THE POWER OF BELIEF: POLICE PERCEPTIONS, PAROLE OFFICER RELATIONSHIPS,
AND RE-INCARCERATION DURING REENTRY

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ABSTRACT

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The time following release from prison, called reentry, presents a host of challenges to returning individuals. Prior work has shown that strong social bonds to significant others like family and peers relates to prosocial reentry outcomes. Mirroring this established body of literature, an emerging line of research suggests that an individual's attachment to their parole officer may also reduce recidivism. However, research has yet to examine how experiences prior to incarceration affect the parole officer relationship. In particular, it is likely that belief in the criminal justice system may affect an individual's attachment to their parole officer. For example, research on police perceptions has found that when one views the police negatively, they are likely not only to lose belief in police, but also lose belief in other aspects of the criminal justice system. This effect may extend into an individual's ability to become attached to their parole officer. To address these gaps in the literature, I first examine how perceptions of police prior to incarceration influence one's relationship with their parole officer. Second, I examine how ones' relationship with their parole officer influences odds of re-incarceration. To conduct this research, I use three waves of data from the *Returning Home* data set. Results of two separate analyses demonstrate that individuals who had better perceptions of police before incarceration were more likely to be attached to their parole officer after release. Furthermore, individuals who had higher attachment to their parole officer were less likely to be re-incarcerate.

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Brittany Bares,

for all the sacrifices that she has made for me

and her unconditional love and support.

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INTRODUCTION

The United States' high rate of incarceration has been a public and political concern for

decades. Due, in part, to tough on crime attitudes and the war on drugs, the United States

incarcerates more individuals than any other country (Travis, 2005). While scholars have

examined the high incarceration rate for some time, sociologists have more recently turned their

attention to the process of prison reentry. Recent trends show that over 600,000 individuals are

released from prison and return to society each year (Hlavka, Wheelock, & Jones, 2015). While

past research has examined some of the hardships associated with the reentry process such as

securing housing and employment, avoiding criminal peers, and abstaining from substance use

and offending, research has overwhelmingly established that strong bonds to others can promote

positive reentry outcomes (Bahr, Harris, Fisher, & Armstrong, 2010; Martinez, 2006; Mowen &

Visher, 2015; Visher & Courtney, 2007). While research has tended to focus on the relationship

between the returning individual and their family and peers (for an overview, see Martinez &

Christian, 2009), bonds can also be formed with other significant individuals during the reentry

process such as the parole officer.

From the perspective of social control theory, bonds to a parole officer – in the form of

attachment – should reduce offending (Hirschi, 1969). While limited, existing research tends to

support this perspective as individuals who report greater levels of attachment to their parole

officer report more success on parole than individuals with less attachment (Chamberlain,

Gricius, Wallace, Brojas & Ware, 2015). Although past research has helped explain factors that

relate to other social bonds post-release (e.g., family, see Bahr et al., 2010), prior work provides

little in the way of understanding factors that promote, or reduce, bonds with the parole officer. Also grounded within social control theory, belief in other arenas of the criminal justice system may play a similar role in this process. Specifically, negative perceptions of police prior to incarceration may undermine the attachment to the parole officer during the reentry process.

A considerable amount of research has focused on the importance of perceptions of police as the primary point of entry into the criminal justice system. Past research suggests that when the public perceives the police to be fair, helpful, trustworthy, and effective, they are likely to comply with formal laws and view the criminal justice system more positively (Tyler, 2004; Hinds & Murphy, 2007; Tankebe, 2013; Tyler, 2013). Alternatively, individuals with negative perceptions of police report decreased belief in the legitimacy of the system and are likely to lose their belief in complying with formal laws (Fagan, 2017; Jackson, Bradford, Hough, Myhill, Quinton, & Tyler, 2012). Although no prior research has examined the extent to which belief in police relate to attachment with the parole officer, when viewed through social control theory, it is possible that negative perceptions of – or a lack of belief in – police may undermine attachment to the parole officer during the reentry process. Lowered attachment to the parole officer may, in turn, increase the likelihood of re-incarceration.

Overall, this brief discussion highlights two inter-related limitations of existing research and brings attention to the goals of this study. First, existing studies – reviewed in subsequent sections – have only started to examine how attachment to the parole officer relates to re-incarceration. Second, research has yet to explore how one's belief in the police prior to incarceration affects the relationship with the parole officer. To address these important gaps in the literature, I will first examine how perceptions of police prior to incarceration influence attachment to a parole officer. Second, I will assess how one's relationship with their parole

officer influences the likelihood of re-incarceration. To conduct this study, I will use all three

waves of the *Returning Home* data, a multistate, prison reentry data set.

SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY

Social control theory was developed under the assumption that all persons have the propensity to commit crime; however, social bonds to society and individuals should prevent people from committing crime. Travis Hirschi (1969) outlined four elements of a bond that reduce individual's involvement in crime: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. The current study is specifically interested in the attachment and belief components. Attachment focuses on an individual's personal relationship with others. Hirschi believed that attachment was the most important of the four elements and stated that an individual with strong attachment is likely to refrain from criminal behavior (Hirschi, 1969). However, when this component of the bond is weakened or does not exist, criminal behavior may occur.

While attachment involves individual relationships, belief is concerned with the belief in the norms, values, and laws of conventional society. For example, an individual who has strong belief accepts, trusts, and views the values, norms, and laws of society as legitimate. With strong belief in the factors that make up conventional society, an individual is likely to follow the norms and laws of society. When the belief element of the bond is absent, crime may occur (Hirschi, 1969).

Social control theory has received empirical support across a wide range of studies (Akers & Cochran, 1985; Congner, 1976; Doherty, 2006; Huebner & Bett 2002; Jenkins, 1997; Krohn & Masse, 1980; Warr 1998; Wiatrowski, Griswold & Roberts, 1981). While Hirschi focused on more than just the attachment and belief elements in his original work on social control, attachment and belief have both received empirical support in past research (Jenkins, 1997; Kempf, 1993). The following two sections will review the empirical support for both the belief and attachment elements.

BELIEF

Belief has been examined within numerous contexts such as adolescent delinquency, school crime, and adult criminality (Chang, Hsieh, & Messina, 2004; Elliott & Menard, 1996; Kempf, 1993; Longshore, Marcos, Bahr, & Johnson, 1986; Williams, 1985). Overall, past research supports the notion that strong belief in the conventional norms, values, and laws of society result in avoidance of delinquent and criminal behavior (Chan & Chui, 2015; Wiatrowski, Griswold & Roberts, 1981; William & Hawkins, 1989). For example, Krohn and colleagues (1983) used a sample of youth to examine how both general and specific belief toward cigarette smoking influenced smoking habits. The results of this study show support for belief whereby belief was negatively associated with cigarette smoking. General beliefs in the conventional values of society predicted less smoking, while specific beliefs toward an action, such as the wrongfulness of smoking cigarettes, also predicted less smoking.

Similar to Krohn et al. (1983), Jenkins (1997) used a sample of youth to examine how belief in school rules and perceived fairness of rules influenced school crime. The results showed that individuals who reported a strong belief in the school's rules were less likely to engage in school crime. William and Hawkins (1989) also found support for the belief element in their research examining why men refrain from aggression toward females. The authors found that belief was a significant predicator in desistance from aggression. More specifically, belief in the wrongfulness of using aggression toward females, and more broadly, the wrongfulness of breaking the law kept the individual from using aggression.

More recently, Payne and Salotti (2007) used a sample of college students to examine the role of conventional beliefs on college crime. Examining three different types of crime – property, violent, and drug – the authors found that belief was a significant predictor of less

crime for all three types. In addition, Chan and Chui (2013) examined how belief in the law influenced the tendency to participate in bullying, using a sample of youth. The authors found that when an individual's belief in the legal system declined, then the individual's bullying behaviors increased, suggesting that the belief in law was inhibiting youth from participating in bullying. Interestingly, the authors also found a strong relationship between bullying and theft and violence, suggesting that there may be a relationship between the belief in the legal system and more serious delinquency as well.

In sum, the belief component of the social bond has received empirical support in past research. This support suggests that a belief in the conventional values, norms, and laws can bond an individual to society and prevent delinquency and crime. Next, I turn to a discussion reviewing past empirical research on Hirschi's attachment component.

ATTACHMENT

Hirschi emphasized the importance of attachment in his original work, even stating that attachment to others was the most important element of the bond (Hirschi, 1969). Unsurprisingly, attachment has been the focal point of a significant number of studies concerned with delinquency, crime, and recidivism. Research on attachment supports Hirschi's statement that attachment to others is an important mechanism that prevents delinquency and crime (Boman & Mowen, 2017; La Vigne, Visher, & Yahner, 2004; Visher, 2004). For example, MacKenzie & De Li (2002), found support for attachment when examining how social bonds influence criminal activity while on probation. The authors found that social bonds did not increase following an arrest, incarceration, or while on probation, but living with a spouse while on probation – a form of attachment – was associated with less criminal activity during probation. Horney, Osgood, and Marshall (1995), found similar results in their analysis of the life circumstances of individuals convicted of a felony and variations in offending. The results of the study show that when formally incarcerated individuals lived with their spouse (a form of attachment), they were less likely to commit crime compared to when they were not living with their spouse.

Research on attachment has not only focused on the attachment to one's spouse, it has also examined the attachment to other important individuals. For example, Wiatrowski and colleagues (1981) found that attachment to parents and school were negatively associated with delinquent behavior. Related, Huebner and Betts (2002) used a sample of youth to examine the relationship between social bonds, delinquency, and academic achievement. The authors found that higher levels of parental attachment were associated with less delinquency for both boys and girls. While the link between juvenile's attachment to their parents and delinquency has been

established, research has also expanded and examined the relationship between parental

attachment and adult children. Schroeder, Giordano, and Cernkovich (2010) looked at the

relationship between adult children, their bond with their parents, and criminal desistence. The

results showed that strong attachment to parents in adulthood was associated with higher odds of

desisting from crime. The authors explained that this association could be attributed to the strong

emotional benefits that parents can provide, even in adulthood.

Past research also supports the notion that attachment to the family as a whole is also

important (La Vigne, Visher, & Yahner, 2004; Visher, 2004; Visher, Kachnowski, La Vigne, &

Travis, 2004; Western, Braga, Davis, & Sirois, 2015). For example, Mowen and Visher (2015)

used a sample of men who were interviewed prior to their release from incarceration and

following their release to examine the relationship between family support, family conflict, drug

use, and desistance. The authors found that those who reported more family conflict had higher

odds of drug use and crime once released from prison. These results suggest that family conflict

may decrease one's attachment to family members and result in worse outcomes when

attempting to avoid criminal behaviors. Along those same lines, Naser and La Vigne (2006)

found in their sample of men returning to society following incarceration that attachment to

family members was critical for remaining in society. More specifically, 80% of the sample

reported that attachment to family members was one of the main reasons they did not reoffend.

Overall, Hirschi's conceptualization of attachment to others has received significant

empirical support in past research. While prior research has highlighted the importance of

relationships with family and peers, within the context of reentry, attachment with the parole

officer may also serve as an important social bond that prevents recidivism. Next, I turn to a

discussion on prison reentry, and explore how social control can provide a framework for

understanding the importance of belief in police and attachment to the parole officer

for returning individuals.

REENTRY

The time period when an individual leaves prison and attempts to reintegrate into society is typically referred to as prison reentry (Travis, 2005). This transition is fraught with difficulties as many newly released individuals struggle to find employment, housing, mental and physical health treatment, and support from family and friends (Travis, 2005). Past research on prison reentry has shown worse reentry outcomes for individuals who do not find stable employment and housing, fail to receive treatment for their substance abuse and mental health issues, and fail to reestablish positive family relationships (Bahr, Harris, Fisher, & Armstrong, 2010; Martinez & Christian, 2009; Petersilla, 2003; Phillips, 2010; Travis, 2005; Visher & Courtney, 2007; Visher & Travis, 2003; Western et al., 2015). However, research has largely overlooked how one's belief in the police or how an individual's relationship with their parole officer affects the reentry process.

POLICE AND BELIEF

As previously discussed, a belief in the norms, values, and laws of conventional society is associated with desistance from criminal behaviors (Wiatrowski, Griswold & Roberts, 1981; William & Hawkins, 1989). However, we do not know what the consequences of negative perceptions of the police are for those persons returning to society following incarceration. Perhaps one's negative perceptions of police weaken the belief element of the bond and can lead to more detrimental consequences during the reentry process.

Although research on the relationship between police and the public's belief in law is limited, what is available has shown that when individuals perceive the police to be fair, respectful, and trustworthy, they are more likely to obey the law (Hinds & Murphy, 2007; Tankebe, 2013; Tyler, 2013). This occurs because individuals view the police as legitimate, or as having the right to the power that they have been given (Tyler, 2004). Jackson and colleagues (2012) used a national probability sample of adults to analyze the relationship between fair and effective police and the public's compliance with laws. The results show that the public is more likely to obey laws when they view the police as fair, effective, and feel obligated to obey them. The authors also note that when the public views the police as unfair, their sense of the law is diminished and they no longer believe that they must follow the laws. These results suggest that negative views of the police by the public have damaging consequences to how individuals view and obey laws.

While past research has examined how positive perceptions of police lead to more compliance of laws and norms, research has also examined outcomes associated with negative perceptions of the police. Past research has shown that negative perceptions of the police vary by race, whereby individuals who identify as black or Hispanic hold more negative views of the

police compared to individuals who identify as white (Cochran & Warren, 2011; Peck, 2015; Rosenbaum, Schuck, Costello, Hawkins, & Ring, 2005; Schafer, Huebner, & Bynum, 2003). These negative perceptions of police have been linked to racial profiling, and the numerous racial disparities in police practices (Cochran & Warren, 2011). Along with race, variables such as age and gender have also been examined when looking at perceptions of police. For example, Brown and Benedict (2002) discuss that past research has found that men hold more negative views of police compared to women, and that younger individuals view the police in a more negative manner than older individuals. Collectively, the findings on negative perceptions of police show that young, minority males have more negative perceptions. Considering that the demographic that is most likely to hold negative views of police is also the demographic that is most likely to be in contact with the police suggests that contact with police may be influencing these perceptions.

Research that has examined the effects of police contact on perceptions of police suggests that the perceived quality of the contact is the most important factor for predicting one's perceptions of police. In other words, if an individual perceives their contact to be positive, they are likely to have positive views of the police. The same has been found for negative encounters with the police and negative perceptions (Worrall, 1999). These findings have been mirrored in research that examines juveniles' views of police (Rusinko, Johnson, & Hornung, 1978) and also in samples of college students (Jacobsen, 2015). Perceptions of police can also be affected through vicarious experiences (Jacobsen, 2015; Brunson & Weitzer, 2011; Wada, Patten, & Candela, 2010). Jacobson (2015) highlights the role of vicarious experiences and perceptions of police when examining how college students perceive campus police and if they view them as legitimate. The author found that student's perceptions of campus police could be influenced by

witnessing or discussing other's experiences. For example, two students in the sample had reported that they believed that police were aggressive when making traffic stops. However, neither student had experienced a campus police officer being aggressive during a traffic stop. This highlights that negative views of police do not always begin with negative personal experiences, but can arise from other's experiences and perceptions.

Overall, findings demonstrate that belief in police matters and that this belief, or lack of belief, may have implications for other outcomes. Considering that all persons reentering society after incarceration have been in contact with the police, there is potential that these interactions result in poor perceptions of the police. The question the, is, how do these perceptions of police influence a newly released individual's reentry process and how do they influence one's relationship with their parole officer? I now turn to a discussion on past research focused on the parole officer relationship.

PAROLE OFFICER ATTACHMENT

The relationship between an individual and their parole officer is complex. During one's transition back into society, a formerly incarcerated individual is in need of social support, resources, and help avoiding technical violations. The parole officer role is to aid the individual and simultaneously provide surveillance. Parole officer take on a dual role where they help their clients and also assure they are not a risk to the public (Kennealy, Skeem, Manchak, & Louden, 2012). From the perspective of the individual on parole, this has potential to be difficult to balance. On one hand, the parole officer may provide help with employment or housing, which may ease the transition. On the other hand, the parole officer may also check in on the returning person at random times, subject them to drug tests, and/or revoke parole (Fulton, Stichman, Travis, & Latessa, 1997; Hill & Wang, 1971; Trotter, 2015). The complexity of this relationship sheds light on how challenging it may be for one to establish a positive relationship with their parole officer. Yet, a handful of prior studies has shown that a better relationship with a parole officer can lead to more prosocial outcomes during the reentry process (Blasko, Friedmann, Rhodes, & Taxman, 2015; Chamberlain et al., 2015; Vidal, Oudekerk, Reppucci, &Woolard, 2015).

Research on newly released individuals' relationships with their parole officers has examined factors that promote a positive relationship – or attachment – to one's supervising officer. Springer and colleagues (2009) examined factors that created a positive relationship between a probationer and a probation officer. The results showed that clarity, fairness, competence, and satisfaction all promoted a positive relationship between an individual on probation and their probation officer. Similarly, Ireland and Berg (2008) report that when individuals on parole establish respect and a strong rapport with parole officers they are more

likely to comply with parole conditions and report having a better relationship with their parole officer.

While past literature has found that fairness, respect, and a strong rapport create a stronger attachment between an individual on parole and their parole officer, research has also examined how this attachment influences some outcomes. While research is limited, it suggests that more attachment with a parole officer leads to better outcomes while on parole. For example, Kennealy and colleagues (2012) used a sample of 109 men and women on parole to examine if a positive relationship between an individual on parole and their parole officer reduced the risk of recidivism. The results suggested that a firm, fair, and caring relationship between the two parties protected individuals from being rearrested. Similarly, Blasko et al. (2015) used a sample of 480 males to analyze how positive perceptions of the parole officer related to reentry outcomes. Using a randomized controlled trial design, half of the sample was assigned to a parole officer–therapist–client collaborative intervention program, and half to usual supervision. The officer-therapist-client group differed in that participants had 12 weekly meetings with a parole officer who was trained in behavioral management and motivational interviewing. In addition, a treatment counselor attended these meeting every other week to provide encouragement for collaboration between the individual on parole and the parole officer. The results of the study supported past research and demonstrated that those assigned to the intervention group reported better relationships with their parole officer and reported fewer violations compared to the control group. Additionally, better perceived relationships were associated with less drug use and fewer violations regardless of the group to which the participant was assigned.

Along the same lines, Chamberlain and colleagues (2017) used a sample of serious and violent offenders to examine how an established positive or negative relationship with a parole officer affected recidivism. The authors found that when strong rapport was established between the individual on parole and their parole officer, odds of recidivism decreased. Finally, Vidal et al. (2015) used a sample of 140 youth to examine how a positive relationship between youth on parole and their parole officer related to recidivism. The authors found that a strong bond was associated with less violent recidivism for those with low parental assistance. This study highlights that when one is not attached to their parents – an important component of the bond – a strong bond to a parole officer can still serve as an important mechanism that reduces recidivism.

Overall, past research demonstrates that a lack of belief in police – or a negative perception of police – affects an individual's general view towards the criminal justice system. Therefore, it is possible that negative police perceptions are undermining the relationship an individual on parole has with their parole officer. This discussion raises attention to two interrelated questions: do negative perceptions of police prevent a returning individual from forming attachment with their parole officer? And if so, how does the lack of attachment to a parole officer affect odds of re-incarceration during reentry?

CURRENT STUDY

As highlighted above, poor perceptions of the police can result in a loss of belief in police and formal law. However, research has yet to examine how perceptions of the police before incarceration influence the attachment between an individual on parole and their parole officer, and how attachment to a parole officer influences recidivism. To address this gap in the literature, I use three waves of data from the *Returning Home* study, a multistate longitudinal data set. Specifically, I have two research questions and related hypotheses. First, do poor perceptions of the police before incarceration affect the attachment between individuals on parole and their parole officer? I hypothesize that individuals who report poor perceptions of police at wave one, will report having less attachment to their parole officer at wave two. Second, does having weakened attachment to one's parole officer influence one's odds of recidivism? I hypothesize that participants who report weakened attachment with their parole officer at wave two will have higher odds of recidivism at wave three compared to those who report stronger attachment to their parole officer.

METHODS

Data

Data for this project come from the *Returning Home* data set. *Returning Home* is a multistate, longitudinal data set. The target population for *Returning Home* was current incarcerated individuals who were within 60 days of their release in the states of Maryland, Ohio, Texas, and Illinois and had served a minimum of a one-year prison term. The researchers obtained two lists that provided them with the names of the individuals who would be released soon. The first list was from a compulsory prerelease program in the states of Illinois and Texas. In Maryland and Ohio, the researchers received a list of prisoners who were scheduled to be released within the next 60 days. For the current analysis, data will only be used from the Texas, Ohio, and Illinois samples, which comprise a total of 740 respondents at wave one. The Maryland sample is not used in the current study because I was unable to obtain that portion of the data.

To collect the data, the researchers used a multistage cluster sample, selecting prisoners close to Houston, Cleveland, and Chicago. These locations were selected because most of the participants in the study would be returning to one of these three cities. After selecting the prison, the researchers attempted to survey all of the incarcerated individuals who were within 60 days of their release. The researchers collected their data in three waves. First, individuals completed a survey while still incarcerated. Second, following their release from prison, two separate face-to-face interviews were conducted about three to six months following the individual's release. Finally, the third wave took place about nine months after release (La Vigne, Visher, & Travis, 2004). To gather data on reoffending, the researchers also used state correctional agencies and official records.

Dependent Variables

The current study has two dependent variables. For the first analysis, the dependent variable is the *parole officer attachment* at wave two. To measure one's relationship with their parole officer, I created a scale comprised of five measures that asked respondents if their parole officer: 1) seemed trustworthy, 2) acts professional, 3) is helpful with their transition, 4) acts too busy to help, and 5) doesn't listen.[1] Respondents could answer the questions along a four point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree) where higher values corresponded to a better relationship with one's parole officer. As shown in Table 1, the mean score for the parole officer relationship was 12.747, with a standard deviation of 1.539. The scale ranges from 5 (a very negative relationship) to 20 (a very positive relationship). The alpha was .796 indicating a high level of inter-item reliability among items (Cronbach, 1951). Descriptive statistics for this measure, as well as all measures in the forthcoming analysis, are shown in Table 1 below.

The dependent variable for the second analysis is *re-incarceration*. This measure was retrieved from wave three and based on official data to capture whether or not the individual was re-incarcerated. Potential responses were either yes or no (yes = 1). Descriptive statistics show that about 14% of individuals were re-incarcerated by wave three (Table 1.).

Independent Measures for First Model

My focal independent variable for the first analysis is *perceptions of police*. This measure is comprised of six questions from wave one that asked respondents about their perception of police behaviors prior to incarceration. The questions asked respondents if the police in their

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[1] Questions that asked if the parole officer acted too busy to help and if the parole officer doesn't listen were reverse coded.

neighborhood were: (1) racist, (2) failing to prevent crime, (3) brutalizing people, (4) failing to maintain order, (5) responding to victims or, (6) doing a good job. Respondents answered along a four point Likert-type scale (1= strongly agree, 2= agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree). Items were coded such that higher values represent more positive views of police.[2] The results of the descriptive statistics show that the overall mean of this scale is 15.539, with a standard deviation of 3.731, and a range from 6 (very high levels of belief in police) to 24 (very low levels of belief in police). The alpha was .824 indicating a very high level of consistency among items (Cronbach, 1951).

I control for *family support* at wave one as past research suggests that family support during the reentry process is critical for desistence (Travis, 2005). To measure family support at wave one, I use a scale comprised of three questions that asked respondents if their family was a source of support while incarcerated, if they wanted their family to be involved with them while incarcerated, and if they felt close to their family while incarcerated. Respondents indicated how much they agreed or disagreed on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 4 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). The sample mean for family support at wave one was 10.044, with a standard deviation of 2.052. This scale ranged from 3 (low levels of family support) to 12 (high levels of family support). The alpha was .845 indicating a very high level of consistency among items (Cronbach, 1951).

I also control for *family conflict* from wave one as prior work has highlighted the impact that family conflict can have during reentry (Mowen & Boman, 2018; Mowen & Visher, 2015).

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[2] Questions that asked if police were racist, failing to prevent crime, brutalizing people, and failing to maintain order were reverse coded.

To do so I created a scale comprised of three measures that asked respondents if they fought with their family a lot, if they were criticized by their family, and if they feel like they disappointed their family. Respondents indicated how much they agreed or disagreed on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 4 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Family conflict had a mean of 6.647 and a standard deviation of 1.906. The family conflict scale ranged from 3 (low levels of family conflict) to 12 (high levels of family conflict).

Independent Measures for Second Model

The identical measure for Parole Officer Attachment at wave two, which served as my primary dependent variable for model one, is used as the focal independent variable for the second analysis. In addition, I control for *family support* following the individuals release from incarceration using a scale comprised of three questions. The three questions used were identical to the questions used to create the scale for family support at wave one, except they came from wave two. The questions asked respondents if they wanted their family to be involved in their life, if family members listened to them, and if they considered their family members to be a source of support. Respondents indicated how much they agreed or disagreed on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 4 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). The sample mean for family support at wave 2 was 10.536, with a standard deviation of 1.737. This scale ranged from 3 (low levels of family support) to 12 (high levels of family support). The alpha was .822 indicating a very high level of consistency among items (Cronbach, 1951).

To control for *family conflict* at wave two, I used the identical scale that was used for wave one family conflict; however, the questions used came from wave two, post release, instead of wave one. Family conflict at wave two had a mean of 9.070 and a standard deviation of 1.937.

The family conflict scale ranged from 3 (low levels of family conflict) to 12 (high levels

of family conflict).

I control for *employment* status at wave 2 as prior research has shown that securing

employment leads to better reentry outcomes (Visher, 2004). To control for employment, I use a

binary measure that asked respondents if they were currently employed (yes = 1). Of the current

sample, 31% reported being employed at wave two.

I control for post-release *substance use* at wave two due to past research highlighting the

difficulties associated with remaining in society for those who are using substances during the

reentry process (Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008). To control for frequency of substance use, a scale

was created by drawing data from five questions from wave two that asked the respondent about

substance use frequency over the prior 30 days. Specifically, respondents were asked if – and

how often – they used: marijuana, cocaine, heroin, amphetamines, and methadone. Possible

responses included not at all (coded 0), once or twice (1), every two weeks (2), once a week (3),

a few times a week (4), and daily (5). Due to a significant positive skew in the distribution, I

used the natural logarithm of the variable.[3] The mean for logged substance use was 0.186 with a

standard deviation of 0.543. The range for this variable was 0 to 2.708.

Control Measures for Both Models

Outside of my dependent and primary independent variables, it is essential to control for

a number of variables that may be associated with the attachment to a parole officer and re-

incarceration during the reentry process (Marbley & Ferguson, 2005; Travis, 2005 Visher &

Courtney, 2007; Visher, 2004).

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[3] Using the natural logarithm of substance use frequency improved the model fit, though the substantive findings were the same with the transformed and untransformed frequency measure.

I control for levels of *depression* as past research has highlighted the significant impact depression can have during the reentry process (Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008). I control for levels of depression using a scale comprised of four questions that asked respondents if they felt helpless, unimportant, like a failure, or like their life had no meaning. Respondents answered along a four point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Higher values on the depressions scale correspond with higher levels of depression. The sample mean for depression was 7.957 with a standard deviation of 2.572. This scale ranged from 4 (low levels of depression) to 16 (high levels of depression. The alpha was .770 indicating a high level of consistency among items (Cronbach, 1951).

I control for *offense type* at wave one due to past research showing differences in reconviction based on primary offense type (Travis, 2005). Collected by *Returning Home* researchers, there were five types of crimes that a respondent could be incarcerated for, including violent, drug, sex, property, and other. A dummy variable was created for each of the crimes. Descriptive statistics show that 30.7% of the sample was incarcerated for a violent offense, 38.8% for drug offenses, 6.8% for sex offenses, 11.4% for property offenses, and 12.7% for other crimes. Violent crime will serve as the contrast group in the current study.

To control for legal cynicism at wave two, I created a scale comprised of four questions that asked respondents if they believed laws are made to be broken, if they believed it was ok to do anything as long as it doesn't hurt, if there was no right or wrong way to making money, and if they believed fighting is no one's business. Respondents then responded on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 4 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). The alpha among these items was .758 indicating high levels of consistency (Cronbach, 1951). The mean

for the legal cynicism scale is 11.570 and has a standard deviation of 2.584. This scale

ranged from 4 (low levels of cynicism) to 16 (high levels of cynicism).

I control for *age* of the respondents due to prior work finding that younger individuals are

more likely to be re-incarcerated than older individuals (Severson, Veeh, Bruns, & Lee, 2012).

To account for this, I include a measure capturing age at wave one. Overall, the average age of

the sample was 36.166 years with a standard deviation of 10.177. This measure ranges from 19

to 73 years.

I control for *race/ethnicity* due to past research suggesting that individuals in minority

groups are re-incarcerated more often (Marbley & Ferguson, 2005). I control for race/ethnicity

using the question that asked respondents to self-identify their race/ethnicity. This measure was

recoded into dummy variables representing that the respondent was black, white, or other

race/ethnicity. Overall, 76% of the sample identified as black, 14.4% identified as white, and

9.6% of the sample identified as another race/ethnicity. For both analyses individuals who

identified as white will serve as the contrast group.

I also control for *gang membership* and *marital status* at wave one because past research

highlights the importance of delinquent peers and marital attachment during the reentry process

(Visher, 2004). To control for gang membership, respondents were asked if they were currently a

gang member at wave one (yes = 1). Only 6% of the sample identified as a gang member. To

control for marital status, respondents were asked what their current marital status was and could

respond with single, married, in and out of the same relationship, widowed, divorced, legally

separated, or other. Using these responses, I created three dummy variables for single, married,

and other. Descriptive statistics show about 20% of the sample was married, 58% reported being

single, and 22% reported having a status other than married or single. Other marital status serves as the contrast group.

I control for *length of incarceration* because individuals who spent more time incarcerated may have a harder time adjusting back to society and have worse outcomes than individuals with shorter sentences (Wolff, Shi, & Schumann, 2012). To control for length of incarceration, I used a measure that asked respondents how many years they had been incarcerated for their current term. To deal with extreme outliers I capped this measure at 18 years, which was three standard deviations above the original mean. Therefore, any respondent who was originally over 18 years or more become coded as 18. The mean for length of incarceration is 3.356 and has a standard deviation of 4.228. This measure ranged from 0 to 18.

Finally, I control for whether or not an individual had experienced *disciplinary segregation* while incarcerated. To control for disciplinary segregation individuals were asked if they had ever been placed in disciplinary control or segregation (yes = 1). Descriptive statistics show that 32.24% had experienced some form of disciplinary segregation.

MISSING DATA

Like most large datasets, there are missing data in the *Returning Home* data. In this analysis, I rely on data from 413 respondents out of the total 567 who were placed on parole following release from prison. Overall, about 27 percent of individuals were removed due to non-response among items (e.g. pairwise deletion). To examine the extent to which missing data did or did not affect the results of the forthcoming analysis, I used two strategies.

First, I ran an attrition analysis using a t-test comparing respondents who were included in the final analytical sample to respondents who had missing data and were not included in the final sample (Brame & Paternoster, 2003). A t-test was conducted for all focal dependent, independent, and covariates used in the analyses. The results of the t-test showed no significant differences in means between the two groups, suggesting that excluding these respondents due to missing data should not bias results.

To further assure missing data would not produce biased results, I also performed Multiple Imputation by Chained Equations (MICE, Roystin & White, 2011). Based on the Bayesian approach, MICE creates multiple data sets using variables without missing data to impute values for variables with missing data. MICE accounts for the uncertainty of the imputed data by adding the correct amount of variance into the imputed values. Furthermore, the newly created data sets containing the imputed data are used to create a final averaged estimate within one completed data set (Roystin & White, 2011). After completing the MICE procedure, I conducted the two analyses for the current study and no significant changes occurred in the results compared to the original analyses. These results suggest that the missing data in the original sample are not producing biased results.

ANALYTIC STRATEGY

The current study uses two analyses to examine the relationship between belief in the police and one's attachment with their parole officer, and the relationship between one's attachment with their parole officer and the likelihood of re-incarceration. For the first analysis, parole officer attachment at wave two serves as the dependent variable and perceptions of police at wave one serves as the focal independent measure. In this analysis, I control for basic demographics and factors that may influence the reentry process or one's relationship with their parole officer. To examine how a broken belief bond due to negative perceptions of police influences one's attachment with their parole officer, I use ordinary least squares regression (OLS). OLS is the appropriate procedure to use when examining this relationship due to the measure of parole officer attachment is a continuous variable that is approximately normally distributed (Agresti & Finlay, 2014).

For the second analysis, the dependent variable is re-incarceration at wave three and the primary independent measure is parole officer attachment at wave two. Similar to the first analysis, I control for numerous measures such as basic demographics and factors that may influence the reentry process or one's relationship with their parole officer. To examine the relationship between parole officer attachment at wave two and re-incarceration at wave three, I use a binary logistic regression. Logit regression is the appropriate procedure to use because the re-incarceration measure is a binary variable, where an individual was re-incarcerated or not (Agresti & Finaly, 2014).

RESULTS

The results of the ordinary least squares regression examining how negative perceptions of police at wave one influence one's attachment to their parole officer at wave two are found below in Table 2. Before discussing the results, model 1 demonstrates that the model fits the data well ($f = 2.82$, $p <= .000$). In addition, I examined variance inflation factors to assure that multicollinearity was not an issue. Results demonstrated that none of the variance inflation factors exceeded 2, suggests that multicollinearity is not an issue within the model (O'brien, 2007). The overall r-squared statistic indicates that about 10.8% of the variation in parole officer attachment is explained by the independent variables included in the analysis.

Turning to the substantive findings, results of this analysis demonstrate that individual perceptions of police are significantly and positively associated with parole officer attachment. Specifically, a one-unit higher score (representing more positive orientations) in the scale capturing perceptions of police corresponds to a .079 higher score on the parole officer attachment scale ($p = .037$). These results suggest that having more positive perceptions of police before incarceration relate to more attachment to a parole officer following release from incarceration.

Results of the remaining covariates in Table 2 show that there is a positive and significant association between family support and parole officer attachment. Results demonstrate a one-unit higher score (representing more support) in the scale capturing family support corresponds to a .142 higher score on the parole officer attachment scale ($p = .049$). Results suggest that having support from family during the reentry process can lead to more attachment to the parole officer.

Next, depression has a significant and negative association with parole officer attachment. Specifically, a 1 unit higher score (representing more depression) in depression corresponds to a *.139* lower score in the parole officer attachment scale ($p = .030$). These results suggest that individuals who report higher levels of depression have lower levels of attachment with their parole officer. Finally, black males report having higher levels of attachment with their parole officers compared to white males ($p = .008$). However, there is no statistical difference between individuals of other race/ethnicities and white respondents. Next, I turn to the results of the logistic regression model, which assessed the relationship between parole officer attachment at wave two and re-incarceration at wave three, shown in Table 3 below.

Similar to the first analysis, results of the model fit indicate that the model fits the data well ($\chi^2 = 67.07$, $p = .000$). Furthermore, none of the variance inflation factors in model two exceed 2, suggesting multicollinearity is not an issue (O'brien, 2007). For this analysis, I used logged odds coefficients and their corresponding standard errors to determine significance; however, to aid in the interpretation and understanding of the results I will use odds ratios (Agresti & Finaly, 2014).

Results of this analysis demonstrate a negative association between parole officer attachment and re-incarceration. Specifically, a one-unit higher score (representing more attachment) on the parole officer attachment scale is associated with a 16.3% reduction in the logged odds of re-incarceration ($p = .002$). These results suggest that individuals with higher levels of attachment with their parole officer have lower odds of being re-incarcerated than individuals who report lower levels of attachment with their parole officer.

Results of the covariates in this analysis also show more significant relationships with re-incarceration. There is a positive association between logged substance use and re-incarceration.

Specifically, a one-unit higher score (representing more substance use) in logged substance use is associated with a 102.9% increase in the logged odds of re-incarceration ($p = .05$). These results suggest that individuals who use substances more frequently once released have higher odds of re-incarceration compared to those who use substance less frequently once released. Next, there is a negative association between length of incarceration and re-incarceration. Surprisingly, each additional year incarcerated is associated with a 27.0% reduction in logged odds of re-incarceration ($p = .001$). These results suggest that individuals who spend more time incarcerated have lower odds of re-incarceration than those who spend less time incarcerated. This is an interesting finding considering past research has found the opposite effect, where individuals who are incarcerated longer have a tougher time during the reentry process and are more likely to be re-incarcerated (Wolff et al., 2012). Finally, results show a positive association between disciplinary segregation and re-incarceration, whereby individuals who experienced being in disciplinary segregation while incarcerated report a 86.7% higher logged odds of re-incarceration compared to those who did not experience disciplinary segregation ($p = .05$).

SUPPLEMENTAL MEDIATION ANALYSIS

To further examine the association between negative perceptions of police, one's attachment with their parole officer, and re-incarceration, I conducted a Sobel-Goodman mediation test (Agresti & Finaly, 2014). A Sobel-Goodman mediation analysis is used to determine if one independent variable mediates the relationship between another independent variable and the dependent variable. If a relationship is mediated, then the effect of the direct relationship will be reduced once the mediator is introduced. Specifically, this mediation analysis examines the extent to which the association between negative police perceptions (an independent measure) and re-incarceration (a dependent measure) is mediated through parole officer attachment (an independent measure). The results of this analysis showed that the parole officer attachment was not a significant mediator of negative perceptions of police and re-incarceration (b= .0009, se = .001). Therefore, the effect that negative perceptions of police has on one's attachment with their parole officer is not influencing the odds of re-incarceration.

DISCUSSION

As the number of individuals on community supervision continues to increase (Guerino, Harrison, & Sabol, 2011), and with a growing public concern over tough policing practices (Novich & Hunt, 2017), the current study set out to build on past research concerned with police perceptions, parole officer attachment, and the reentry process. My study set out with two separate but related goals. Referencing an established body of research that has identified the social consequences of both positive and negative perceptions of police, the first goal of the study was to examine how perceptions of police prior to incarceration influenced one's attachment to their parole officer once released. Second, building on a limited body of research on parole officer attachment, the second goal of this study was to examine how attachment to a parole officer influenced odds of re-incarceration. To address these interrelated issues, I used three waves of data from *Returning Home*, and conducted two separate analyses. I now turn to the hypotheses to unpack the findings from this study.

To address the first goal of the study, I hypothesized that individuals who reported more negative perceptions of police before incarceration would report lower levels of attachment to their parole officer after release compared to those who reported more positive perceptions of police. This hypothesis is supported by the results of the ordinary least squares regression analysis. The results demonstrated that even after accounting for a number of covariates that past research has shown to be important, there is a negative association between perceptions of police and parole officer attachment. Individuals who reported having negative perceptions of police prior to incarceration reported less attachment to their parole officer compared to those who reported positive perceptions of police. I offer two explanations for these findings.

Hirschi (1969) states that individuals who believe in the norms, values, and laws of society will avoid criminal behaviors due to these beliefs. Therefore, from the perspective of social control theory, the negative association between perceptions of police and parole officer attachment may be attributed to a broken or weakened belief component of the bond. Belief may be broken through their direct or vicarious experiences with the police. Furthermore, negative perceptions, or weakened belief, appear to affect bonds to other actors of the criminal justice system, such as the parole officer. This carryover of a broken belief may be preventing the attachment to the parole officer from ever forming, resulting in a worse overall relationship. In sum, the results suggest perceptions of the police are critical in the development of later attachments. I now turn to a related body of research that helps explain how one may obtain negative perceptions of police.

When discussing why one would have negative perceptions of the police, it is important to discuss why police actions matter. Jeffrey Fagan (2017) discusses the actions of the police and states "The internalization of harsh policing into everyday social interactions can produce cynicism toward law and legal actors, and a withdrawal of citizens from cooperation with the police to control crime" (p. 85). Fagan highlights a critical point in that not only can the actions of the police have a detrimental effect on an individual's belief in the police, but also on the criminal justice system as a whole. Tying Fagan's comments to the negative association between police perceptions and parole officer attachment, harsh policing tactics may be the driving force behind negative perceptions. The dual role of the parole officer may be one reason an individual reports low attachment to their parole officer. First, the parole officer is similar to a social worker in that they provide aid and support. More important to the current research, the second role of the parole officer is similar to police in that they provide surveillance to the individual on parole

(Trotter, 2017). The surveillance role may consist of the parole officer conducting random check in on an individual at their home or work, subjecting them to drug tests, and/or revoking their parole (Fulton et al., 1997). As one takes their negative perceptions of police from one stage of the criminal justice system to another, similarities between different actors may lead individuals to have similar perceptions and potentially, less attachment. In sum, harsh policing practices may be influencing negative perceptions, which may be affecting individuals' perceptions of the criminal justice system and other critical actors within the system that share similar roles with the police.

Building off recent research suggesting that strong attachment to a parole officer during reentry can lead to better reentry outcomes (Blasko et al., 2015; Chamberlain et al., 2015; Vidal et al., 2015), the second goal of this paper was to examine whether strong attachment to a parole officer decreased odds of re-incarceration. I hypothesized that individuals who reported lower levels of attachment to their parole officer at wave two would report higher odds of re-incarceration at wave three compared to those who reported high levels of attachment to their parole officer. This hypothesis is supported by the results of a logistic regression analysis demonstrating there is a negative association between parole officer attachment and re-incarceration.

From a theoretical perspective, the negative association between parole officer attachment and re-incarceration can be explained using Hirschi's attachment bond. Hirschi (1969) theorized that strong attachment to others could prevent individuals from criminal behaviors. When considering the reentry process and the difficulties associated with it, the parole officer relationship may provide an opportunity for the individual to form an important social bond, which should prevent criminal behaviors from happening. In sum, if a strong attachment is

formed between an individual on parole and their parole officer, this may prevent the individual from being re-incarcerated.

Past research has examined how social support can be beneficial during the reentry process. Most of the research on social support has focused on family members and peers and how they can help overcome hardships (Bahr et al., 2010; Martinez, 2006). However, due to limited research on the parole officer relationship, research has yet to identify the parole officer as a source of social support. As the individual on parole faces the hardships of the reentry process like finding adequate housing, stable employment, and avoiding substance use, they may have better outcomes with broad social support (Bahr et al., 2010). One consistent person they interact with is the parole officer. One role the parole officer has is to provide aid to this individual. When they receive that support, individuals on parole are provided a strong social attachment to their parole officer, which may help them through the hardships. In addition to peers and family, this research demonstrates the parole officer is another source of social support that can help an individual during the reentry process.

A number of additional noteworthy findings emerged from the analyses. First, I conducted a Sobel-Goodman mediation test to examine if, and to what extent, parole officer attachment mediates the relationship between perceptions of police and re-incarceration. The results of the mediation test demonstrated that parole officer attachment was not mediating the relationship between perceptions of police and re-incarceration. Therefore, the effect of parole officer attachment on re-incarceration is independent of perceptions of police. Taken together, the results demonstrate that while reentry failure can be attributed to low levels of attachment to the parole officer, negative perceptions of police may be the starting point for this failure since

negative perceptions are related to low attachment. I now turn to the results of the interactions of race and parole officer attachment.

Past research has shown that black and white individuals differ in their experiences with the criminal justice system. For example, not only are black individuals arrested and incarcerated at a higher rate than white individuals, they are also likely to have more negative perceptions of police, and to be re-incarcerated during the reentry process (Travis, 2005; Wu, 2014). When considering these racial disparities, it is critical to examine if parole officer attachment can be more beneficial for one race compared to another. To further examine the racial disparities, I examined how attachment to the parole officer differed between black, white, and other individuals by including an interaction term in the model assessing re-incarceration. To construct the interaction term, I centered the parole officer relationship variable by subtracting it from its mean and multiplied it by the dummy variables for black and other (Agresti & Finlay, 2014). The results of the analysis including the interaction terms demonstrated that there was not a significant difference in the effect of parole officer attachment on re-incarceration by race. In other words, attachment to a parole officer is equally beneficial for all race and ethnicities as they attempt to reintegrate.

As highlighted above, social control is a useful theoretical orientation to help understand the findings from this study. However, findings from this study also inform, and are informed by, additional theoretical perspectives within the field. First, both key findings can be explained using the life course perspective. Results of this study suggest that a change in perceptions of police may serve as a turning point whereby individuals are placed onto an alternative life course trajectory (Sampson & Laub, 2005). Negative perceptions of police as a turning point may also be the beginning of cumulative disadvantage. Individuals who hold negative perceptions of

police are not only more likely to have less attachment to their parole officer, but also higher odds of re-incarceration. Similarly, attachment to a parole officer may also serve as turning point where the individual is presented with a supportive environment, which may serve as a mechanism for cognitive transformation. Within this supportive environment, the individual on parole may be given the opportunity to accept positive stimuli and distance themselves from negative stimuli, which may result in criminal desistence (Giordano, Cernkovich, & Rudolph, 2002).

Another useful theoretical perspective to explain the findings on parole officer attachment is differential association. Differential association theory states that when individuals associate with non-criminal peers and learn anticriminogenic definitions they will avoid criminal behaviors (Sutherland, 1947). The parole officer may then serve as a non-criminal peer teaching the individual on parole definitions that will lead to desistence. However, Sutherland (1947) discusses four factors that may influence the importance of definitions, including duration, intensity, priority, and frequency. Future research should examine what role these factors play in learning definitions from the parole officer and desisting from crime.

Finally, general strain theory can be useful in explaining the findings on parole officer attachment. General strain theory concentrates on the effects of stressful situations and the affective states that accompany these situations. The theory states that individuals attempt to reduce the affective state that stress causes with criminal behaviors (Agnew, 1992). The reentry process can be a stressful time for individuals as they deal with numerous hardships. This stressful time period may induce affective states such as depression or anxiety; however, the parole officer may serve as an effective coping agent. Therefore, individuals on parole may be presented with a pro-social coping agent instead of turning to crime to reduce their affective

states by experiencing parole officer support. However, there is potential that the parole officer can be a source of strain on the individual. Perhaps the parole officer's supervision and requirements add to an already stressful situation. Future research should examine how the parole officer may function as a mechanism of strain.

In addition to theory, this study also carries policy implications. First, the results suggest that negative perceptions of police can be detrimental to an individual's chances of success during the reentry process. I propose two ways that policy can improve individual's perceptions of police. First, to improve perceptions of police, police agencies must become less militarized. Recent research has found that increases in the militarization of a police agency is associated with increases in police violence (Delehanty, Mewhirter, Welch, & Wilks, 2017). Furthermore, Mummolo (2018) found when citizens see militarized policing in the media, opinions of law enforcement tend to become more negative. Taken together, the militarization of police may be the driving force behind the decreases in the public's perceptions of police. To rectify falling police perceptions, prior research has examined how community-oriented policing may increase public approval. Community-oriented policing relies on the community to define and address the crime problems, and research shows that it can increase perceptions and police legitimacy (Gill, Weisburd, Telep, Vitter, & Bennett, 2014). Future research should continue to examine the effects of police militarization and how community-oriented policing can overcome some of the negative consequences created by militarization. In sum, a decrease in the militarization of police and an increase in community-oriented policing practices could increase positive police perceptions and potentially benefit individuals during reentry.

Similar to the policy implications for the findings on police perceptions, policy makers should also address some of the issues surrounding the parole officer relationship. As the results

indicate, attachment to the parole officer reduces odds of re-incarceration. Drawing from a related body of literature, research has shown that increased contact with other individuals – such as family and peers – increases social support (Western et al., 2015). However, the *Returning Home* data shows that by wave two, only 50% of the sample had reported meeting with their parole officer in the past 30 days, and of those, 60% reported meeting with their parole officer for less than a total of 30 minutes. It is possible that this lack of contact may be contributing to lower levels of attachment. Drawing from what is known about contact with family and peers (e.g., Western et al., 2015), increasing contact between an individual on parole and their parole officer could increase support and attachment.

In addition to increases in contact, prior research on the parole officer relationship finds that parole officers may be focusing on their role as a supervisor more than their role as a mechanism of social support (Bonta, Rugge, Scott, Bourgon, & Yessine, 2010). These findings are alarming considering that research has shown that when the parole officer focuses on their role as a form of support and less on their role as a punitive supervisor, individuals on parole have better outcomes (Morash, Kashy, Smith, & Cobbina, 2016; Vidal & Woolard, 2015). This emerging line of research suggests that parole officers may be beginning to look and act more like police; Paparozzi and Guy (2018) state "The parole officers gave the appearance of law enforcement officers. Their shirts displayed embroidered badges, and they prominently displayed handcuffs, ammunition pouches, and pistols." (pg. 8). Paparozzi and Guy draw attention to the fact that some parole officers may appear to be more of a police officer than a parole officer, which may lead an individual on parole to view them in a negative manner and prevent attachment. In sum, similar to how the police need to be demilitarized, parole officers need to be

depoliced and their focus needs to be refocused on providing these individuals with help so they can remain in society.

Future research should continue to examine the role of the parole officer during the reentry process in a number of ways. First, if the parole officer serves as a source of social support similar to the family, does the parole officer protect individuals from re-incarceration when someone is lacking support from their families? In other words, can having strong attachment to a parole officer overcome a lack of family support? Second, research should examine if there are different types of relationships that one can have with their parole officer. For example, one may have a relationship with their parole officer that is more interpersonal than professional, or vice versa. Scholars should examine if there are different reentry outcomes depending on the type of relationship one has. Finally, research should examine what it is, specifically, about the parole officer relationship that matters. Is it the emotional support, where the individual feels like a priority, feels that they can talk to their parole officer, or relies on their parole officer for support during their hardships that helps prevent re-incarceration? Or is it instrumental support, where the parole officer helps the individual find housing, a job, or substance abuse treatment? To fully understand the benefits of strong attachment to the parole officer, research must explore what specific mechanisms the parole officer offers to the individual on parole matter.

While the current study contributes to research in a number of areas, there are still a number of limitations. First, when considering the limitations of the *Returning Home* data, there are only three waves of data that span across one year. This is a limitation since the reentry process can last much longer than one year. Furthermore, there are limits to the generalizability of the findings since the sample used is made up of men and only comes from three states. This

limits the findings of the results as they do not generalize to women and other states. The final limitation of the data is that I was not able to control for any characteristics of the parole officer. There is potential that characteristics of the parole officer such as age, race, and gender may influence the relationship between an individual on parole and the parole officer.

Along with data limitations, the current research also has a number of theoretical limitations. First, the current study does not examine either relationship of interest through a macro-level lens. As Matsueda (2016) points out, criminologists often examine relationships at the micro- or macro-level, while often ignoring explanations at the other level. Often called the "levels of explanation" problem, the current study is limited because I do not examine any macro-level variables or explanations. For example, I do not control for any macro-level variables such as neighborhood conditions or amount of police presence in a certain area. This is a theoretical limitation because it limits my explanations of the findings purely to the micro-level. The current study is also limited in its usage of social control theory. While I test the attachment and belief elements, I do not include any measures for the involvement or commitment elements. This is a limitation because Hirschi (1969) stated that if any of these components are intact then criminal behaviors should be prevented.

Overall, the findings of the current study raise attention to two pressing issues. First, the parole officer is a vital part of an individual's reentry success, and – like family and peers – must be viewed as a key source of social support during this process. However, the second key finding suggests that the ability for parole officer attachment to be formed may be drastically reduced by pre-existing negative perceptions of police. Taken together, these two findings suggest that negative police perceptions may build a barrier that limits an individual's chances of success following release before the individual is even incarcerated

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APPENDIX A. CORRELATION MATRIX

Appendix Table A. Correlation Matrix for all Variables

Varaible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Parole Officer Attachment	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 Perceptions of Police	.074	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3 Re-Incarceration	-0.148	-0.096	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4 Legal Cynicism	0.010	0.288	-0.109	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 Length of Incarceration	0.108	0.101	-0.218	0.173	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6 Disciplinary Segregation	0.105	-0.128	0.022	-0.047	0.332	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7 Logged Substance Use	0.089	0.001	0.108	-0.061	-0.062	0.011	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
8 Depression	-0.208	-0.125	0.085	-0.206	-0.219	-0.069	-0.020	1.00	-	-	-	-	-
9 Employment	0.027	0.174	-0.155	0.076	0.140	-0.015	-0.086	-0.055	1.00	-	-	-	-
10 Gang Membership	0.034	-0.202	0.119	-0.239	-0.066	0.103	0.013	0.081	-0.060	1.00	-	-	-
11 Family Support Wave 1	0.165	0.089	-0.170	0.139	0.104	-0.033	-0.097	-0.296	0.017	0.020	1.00	-	-
12 Family Support Wave 2	0.140	0.085	0.038	0.122	0.029	0.043	-0.001	-0.158	-0.024	-0.018	0.447	1.00	-
13 Family Conflict Wave 1	-0.137	-0.166	0.056	-0.195	-0.197	0.020	0.098	0.474	-0.064	0.024	-0.248	-0.238	1.00
14 Family Conflict Wave 2	0.195	0.073	-0.055	0.078	0.124	0.058	-0.137	-0.220	-0.010	-0.006	0.172	0.423	-0.313
15 Single	-0.021	-0.105	0.047	-0.130	0.055	0.123	-0.019	0.011	-0.015	0.052	-0.015	-0.045	0.025
16 Married	-0.010	0.003	0.004	0.011	-0.117	-0.123	-0.016	0.016	-0.005	0.014	0.090	0.089	-0.066
17 Other Marital Status	0.035	0.122	-0.059	0.144	0.046	-0.029	0.038	-0.028	0.023	-0.075	-0.068	-0.031	0.033
18 Age	-0.025	0.226	-0.078	0.230	0.177	-0.148	-0.037	0.009	0.031	-0.229	-0.065	-0.072	-0.029
19 Black	0.144	-0.152	0.005	0.028	0.032	0.011	0.013	-0.153	-0.253	0.080	0.078	0.059	-0.065
20 White	-0.166	0.149	0.004	-0.023	-0.023	-0.017	-0.033	0.184	0.192	-0.077	-0.095	-0.064	0.102
21 Other Race/Ethnicity	0.016	0.046	-0.012	-0.014	-0.018	0.004	0.020	0.007	0.139	-0.025	-0.002	-0.011	-0.024
22 Property Offense	0.010	-0.070	0.136	0.005	-0.120	0.006	-0.053	0.115	-0.091	-0.086	-0.004	0.026	0.055
23 Violent Offense	0.064	0.050	-0.108	0.053	0.133	0.131	-0.023	-0.014	0.138	-0.062	0.062	0.009	-0.011
24 Drug Offense	0.028	-0.085	0.085	-0.101	-0.216	-0.116	0.077	-0.038	-0.048	0.107	-0.029	-0.025	0.045
25 Sex Offense	-0.062	0.138	-0.052	0.133	0.182	0.069	-0.045	0.015	-0.061	-0.042	-0.041	-0.050	-0.061
26 Other Offense	-0.093	-0.002	-0.043	0.043	-0.187	-0.085	0.007	-0.038	-0.003	0.045	-0.012	0.040	-0.048

Appendix Table A. Continued

	Varaible	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1	Parole Officer Attachment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Perceptions of Police	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Re-Incarceration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Legal Cynicism	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Length of Incarceration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Disciplinary Segregation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	Logged Substance Use	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Depression	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	Employment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	Gang Membership	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	Family Support Wave 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	Family Support Wave 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	Family Conflict Wave 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	Family Conflict Wave 2	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	Single	-0.039	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	Married	0.009	-0.580	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	Other Marital Status	0.038	-0.634	-0.262	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	Age	0.002	-0.294	0.140	0.215	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	Black	1.010	0.093	-0.035	-0.077	0.043	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	White	-0.106	-0.045	-0.030	0.081	0.011	-0.712	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	Other Race/Ethnicity	-0.022	-0.081	0.083	0.017	-0.069	-0.603	-0.130	1.00	-	-	-	-	-
22	Property Offense	0.068	-0.054	0.077	-0.009	0.120	0.056	-0.051	-0.022	1.00	-	-	-	-
23	Violent Offense	-0.093	0.123	-0.139	-0.014	-0.084	-0.040	0.062	-0.013	-0.234	1.00	-	-	-
24	Drug Offense	-0.033	0.016	-0.009	-0.011	-0.050	0.135	-0.150	-0.020	-0.232	-0.547	1.00	-	-
25	Sex Offense	0.067	-0.049	-0.005	0.063	1.030	-0.184	0.153	0.086	-0.092	-0.218	-0.211	1.00	-
26	Other Offense	0.069	-0.116	0.151	-0.006	0.006	-0.037	0.048	-0.002	-0.120	-0.282	-0.273	-0.109	1.00

APPENDIX B. TABLES

Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics for Returning Home Data (n = 413)

Variable	Mean	*SD*	Range
Dependent Variables			
Parole Officer Relationship	15.518	2.733	6-20
Re-incarceration	0.160	-	0,1
Independent Measures for First Model			
Belief in Police	14.567	3.675	6-24
Family Support (Wave One)	10.182	1.947	3-12
Family Conflict (Wave One)	6.550	1.866	3-12
Independent Measure for Second Model			
Employment	0.317	-	0,1
Logged Substance Use	0.073	0.329	0-2.398
Depression	7.683	2.495	4-16
Family Support (Wave Two)	10.712	1.589	5-12
Family Conflict (Wave Two)	9.293	1.834	3-12
Control Measures for Both Models			
Offense Type			
Violent	0.361	-	0,1
Drug	0.346	-	0,1
Sex	0.077	-	0,1
Property	0.092	-	0,1
Other Crime	0.123	-	0,1
Legal Cynicism	11.570	2.584	4-16
Age	35.659	9.856	19-67
Race/Ethnicity			
Black	0.768	-	0,1
Other Race	0.099	-	0,1
White	0.133	-	0,1
Gang Membership	0.068	-	0,1
Marital Status			
Married	0.194	-	0,1
Single	0.584	-	0,1
Other	0.223	-	0,1
Length of Incarceration	3.356	4.228	0-18
Disciplinary Segregation	0.385	-	0,1

Notes: *SD* = Standard Deviation, *n* = Sample Size

Table 2. OLS Model examining Parole Officer
Relationship (*n* = 413*)*

Variable	Coef.	S.E.
Perceptions of Police	0.079	0.393*
Family Support (Wave One)	0.142	0.072*
Family Conflict (Wave One)	-0.061	0.082
Offense Type		
Drug	-0.092	0.334
Sex	-0.646	0.529
Property	0.127	0.508
Other Crime	-0.802	0.459
Depression	-0.139	0.063*
Legal Cynicism	-0.070	0.056
Age	-0.007	0.015
Race/Ethnicity		
Black	1.107	0.412**
Other Race	0.757	0.554
Gang Membership	0.392	0.555
Marital Status		
Married	-0.253	0.415
Single	-0.451	0.340
Length of Incarceration	0.017	0.038
Disciplinary Segregation	0.515	0.297
Intercept	14.738	1.545***
F	2.82***	
R^2	0.108	

* *p* <.05, ** *p* <.01, *** *p* <.001
*OLS = Ordinary Least Squares

Table 3. Logit Model examining Re-incarceration (*n* = 413)

Variable	Coef.	S.E.	OR
Parole Officer Relationship	-0.178	0.056**	0.837
Family Support (Wave Two)	0.189	0.115	1.208
Family Conflict (Wave Two)	-0.054	0.091	0.947
Employment	-0.626	0.412	0.535
Logged Substance Use	0.708	0.370*	2.029
Depression	-0.023	0.062	0.977
Offense Type			
Drug	0.161	0.393	1.174
Sex	-0.142	0.756	0.868
Property	0.928	0.517	2.530
Other Crime	-0.782	0.576	0.475
Legal Cynicism	-0.050	0.062	0.951
Age	0.001	0.017	1.000
Race/Ethnicity			
Black	-0.334	0.477	0.716
Other Race	-0.187	0.645	0.830
Gang Membership	0.916	0.522	2.500
Marital Status			
Married	0.031	0.491	1.031
Single	0.395	0.414	1.484
Length of Incarceration	-0.314	.091**	0.730
Disciplinary Segregation	0.625	0.328*	1.867
Intercept	0.593	1.925	
χ^2		67.07***	

* p <.05, ** p <.01, *** p <.001