually improve public protection, whereas, using approaches that have not been found effective can have the opposite effect (Cullen, Pealer, Fisher, Applegate, & Santana, 2002).

In the summer of 2002 the largest study ever conducted of residential correctional programs was completed by Dr. E. Latessa and Dr. Lowenkamp from the University of Cincinnati along with a team of researchers they studied 15 CBCFs and 38 HWH with a combined resident population of 13,000 offenders (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002). This study was conducted on direction of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections and state officials who were looking at the extreme correctional costs and how to reduce them. Results from this study showed that treatment effects of such rehabilitative programs had the strongest

effects on high-risk offenders, and that for all but a handful of programs, the recidivism rates for low risk offenders increased because of this programming (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002). Because of that study, Ohio has since enacted a number of policy changes aimed at reducing recidivism and enhancing the positive results from community based corrections. The policy changes included a five-day window of assessment to be completed by all intake agencies to establish risk levels for effective placements, ensuring placements of offenders are in line by matching high risk and low risk individuals to the appropriate service delivery models, cognitive behavioral modality to be adopted alongside other programming, standards to be based on performance-based models only, programs to be evaluated every three years to ensure continued fidelity, and criminogenic targets to be addressed in all programming (Latessa, The Challenge of Change, 2004).

Overview of Literature

Overall, research does not conclude that a negative experience of a correctional sanction has a great effect on reducing possible future recidivism. Furthermore, a large portion of evidence points to the possibility that sanctions of imprisonment has the possibility of increasing the chances of recidivism. This then questions the continued use of state prison systems use as a general deterrence of recidivism. Harsh treatment of offenders has been a popular politically driven approach of crime and recidivism reduction in the past, but the preponderance of evidence that is available contradicts this as an effective treatment or sanction.

The placement in a state prison facility has been discussed in-depth by highlighting the possible effects of sanctioning on recidivism. The literature has also considered how EBPs and research has redirected incarceration towards a rehabilitative approach as a positive tool towards reducing recidivism thereby rejecting the retribution approach of state level incarceration. This

literature review has also examined some of the alternative options to traditional placements. This study looks to compare data generated from the three options of placement and determine the role that placement plays in recidivism reduction. The available longitudinal research that reviews the practice of pre-release programming and rehabilitative programs is lacking. The current research reviews the outcomes of placement across three different categories of placement: (1) CBCF facilities, (2) transitional or step-down programs, and (3) prison on recidivism. The Previous studies tended to focus exclusively on sex offenders and juveniles' placement types. Few studies examine the outcomes of a general male population between the ages of 18-70 years old across three different types of placements. Given the push toward reentry programming both in and out of prison or community residential alternatives, it is important to understand if placement matters in contributing to future behaviors engaged in by this population after release.

For the purpose of this study, I hypothesize that when completing recidivism-reduction programming before release there will be a decrease in recidivism. Since this type of programming occurs as part of the treatment component in a CBCF, individuals spending time in these facilities should experience lower levels of recidivism. Specifically, I expect to find that there will be a statistically significant negative relationship with placement in a CBCF and recidivism reduction. I also expect to find there will be a statistically observable inverse relationship with placement in a step-down and recidivism. Finally, I also expect to find there will be a statistically significant positive relationship between placement in prison and higher levels of recidivism.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between sentencing placement and recidivism. To accomplish this objective, existing data on individuals sanctioned to a state prison, a CBCF unit, or a combination of prison and a step-down program are analyzed. Data within the first 12 months of release are examined. Recidivism is defined as returning to an incarceration facility after conviction of new criminal charge(s). This chapter details the methodology and statistical procedures that are used to study this relationship.

Sample

Methodologically rigorous studies of the observable effects of state prison incarceration are challenging to do – random assignment of sentenced offenders to either a rehabilitation facility or state facility is not viewed as an ethical sentencing procedure. The use of secondary data eliminates the possibility of random assignment, but will still be able to produce a data set that is representative of the adult male ex-offender. The study's sample is comprised of ex-offenders who spent time in either a CBCF or prison. Data come from two sources: (1) NorthWest Community Correctional Center (NWCCC) in Bowling Green Ohio, which is a CBCF and (2) ODRC's Gatekeeper program that is a record keeping system of all incarcerated individuals at state facilities.

The decision to sample individuals from these two sources was based on the availability of data from NWCCC that could provide information on ex-offenders who were judicially placed in the CBCF and those who were sentenced there as a transitional/step-down placement after a period of time in a state prison. ODRC data consist of those individuals who only spent time in prison. The samples from NWCCC are matched with prison-only individuals from ODRC on

age, gender, race/ethnicity, crime, sentence, and criminal history. All data used in this study are *Ex Post Facto*[5] as they have been measured on the dependent variable as a past event. Each individual in the dataset has no less than 12 months of follow up data on criminal history in order to ensure valid and reliable measures of the dependent variable of recidivism.

Dependent Variable

This study is important in defining influential factors in recidivism. To determine the factors that influence recidivism, it is essential to establish if the pre-release environment influences the post release behaviors. Thus, the dependent variable for this research is acts of recidivism, which is measured at the nominal level with any returns to prison over a 12 month period coded as a "yes" and none as a "no."

Independent Variable

The type of placement is the primary independent variable of interest. Placement is measured on a nominal scale that indicates if the individual was placed in a CBCF facility, transitional program, or a state prison. The individuals who completed a transitional program that included a completed term in a state prison, and then a required completion of a term in a CBCF facility for release were categorized as transitional. Step-down programs that are similar in design, with a prison term completed, and then placement in a half-way house or similar community reentry home was also considered transitional. Individuals who were sentenced directly to a CBCF by the judge are categorized as CBCF. Those who were sentenced to prison only (i.e., no period in a step-down program or facility) fall under the "prison-only" category.

Control Variables

[5] *Ex Post Facto* is a Latin legal term but in this study means data that has been formulated, enacted, or operated retroactively.

There are eight control variables in this study. Two of the variables are measured at the interval/ratio level and are the individual age at time of entry into the assigned facility and length of stay at the facility. The only demographic variable available in the secondary dataset was race/ethnicity and this was coded into the categories of "White," "Black," "Hispanic," or "Other." Behavioral history of the ex-offender is also important to control for when studying recidivism. These variables were whether the individual had a history of drug or alcohol abuse, operationalized as being present if the criminal history of the ex-offender whose crimes involved drugs or alcohol. In addition, the highest level of felony conviction for current sentencing was included as well as the type of instant offense as control variables. Instant offense is a nominal variable that categorizes the crime that led to the current incarceration and was classified as drug crimes, domestic violence offenses, property crimes, violent crimes, sex crimes, and a catch all category of other crimes. Post-release supervision is the outcome that occurred after release from incarceration and was four in number: (1) no supervision after release; (2) probation supervision after release; (3) parole supervision after release; or (4) placement in a type of transitional programming not restricted to residential programs.

Statistical Procedure

The statistical procedure used is based on the levels of measurement of the variables under study. The dependent variable of recidivism is measured at nominal level. The independent variable of placement is measured on a nominal level within three categories of placement. The first category of placement is a CBCF unit, second category is a state prison facility, and the third category of transitional includes split sentencing of prison and step-down or CBCF programming prior to any release as detailed previously. Further, since many of the control variables are also measured at the nominal or ordinal level, the significance of bivariate

relationships were analyzed using chi-square. Since age at time of entry and length of sentence are interval/ratio level variables, t-tests were conducted to determine significance between these control variables and recidivism. Analysis of variance was run to determine if the relationship between type of placement and these continuous variables were significant, as well.

Binary logistic regression was utilized for the multivariate analysis. This statistical procedure measures the relationship between a nominal level dependent variable and one or more independent variables, which can be of any level of measurement, by using probability scores as the predicated value of the dependent variable. Binary logistic regression is used to determine the predictive contribution of placement in explaining recidivism while controlling for the other variables also known to affect recidivism. This procedure permits for a more rigorous test of how the variables in the complete model work together to explain post-release behaviors, in this case, recidivism.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a detailed description of the dataset and sample. It also, identified the independent, control, and dependent variables to be tested and the procedures and rationale used for the statistical analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The main purpose of this study was to determine if incarceration placements in prison, transitional, or rehabilitation-based CBCFs affected the probability of recidivism post-release. This study also included variables that were considered possible predictors in recidivism, along with any and/or pre-release programs to which individuals were exposed. Additional variables included reason for initial placement, charge of placement, drug and/or alcohol abuse history, race, felony level, age at time of entry and post release requirements.

The descriptive characteristics of the sample were determined with frequency counts. Chi-square tests were used to examine the relationship between the variables of placement and alcohol abuse, drug abuse, felony level, instant offense category, type of post-release, race, and recidivism. Finally, a binary logistic regression was performed to regress all the variables on recidivism.

Demographics

This study examined 499 cases of men between 18 and 69 years old. With the mean age being 29 years and 6 months (sd=9.87). The percentage of the sample that had a history of alcohol abuse rate in this sample was 65.7% and 75.4% of the sample had a history of drug abuse. The majority of the sample was individuals placed in CBCFs, followed by prison, and then transitional programs. Most of the sample was convicted of property and drug crimes as the instant offense.

The percentage of the same who timed out of incarceration and received no supervision upon release was 7.6%. Over 85% were released on probation for post-release control, 2.2% were released on parole supervision, and 5% post release individuals were placed in a

transitional program post-release. Race/ethnicity in this sample was 71.3% are White, 22% was African American, 6% was Hispanic, and other was .6%. Over 36% of the sample had one or more acts of recidivism within the first 12 months of release and 63.9% had no recorded acts of recidivism in the same time-frame.

Table 5.1. Descriptives

	CBCF Only (N = 308)	**Transitional** (N = 41)	**Prison Only** (N = 150)	**Full Sample** (N = 499)
	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)
Variables				
Recidivism	No = 64.6 Yes = 35.4	No = 63.4 Yes = 36.6	No =62.7 Yes = 37.3	.525 (0.812)
Age at Entry	29.0 (9.3)	30.122 (8.51)	30.66 (11.05)	29.6 (9.9)
Alcohol Abuse	No = 5.8 Yes = 94.2	No = 12.2 Yes = 78.8	No =98.7 Yes = 1.3	No = 34.3% Yes = 65.7%
Drug Abuse	No = 4.9 Yes = 95.1	No = 14.6 Yes = 85.4	No = 68.0 Yes = 32.0	No = 24.6% Yes = 75.4%
Felony Level	1 = 0.6 2 = 6.8 3 = 17.2 4 = 37.0 5 = 38.3	1 = 0.0 2 = 14.6 3 = 48.8 4 = 19.5 5 = 17.1	1 = 9.3 2 = 15.3 3 = 32.0 4 = 12.7 5 = 30.7	1 = 3.2% 2 = 10% 3 = 24.2% 4 = 28.3% 5 = 34.3%
Instant Offense	Drug = 29.5 DV = 4.5 Other = 10.7 Property = 35.4 Sex = 7.1 Violent = 12.7	Drug = 22.0 DV = 9.8 Other = 19.5 Property = 14.6 Sex = 14.6 Violent = 19.5	Drug = 32.0 DV = 5.3 Other = 10.0 Property =36.1 Sex =5.6 Violent = 12.2	Drug = 29.7% DV = 5.2% Other = 11.2% Property = 36.1% Sex = 5.6% Violent = 12.2%

Table 5.1. Descriptives continued…

	CBCF Only (N = 308)	**Transitional** (N = 41)	**Prison Only** (N = 150)	**Full Sample** (N = 499)
	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)
Variables				
Length of Stay (days)	111.9 (28.7)	114 (19.6)	1131 (1063)	418.52 (746.8)
Post-Release	None = 0.00 Prob. = 100.00 Parole = 0.00 Step = 0.00	None = 0.00 Prob. = 100.00 Parole = 0.0 Step = 0.00	None = 25.3 Prob. = 50.7 Parole = 7.3 Step = 16.7	None = 7.6% Prob. = 85.2% Parole = 2.2% Step = 5%
Race	White = Black = Hispanic = Other =	White = Black = Hispanic = Other =	White = Black = Hispanic = Other =	White = 71.3% Black = 22% Hispanic = 6% Other = .6%

Bivariate Results

The chi-square test can be used to determine whether the frequencies observed differ significantly from an expected distribution. A series of bivariate chi-square tests were performed to determine whether there would be a significant difference in observed frequencies of a number of variables based on the incarceration placement of a participant. The variables tested included age at time of entry into a facility, history of alcohol abuse, history of drug abuse, convicted felony level, recidivistic behavior, instant offense category, length of stay, post-release control, and race.

The test for the difference in felony level and incarceration placement was significant ($x^2 = 81.54\ (df\ 8), p < .001$). The individuals convicted of felony four and felony five were

more likely to be housed in a CBCF facility compared to a transitional facilities or prison. In addition, the test for the difference in offense category and incarceration placement was found to be significant, ($x^2 = 38.56\ (df\ 12), p < .001$) in that offenders convicted of property and drug offenses were more likely to be housed in CBCFs and prison compared to transitional programs.

The test for the difference in race and incarceration placement was also significant ($x^2 = 126.42\ (df\ 6), p < .001$). Caucasian individuals (50.3%) were more likely to be placed in a CBCF facility compared to African Americans (6.2%), Hispanics (4.6%) and other racial and ethnic groups (0.6%). Placement in prison rather than a CBCF or transitional facility was slightly higher for African Americans (15.8%) compared to Caucasians at (14%). The tests performed to determine whether there would be a significant difference in age at time of entry into a facility, history of alcohol abuse, history of drug abuse, recidivistic behavior, length of stay, and post-release control based on the incarceration placement of the participant, however, did not yield a significant association.

An additional series of bivariate chi-square tests were performed to determine whether there would be a significant difference in observed frequencies of several variables based on the recidivistic behavior within 12 months of release of a participant. The variables tested included age at time of entry into a facility, history of alcohol abuse, history of drug abuse, convicted felony level, incarceration placement, instant offense category, length of stay, post-release control, and race.

There was a significant relationship between felony levels and recidivism ($x^2 = 3.35\ (df\ 4), p < .05.$) The felony level category showed that participants committing felony four and five level crimes were more likely to recidivate than participants who committed felony one, two, and three level crimes. In addition, instant offense category and recidivism showed a

statistical significance ($x^2 = 30.40\ (df\ 5), p < .001$). Participants who committed drug and property instant offenses were more likely to have recidivistic behaviors within 12 months of release compared to those participants committing violence, domestic violence, sex, and other crimes. Tests performed to determine whether there would be observed differences in age at time of entry into a facility, history of alcohol abuse, history of drug abuse, incarceration placement, length of stay, post-release control, and race in the likelihood of participants having recidivistic behavior were not significant.

T-Test

A t-test was performed to determine whether the average age of entry may be significantly different based on whether an individual had recidivated. The age of entry to the criminal justice system was significantly different for those who had recidivated compared to those who had not: t(493)=2.06, *p<.05.* These individuals who had recidivated were younger at the age of entry (m=28.4,sd=.67) than those who had not recidivated (m=30.3, sd=10.3) Length of stay was not significantly different for those who recidivated compared to those who did not.

Table 5.2. Group Differences Between Recidivism and Predictors

Variables	**No Recidivism**		**Yes Recidivism**		***t* (497)**	**Levene's test for Equality of Variances**
	M	SD	M	SD		
Age Entry	30.3	10.3	28.4	.67	2.061*	8.34*
Length Stay	403.3	687.31	445.49	843.36	-.605	.772

****p <.001; **p<.01; *p<.05**

An analysis of variance was performed to determine if the length of stay of an individual was significantly different based on whether a participant was placed in a CBCF facility, transitional, or prison. There was a significant difference in the length of stay of participants who were placed in a CBCF facility, compared to a transition placement and prison: F(2,496) =

160.15.p<.001. The average length of stay was far greater for participants were placed in prison (m=1131 days, sd = 1063) than it was for individuals placed in a CBCF facility (m = 111.9 days, sd = 28.7) or those placed in a transitional program (m = 114 days, sd = 19.6). Age at entry to the criminal justice system was not significantly different for those placed in a CBCF facility, transitional or prison.

Table 5.3. Group Differences between Placement and Predictors

Variables	**CBCF**		**Transitional**		**Prison**		***F* (2, 496)**
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
Age Entry	29	9.4	30.1	8.5	30.7	11.1	1.494
Length Stay	111.9	28.7	114	19.6	1131	1063	160.153*

****p <.001; **p<.01; *p<.05**

A series of chi-square tests revealed that other variables were also found to be significant. These included age at time of entry into a facility, history of alcohol abuse, history of drug abuse, convicted felony level, incarceration placement, instant offense category, length of stay, post-release control, and race in the first 12 months of post release.

The relationship between post-release controls and recidivism was also found to be significant ($x^2 = 5.39\ (df\ 3), p < .05$). Individuals in the data set who were assigned probation as post-release requirement (31.9%) committed an act of recidivism while on probation within the first year, but this group is drastically overrepresented in the data set. These observations are consistent with the sentiment that parole, transitional programming, and timed-out to completion of sentence are anomalies in our current criminal justice system; there are many options available for individuals to reduce their sentence (Marion, 2012).

Binary Logistic Analysis

Binary regression analysis was used in this study to predict the likelihood of recidivism with prior knowledge of values from all previously listed independent variables. The main

Table 5.4. Chi-Square Results: Bivariate Associations between Recidivism and Predictors

	No Recidivism		Yes Recidivism		x^2
Variables	*n*	%	*n*	%	
Placement					
CBCF	199	62.4	109	60.0	4.303*
Transitional	26	8.2	15	8.3	
Prison	94	29.5	56	29.5	
Alcohol Abuse					
No	109	63.7	62	64.0	.004
Yes	210	36.3	118	36.0	
Drug Abuse					
No	86	69.9	37	30.1	2.541
Yes	233	62.0	143	79.4	
Felony Level					
1	10	3.1	6	3.3	3.354*
2	35	11.0	15	8.3	
3	83	26.0	38	21.1	
4	89	27.9	52	28.9	
5	102	32.0	69	38.3	
Instant Offense					
Drug	79	24.8	69	38.3	30.401*
Domestic Violence	20	6.3	6	3.3	
Other	44	13.8	12	6.7	
Property	103	32.3	77	42.8	
Sex	23	7.2	5	2.8	
Violent	50	15.7	11	6.1	
Post-Release					
None	24	7.5	14	7.8	5.393*
Probation	266	83.4	159	88.3	
Parole	10	3.1	1	0.6	
Step-down	19	6.0	6	3.3	
Race					.988
White	232	72.7	124	68.9	
Black	66	20.7	44	24.4	
Hispanic	19	6.0	11	6.1	
Other	2	0.6	1	0.6	

**p <.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

hypothesis that incarceration placement increased the probability of recidivism was not statistically significant. Compared to the violent offenders, those convicted of drug and property crimes are 3.5 times more likely to recidivate. Approaching significance at .057 was the placement category measuring the number of individuals leaving prisons and entering formal transitional programs, such as 'The Exit' program. Though only representing a small number in the sample, compared to those released from secure custody to probation, the probability of offenders in transitional housing were less likely to recidivate upon completion ($x^2 = 2.87;\ \rho <$ .10).

Overall, these variables were significantly predictive of recidivism (R^2=.12, $x^2 = 46.49(df\ 21), p < .001$). Although, this model was significant, it is really only telling us that 12% of the proportion of the explained variation was done so by the included variable, which leaves 88% of the variation not accounted for. This clearly indicates that this model is missing key variables that predict the probability of acts of recidivism.

Drugs crimes and property crimes had a higher frequency of recidivism post-release when compared to domestic violence, violence against persons, other crimes, and sex crimes. It is relevant to note that this data has only included failure of new/changed address and /or failure to report as sex offender's requirements of release. These have been categorized under sex crimes even though not a physical crime.

Table 5.5. Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Recidivism

Variable	B	SE	OR	Wald Statistic
Age Entry	-.010	.011	.990	.787
Alcohol Abuse				
No	-.045	.519	.956	.007
Yes[a]				
Drug Abuse				
No				
Yes[a]	-.416	.406	.660	1.050
Felony Level				
1	-.063	.690	.939	.008
2	.029	.392	1.029	.005
3	-.081	.282	.922	.082
4	.168	.255	1.183	.433
5[a]				.796
Placement				
CBCF	-.434	.588	.648	.544
Transitional	.070	.663	1.072	.011
Prison[a]				2.067
Instant Offense				
Drugs	1.280	.411	3.597	9.685
Domestic	.314	.597	1.369	.277
Other	.226	.482	1.254	.220
Property	1.240	.387	3.455	10.276
Sex	.016	.614	1.016	.001
Violent[a]				
Length of Stay	.000	.000	.421	.6464
Post-Release				
None	.942	.627	2.566	2.257
Probation	1.053	.554	2.866	3.610
Parole	-1.301	1.187	.272	1.201
Step-down[a]				
Race				
White	-.350	1.301	.704	.073
Black	-.219	1.321	.803	.028
Hispanic	-.364	1.354	.695	.072
Other[a]				

[a]Reference category. Note: CI = confidence intervals for odds ratio (OR).
**p <.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

Table 5.6. Chi-Square Results: Bivariate Associations between Placement and Predictors.

Variables	CBCFs		Transitional		Prison Only		x^2
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	
Recidivism							
No	199	64.6	26	63.4	94	62.7	.170
Yes	109	35.4	15	36.6	56	37.3	
Alcohol Abuse							
No	18	5.8	5	12.2	148	98.7	218.87
Yes	290	94.2	36	87.8	2	1.3	
Drug Abuse							
No	15	12.2	6	4.9	102	82.9	81.54**
Yes	293	77.9	35	9.3	48	12.8	
Felony Level							
1	2	0.6	0	0.0	14	87.5	81.538
2	21	42.0	6	12.0	23	46.0	
3	53	43.8	20	16.5	48	39.7	
4	114	80.9	8	5.7	19	13.5	
5	118	69.0	7	4.1	46	26.9	
Instant Offense							
Drug	91	29.5	9	22.0	48	32.0	38.563
Domestic Violence	14	1.0	4	9.8	8	10.0	38.563
Other	33	10.7	8	19.5	15	5.3	
Property	109	35.4	6	14.6	65	43.3	
Sex	22	7.1	6	14.6	0	0.0	
Violent	39	12.7	8	19.5	14	9.3	
Post-Release							
None	0	0.0	0	0	38	25.3	202.152
Probation	308	100.00	41	100.00	76	50.7	
Parole	0	0.0	0	0	11	7.3	
Step-down	0	0.0	0	0	25	16.7	
Race							
White	251	81.5	35	85.4	70	46.7	126.422
Black	31	10.1	0	0.0	79	52.7	
Hispanic	23	7.5	6	14.6	1	0.7	
Other	3	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	

**p <.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

This study attempted to address the relationship between placement in a correctional facility and any post acts of recidivism. The current attention on recidivism reduction programs and the escalating corrections debt on state and national levels bring about many questions on establishing predictors of recidivism. The following sections further discuss the study, its relation to previous literature, along with the limitations and questions to be addressed by further research.

In the bivariate results, the felony level and the category of offense was predictive of placement for the individuals in that those convicted of lower level felonies were more likely to be placed in CBCFs. This is consistent with HB 86 as discussed in chapter 1. The relationship between placement and recidivism, however, was not significant. The data show that race/ethnicity was significant in predicting placement decisions in that Blacks were more likely to be sentenced to prison despite the finding that race/ethnicity did not result in a significant relationship with recidivism. There may be disproportionate minority confinement issues but this was not a focus of this study though future research should explore further.

One variable that did stand alone as a predictor of recidivism was the level of felony that an individual is charged with. The individuals in the dataset charged with a felony four or felony five were more likely to engage in recidivism, which is concerning because these individuals are more likely to be placed in CBCFs that have a treatment component. It is possible that individuals are not being classified by risk and need levels correctly, but this was not the focus of this study and future research should investigate in more detail. The instant offense charge variable was also found to be a significant predictor of recidivism in that drug and property

offenders were also more likely to recidivate in both the bivariate and multivariate analyses. These findings are interesting because they are also used as decisional factors in placement or acceptance by CBCFs and step-down programs. The placement of higher risk offenders in the rehabilitative design of applying intensive programming has EBP stating success, yet this study shows the selection factors as being possible recidivism factors. This would bring an expected lower recidivism rate for higher risk offenders when completing a CBCF or Step-down program. The totality of the findings supports only the notion that there is a multiple factor aspect to acts of recidivism and not all offenders are alike and will respond alike. Rehabilitation approaches in CBCF and step-down units cannot be a 'one track' approach nor be uniformed in approach.

A further significant relationship observed in the dataset was a high recidivism rate of those placed on post-release probation when compared to parole or transitional programs. This significance is limited in validity due to a skewed data set that had unequal representation on post-release factor. Other significant variables found were the age of the offender upon entering a facility, length of stay, and post-release control and their relationship with recidivism in the first 12 months of release. These factors only accounted for 12% of the explained variation, which brings about the missing variables and the effect that they might have had in the complete model had they been available for analysis.

As with any study done with secondary data, the original purpose of the data was not for this study. While many of the variables available in the study were an appropriate match to serve the major purpose, there still remains several other variables that had they been included could have produced different results. For example, marital status, employment, highest level of education, and mental health are variables that have been found to relate to recidivism in previous studies but were not available for examination herein. The inclusion of these additional

variables could have expanded this study considerably; and only when understanding the predictors of recidivism can preventative intervention programming be implemented.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. Using secondary data was the primary limitation as just aforementioned. The dataset has a 12-month period that looks at any recidivism, but the study discounts probation violations that do not lead to incarceration, as it would be unrealistic to attain this data from multiple agencies and violations can occur even when the individual has no criminal intent. As pre-existing variables define the sample groups, I am unable to randomize selections, but to counter this I matched the individuals in the ODRC group to match on many factors as the CBCF data set and all within an identical period. The selection from the ODRC data was matched on an individual basis to an existing member of the preexisting sample group on age, instant offense and any known documented prior criminal charges thus lessening selection bias.

Another limitation to this study was the lack of control of in group membership. No randomization of assignments and no manipulation of variables for different outcomes were made. The lack of control over examining the dataset hinders my ability to state that the data are valid and free from any selection bias by the source. As an existing dataset, I cannot randomly assign comparative offenders into groups that would possibly yield greater or more conclusive results as they have already received programming or completed assigned sentences.

A further limitation of this study was not being able to conduct a reliability test of many of the variables that have been documented in many previous studies, research, and literature, which are known to affect recidivism. As stated previously, additional variables would include employment, education, marital status, children, and physical and mental health. The dataset for

this study from the ODRC comprised of only what was available to me via publicly available sources. I was unable to obtain more detailed information of any further known variables found to be significant predictors of recidivism. Relatedly, the offenders in the transitional category are small in number with only 41 cases, which could also be considered problematic for data analysis and external validity.

Finally, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections currently uses a three-year period when studying and documenting acts of recidivism. However, in this study I chose to use a small time frame of 12 months. The choice behind the smaller period is due to the immediate 12 months post-release being considered the time with the most probability of any acts of recidivism occurring.

Future Research

This study leaves no question that further research is needed with a more in-depth and data rich sample group. The sample group I was able to obtain was unequal in representation, which then made interpreting the data results limited and often incorrect in the initial appearance. Obviously, the current study was limited on accessible data regarding predictors of recidivism, but future research should attempt to further link the suggested recidivism factors by including more in-depth characteristics. More relevant characteristics that should be considered variables to be more in line with previous studies are employment, marriage, children, education status, mental health status, any physical/medical issues, peer associations, social bonds, any language restrictions or cultural barriers. The findings of this study are specific to one state, and in order to expand on the findings and enable generalizability, larger sample sizes with more variation on placement categories are highly encouraged.

Conclusion

Specifically to this study, future research could produce more informative results as to predictors in recidivism than was possible this study in several ways. Any future research could redirect the focus from outcomes of placement upon recidivism, and more towards post-release programming. Post-release programming could then be a 'catch-all' regardless of placement for the sentenced period. The findings discussed in the literature review and previous chapter, all highlights the importance of understanding an increasing awareness of recidivism and its role in reentry. Overall, the findings support the idea that recidivism has not one significant factor but many. Type of placement was not related to post-release recidivism. Future research is essential to plans in effective recidivism reduction approaches and successful reentry programming by drawing attention to the needs of the individuals returning to our communities.

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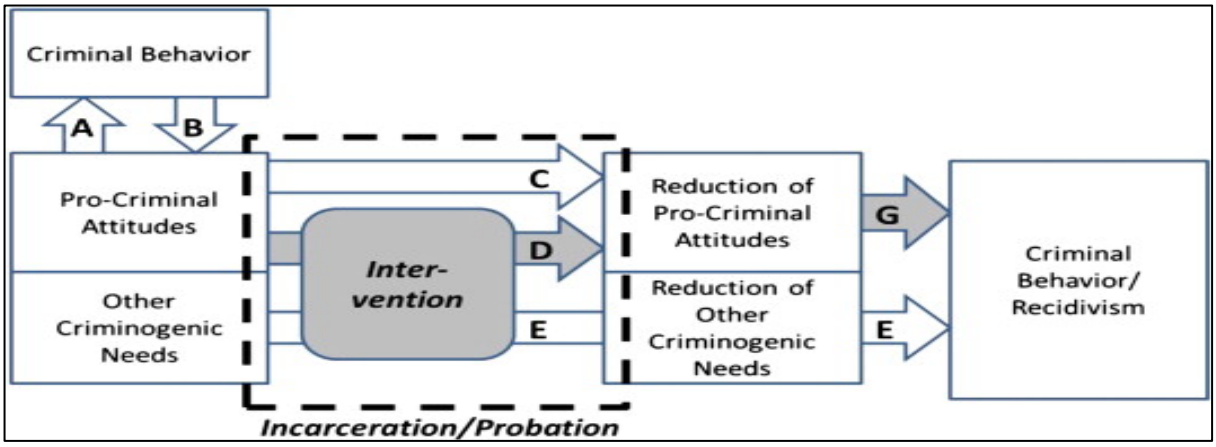
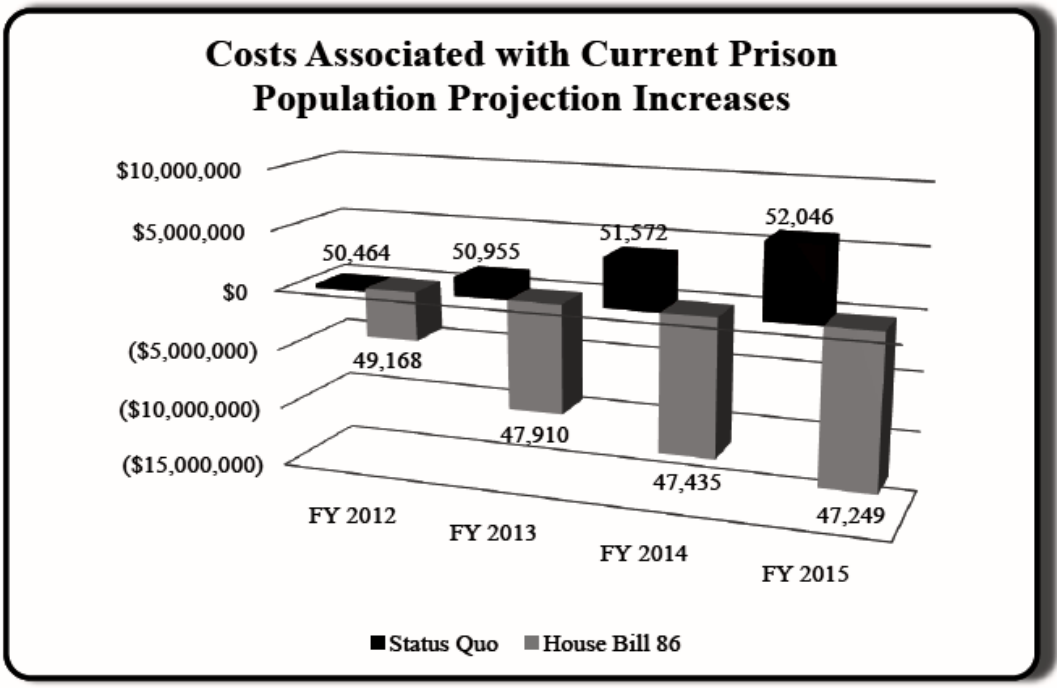
APPENDIX: Figures

Figure 1A. A Causal Path Model of Pro-Criminal Attitudes, Intervention, and Criminal Behavior.



Source: Banse, R., Koppehele-Gossel, J., Kistemaker, L. M., Werner, V. A., & Schmidt, A. F. (2013). Pro-Criminal Attitudes, Intervention, and Recidivism. Aggression and Violent Behavior.

Figure 2A. Population Projection of House Bill 86 Impact.



Source: ODRC Bureau of Research and Evaluation.