



5-2017

Examination of Parole Revocation Decision-making Policy thru the lens of Organizational Theory: Qualitative Analysis

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**Examination of Parole Revocation Decision-making Policy thru the lens of Organizational
Theory: Qualitative Analysis**

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Criminal Justice

Bridgewater State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the requirements for the Degree

Master of Criminal Justice

By Ashley Furtado

M.S., 2017, Bridgewater State University

May 2017

**Examination of Parole Revocation Decision-making Policy thru the lens of Organizational
Theory: Qualitative Analysis**

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May 2017

ABSTRACT**EXAMINATION OF PAROLE REVOCATION DECISION-MAKING POLICY THRU THE
LENS OF ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

By

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May 2017

Mass incarceration is primarily caused by harsh sentencing policies. But another contributing factor is the recidivism of parolees. There are several definitions of recidivism including relapse into behaviors associated with crime (technical violations), or committing crime. Criminal Justice agencies are organizations whose behavior may be better understood by looking at organizational theory. Organizational theory is a self-correcting model in which outcomes of prior decisions provide feedback to influence future decision in organizations. This study utilizes organizational theory to explore the relationship between the open systems theoretical model and the tolerance of risk of parolees. Seek to answer whether correctional populations are also driven by parole decisions that are worsening mass incarceration. In addition, we seek to understand the extent to which external pressures on parole agencies drives parole violations, reincarcerations and ultimately contribute to the problem of mass incarceration. Policy implications are discussed.

TABLES OF CONTENTS

Abstract	3
 CHAPTER 1	
INTRODUCTION	6
The Problem of Mass Incarceration	6
The Decarceration Movement.....	7
The Challenges of Reentry.....	10
What is Parole.....	12
Technical Violations	14
 CHAPTER 2	
LITERATURE REVIEW	16
Parole Revocation Studies	16
Technical Parole Violation Studies.....	19
Organizational Theory	24
Open and Close System Theories	25
 CHAPTER 3	
METHODS	27
Study Variables.....	27
Research Questions.....	28
 CHAPTER 4	

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	30
-----------------------------	----

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION.....	42
-----------------	----

Theory Implications on Policy.....	42
------------------------------------	----

Study Limitation	43
------------------------	----

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION.....	45
-----------------	----

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Problem of Mass Incarceration

The United States, with less than 5% of the world's population, has nearly 25% of the world's incarcerated population (Osler & Bennett, 2014, p.124). Incarceration has been steadily rising in the United States for over the last three decades. Between 1975 and the end of 2005, the incarceration rate increased 342%, from 111 to 491 per 100,000 (Defina & Hannon, 2013, p.563). According to Carson and Williams (2016), Bureau of Justice Statistician and Director, the number of prisoners sentenced to more than one year under the jurisdiction of state correctional authorities increased 55% over the past two decades (p.1). Bureau of Justice Statistics of the DOJ reported that about 6.98 million people in the United States were under correction supervision in prison or jail or on probation or parole (Osler & Bennett, 2014, p.127).

Mass incarceration has an enormous impact on the citizens of the United States. It starts with destroying families and lives of the youth that are growing up with broken families because of incarceration. Since the beginning of the twenty first century, federal and state prisoners were parents to 1,498,800 children under the age of 18 and by 2002, once in every 45 minor children had a least one parent in federal or state prison (Osler & Bennett, 2014, p.128). How did mass incarceration get to this point? Mass incarceration has become so out of control due to policies and Congress changing sentencing. Congress has radically transformed federal sentencing by abandoning parole, establishing mandatory guidelines, ratcheting up narcotics sentences, and taking away discretion away from judges (Osler & Bennett, 2014, p.134).

Incarceration has increased throughout the years as shown by statistical data collected through agencies such as Bureau of Justice Statistic, Census Data or the Sentencing Project.

What is often overlooked is the type of prison admission. In the last several years admission into prison due to a parole violation has increased.

In 2013, 70% of all admissions to state prisons of offenders sentenced to more than 1 year were for new convictions while on parole, compared to 62% in 2003 and 64% in 1993. This change reflects the increased use of parole violation admissions through 2000, when 57% of prison admissions were new court commitments. (Carson & Williams, 2016, p.14).

This indicates that offenders in 2003 were spending less time in prison than they are now. This is the root of this issue showing that parole violations are increasing prison admissions. At this rate prison rates will continue to grow because of inmates staying in prison longer.

Much of the problem of a persistently high prison population is due to the parole and probation systems that are currently ineffective. Parole revocation is contributing to recidivism rates but it does not actually mean more violent crime is being committed. The U.S. prison population is at an all-time high with 2.2 million incarcerated in jails and prisons. This growth in the correctional population has occurred even when crime rates have steadily declined (Gainsborough & Mauer, 2000). There are increasing voices calling for a new direction towards decreasing the prison population, referred to as decarceration, or at least slowing the current rate of incarceration.

The Decarceration Movement

The decarceration movement that is being referred to here is the decarceration movement of prisons in the United States. Decarceration was defined as “a state-sponsored policy of closing down asylums, prisons, and reformatories”; in a contemporary context, this definition fits more accurately the conception of ‘prison abolition’ (Garland, Hogan, Wodahl, Hass, Stohr

& Lambert, 2014, p.449). The decarceration movement primarily is focused on decreasing the number of inmates that are in the United States prison systems. The number of inmates that are currently under control of the United States correctional system is overwhelming, all prisons are filled beyond normal capacity.

There are few creative ways that government agencies reduce the prison population. Decarceration started with changing mandatory sentencing that was first created for the tough on crime movement. Changing the mandatory sentencing is in hopes that individuals stop getting insanely long sentences because currently individuals who received long sentences are helping keep the prisons full. A different method was shortening sentences for those already in prison, this could be done in many ways. Most commonly shortened sentences went to those offenders in programs or who have good behavior. Another commonly used method for decarceration is reentry initiatives. These initiatives are used to parole offenders, if offenders are paroled it is thought there would be fewer persons the correction system has to deal with.

Decarceration has benefits for both conditions inside prison and society at large. Decarceration for prison creates a better environment for prisoners and correctional staff. With less people inside the prison, there are less inmates to watch so the ratio of correctional officers to inmates is not overwhelming. Correctional staff can profit from reduced crowding as the poor living conditions and lack of communication between staff and inmates emanating from overcrowded facilities are linked with violence, disturbances, and riots (Garland et al., 2014, p.458). Safety is a great concern in prisons throughout the country but there are benefits from reducing the populations. Funding increases because there is a redirect in funds formerly used for security costs to support programming, could provide the opportunity to improve the rehabilitative opportunities for inmates (Garland et al., 2014, p.459).

Releasing inmates back into society is a daunting task to some. It is alarming that the release of offenders on parole is this challenging. The reason for this challenge is because parolees are a large group of vulnerable people being released into society; being sent back into communities with nothing. Some of these individuals have been disconnected from the world for years or decades but are still expected to find work and to successfully adjust to a less familiar society. Many inmates are released back into the communities that they were in when they were originally got incarcerated. This sudden mass decarceration could result in certain communities getting “bombarDED” with former prisoners (Garland et al., 2014, p.461). Releasing inmates provides an opportunity for those individuals to become productive members of society; but there are challenges that come before that can happen for most ex-offenders.

Decarceration is occurring in the United States, “The combined U.S. prison population decreased 0.3 percent in 2010, the first decline since 1972” (Garland et al., 2014, p450). As indicated from Bureau of Justice Statistics data, 24 states experienced a decrease in imprisonment rates from 2008 to 2009, 25 states had declines in 2010 from 2009, and 26 states experienced decreases from 2010 to 2011 (Garland et al., 2014, p.450). Decarceration in theory is a great concept because at first glance it is removing people from prison who necessarily do not need to be there. This is supposed to stop aiding the prison rates that have caused mass incarceration. If decarceration is to make a difference; those who are released from prison must make a successful adjustment while on parole and not commit another crime. While in the era of decarceration there is a new focus on how parole is supposed to function. There have been shifts in sentencing strategies, including parole being transformed from having a law enforcement-social service orientation aiming to supervise and treat released prisoners to a surveillance orientation serving primarily a detection and apprehension function (Garland et al., 2014, p.452).

The Challenges of Reentry

There is more interest in the successful reentry of the offender into the community. But the reality of 'invisible punishments' interfere with reentry efforts. Some correctional policies and practices may also hinder reentry and the reintegration of offenders, rather than support them, such as affixing parole conditions. Parole conditions present opportunities to fail and as a result, many parolees end up being sent back to prison. The United States American system of punishment to date has been constitutionally invisible (Cover, 2014, para. 35). That the correctional system keeps *nonviolent* offenders incarcerated is not widely known to society. The United States uses due process as form of punishment to those who break the law or commit a crime but what is invisible to the general public is that fact that the due process is not fair and never ends for many offenders. Depending on the jurisdiction and the crime, felons who have served their sentences and are no longer under any sort of state supervision nevertheless face multiple disadvantages; being unable to vote, obtain certain types of employment, receive food stamps, qualify for student loans, maintain parental custody, or even pick up their children from school (Saxonhouse, 2004, para. 1). The number of legal restrictions and lose of rights when returning back to society is countless for ex-offenders. According to Petersilia (2001), "A parolee must generally be released to the county where he last resided before going to prison. Because offenders overwhelmingly come from poor, culturally isolated, inner-city neighborhoods, those are where they return to. The greatly expanded use of incarceration in the United States has a particularly acute impact on communities that are already characterized by great concentrations of disadvantage." (p.362)

These restrictions are also associated with stigmas. These stigmas make the already loss of rights even more burdensome. Ex-offenders have to deal with multiple burdens produced by the stigmas that are associated with being in prison but they are also impacted by loss of rights

and equal access to countless number of public assistances and licenses that many citizens are completely unaware of. According to Katzen (2011), “These punishments are not part of the original sentence for crime, they may be considered “invisible punishment”, because they exist outside the criminal justice system yet operate to the continued detriment of those we have convicted of violating the law,” (p.231). These are harsh and unusual punishments that never stops punishing many ex-offenders.

For an example restrictive employment opportunities regarding offenders is unfair. Laws of the federal government, every state, and numerous municipalities single out the ex-convict for likely exclusion from the majority of regulated occupations; if a trade, profession, business, or even an ordinary job requires licensing, conviction of any serious crime may disqualify the offender from obtaining or holding a license (Saxonhouse, 2004, para. 22). Employment is very important in the rehabilitation process, it provides stability for those trying to reenter society. Those who are unemployed in a society or any given community are more likely to experience an arrest; this is due to the low social support from the community. Compared to those who are unemployed, those who were employed in the community had 45% lesser odds of recommitment to prison (Listwan et al., 2013, p.157-159).

The United States is in the midst of a prisoner reentry crisis. In 1980, fewer than 170,000 people were released from federal and state prisons in the United States (Pinard, 2010, p.1213). Some states have succumbed to releasing prisoners for monetary purposes. These states are not releasing inmates from prison because of a morally just reason but because they can no longer financially support Mass Incarceration. Approximately one in four adults in the United States has a criminal record and these individuals are perhaps more burdened and marginalized by a criminal record today than at any point in U.S. history (Pinard, 2010, p.1218). Reentry has appeared to be the most difficult and persistent criminal justice issue at the current moment for

the United States. It is a complex and multi-layered mix of legal and non-legal issues that impact the record numbers of individuals released annually from U.S. prisons; these issues are particularly hard because of the broad impact mass reentry will continue to have on families and communities (Pinard, 2010, p.1223).

What is Parole?

The use of parole for federal prisoners began in the United States in June 1910. Parole was used in three federal penitentiaries at the time. Parole was granted by a board at each institution; membership of each parole board consisted of the warden of the institution, the physician of the institution, and the Superintendent of Prisons of the Department of Justice in Washington, DC (Hoffman, 1997, para. 2). Before the use of parole for federal prisoner in 1910, parole was used in jails and state penitentiaries. Before 1910, parole was called good conduct statute which authorized a deduction of 1 month in each year from the term of sentences for prisoners by approval of the warden with approval from the Secretary of Interior (Hoffman, 1997, para.12).

The purpose of parole is to try to incorporate rehabilitated inmates back into society hence they can become productive members of society. The parole system is not only useful for turning prisoners into a useful part of society the but it also helps the government by keeping the prison system less crowded and saves governmental money. The goal of parole should be to find what is needed to keep parolees out of prison; whether it is finding them jobs, proper housing, education, and a support system to help them integrate back into society. Parole is the release of a prisoner, who is to serve what remains of the sentence in the community until it is satisfied. Either temporally or permanently. There are hundreds of prisoners that get released on parole every year.

Parole is an important factor that needs to be examined with the incredible growth in the number of inmate releases. Parole places a huge amount of stress to a community and requires resources to support the parolees who have been released from prison. The increasing number of inmates returning from prison has taxed accessible community resources for offender reintegration this because when there were only a few hundred thousand prisoners, and a few thousand releases per year, the issues surrounding the release of offenders did not excessively challenge communities (Seiter, 2002, para. 1).

The role of the parole officer. Parole is a structure that is used by the correction system to released inmates from the complete supervision of state and federal prisons. The ex-offenders who are released back to society are still required to be monitor for safety purposes because they are were just in prison. This creates the role of the Parole officer. The rise in parole releases has created a rise in parole officers and the case load for each officer. Parole officers' duty consisted of supervising and assisting offenders in returning to the community; mostly to ensure that the ex-offender successfully reenters society which means to not return to prison.

When parole officers were asked in a survey conducted by Richard Seiter (2002), they are identified maintaining steady employment, staying drug free, receiving support from family and friends, and developing stable patterns of behavior as the most critical aspects of success for successful prisoner reentry (para. 26). Parole officers who are charged with supervising parolees will never prevent all individuals from failing in the community, having the knowledge of how those who succeed and those who fail in the community differ according to risk, need, and appropriate service reception (Ostermann, 2015, p.185).

Technical Violations

A technical violation is a parole revocation that occurs not because of a new crime but because of violation of parole terms. Those who are being returned to prison for technical violations not new offenses are significantly different from each other. Technical violations can occur in multiple ways but none of those ways are a criminal offense or new crime. There are many types of technical violations that could potentially result in revocation such as the inability to obtain employment or housing, failure to pay court fees or child support payments. There are countless types of technical violations and any of these violations could result in a parolee being sent back to prison. Technical violations of parole are not considered criminal acts (Ostermann, 2015, p.171). Offenders incarcerated in state prisons for technical violation take up a significant portion of public revenue for their imprisonment (Orrick & Morris, 2015, p.1028).

Technical violations are processed in most parole systems in the United States. Administration is a large part in parole and all decision making that currently is used to define technical violations. Recidivism can be explained three ways, a post-release arrest for a new crime, a post-release conviction that resulted from a new arrest, or a revocation of parole due to a technical violation (Ostermann, 2015, p.165). According to Ostermann (2015), in a 1994 study 51.8% of prisoners returned to prison because of technical parole violations (p.166). Examples of technical violations can be failure to report, failure to maintain employment, failure to complete community service restitution, or failure to pay court-ordered fees (Stevens-Martin Oyewole & Hipolito, 2014). These violations are violations not criminal acts and need to be distinguished from recidivism.

Parole organizations have developed a system of how they handled parole through years of trial and error. The term for this type of policy making is called the Cybernetic Decision model. The Cybernetic Decision model is a decision theory that is a self-correcting decision making

model in which the outcomes of prior decisions provide feedback to influence future decisions (Stojkovic, Kalinich, & Klofas, 2015, p.348). This form of decision making is used by collecting data from these organizations to examine which policies work and how they have impacted individuals of criminal justice system. Parole officers have set practiced and procedures to handle parolees. These procedures were developed in decision model theories. The purpose of this is demonstrate that current policies and procedures were not collected and formed randomly throughout the years.

The significance of this research is to show how to investigate state level conditions that may influence administrative policy on parole release and tolerance (or intolerance) of risk behaviors demonstrated by parolees. Incarceration is often viewed as a front-end problem meaning because of harsh sentencing policies, the purpose of this research is to show that back-end factors contribute to incarceration and how criminal justice agencies have external factors that may shape parole revocation policies.

On Average 67.8% of the 404,638 state prisoners released in 2005 in 30 states were arrested within 3 years of release, and 76.6% were arrested within 5 years of release (Durose, Cooper, & Snyder, 2014, p. 1). Reasons such as unemployment or persistent substance abuse occurrences are factors that contribute to offenders' unsuccessful reintegration into society. Thus the decision of parole officers or the parole policy themselves may be impacted by factors beyond the behavior of parolees. This research investigates factors that may impact the tolerance level of risk behavior of parolees as determined by the number of parolees returned to prison for technical parole violators and other factors. The following section reviews the relevant literature.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Parole Revocation

The prison population is over capacity and there needs to be a redirected focus to start decreasing the prison population or at least not let it continue to grow at the rate it is at. The current methods the criminal justice system is presently using to handle their parolees and probationers is not helping them stay in society; it just ends up resulting with these parolees/probationers being sent back to prison. The choice to revoke someone's parole and have them sent back to prison has serious repercussion for both the parolees themselves and all the states (Steen, Opsal, Lovegrove & McKinzey, 2013, p. 87).

The typical parolee who has their parole revoked due to technical violation are single, unemployed white males with low levels of education and income (Stevens-MartinOyewole & Hipolito, 2014). This effects parolees because they are often reincarcerated for months or even years and the states/country is already struggling with an overgrowing prison population, therefore sending parolees back to prison just continues to make it unmanageable to get the over capacitated prison population under control (Steen et al., 2013, p.87). Sending parolees back to prison is just increasing recidivism rates throughout the country.

Technical violations are most likely to occur within the first six months or first year of release from prison (Ostermann, 2015, p.178). Offenders within the first year of their parole are still adjusting to their new community and adjusting to the rules of their court arrangement. This is a difficult time for parolees who have just been released from years in prison. If parolees were provided with more to make a successful integration into society there would be less recidivism because of technical violations. According to Stevens-Martin, Oyewole, & Hipolito (2014),

Sixty-seven percent of those revoked for technical violations were unemployed and 55 percent had no high school diploma or equivalent. Understanding the lack of preparation for parole release is important to examine when discussing parole revocations because it is significant to comprehend how technical violations occur.

On average 590,400 state and federal inmates have been released and placed under parole or probation supervision each year (Palermo, 2015, p.119). In some cases the parolees reenter society without a problem but that is not the case for most released individuals. Parolees are faced with obstacles such as seeking employment, housing, and court mandated fees and if they cannot afford such things they will face parole revocation. Parolees are still consider prisoners that are serving part of their sentence outside of prison and have three distinctions from being free, absconding, failure to comply with parole conditions of any kind and re-arrests.

The decision to revoke parole is important decision that comes with many different factors that can permanently impact the parolee's life. This decision is made by parole officers and then followed up by a judge from a parole board or hearing. This organization makes the permanent decision to remove a parolee from society. There needs to be changes done with the parole handling system if it should be considered progressive. For example an exact set of procedures for handling delinquent parolees. There needs to be consistency and set of procedures that directly show parole officers how to handle technical violations. For example an exact set of procedures for handling delinquent parolees. Criminal intent of a parole violation is a major concern that is overlooked. "Do the rules of insanity, coercion, ignorance of fact, defense and compulsion bear upon parole violations" (Von Hentig, 1943, p.370)? The purpose of parole is to rehabilitate ex-offenders but the wrong procedures in the correction system could cause them more and not less difficulty.

There are new attempts in increasing the chance of success of parole integration. Uniformity in sanctions (which would then theoretically increase offenders' perceptions of fairness and subsequent compliance with parole terms) may also be an important part in increasing success with parole (Turner et al., 2012, p.272). Research conducted among the prison population of the California prison tested to see if the Parole Violation Decision-Making Instrument (PVDMI) produced more effective results. Turner et al. (2012) concluded that responding to violations of parole with the PVDMI became more consistent and predictable:

The use of a graduated sanction matrix is a tool to better manage offenders in the community and to use return to custody for those that pose a threat to society. The matrix provides an opportunity to help structure the decision of officers, and to expand the use of a full range of administrative sanctions. (Turner et al., 2012, p.290-291)

This is one example of how set rules and procedure can successfully implement parole. There are some implications that come with using instruments such as the PVDMI. A cause of limited implementation is parole agent resistance to the use of tools that limit their discretion (Turner et al., 2012, p.292).

Jail sanctions that remove the parolee from the community to place them back into prison shows that the jail environment may cause deleterious effects. Research by Wodahl, Boman IV, and Brett (2015), looks into the influence of jail sanctions. Jail sanctions do lessen the chance of a new offense but the research suggests that jail sanction is not any more or less effective than community based sanctions. Consistency and celerity of punishment are more prominent than severity. (p.248):

“Policy was implicitly designed to compel officers to manage offender noncompliance in the community (as opposed to initiating revocation proceedings), it seems that the imposition of the policy was effective in achieving this goal.” (Steiner, Lawrence, Makarios, & Meade, 2011, p.381).

Technical Parole Violation Studies

Parole is meant to keep the individual out of prison and confinement so they can have them reenter into society as a productive member. There needs to be some type of transition between prison and parole with distinct rules. Rules put in place the exact protocol that officers and courts must follow when handling technical violations. When recidivism is defined solely as a return to prison it potentially creates artificial crime rates; it is important to separate failure/new crime from noncriminal technical violations (Ostermann, 2015, p.168-169).

Parolees are faced with challenges when seeking employment because criminal records close doors in employment situations (Pogrebin, West-Smith, Walker & Unnithan, 2014, p.395). Inmates are not unaware of the challenges with being on parole, which leads to many foregoing parole when they become eligible (Ostermann, 2011, p.687). When parolees are sent back to prison it directly affects the already overwhelmed criminal justice system because they are often reincarcerated for months or even years. Sending parolees back to prison just continues to make it impossible to get the overcrowding prison population under control (Steen et al, 2013, p.87). When parolees and probationers commit a new crime while under supervision, the decision to revoke their conditional release and return them to prison is clear and reflects public safety concerns. The question arises: do technical violations that result in a return to prison contribute significantly to the problem of mass incarceration? The following information will lead to

showing that parole revocations caused by technical violations are adding larger amounts of ex-offenders back into prisons, adding to mass incarceration. When parolees are sent back to prison it directly effects the already overwhelmed criminal justice system because they are often reincarcerated for months or even years and the states already struggles with an overgrowing prison population so sending parolees back to prison just continues to make it impossible to get the overcrowding prison population under control (Steen et al, 2013, p.87).

In many cases the parolees or probations reenter society without a problem but that is not the case for most released individuals. For example, of prisoners released in 30 states in 2005, more than two thirds (67.8%) had some form of contact with the justice system within 3 years and almost half (49.7%) had returned to jail or prison, either for violation of parole or a new crime (Palermo, 2015, p.120). Many of the reasons for such high rates of recidivism for paroled offenders is due to the inadequate preparation before their discharge.

There has to be a better way to handle parolees and technical violations because in Massachusetts about 75% of parolees in 2010 were sent back to prisons because of these technical violations (Haas, 2012, p.12). The choice to revoke someone's parole and have them sent back to prison has serious repercussion for both the parolees themselves and the states (Steen, Opsal, Lovegrove & McKinzey, 2013, p. 87). According to The Massachusetts Parole Board there is also a financial benefit for the state of Massachusetts when they release inmates for parole, "the public treasury also benefits from paroles as there is a significant cost differential between a year on parole and a year in prison (Haas, 2012, p.14). Keeping parolees out of prison would therefore benefit the state of Massachusetts financially. Learning what causes technical violations is the key to keeping parolees out of prison.

These groups of outcasts are supposed to return back to society and instantly become a productive member but it is often ignored that they are being forced to return to area that let them down before. Many inmates are released back into communities that have been ridden with poverty and had been greatly impacted by mass incarceration. Incarceration rates will begin to have a substantial effect on crime in the other direction, by increasing it (Clear, 2007, p.160). Returning back into communities that are in these conditions are going to bring nothing but strain to parolees and returning ex-offenders. These neighborhoods and communities are filled with social disorganization. The concentration of formerly incarcerated men in poor neighborhoods not only impacts them individually but also damages the labor market prospects of others in the community (Clear, 2007, p.108).

Prisons influence inmates greatly by shaping choices through influencing how inmates think and feel, whether they become angry and defiant, and perhaps whether they can sustain the human agency to overcome the rigors of reentry (Listwan et al., 2013, p.163). Prison is not only used to punish an offender but also prepare them for reentry. There are strains that stress an inmate but there are also strains that follow inmates outside of prison. The American penal system has created trends that have led the United States to have one of the highest incarceration rates in the world have also undoubtedly helped keep poverty high (DeFina & Hannon, 2013, p.583). When a parolee is released back into society there are several obstacles they will encounter. Prior to being released prison prepares inmates for their reentry back into society. Helping offenders to become acquainted with the community in which they would like to settle has been found to be very effective (Palermo, 2015, p.120).

Parolees should be provided with secure employment when they are released from prison. Those who are employed wish to avoid trouble with police but the unemployed do not have as much at stake (Sherman, 1993, p. 451). Employment is an important variable when determining

recidivism of parolees. Those who were employed in the community had 28% lower chance of a new arrest and those with greater supports had a 27% lower chance of arrest per unit increase in the support scale. (Listwan et al., 2013, p.157-159),

Without a job, parolees have trouble paying for transportation, housing and other basic needs. Employment is an important factor when it comes to recidivism of parolees. Another important part of employment is the location of the job because if the job is too far from the community in which the parolee resides they will be disconnected from the community. The risk of parole failure due to unemployment is evident. Unemployment and inability to reenter into society while on parole leads to technical violations. Employment provides stability for the rest of the reentry process. Those who are unemployed in the community are more likely to experience an arrest; this is due to low social support. Compared to the unemployed, those who were employed in the community had 45% lesser odds of recommitment to prison.

If local news regularly reports violent crime incidents the public response may be that authorities are not doing enough to keep them safe. In a climate fueled by public concerns over the effectiveness of the justice system—tolerance of parolee risk behavior may be considerably decreased. Less tolerance for parole violations is the response from criminal justice organizations. It is not certain that heightened increased in parole violations cause organizations to be less tolerable. What is know is how large organizations work and they are very susceptible to the public. Large organizations such as the criminal justice system are susceptible to public opinions. Government organizations are dynamic environment which means they rapidly change over time and are unpredictable (Stojkovic et al., 2015, p.74). This government organization reacts to both the political and public environment that surrounds it.

Informal political system pressures can support or oppose the existing programs and/or practices which can led to a demand in new programs or services (Stojkovic, Kalinich, & Klofas,

2015, p.68). Informal pressure can be news reports of parole revocation. Increase parole revocation is associated most of the time with recidivism rates but without the break down showing that these recidivism rates are mostly technical violations not new crimes or acts that plague society, society will only believe that crime is on the rise.

There are some programs that could be available to inmates while in prison to be learning about the reentry process with providing inmates with reentry programs. These programs are often known as reintegration programs, which are usually available in prison for inmates to become rehabilitated. Other programs such as transition control which releases inmates to halfway houses before they finish their sentence, in these programs parolees are provided with resources for employment, education, vocational training, and treatment (Listwan et al., 2013, p.152). Preparation before being sent into society to survive on their own the inmates need to be prepared of what is expected of them. Becoming a productive member of society does not happen instantly after being released it takes resources to achieve this goal.

Within the first three years of parole 51% of parolees are sent back to prison due to technical violations and technical violations do not mean that a parolee is at risk for committing a new crime (Ostermann, 2015). Recidivism because of technical violations can be avoided by addressing the strains that parolees face when outside of prison. The objective of the parole system and the department of correction should be to reduce the strains and stigmatization associated with paroled inmates. Reducing these strains and stigmatized shame can be done by getting inmates or parolees' employment, education and reentry programs. Inmates who are prepared for reentry with education, employment and reentry programs are less likely to be sent back to prison.

Organizational Theory – The Open System Model

The final area of relevant literature includes criminal justice organizational decision-making. According to Stojkovic, Kalinich, and Klofas (2015), the political environment of the criminal justice system can be thought of as a complex decision-making apparatus containing both formal and informal overlapping subsystems (p.67). Some would observe that the parole system inadvertently employs some practices identified in administration and management theories, such as the Garbage Can Theory. Garbage Can Theory represents the history and interest of the organization and its members, this is an approach to problems by using the problems themselves as the solutions. Solutions derive from the problems in the garbage can (Stojkovic, Kalinich, & Klofas, 2015, p.350). How most criminal justice agencies seek to solve problems is by routinely seeking the least diverse and least costly change that will most readily satisfy its members both externally and internally (Stojkovic et al., 2015, p.418).

Parole decisions and other decisions made in regards to offenders are made with considering the environment. The organization in charge of these decisions has to have the ability to respond appropriately to the environment by providing feedback and changes. A public agency that fails to maintain successful relationships with its environment will fail to be responsive to demands will not appropriate adequate resource and support for its activities and will be unable to adapt to significant environmental change (Stojkovic et al., 2015, p.75). With the increase in parole releases, parole agencies and government organizations had to change to adapt to the increase of ex-offenders being released into society.

Decision makers such as those who in the parole system make decisions on the basis of bounded rationality, partly because decision makers are incapable of collecting and handling the kinds of information needed for completely rational decisions (Stojkovic et al., 2015, p.349). This decision making can be made through determining effectiveness. Organizational

effectiveness is thus a central theme in management, for many managers determining effectiveness involves identifying the criteria with which to assess effectiveness, measuring these criteria and weighing the various outcomes (Stojkovic, Kalinich, & Klofas, 2015, p.383). Change in criminal justice organizations such as the correction system or parole system requires “leadership and vision coupled within an urgent sense that new paradigms are needed – the set of rules and assumptions that guide us in putting and processing information and lead to conclusion, decisions and understanding.” (Stojkovic, Kalinich, & Klofas, 2015, p.441)

Open and Closed System Theories

Closed system are organizations that are composed of elements that are all related to one another, thus are self-contained and unresponsive to their environment (Stojkovic et al., 2015, p.12). Criminal Justice organizational theories are important in understanding why certain policies are in place. It also helps create new policies to better fit how the criminal justice system operates. Technical violations are huge factor in parole recidivism, through this research it has pointed out how technical violations are not always necessary. Open system theory is an approach to understanding organizations as being influenced by their environment (Stojkovic et al., 2015, p.13).

Research does not shed much light on what technical violations occur most often and at what point do parole officers recommend revocation and reincarceration. I take the position that the factors examined in this study represent external factors which in turn influence organizational decision-making. The recognition of parole officer discretion, local practices and the dynamics that shape parole officer decision making regarding the revocation decision are understudied areas. But more importantly, the objective of this study is to investigate the extent to which reincarceration due to technical parole violations contributes to the problem of mass

incarceration. An additional area of investigation is to understand parole and probation decision-making concerning technical violations, the return to prison decision and the manner in which parole/correctional organizations apply these decisions to parole policy.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This study examines compiled state-level data on five selected states to investigate the primary research question: What variables correlate with fluctuations in state parole populations? Within this study, the collected data is used for looking at the following selected variables to determine whether there is a correlation between organization decisions and the current trend of parole revocations for nonviolent crimes. A sample of five states include: Louisiana, Texas, Massachusetts, Arizona, and Ohio. The following variables are used as indicators of external forces or pressures:

Study variables:

- (1) Aggregate Parole Data
- (2) Legal Investment in Formal Control Data
- (3) Political Environment Data
- (4) Economic Data
- (5) Demographic Data

These data are analyzed by comparing two time periods: first looking at the time span of 2009-2010. This time era is noted as the pre Mass Incarceration perspectives which Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Era of Colorblindness* - was published January 5, 2010. After the publication of this important work a new perspective took hold which emphasized the social and economic problems created by mass incarceration conditions in the United States. The second time span are the years following the Alexander work: 2013-2014. Michelle Alexander's novel *The New Jim Crow* was a revolutionary novel calling for a new social movement in the criminal justice system in the United States. Her novel

discussed the colorblindness that controls the criminal justice system and how mass incarceration has taken control of corrections. After the publication of her novel the years following is a time that is aware of the damages of mass incarceration whereas before her novel mass incarceration was still sweeping the nation.

The data selected for this study focused around five states. The states were selected at random within each region of the United States. The United States has four regions dividing the States: Northeast, Midwest, West, and South. The South is the largest region consisting of 17 states therefore selecting the fifth state from this region.

Selected data was arranged to the following areas: aggregate parole data, legal investment in formal control data, political environment data, economic data, and demographic data. Within these five areas of focus there are certain information gathered. Under legal investment in formal control, focusing on the number of prisons each state has and the number of police employment per capita rates for cities. Political environment part consisted of violent crime rate and number of media crime reports. The number of media crime reports is collected through using LexisNexis Academic, a database with coverage of various newspapers and periodicals. Economic data collected focused on poverty and unemployment rates for each state. The purpose of this research is to focus on finding out why state level factors correlate with increases and decreases in parole populations.

Research Questions

This research will answer the following questions: (1) Assuming that parole agencies function according to open system theory, is there an association between environmental pressures and the number of parole revocations and returns to prisons? (2) If there is an association, is the association stronger or weaker when technical parole violations are focused on

separately (that is without parole violation due to new crime)? (3) If there is more pronounced association when focusing on external forces and increase technical violations – does that reflect less intolerance of risk? (4) Is there an environmental factor(s) more strongly associated with parole revocations?

CHAPTER 4

Analysis and Findings

The following Table 1 contains information for each variable relating to the five states; Massachusetts, Ohio, Louisiana, Texas and Arizona. The first chart is data from the pre-mass incarceration perspective; 2009-2010.

Table 1.

2009-2010 Pre Mass Incarceration perspectives			Massachusetts	Louisiana	Ohio	Texas	Arizona
Adults on Parole	2009		3,112	23,607	14,575	104,943	8,186
	2010		3,253	26,105	12,076	104,763	7,998
Technical Violation Data Returning to Incarceration through Revocation	2009		642	643	194	1,564	3,152
	2010		768	1,090	129	1,205	3,106
Legal Investment In Formal Control	Number of Prisons	2009	9	9	27	59	16
		2010	9	9	27	59	16
	Police Employment per capita rates for cities	2008	13,128	17,933	25,319	53,420	13,128
Political Environment	Violent Crime Rate	2009	30,503	28,878	38,305	121,684	28,128
		2010	30,553	24,886	36,366	113,231	26,085
	Number of Violent Crime Media Report	2009	8	2	2	6	4
		2010	12	1	5	1	20
Economic	Poverty Rate	2009	10.8%	14.3%	13.3%	17.3%	21.2%
		2010	10.9%	21.5%	15.4%	18.4%	18.8%
	Unemployment Rate	2009	8.2%	6.6%	10.1%	7.6%	9.7%
		2010	8.5%	7.5%	10.1%	8.2%	10%
Demographic	Percent of Black Population	2010	6.6%	32%	12.2%	11.8%	4.1%
	Percent of Hispanic Population	2010	9.6%	4.2%	3.1%	37.6%	29.6%

Table 2 is for the years following labeled as mass incarceration perspectives. In the following analysis of this compiled data, it will be broken down by each of the five sections.

Table 2.

2013-2014 Mass Incarceration perspectives		Massachusetts	Louisiana	Ohio	Texas	Arizona	
Adults on Parole	2013	2,130	27,092	14,653	112,288	7,460	
	2014	2,106	27,615	16,797	111,302	7,884	
Technical Violation Data Returning to Incarceration through Revocation	2013	541	992	112	811	2,979	
	2014	475	853	97	1,229	2,727	
Legal Investment In Formal Control	Number of Prisons	2013	9	9	27	59	16
		2014	9	9	27	59	16
Legal Investment In Formal Control	Police Employment per capita rates for cities	2012	13,082	17,768	23,005	54,353	13,082
Political Environment	Violent Crime Rate	2013	27,264	24,127	33,722	108,757	27,576
		2014	26,399	23,934	33,030	109,414	26,916
	Number of Violent Crime Media Report	2013	12	0	4	14	1
		2014	5	1	4	16	2
Economic	Poverty Rate	2013	12.1%	21.2%	14.9%	16.9%	17.9%
		2014	13.6%	23.1%	15.6%	16.4%	21.2%
	Unemployment Rate	2013	6.7%	6.7%	7.5%	6.2%	7.7%
		2014	5.8%	6.4%	5.8%	5.1%	6.8%
Demographic	Percent of Black Population	2015	9.6%	32.5%	12.7%	12.5%	4.8%
	Percent of Hispanic Population	2015	11.2%	5%	3.6%	38.8%	30.7%

The Aggregate Parole Data shows the number of adults on parole and the number of paroles returning to prison through revocation due to technical violation. Looking at the pre-mass incarceration perspective into the mass incarceration perspective, 3 out of 5 states (Louisiana, Ohio, and Texas) show the number of parolees increased. Technical violations between the first

time period and second time period changed for every state. Some states such as Massachusetts, Louisiana and Ohio had over a 20% decrease in technical violations. Only one state (Texas) did not following the trend of having the number of technical violation revocation decrease steadily between these time periods. Texas in 2009 has about 1,564 technical violation revocations but between 2010-2013 drops the number of technical violations to 1,205 and 811, but in 2014 increases to 1,229. Though that number is not higher than 2009 it is still higher than 2013 not allowing the state to continue the trend like the other states.

Legal Investment in Formal Control section of the compiled data shows the number of prisons for each state and employment capita rates for cities of each state. This data shows how the formal control may have impacted the number of technical violation revocations throughout these years. The data shows that the number of prisons between these two time periods did not change, meaning no new prisons were added to the states and no prisons were removed. Police employment per capita is data collected every four years from Bureau of Justice statistics. Between 2008 and 2012, there was a drop in the number of police per capita for all four states aside from Texas. Texas increased the number of police by 933.

The political environment section was devoted to violent crime rates and number of violent crime media reports. These two areas will show how crime rate impacts media for each state. Violent crime rates decreased between the two time periods and with this decrease crime there is also a decrease in number of media reports for most states. Texas did not have an increase in violent crime but in the Mass Incarceration perspective era there was an increase in the number of media reports regarding violent crime.

Economic data collected examined poverty rates and unemployment rates for the five states. There was no consistent change between the five states to suggest that poverty rates are decreasing. Three states (Massachusetts, Louisiana, and Ohio) had slight increases in poverty

rates. Poverty rate decreased in Texas and there was no change in Arizona. Unemployment rates though showed consistent decrease between all 5 states. Demographic data collected shows that between the two time periods examined there was little to no change regarding black and Hispanics populations aside from in Massachusetts where there shows to be a 3% increase for both the black and Hispanic population.

The constructed indexes:

1. Legal Investment in Formal Social Control index: is comprised of the number of prisons and the number of police employed in the sample state. It is anticipated that with an increased resource to manage offenders, parole violations would increase.
2. Political Environment index: is represented by the violent crime rate and the number of media reports of violent crime in the sample state. It is anticipated that the more violence crime reported by the media and actual increases in violence crime, parole violations would increase.
3. Economic index: is comprised of the poverty rate and the unemployment rate in the sample state. An increased economic index could increase parole violations.
4. Demographic index: the percent Hispanics and percent Blacks in the sample states population. An increase in ethnic and racial minorities could increase parole violations.

In the following tables it is a breakdown of the five individual studied states with all collected data regarding the two time periods; pre-mass incarceration perspective and mass incarceration perspective.

Table 3. Massachusetts

Massachusetts				
	2009	2010	2013	2014

Legal Investment In Formal Control	Number of Prisons	9	9	9	9
	Police Employment per capita rates for cities	2008		2012	
		13,128		13,082	
Political Environment	Violent Crime Rate	30,503	30,553	27,264	26,399
	Number of Violent Crime Media Report	8	12	12	5
Economic	Poverty Rate	10.8%	10.9%	12.1%	13.6%
	Unemployment Rate	8.2%	8.5%	6.7%	5.8%
Demographic	Percent of Black Population	2010		2015	
		6.6%		9.6%	
	Percent of Hispanic Population	9.6%		11.2%	
Technical Violation Data Returning to Incarceration through Revocation		642	768	541	475

There were a few notable changes between pre-mass incarceration time period and post mass incarceration time period. Technical violation data in Massachusetts for the pre-mass incarceration time period (2009-2010) had a couple hundred more technical violation revocations compared to post mass incarceration time period (2013-2014). A few variables also increased during these times that influenced the number of technical violation revocations to decrease. Unemployment rate in the state dropped about 2-3%; 2009, Massachusetts had an unemployment rate of 8.2% then by 2014 it decreased to 5.8%. Minority populations for black and Hispanics also grew between these time periods, the increase in minorities did not negatively impact parole revocations. There was a slight decrease in the number of police per capita in the state, there was not a need to increase police employment during these time periods even with an increase in parolees reentering society. The largest change between these time periods is with violent crime

rate decreasing 30,503 and by 2014 it was at 26,399. Less reports of violent crime indicates that the number of parole violation are also decreasing. With the decrease in violent crime reported there also was a decrease in violent crime media reports in Massachusetts which indicates that there is less fear of recidivism generally for parolees. These changes show that there is more tolerance for risk of parolees regarding technical violations, this is shown with the decrease in revocations.

Table 4. Louisiana

Louisiana					
		2009	2010	2013	2014
Legal Investment In Formal Control	Number of Prisons	9	9	9	9
	Police Employment per capita rates for cities	2008		2012	
		17,933		17,768	
Political Environment	Violent Crime Rate	28,878	24,886	24,127	23,934
	Number of Violent Crime Media Report	2	1	0	1
Economic	Poverty Rate	14.3%	21.5%	21.2%	23.1%
	Unemployment Rate	6.6%	7.5%	6.7%	6.4%
Demographic	Percent of Black Population	2010		2015	
		32%		32.5%	
	Percent of Hispanic Population	4.2%		5%	
Technical Violation Data Returning to Incarceration through Revocation		643	1,090	992	853

Louisiana did not show much positive change between pre-mass incarceration time period and post-mass incarceration. Technical violation revocation increased by 210 revocation between 2009 and 2014. This shows a less tolerance of risk in Louisiana regarding technical violation revocations. Factors that influenced less tolerance would be economic factors. Poverty

rate in the state in 2009 was at 14.3% and increase greatly to 23.1% in 2014. This shows that poverty rate in the state determines how lenient parole officers may or may not be towards technical violations. Even though violent crime rate decreased between 2009 at 28,878 to 23,934 in 2014, the poverty rate increased greatly between these time periods. The increase in poverty rate increased strain in the state ultimately leading to less tolerance. In this state is shows that with the large increase in poverty rate it impacted technical violation tolerance.

Table 5. Ohio

Ohio					
		2009	2010	2013	2014
Legal Investment In Formal Control	Number of Prisons	27	27	27	27
	Police Employment per capita rates for cities	2008		2012	
		25,319		23,005	
Political Environment	Violent Crime Rate	38,305	36,366	33,722	33,030
	Number of Violent Crime Media Report	2	5	4	4
Economic	Poverty Rate	13.3%	15.4%	14.9%	15.6%
	Unemployment Rate	10.1%	10.1%	7.5%	5.8%
Demographic	Percent of Black Population	2010		2015	
		12.2%		12.7	
	Percent of Hispanic Population	3.1%		3.6%	
Technical Violation Data Returning to Incarceration through Revocation		194	194	112	97

Ohio showed an increase of tolerance of risk for technical violation revocations. In 2009, technical violation revocations were at 194 by 2014, dropped to 97. That is nearly 100 fewer technical violation. There were a few factors that contributed to Ohio becoming more tolerable

to technical violations. Between the pre-mass incarceration time period and post-mass incarceration time period unemployment dropped from 10.1% in 2009 to 5.8% in 2014. This is a positive change for the state. Violent crime rate dropped greatly in Ohio between these time periods. In 2009, violent crime rate was at 38,305 then in 2014 it was at 33,030. Fewer reports of violent crime in Ohio contributed to more tolerance for technical violations leading to less revocations. These changes in violent crime rate and unemployment rate show that there is more tolerance for risk of parolees regarding technical violations, this is shown with the decrease in revocations in 2014.

Table 6. Texas

Texas					
		2009	2010	2013	2014
Legal Investment In Formal Control	Number of Prisons	59	59	59	59
	Police Employment per capita rates for cities	2008		2012	
		53,420		54,353	
Political Environment	Violent Crime Rate	121,684	113,231	108,757	109,414
	Number of Violent Crime Media Report	6	1	14	16
Economic	Poverty Rate	17.3%	18.4%	16.9%	16.4%
	Unemployment Rate	7.6%	8.2%	6.2%	5.1%
Demographic	Percent of Black Population	2010		2015	
		11.8		12.5%	
	Percent of Hispanic Population	37.6%		38.8%	
Technical Violation Data Returning to Incarceration through Revocation		1,564	1,205	811	1,229

Texas indicated an increase of tolerance of risk for technical violation revocations between the pre-mass incarceration time period and post-mass incarceration time period.

Technical violation revocations in 2009 were at 1,564 and by 2014, they decreased to 1,229. That is 335 less technical violations between those time periods showing that Texas is more tolerable of parolees regarding technical violations. Violent crime rate, poverty rate, unemployment rate all decreased in the post-mass incarceration time period ultimately leading to technical violation revocations to decrease. In 2009, violent crime rate was at 121,684 then by 2014 109,414. Poverty rate and unemployment rate decreased about 1-2%. In 2009 poverty rate was at 17.3% and unemployment rate was at 7.6% by 2014 both decreased to poverty rate being at 16.4% and unemployment rate at 5.1%. Economically with the decrease in poverty rate and unemployment rate shows positive outlook for parole violations. There was an increase in police employment in Texas and this would anticipate that resources used to manage offenders would increase the parole violations but it did not negatively impact parolees. Decreases in the economic index and violent crime rate influenced parole agencies in Texas to be more tolerable of technical violations, leading to less parole revocations.

Table 7. Arizona

Arizona					
		2009	2010	2013	2014
Legal Investment In Formal Control	Number of Prisons	16	16	16	16
	Police Employment per capita rates for cities	2008		2012	
		13,128		13,082	
Political Environment	Violent Crime Rate	28,128	26,085	27,576	26,916
	Number of Violent Crime Media Report	4	20	1	2
Economic	Poverty Rate	21.2%	18.8%	17.9%	21.2%
	Unemployment Rate	9.7%	10%	7.7%	6.8%
Demographic		2010		2015	

	Percent of Black Population	4.1%		4.8%	
	Percent of Hispanic Population	29.6%		30.7%	
Technical Violation Data Returning to Incarceration through Revocation		3,152	3,106	2,979	2,727

In Arizona there were a few notable changes between pre-mass incarceration time period and post mass incarceration time period. In 2009, technical violation revocation data was at 3,152 then by 2014 the data was at 2,727. There were 425 less technical violations resulting in revocation in Arizona in the post-mass incarceration time, this would show that there is an increase in tolerance for technical violations. Factors that contributed to more tolerance would be economic changes such as the unemployment rate in the state dropped about 3%; 2009, had an unemployment rate of 9.7% then by 2014 it decreased to 6.8%. Poverty rate in Arizona stayed the same in 2009 and 2014 at 21.2% but in 2013 there was a decrease in the poverty rate at 17.9%. Minority populations for black and Hispanics also grew between these time periods which did not negatively impact parole revocations. There was a decrease in violent crime rate between these time periods. In 2009, violent crime rate was at 28,128 and by 2014 it was at 26,916. These changes display that there is an increase in tolerance for risk of parolees regarding technical violations, this is shown with the decrease in revocations.

Findings

The data suggests for most states between these two time periods have become more tolerable for technical violations and have a more positive outlook towards parole. Four out of the five states had increase in adults on parole and a decrease in technical violation revocations. The increase in tolerance of risk does not seem to suggest that this influence came from the

political environment from media reports or demographics but rather from decrease of legal investment in formal control, violent crime rate, and economic data.

The research above can answer the following research questions. (1) Assuming that parole agencies function according to open system theory, is there an association between environmental pressures and the number of parole revocations and returns to prisons? According to the data violent crime rate was the largest indicator of environmental pressure. The higher the violent crime rate was for a given state, the technical violation revocations were also high. Other factors such as unemployment was a consistent factor for the five selected states. When unemployment rate decreased there was also a decrease in technical violation revocations.

(2) If there is an association, is the association stronger or weaker when technical parole violations are focused on separately (that is without parole violation due to new crime)? There is a stronger association with the factors gathered regarding technical parole violations. Generally, technical violations decreased between pre-mass incarceration and post-mass incarceration time period.

(3) If there is more pronounced association when focusing on external forces and an increase technical violations – does that reflect less intolerance of risk? According to data from the five states researched all of the states but Louisiana reflected in increase intolerance of risk.

(4) Is there an environmental factor(s) more strongly associated with parole revocations? Yes, environmental factors such as violent crime rates, unemployment rate, demographic rates of minorities and poverty rate were more strongly associated with parole revocations than the number of prisons, police employment capita, and media reports.

Overall this collected data shows decrease in violent crime rate, unemployment, and decrease in police employment per capita with no changes demographics in most of the five

examined states. These variables may have impacted the increase of number of adults on parole in these states and less technical violation revocations. The data suggests - it does seem that violent crime rate, unemployment and police employment have an impact on parole agencies in regards to number of offenders they parole and the tolerance for technical violation revocations.

CHAPTER 6

Discussion

Theory Implications on Policy

The theories discussed in this research such as organizational theory and open and closed theories are theories are used hopefully explain how organizations such as the parole system functions. The data that was collected in this research cannot implicitly determine what theory method best explains these parole agencies. Though it can suggest that with an increase number of parolees in each state and less technical violation revocations, these states were impacted after the publication of Michelle Alexander's novel. The years (2013-2014) labeled as mass incarceration perspective can show distinct changes because of her influence. If these states were influenced by the knowledge of mass incarceration in 2010, they may be operating under an open theory form of organization or theory z. Four out of the five states were influenced by the post-mass incarceration period, Massachusetts, Texas, Ohio and Arizona. For example, the unemployment rates in these states decreased between pre-mass incarceration knowledge and post-mass incarceration knowledge. The unemployment rate impacted the decrease in technical violation revocations for these states this influence could have occurred by creating jobs in the area in the parole systems to best supervise and manage parolees once they are released. Parole agencies increased the training to better handle the parolees released with this better training parole officers are better with finding employment for the released parolees.

As previously discussed, in this research an organizational theory is used to understand the process of organizations in the criminal justice system, an organizational theory that best explains how parole systems operate is theory z. Theory z is the best theory to explain parole organizations is because in this modern form of open theory it demonstrates how agencies are

impacted by outside factors. Theory z states that organizations cannot be viewed independently of the larger social, economic and political conditions in society; most importantly organizations must understand in conjunction with other institutions in society (Stojkovic et al., 2015, p.145). Organizational theories need to be thought of in conjunction with criminological theories to come to the best conclusion and solutions regarding improving the correctional system. Combining both theories for research will result in better results in explaining revocations. Looking forward this is a time that criminal justice researchers are aware of mass incarceration that requires more than just thought on reducing crime but reducing the current prison population. This partially involves the parole system and requires understanding how this organization is influenced and operates. Also looking into the factors that can contribute to reducing the prison population and increasing the number of parolees out in society. Factors such as unemployment, poverty rate and violent crime rate are factor shown in this research to have impacted technical violation revocations.

Study Limitations

This research of regarding parole revocations is looking at the problem from an organizational theory perspective not criminological. The research gathered from this study is to display how parole agencies and organizations are influenced by outside factors that may or may not be influencing the practices which result in less tolerance for parolees after their release from prison. Other research on this topic focuses on the criminological aspect from the parolee's side of the story, that type of research gives a better understand of how and why parolees themselves do not succeed when they reenter society, focusing on strains and shortcomings. The research collected through this study can only show how parole organizations may be less tolerable towards parolees which then result in parole revocations.

Data collection itself could be improved by looking into a few years before 2010 and until the most recent year 2016. This would give a better indication on how mass incarceration perspective may or may not have influenced the variables examined in this research. Every state has different organizational systems so to best understand state data, future research should examine all fifty states or half of the fifty states to better support change as an entire country. Five states that were examined in this study cannot strongly show how changes impacted the variables selected. The data did however help show that all but one state had an increase in tolerance for technical violations, resulting in less revocations. Going forward, a more sophisticated data analysis such as a bivariate regression or correlation functions would shed more light on significant relationships among variables. Bivariate regression or quantitative analysis of data collected could show better representation of how the variables correlate.

Largely, this research is not intended to imply that organizations should not be influenced by outside factors but to be aware of how these factors play a role in criminal justice organizations. This study is to help criminal justice organizations and criminal justice researchers understand the importance of outside factors and influences. The criminal justice system is not purely influenced by criminological theory but also organizational theory because smaller organizations within the criminal justice system such as the parole system rely on outside factors such as media reports, crime rates, and economic data to shape its policies. Those factors ultimately play an important role influencing the laws and policies that impact offenders, ex-offenders and society.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

Overall, technical violations cause a huge problem for the recidivism rates throughout the country. Recidivism rates have a direct correlation to high incarceration rates. Technical violations can be avoided by breaking down what technical violations occur most often. These technical violations are impacted by many factors. Parolees are not prepared enough when they are put back into society. They have nothing but their years in prisons to show to society, causing stigmatized shaming that will only lead to more strains that parolees are already facing after being incarcerated. The focus that parole organizations need to take is to get parolees prepared before they are reintroduced to their new lives as a productive member of society; reintegrative process. Parolees need education to help them get employment and need to participate in reentry programs to help them overcome the strains that derived from being placed back into society after life in prison.

It is important to think about new policies or programs that could help the preparation of parolees' reentry. Programs for reentry or rehabilitation within the prison system are the most important part in helping inmates become better members of society. Rehabilitation programs have been increasingly more difficult to implicate because of the overcrowding in prisons all throughout the country that is constantly straining all resources that correctional systems have (Gumz, 2004, p.454). There needs to be more funding and time put into rehabilitation programs throughout the country. Rehabilitation is the utmost important part of imprisonment because rehabilitation is supposed to be making them learn from their punishment and get ready to go back into society better, not worse.

Rehabilitative failure means reintegrative failure (Coylewright, 2004, para. 13).

Reintegrative failure only will increase recidivism rates among parolees. Right now there are not enough programs teaching prisoners with the skills they need when back in society. There is a high rate of recidivism among released prisoners and this shows the inadequacy or the lack of current prisoner reintegration strategies. The lack of decision-making and problem-solving skills possessed by parolees is what ends up being their downfall or ticket back to prison. Undeniably facing some of the most challenging social obstacles that our society has to offer is overwhelming to exiting inmates, prisoners are not making wise, safe, legal and lawful decisions upon release (Coylewright, 2004, para. 9).

Looking at parole reintegration failure with organizational theory instead of the traditional criminological theories gives a better understanding of where policies and procedures can be adjusted to better fit the new environment that has been created with the decarceration movement. As of right now parole procedures are not adjusting to their environment. This is important consideration because the ability of an organizations to create favorable exchange relations with its environment is ultimately related to its effectiveness as an organization (Stojkovic et al., 2015, p.79).

Successful reentry into society will lower recidivism rates throughout the country which would then lower the prison population. Lowering the prison population is the ultimate goal when concerned about recidivism rates. Technical violation revocation are large part of incarceration rates. When parole is successful inmates are released into the community to become productive members and therefore will refrain from getting into trouble with law enforcement again. With less technical violation revocations there it will increase parole success rate and decrease prison populations. When the prison population is lowered it would therefore increase funding for other areas in the department of corrections. This would ultimately make

incarceration more successful for inmates by rehabilitating them into successful members of society. Research and other collaboration will only advance the intellectual pursuits of Criminal Justice and Criminology and assists Criminal administrators in administrators in addressing crime.” (Stojkovic et al., 2015, p.474) Researchers need to remember that future research should combine both criminological theories and organizational theories to advance the criminal justice system as a whole.

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