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Planning Release: An Evaluation of the Allegheny County Jail Project

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PLANNING RELEASE: AN EVALUATION OF THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY JAIL PROJECT

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty

Of the

McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of

The requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

By

Rae Allison Dorer

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ABSTRACT

The goal of the Allegheny County Jail Project is to allow inmates to maintain social bonds by obtaining meaningful employment and reduce the rate of recidivism. The rates of recidivism were evaluated for the Allegheny County Jail Project and then compared to the rate of recidivism of the general population of the Allegheny County Jail to measure the success of the program.

A population of 126 enrollees, the first and second year enrollees of the program combined, was selected for this evaluation from September 2001 to June 2003, and then a follow up of one year was conducted to find the impacts of demographic variables on participation in the program and recidivism. The initial tests found that there were several variables that had a relationship with recidivism. A final logistic regression test supported only two variables, termination and sex.

In conclusion, it was found that the rate of recidivism was lower for the Allegheny County Jail Project than that of the general population. It was also found that those who completed the program were drastically less likely to recidivate than those who were non-positively terminated.

INTRODUCTION

The concern of this study was the successful adjustment by former inmates of the Allegheny County Jail into a community setting. The Allegheny County Jail Project was established to provide inmates with a comprehensive form of rehabilitation within the jail setting and to continue this progressive rehabilitation after release from the county jail. This allowed the enrollees involved in the program an easier transition from incarceration into a community setting as a productive part of society. The primary goal of this program was to allow enrollees to develop the skills and discipline necessary to become productive citizens, by obtaining meaningful employment, and by reducing the rate of recidivism. There were other peripheral goals of this program that are of great significance, such as drug rehabilitation and counseling, education and the implementation of everyday life skills. These other goals were of great importance and provided inmates with useful skills.

This study was an evaluation of the Allegheny County Jail Project. Its intent was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Allegheny County Jail Project and the effects it had on society, the individual, and the Allegheny County Jail System. I defined recidivism as committing an infraction of the law or probation, which results in a return to a correctional facility within one year of the inmate's release.

The issue of adjustment is of concern to the public and to many groups that are trying to reduce recidivism rates across the nation, by providing either in house rehabilitation (within the jail) or planning release (to give an inmate a path to follow once released). There are many issues surrounding release of an inmate, such as employment and housing that may affect recidivism rates within a given county or state. By providing

former inmates with certain amenities, such as employment, housing and clothing they may decide not to commit crimes to make a living, and instead may become productive in society.

RATIONALE

Crime and punishment are still main topics for politicians, interest groups and the media. The public would like to find solutions to the large issue of recidivism, so that more people are positively contributing to society. Because overcrowding is a serious problem in the nation's prisons and jails, it is necessary to take a close look at alternative programs, such as rehabilitation, and evaluate them. Evaluations of such programs are necessary in order to alert policy makers to adjust the system where needed. This evaluation provides a wealth of information, regarding program participant's employment status, age and criminal history.

On the national level at midyear 2003, local jails held 691,301 individuals in custody. This is a 3.9% increase in local jail populations from midyear 2002 (*Bureau of Justice Statistics*, 2003). The jails in our nation are operating at a 94% capacity rate. The *Bureau of Justice Statistics* compiled in 2001, a special report concerning *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994*. The study found that within the first year of release that 44.1% of the prisoners were rearrested for a new offense, and within three years 67.5% were rearrested. The jails in our nation are almost full and ex-offenders are recidivating.

The Allegheny County Jail statistics for 1999, paint a picture of incarceration in the county. There were 22,858 inmates received in 1999. Of those received only 1171 were over the age of 49. This suggests that younger individuals were more likely to commit law violations. There were 18,502 male inmates received, roughly 81% of the total received. There are more males incarcerated through the United States than females. Most of the individuals received were not married, 19,012 or about 83% and more than half were unemployed, 13,064 or 57%. These statistics show that it may be

possible to reduce recidivism by providing valuable tools for inmates to use to allow them the opportunity to become employed, and form social bonds that will help them once outside the confines of the jail environment.

Rehabilitation of offenders can be a useful technique in alleviating jail and prison overcrowding. The per day cost of an incarcerated inmate in the Allegheny County Jail in 1999 was \$62.27, and the total cost of operation of the jail for the year 1999 was \$42,290,689.00. If rehabilitated from the start, inmates may not continue on to become career criminals. The findings of this study will educate policy makers to make better-informed decisions regarding inmates and sentencing procedures. Certain inmates will always be viewed as a lost cause, either because of the length of their sentence or the nature of the crime committed by the individual.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS & HYPOTHESES

The Allegheny Jail Project was evaluated from September 2001 through June 2003. From this evaluation a decision can be made on whether the goals of the Allegheny County Jail Project are achieved. These goals consist of the following: 1. Provide a transition from incarceration to living in a community setting, reducing the rate of recidivism 2. Provide the inmate with rehabilitative services while enrolled in the program in the jail facility, such as faith-based programs, narcotics anonymous, and alcoholics anonymous, continuing the services once the inmate is released. 3. Educate the inmate about everyday life skills, and maintain meaningful employment, which will help the inmate lead a crime free lifestyle. There are other goals that may not apply to all inmates, such as providing housing, clothing or obtaining a driver's license, which will be assessed as well. Thus the research questions: Does the Allegheny County Jail Project produce a favorable recidivism rate compared to the general population? Are the enrollees in the Allegheny County Jail Project able to maintain meaningful employment? Does age affect recidivism? Does race affect recidivism? Does sex affect recidivism? Does marital status affect recidivism? Does number of children affect recidivism? Do prior offenses influence the rate of recidivism? Does religion affect recidivism? Does level of education affect recidivism? Does termination, either positive or non-positive have an effect on recidivism? Once completed this evaluation may provide the Allegheny Jail Project with valuable information concerning the effectiveness of the program. It may also provide information about where the program is lacking and could use adjustments.

The main hypothesis tested by this proposal was: Inmates who are provided the opportunity to participate in the Allegheny County Jail Project are less likely to recidivate once they are released than inmates who are not affiliated with a rehabilitative program. The other hypotheses are as follows: Age is negatively related to recidivism. The older the individuals, the less likely they are to recidivate. Race is not directly related to recidivism. Sex is related to recidivism. Men are more likely to recidivate than women. Marital status affects the rate of recidivism. Married individuals are less likely to recidivate than those who are not married. Number of children is related to recidivism. The more children a person has the less likely he/she is to recidivate. Prior offenses negatively influence the rate of recidivism. If the individual has committed prior offenses, he is more likely to recidivate. Religion plays no role in the rate of recidivism. Level of education is related to recidivism. Higher educated people are less likely to recidivate than those with less education. Employment is related to recidivism. Employed individuals are less likely to recidivate than those who are not employed. Termination from the jail program is related to recidivism. Those who are non-positively terminated are more likely to recidivate, than those who finish the program and are positively terminated. The Allegheny County Jail Project does reach a favorable rate of recidivism compared to the general population of the Allegheny County Jail.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rehabilitation and jobs programs, whether at the state or local level, have the following goals: 1. Providing the inmate the opportunity to obtain a job in order to pay restitution, child support, maintains status as a productive citizen, and etc: 2. Providing assistance to the inmate to ease transition from a jail setting back into a community setting. 3. Reducing the rate of recidivism to lower crime rates.

The focus of this literature review is to recognize previous research on this topic, which examines numerous variables in relation to recidivism. Programs and research pertaining to rehabilitation and jobs programs in relation to recidivism is of particular interest and will be used for comparison purposes.

Research conducted concerning recidivism and rehabilitation seems to follow similar patterns concerning the use of variables. Certain studies however, are more precise in their definitions of recidivism and its causes. For example, Steurer, Smith & Tracy (2001) conducted a study pertaining to education in a three state study. This study included demographic factors of inmates such as, age, gender, race, marital status, number of children, employment, education and criminal history. This publication also collected extensive information from inmates themselves, and tracked recidivism for three years. This is very important, because many studies lack either demographic data, or do not define or track recidivism in the study. Another study conducted by Peter Finn evaluates Chicago's Safer Foundation. The main variables assessed are: education, employment and recidivism. The main problem with this study is the failure to define recidivism, which is extremely important when assessing a program dealing with ex-offenders. Other recidivism studies only define one part of the variable pertaining to type

or seriousness of offense and forget to state a time period for recidivism. This characteristic is integral for the study because it defines the most important aspect of the variables. Another variation found in the studies about ex-offenders and recidivism is the conflicting sizes of control and experimental groups. Several studies used different sample or control sizes, which may cause different results in their studies.

There are several studies that evaluate programs implemented in jails or prisons, which prepare inmates for release, but few use demographics and track recidivism for a one-year period after release. The following studies have been chosen to provide examples of some of the techniques I gathered for use in my research.

OCE/CEA Three-State Recidivism Study

The Correctional Education Association conducted the Three State Recidivism Study for the United States Department of Education Office of Correctional Education. The OCE/CEA Three-State Recidivism Study evaluated the impact of correctional education programs on incarcerated inmates by (1) measuring recidivism after release from incarceration, (2) assessing post-release behavior for those on parole or supervised release, and (3) examining post-release employment. (Steurer et al. 2001) This study was particularly interested in the role of correctional education after release; did it help reduce recidivism or increase the offenders' participation in the labor market. However, it also provides useful information pertaining to employment and recidivism as well as demographic factors relating to recidivism.

FINDINGS

A longitudinal study conducted on about 3,200 inmates from Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio prisons who were released in late 1997 and early 1998. The study found that participants and non-participants were at high risk for recidivism, based on risk factors of previous research. (Steurer et al. 2001) Both participants and non-participants experienced unstable and erratic work histories, with frequent changes in employment, long periods of unemployment, and low wages. The study found that over a quarter of the survey respondents, 27.3% of the participants and 26.5% of the non-participants, had not held a legal job in the year prior to incarceration. (Steurer et al. 2001) The study also found that less than half of both groups thought they would be able to obtain employment in the community upon release. A majority of both groups were male, young, African-American, not married, and had children under the age of 18. Lower recidivism rates of re-arrest, re-conviction, and re-incarceration were found for the correctional education participants compared to the non-participants in all three states. (Steurer et al. 2001) The percentage of employed, either part-time or full-time was also higher: 46% for participants, and 44.2% for non-participants. Of this only about 16% of both groups were able to find full-time employment.

COMMENTS

There were several limitations found pertaining to this study. The first is that the randomization of the study participants was not possible. There was no way to randomly select participants for the study. The second is that the main variable for the study, education was not recorded in a systematic manner that would allow this information to be reported with confidence at all institutions. (Steurer et al. 2001) My study will not be

as detailed as this due to the information that I am to obtain from the Allegheny County Jail Project. Only certain variables that the program is interested in are tracked, which makes it possible for me to evaluate only these variables. This study not only took into account numerous variables, but also surveyed inmates to better understand what is important to them. This might be helpful in evaluating the program's response to their needs. This study has provided me with information concerning variables that may be most interesting in my study and I will incorporate some of the ideas from this study into my own research. By using some of the same variables I will be able to test for relationships between enrollee characteristics and recidivism.

Chicago's SAFER FOUNDATION

Upon release from prison, many ex-offenders encounter problems in securing permanent, unsubsidized employment because they lacked occupational skills, had little job hunting experience and found that many employers refused to hire them. (Finn, 1999) The Safer Foundation implemented in Chicago in 1984, and now has offices in other locations, is the largest community based provider of employment in the United States. The Safer Foundation also provides post-release services including: specialized case managers who work with offenders for one year after they have secured employment, and employment specialists who visit companies to monitor the progress of Safer clients. The program offers a number of services and the study assessed the main variables of education, employment and recidivism, tracking ex-offenders for 10 months.

FINDINGS

The Safer Foundation has begun to track clients work histories for 10 months after they have found a job. “Among a partial sample of clients, who remained employed 30 days, 81 percent were still employed (with the same or another employer) after 2 months, 75 percent were still employed after 3 months, and 57 percent were still employed after 9 months.” (Finn, 1999:5) This study does show that the employment of ex-offenders is beneficial. It also shows that many of those who became employed did in fact stay employed, but it fails to state whether any of these individuals were re-incarcerated.

A graduate student, M. Kamon, at DePaul University in Illinois also evaluated data concerning this program. This student compared the recidivism rates for 100 participants who completed the Safer Foundation’s preemployment program in 1992 with the recidivism rates of all 9,844 adults felons released by the Illinois Department of Correction in 1989. This study found an 8 percent recidivism rate for Safer participants compared with a 46 percent rate for the comparison group. Thus, the graduate student concluded that those who participate in the Safer program are less likely to recidivate and those who do not participate. This rehabilitation program is successful in providing inmates with the skills that they need to obtain successful employment.

COMMENTS

The study reported by Peter Finn about the Safer Foundation does allow the reader to assess the program, but not with the use of empirical evidence. There is little statistically to show that this program is successful. However, the study conducted by the Graduate student at DePaul University and by the Safer Foundation clearly shows that the

foundation is helping ex-offenders stay that way. There are limitations in both of the studies that provided information about the program. The graduate student's study used a small sample size, which affects generalizability, which is something that I had to take into account as well. The statistics provided by the Safer foundation, reported by Peter Finn, will not be useful in this study because of the lack of variables assessed and the short-term recidivism rate. Most offenders' recidivate within one year of release, but the Safer Foundation did not even track their clients that long, which makes the information less helpful for comparison purposes.

Texas' Project RIO (Re-Integration of Offenders)

This project started as a two-pilot program in 1985 and is devoted to the job-placement of ex-offenders. Project RIO provides services to the entire state and provides support to offenders while they are in prison. Support in this program includes: life skill classes, individual job readiness counseling, and help assembling birth certificates, social security cards, school transcripts and other needed documents so they can begin looking for employment the moment they are released.

FINDINGS

“Project RIO has placed 69 percent of more than 100,000 ex-offenders served since 1985.” (Finn, 1998:14) Project RIO clients appear to be more likely to get jobs than ex-offenders who do not participate in the program. A study conducted by Texas A&M University (1992) found that ex-offenders who found jobs through RIO had lower recidivism rates than un-employed ex-offenders who did not enroll in RIO, with demographic factors taken into account. (Finn, 1998) “During the first year after release,

48 percent of RIO high-risk clients were rearrested compared with 57 percent of non-RIO high-risk parolees: 23 percent were reincarcerated, compared with 38 percent of non-RIO parolees.” (Finn, 1999:7) Project RIO clients appear to be much more likely to become employed than those who do not participate, and because the percentage of re-incarcerated individuals is lower for these clients employment does seem to have a negative effect on recidivism.

COMMENTS

This evaluation is helpful in the evaluation of the Allegheny County Jail Project because it too was an evaluation of a program promoting employment of ex-offenders in the hopes of reducing the rate of recidivism. The main limitation with this study is trying to understand the risk factors associating with recidivism rates, based on 23 factors. I was not be able to make an assessment using risk factors because I did not have access to enough information to complete such an analysis. These variables were not individually assessed, but were combined. The re-arrest rate for this program is also quite high compared to that of the other programs mentioned in this review. This study did not provide me with any useful information for my study, although it was an evaluation study that examined recidivism and employment.

MAKING REHABILITATION SUCCESSFUL

“Successful rehabilitation programs share certain characteristics, most of which pertain either to treating offenders according to their individual circumstances or to the programs administration.” (Murray, 2002:15) Rehabilitation has worked in certain places, but there may be a formula to follow that will bring success more often.

Andrews, Bonta and Hoge wrote an article in 1990, "Classification for Effective Rehabilitation: Rediscovering Psychology" which outlines four main principles for successful rehabilitation programs.

The first principle is the Risk Principle. "Successful programs match the level of treatment to the risk that the subject will offend again." (Murray, 2002:15) The second is the Needs Principle. Each offender has a set of problems that need to be addressed and addressing these needs lowers the individual's chance of reoffending. These needs can fit into two categories criminogenic, pertaining to substance abuse, and non-criminogenic, pertaining to employment. Both are equally important and if neither is addressed the individual will reoffend. The third principle is the Responsivity Principle. The program must demonstrate an ability to help the less able. (Murray, 2002) The program must be responsive to the individual's learning needs and tailor each individual's lessons if needed, providing the individual with the optimal learning experience. The fourth principle is Professional Discretion. While working with offenders, professional discretion is a must. "Relying on objective instruments and rules is not sufficient to allow a program to be properly effective." (Murray, 2002:17) Later on the psychologists added a fifth principle, Program Integrity. Even the most planned programs can be ineffective if poorly implemented or delivered by untrained personnel. The people who are in charge of these rehabilitation efforts need to hire staff that is confident and trained to deal with problems that offenders may possess.

COMMENTS

This article suggests that rehabilitation can be successful and that there is a formula that is helpful in reaching a positive outcome. This article would be most useful

in assessing an unsuccessful program to find out if the implementation or goals of the program are skewed. I have chosen this article to affirm that the Allegheny County Jail Project follows these Principles. The Allegheny County Jail program does allow for treatment that matches individual needs by providing substance abuse programs, life skills and opportunities for education that will lessen the chance of reoffending. There are no needs that are not addressed. If an individual states a need the counselors will try their best to correct it, thus allowing the individual with more chances for success. An example of this is the need for photo identification or a driver's license, which will give the individual more employment opportunities. These program functions relate to the first three principles outlined, "Risk," "Needs," and "Responsivity." The last two principles are also followed. Professional Discretion and Program Integrity are a large part of why this program is successful in retaining individuals in the program. Needs are addressed and when special circumstances arise the staff is able to assess the situation and deal with the matter in a discrete way, as not to notify others involved in the program. The administrators involved in the program feel that they are making a positive impact in the lives of the individual's they are helping, and have changed the program in certain ways to make sure that it is properly implemented. If there is a negative outcome, it may be related to these program principles, and further analysis pertaining to these may help the program.

ADDITIONAL STUDIES

The Washington State Corrections Clearinghouse (CCH), a unit of the Washington State Employment Security Department illustrates a commitment to preparing offenders for the workplace and finding employment. The CCH, Founded in

1976, provides direct services and acts as a central point for brokering and coordinating the services available through a network of State and local agencies. (Finn, 1999) The only statistical information provided about the CCH program, concerns the Ex-O program, which provides job assistance to adult and juvenile offenders. A 1994 study conducted by the CCH staff with the assistance of the Department of Correction's (DOC) Office of Research compared the recidivism rates of 500 Ex-O clients who found employment with the historical recidivism rate among all releasees. The recidivism rate for the Ex-O clients after one year was 3%, compared with 10% of all releasees. After five years, the recidivism rate was 15% for Ex-O clients, compared with 30% for all releasees. (Finn, 1999)

The InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI), a partnership between the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and Prison Fellowship, provides inmates with spiritual and moral transformations beginning while incarcerated and continuing after release with the goal of slowing down recidivism. A study conducted by Dr. Byron Johnson of the University of Pennsylvania found that the two-year post-release re-arrest rate among IFI graduates in Texas was 17.3%, compared with the 35% matched comparison group. (Nolan, 2004) This shows that faith can play a role in rehabilitation. These groups also form a bond with one-another, which allows for a support system outside of the prison.

The study of Prisoner Reentry in Illinois conducted by LaVigne and Mamalian (2003) provides vital information about prisoners who are reentering society. This study is part of a larger study, Returning Home, which has two primary research questions: What is the experience of those being released from prison and returning home? and What factors influence a released prisoner's propensity to re-offend? (LaVigne and Mamalian

2003: 75) This study included demographic factors of inmates such as race, age, education, admission type, conviction offense, sentence length and prior incarceration. This study is extremely extensive, but does not delve into the main topic of recidivism, because it is the first part of a larger study. It does however provide a wealth of information about offenders reentering society and once complete will provide readers with a full picture of reentry and recidivism in Illinois.

Evaluations of rehabilitation programs involving ex-offenders are limited. The study conducted by the OCE/CEA, although it pertained mainly to education, is the type of study I intended to conduct, but on a smaller scale considering that the OCE/CEA is state level and the ACJ is county level. The studies involving the Safer Foundation and Texas' Project RIO are most helpful in the evaluation of the Allegheny County Jail Project, but are somewhat limited in the information on demographic and recidivism statistics, which makes the OCE/CEA a stronger study for comparison of certain variables. All of the studies did find that certain variables affect the rates of recidivism.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

There are numerous hypotheses to be tested by this proposal, which is why it is necessary to identify all of the dependent and independent variables involved. The primary hypothesis contains the variables, recidivism (dependent variable) and program participation (independent variable). The relationships between these two variables are based on the two criminological theories, deterrence and social bonding. The United States uses the Deterrence theory as the foundation for its criminal justice system. “Deterrence theory assumes that people are rational and that crime is the result of calculating the costs and benefits of law violations.” (Liska 1987:93) This theory assumes that individuals, who might commit a crime, will commit a low level crime because of the high costs of committing crime (the high costs of punishment). People will engage in deviant acts if they do not fear apprehension. There are two types of deterrence, general and specific.

General deterrence refers to a process by which the punishment of some law violators provides information about the costs of crime to those punished (the general public), thereby reducing the latter’s law violations. (Liska 1987) The general public is less likely to commit crimes because of the punishment that law violators receive. Specific deterrence is to employ a punishment that reduces the law violations of those punished. This process would make the punishment harsh, therefore deterring a person from committing criminal acts.

The specific form of deterrence focuses on three aspects of punishment including severity, certainty, and celerity. Severity refers to the harshness of the punishment employed. If a harsher punishment is employed then there will be a lower level of law

violators. “Certainty of punishment refers to the probability of experiencing punishment.” (Liska 1987:94) If the probability of apprehension is high in an area then it is more likely that violators will be apprehended and arrested. Thus, if there is a high level of certainty then the violator is less likely to commit a crime there. Celerity refers to the swiftness of punishment. Deterrence theory assumes that if the punishment is immediate that it will deter law violators. Deterrence theory predicts that law violations are highest when severity, certainty, and celerity are lowest.

Social Bonding Theory explains the bond between people and conventional society. (Hirschi, 1969) Weak bonds to society may result in delinquency. Individuals who possess strong bonds to family, school, peers or religion are less likely to commit a crime because this would take them away from the bond. The bond consists of four elements: attachment, commitment, involvement and belief. Attachment refers to emotional and psychological ties to another person. An individual who has a caring family that is of importance to them is less likely to risk this bond because this individual cares what others think of him or her. Commitment is the time, energy and effort expended in conventional action, such as a good job. An individual who is committed to a job or to volunteering is not going to risk losing this privilege by committing a crime. Involvement is significant time spent on conventional activities, such as family or education that allow less time to commit law violations. Belief is the acceptance of moral legitimacy of law and authority, the degree to which a person thinks they should obey the law. These bonds are related to certain variables that I chose to use in the study to test this theory, such as religion, marital status, number of children and employment. These variables are related to different bonds and together may reduce the likelihood of

recidivism. Age may also play a role in bonding. If a person is getting older, he may want to spend more time with his family and elect to halt the commitment of law violations.

Since I am dealing with a population of ex-offenders, I am suggesting that specific deterrence will act on the ex-offender and he will choose not to recidivate. The ex-offender will not want to go back to the unpleasantness of jail. The combination of these two theories, deterrence and social bonding will explain a favorable rate of recidivism reached by the Allegheny County Jail Project.

Inmates who participate in the Allegheny County Jail project are less likely to recidivate once released than inmates who serve a regular jail sentence (without being enrolled in the program). There is no relation between sex and recidivism. Both sexes are equally likely to recidivate. Age is related to recidivism. Older enrollees are less likely to recidivate than younger enrollees. Members of various racial groups are equally likely to recidivate. There is no relationship between race and recidivism. Level of education is related to recidivism. More educated individuals are less likely to recidivate. Marital status is related to recidivism. Individuals who are married are less likely to recidivate than those who are not married. Individuals with children are less likely to recidivate than those with no children. Religion is related to recidivism. Individuals who state a religious affiliation are less likely to recidivate. Prior offenses are related to recidivism. Individuals who have committed prior offenses are more likely to recidivate. Employment is related to recidivism. Individuals that are able to maintain meaningful employment are less likely to recidivate.

The Allegheny County Jail Project allows certain inmates to serve time without being completely confined while in jail, by attending life skills classes and other rehabilitation programs. Individuals involved in the program, in the first two years of its existence, were screened for various factors, namely sentence length and willingness to participate in jobs program. This allowed participation to be voluntary. Through participation, the inmate is able to learn skills necessary to obtain gainful employment. The inmate is also able to receive treatment (drug/alcohol) and educational training if so wanted. I define recidivism as committing an infraction of the law or probation, which results in a return to a correctional institution within one year of the enrollee's initial release.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

The population of enrollees used in this evaluation came from the total number of enrollees in the Allegheny County Jail program from September 2001 to June 2003.

Characteristics of the population of enrollees were studied in order to measure the rate of recidivism and test the programs' effectiveness. All identifiers were removed from the data, to maintain confidentiality.

I was provided information about each member of the population to assess the variables in this evaluation. For the variable 'Recidivist,' those that did commit another offense were coded as '1', and those that did not commit another offense were coded as '0'. The independent variables that I used are defined in the subsequent way. The variable 'Age' consisted of the recording of the individual's age upon enrollment in the program. The variable 'Race' was coded in the following manner: White/Caucasian was coded as '1'; Black/African American was coded as '2'; Asian was coded as '3'; Hispanic was coded as '4' and Other was coded as '5'. 'Sex' was defined as the enrollee's gender, male was coded as '1' and female was coded as '2'. 'Marital Status' was the recording of the marital status of the individual upon enrolling in the program. Single was coded as '1', Married was coded as '2', Divorced was coded as '3', Separated was coded as '4', Widowed was coded as '5', and missing data was coded as '0'. 'Dependents' was recorded as the number of children the individual had upon enrolling in the Allegheny County Jail Project. 'Prior Incarceration' was defined as those having prior offenses, which have resulted in incarceration. Enrollees who had prior offenses were coded as '1', and those who had no prior offenses were coded as '0'. 'Religion' is defined as whether or not the individual specified a religion upon enrollment in the

program. Members who did specify a religion will be coded as '1' and those who did not specify a religion was coded as '2'. 'Education' is the highest degree earned by the participant. Enrollees who completed less than a high school were coded as '1', GED was coded as '2', Graduation from High School was coded as '3', Associates Degree was coded as '4', Technical School Degree was coded as '5', Bachelors Degree was coded as '6', Masters Degree was coded as '7', Doctorate was coded as '8', and missing information is coded as '0'. 'Employed' was defined as those who were placed in an unsubsidized job at least 20 hours per week. Individuals who were placed in employment were coded as '1,' and those who were not placed were coded as '2'. 'Maintained Employment' was defined as those who were placed and were able to maintain employment for 6 months after placement. Members who were able to maintain employment were coded as '1' and those who were unable to maintain employment were coded as '2'. The last variable assessed was 'Termination'. This variable was defined in the following manner: enrollees who were positively terminated were coded as '1,' enrollees who were non-positively terminated were coded as '2'.

RESEARCH DESIGN & ANALYSIS

The evaluative study of the Allegheny County Jail Project was conducted by performing an analysis of existing data, previously collected by the Allegheny County Jail staff. The data were collected while enrollees in the program were incarcerated, except for the termination, employment, maintained employment, and recidivism variables. The data were collected by interviewing individuals and recording self-reported information. The Allegheny County Jail staff collected these data, the termination, employment, maintained employment and recidivism variables, after the enrollees had been released from the jail by tracking individuals. The population of enrollees used in this evaluation, 126 persons, was the total number of enrollees in the program from September 2001 to June 2003. A one-year follow up of the enrollee's records, provided by the Allegheny County Jail Project, provided me with information from which I was able to calculate recidivism rates within the program. Characteristics from this population of enrollees were studied to measure the rate of recidivism and test the program's effectiveness. I was also able to use these characteristics to examine the relationships between the population vs. prior incarceration and demographics vs. recidivism. All of the data required for these tests was obtained from records kept by the Allegheny County Jail Project, without any identifiers attached to the records to maintain confidentiality.

Once all of the data were collected, bivariate, multivariate, and logistical regression tests were used to determine the relationships between the numerous variables. The following is a list of the variables that I examined: recidivism, employment, marital status, children, age, sex, race, religion, prior offenses, termination, and education.

DATA COLLECTION

The population of enrollees used in this evaluation came from the total number of enrollees in the Allegheny County Jail program from September 2001 to June 2003. The total number of individuals enrolled during this period of time was 126 persons. The sample was thoroughly analyzed and four records were deemed unusable, because the enrollees did not receive any services outside of the jail facility, thus could not be considered a part of the sample. The sample used in this study, therefore, only contains 122 records.

I was in possession of the data collected by the Allegheny County Jail project and stored it in a locked drawer in my desk at home. The data were kept organized and saved to disk, which I also locked in the desk drawer when I was not using it, to maintain confidentiality. Upon completion of the project all data provided by the Allegheny County Jail Project was be returned to the Allegheny County Jail project or destroyed.

The following variables were provided by the Allegheny County Jail project for each member of the 122-enrollee sample: age, race, religion, sex, employment, education, maintained employment, marital status, prior incarceration, dependents, termination and recidivism. I was able to identify various relationships between these variables and recidivism.

FINDINGS

The procedures that I used to test the hypotheses of this evaluation produced some unexpected results. Table 1 is a descriptive statistics table for all variables involved in the evaluation. The table provides characteristics about the sample population of enrollees involved in the Allegheny County Jail Project. The descriptive statistics for the variable ‘age’ show that the youngest inmate was 19, the oldest inmate was 56, and the mean age of the inmate in the sample was approximately 35. This was somewhat surprising because the mean age was expected to be less than 35. The range in age was somewhat broad, but was not entirely unexpected.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of All Variables in the Population (Age, Education, Employed, Marital Status, Dependents, Prior Incarceration, Race, Recidivist, Religion, Maintained Employment, Sex and Termination).

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	122	37	19	56	34.86	9.464
Education	122	5	1	6	2.45	1.005
Employed	122	1	1	2	1.43	.497
Marital Status	122	4	1	5	1.39	.868
Dependents	122	7	0	7	1.61	1.649
Prior Incarceration	122	1	0	1	.93	.249
Race	122	4	1	5	1.84	.481
Recidivist	122	1	0	1	.38	.487
Religion (specified)	122	1	1	2	1.29	.454
Maintained Employment	122	1	1	2	1.69	.465
Sex	122	1	1	2	1.20	.399
Termination	122	1	1	2	1.69	.465
Valid N (listwise)	122					

Table 2 is a frequency table for the variable ‘age’. The table was produced to provide more information about the age variable. The table again shows that the mean age in the sample was 34.86 years, but also provides the median age, which was 36 years of age. The mean is smaller than the median because the distribution of data has a tail that extends toward smaller values. The median is larger than the mean, but differences between these two measures are not very large. This means that the data is skewed by outliers but not enough to seriously affect the mean age in this sample.

Table 2. Population Breakdown by Age

N	Valid	122
	Missing	0
Mean		34.86
Median		36.00
Mode		23(a)
Minimum		19
Maximum		56
(a) Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown		

The descriptive statistics, Table 3, for ‘education’ show that the sample contained inmates who completed less than a GED or High School Diploma up to inmates who completed a Bachelors degree. The average degree earned pertaining to education is a GED or High School Diploma. The highest percentage of people in the sample, 44.3% or 54 people, completed a high school diploma. Only, 7.3%, 9 enrollees completed a level of education higher than a high school diploma.

Table 3: Highest Level of Education Attained.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than High School Diploma	23	18.9	18.9	18.9
GED	36	29.5	29.5	48.4
High School Diploma	54	44.3	44.3	92.6
Junior College Degree	5	4.1	4.1	96.7
Technical School Degree	2	1.6	1.6	98.4
Bachelors Degree	2	1.6	1.6	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

To evaluate the other variables the frequency distribution tables for each variable assessed in this study must be consulted. The frequency table for the variable ‘race’ (Table 4) shows that 18.0% of the sample was white, 81.1% was black and .8% was put into the category of other.

Table 4: Population Breakdown by Race.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
White	22	18.0	18.0	18.0
Black	99	81.1	81.1	99.2
Other	1	.8	.8	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution for ‘sex’ (Table 5) shows that 79.5%, or 97 enrollees in the population were male, and 20.5% or 25 enrollees were female. There are fewer women than men incarcerated in the Allegheny County Jail, thus less of the individuals enrolled in the Allegheny County Jail Project were female.

Table 5: Population Breakdown by Sex.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	97	79.5	79.5	79.5
Female	25	20.5	20.5	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

When the recidivists in the sample are divided into two categories, male and female, it is easy to understand why the variable ‘sex’ is related to recidivism. In the sample, 46 inmates were found to be recidivists. Of these recidivists (Table 6), 3 or 6.5% were female and the rest, 43 or 93.5% were male. Within the sample fewer females than males were found to have recidivated within one year of release from the Allegheny County Jail.

Table 6: Frequency Distribution for Sex Pertaining to Recidivists.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	43	93.5	93.5	93.5
Female	3	6.5	6.5	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

The frequency distribution for ‘Marital Status’ (Table 7) shows that 79.5% of the sample was single, 7.9% was married, 7.9 was divorced, 4.0% was separated and .8% widowed.

Table 7. Population Breakdown by Marital Status.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Single	97	79.5	79.5	79.5
Married	9	7.4	7.4	86.9
Divorced	10	8.2	8.2	95.1
Separated	5	4.1	4.1	99.2
Widowed	1	.8	.8	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

The number of dependents (Table 8) ranged from 0 to 7 with 34.4% of the sample having no dependents and approximately 60% of the sample having between 1 and 4 dependents. The remaining 5.7% had either 5 or 7 dependents. Most of the population had at least one dependent.

Table 8. Population Breakdown by Number of Dependents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	42	34.4	34.4	34.4
1	27	22.1	22.1	56.6
2	18	14.8	14.8	71.3
3	18	14.8	14.8	86.1
4	10	8.2	8.2	94.3
5	5	4.1	4.1	98.4
7	2	1.6	1.6	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

Approximately 71% of the sample specified a religion (Table 9). Only about 29% of the sample did not specify a religion. Overall most of the population reported affiliation with a religion.

Table 9. Population Breakdown by Religious Affiliation.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Specified Religion	87	71.3	71.3	71.3
No Specified Religion	35	28.7	28.7	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

Prior Offenses (Table 10) was broken down into two categories. For the sample 6.6% were first time offenders. Repeat offenders made up 93.4% of the sample. The percentage of repeat offenders is quite high, and unexpected. This may be correlated with the high recidivism rate reported by the Allegheny County Jail system.

Table 10. Population Breakdown by Prior Offenses.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Prior Offenses	8	6.6	6.6	6.6
Has Prior Offenses	114	93.4	93.4	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

The Employment variable (Table 11) was broken down into two categories. The two categories were placed in employment, whether or not an enrollee was able to be placed in an unsubsidized job, and never placed, which meant the enrollee was never placed in a job. For the sample 70 enrollees, roughly 57.4%, were placed in an unsubsidized job at least 20 hours a week. Less enrollees were not placed at 52, or 42.6%. More enrollees were placed than not, and this number might be higher if subsidized employment was included.

Table 11. Population Breakdown by Employment.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Placed in Employment	70	57.4	57.4	57.4
Never Placed	52	42.6	42.6	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

The variable, maintained employment is only useful when combined with the employment variable (Table 12). Of the inmates placed in employment, 70 enrollees, 38 or 54.3% were able to maintain employment. Less than half of those placed, 45.7% or 32 enrollees were not able to maintain employment after being placed. Thus, a larger number of individuals who were placed in employment were able to stay employed.

Table 12. Population Breakdown by Maintaining Employment of Individuals Placed in Employment.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Retained Employment for 6 months	38	54.3	54.3	54.3
Did Not Retain Employment	32	45.7	45.7	100.0
Total	70	100.0	100.0	

The variable termination (Table 13) was broken down into two categories, positive and non-positive. Positive termination refers to enrollees who finished the program in its entirety. Individuals who were non-compliant with the programs rules and regulations were terminated non-positively. In the sample non-positive termination made up 68.9%, or 84 individuals, while positive termination was lower consisting of 38 individuals or 31.1% of the sample.

This variable becomes more interesting when the recidivism rate of the positive-term individuals is calculated. (Table 14) This table shows that of the individuals who were positively terminated from the program only 5, or 13.2% returned to the jail facility within one year of release. Individuals who were positively terminated from the program were less likely to recidivate.

Table 13. Population Breakdown by Termination.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Positive Termination	38	31.1	31.1	31.1
Non-Positive Termination	84	68.9	68.9	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

Table 14. Frequency Table of Positive Termination Recidivists

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Did Not Return Within One Year of Release	33	86.8	86.8	86.8
Did Return To Jail Within One Year of Release	5	13.2	13.2	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

Finally, the recidivism variable was divided into two categories and compiled by following each member of the sample for a one-year period (Table 15). Overall 62.3% of the sample did not commit an infraction of the law resulting in a return to the Allegheny County Jail within one year of release. Approximately 37.7% were returned to the jail during the one-year period.

Table 15. Population breakdown of Variable Recidivist.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Did Not Return Within One Year of Release	76	62.3	62.3	62.3
Did Return To Jail Within One Year of Release	46	37.7	37.7	100.0
Total	122	100.0	100.0	

To complete this evaluation, it was necessary to examine demographic characteristics and their effects on recidivism. The initial tests focused socio-demographic predictors of recidivism. The correlation matrix (Table 16) was devised to examine the relationships between variables. The first hypothesis to be tested was the correlation between age and recidivism. According to Table 16 this is not a significant relationship. In this study age and recidivism are not related. It was expected that these two variables would have a correlation that as age increased recidivism would decrease, this was not observed. The average age of the sample was approximate 35, which was thought to be older than expected. This sample does not support the belief that as age increases recidivism decreases.

Table 16. Correlation Matrix of all Variables of the Population. Variables include: Age, Race, Religion, Sex, Marital Status, Dependents, Prior Offenses, Education, Termination, Employment, Maintained Employment, and Recidivist.

		Age	Race	Religion (specified)	Sex	Marital Status	Dependents	Prior Offenses	Education	Termination	Recidivist	Employed	Maintained Employment
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.039	-.119	.010	.347(**)	-.026	-.011	.118	-.143	-.114	.015	-.143
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.672	.190	.917	.000	.778	.905	.196	.115	.211	.874	.115

	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Race	Pearson Correlation	.039	1	.017	-.183(*)	-.050	-.026	.121	-.076	.114	.182(*)	.142	.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.672	.	.852	.043	.585	.778	.184	.407	.212	.045	.120	.212
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Religion (specified)	Pearson Correlation	-.119	.017	1	-.086	-.121	.053	-.125	.004	-.121	.067	-.107	-.121
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.190	.852	.	.347	.184	.565	.171	.965	.183	.461	.241	.183
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Sex	Pearson Correlation	.010	-.183(*)	-.086	1	-.034	.043	.131	-.099	.110	-.257(**)	.032	.110
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.917	.043	.347	.	.707	.636	.150	.277	.227	.004	.725	.227
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Marital Status	Pearson Correlation	.347(**)	-.050	-.121	-.034	1	-.030	-.148	-.016	.019	.018	-.086	.019
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.585	.184	.707	.	.747	.105	.865	.831	.847	.349	.831
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Dependents	Pearson Correlation	-.026	-.026	.053	.043	-.030	1	.098	-.022	-.010	-.050	-.106	-.010
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.778	.778	.565	.636	.747	.	.284	.812	.911	.581	.244	.911
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Prior Offenses	Pearson Correlation	-.011	.121	-.125	.131	-.148	.098	1	.086	.251(**)	.069	.094	.251(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.905	.184	.171	.150	.105	.284	.	.345	.005	.447	.301	.005
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Education	Pearson Correlation	.118	-.076	.004	-.099	-.016	-.022	.086	1	-.086	-.097	-.057	-.086
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.196	.407	.965	.277	.865	.812	.345	.	.346	.288	.533	.346
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Termination	Pearson Correlation	-.143	.114	-.121	.110	.019	-.010	.251(**)	-.086	1	.341(**)	.580(**)	1.000(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.115	.212	.183	.227	.831	.911	.005	.346	.	.000	.000	.
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Recidivist	Pearson Correlation	-.114	.182(*)	.067	-.257(**)	.018	-.050	.069	-.097	.341(**)	1	.321(**)	.341(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.211	.045	.461	.004	.847	.581	.447	.288	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122

Employed	Pearson Correlation	.015	.142	-.107	.032	-.086	-.106	.094	-.057	.580(**)	.321(**)	1	.580(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.874	.120	.241	.725	.349	.244	.301	.533	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
Maintained Employment	Pearson Correlation	-.143	.114	-.121	.110	.019	-.010	.251(**)	-.086	1.000(**)	.341(**)	.580(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.115	.212	.183	.227	.831	.911	.005	.346	.	.000	.000	.
	N	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).													
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).													

Race is not related to recidivism was the next hypothesis to be tested. A significant correlation was found between race and recidivism. The findings show that there is a fundamental bias between race and recidivism.

Religion was expected to correlate with recidivism; however this was not observed either. When this hypothesis was tested it was found that there was no correlation. These two variables had no relationship. The next hypothesis tested was sex is related to recidivism. These two variables were correlated and it was observed that sex had the strongest relationship to recidivism. The findings show that men are more likely than women to recidivate. There is a relationship between sex and recidivism.

The next hypothesis is marital status is related to recidivism. According to the table there is no relationship between these two variables. This was unexpected, but could be due to the high number of participants that reported they were single. Because this population did not have a range between the different categories, this could be why these results were found.

It was thought that the number of dependents a person had would play a role in recidivism. This was not the case. Number of dependents was not related to recidivism.

Social bonding theory states that bonds within the community may decrease criminal activity, this was not the case for this variable.

I was also expected that level of education is related to recidivism. It was thought that as level of education increased that recidivism decreased. However, the correlation matrix indicates that education does not significantly correlate with recidivism.

Another hypothesis was that prior offenses a person has committed is related to recidivism. This was expected because recidivists have established a pattern of criminal behavior and therefore are more likely to recidivate than those with no prior offenses. This relationship was not found to be significant in this population, which is most surprising. This is most likely the case because the percentage of recidivists is so high in the population of the Allegheny County Jail Project. Noteworthy, though is the fact that of the six enrollees who were not recidivists none committed another offense within one year of release from the Allegheny County Jail.

The primary hypothesis of this evaluation states that inmates who are given the opportunity to participate in the Allegheny County Jail Project are less likely to recidivate when released than inmates who are not involved in the program. This was tested by finding the percentage of recidivists from the sample population and comparing that to the recidivism rate of the general population of the Allegheny County Jail. The rate of recidivism found for the sample population was 37.7%, this is much lower than the stated recidivism rate of 70-85% for the general population of the Allegheny County Jail. (Martinson, 1999) According to these findings, participation in the Allegheny County Jail Project reduces recidivism.

Logistic regression (Table 17) was used as the final test to assess the hypotheses. This test was used to predict the presence or absence of a characteristic. Table 16 3 shows correlations between recidivists and the variables race, sex, termination, employment and maintained employment. All of these correlations were expected except for the relationship between recidivism and race. However, Table 17 shows that the relationships found in the correlation matrix (Table16), with the exceptions of sex and termination all lost significance when all of the other variables are controlled. Thus the only hypotheses that seem to hold true in this study are that sex and termination are related to recidivism. Also noteworthy is low significance level found between the variables employment and recidivism. These two variables are correlated although not as high as sex and termination.

Table 17. Logistic Regression of Recidivism.

	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
AGE	-.024	.026	.357	.976
RACE	.632	.616	.305	1.881
RELIGION	.714	.507	.159	2.042
SEX	-2.080	.703	.003	.125
MARSTAT	.217	.297	.464	1.243
NUMCHILD	-.050	.131	.703	.951
PRIOR	.432	1.062	.684	1.541
DEGREE	-.183	.225	.417	.833
TERMIN	1.507	.688	.028	4.512
EMPLOY	.934	.539	.083	2.544
Constant	-3.552	2.305	.123	.029

Variable(s) entered on step 1: AGE, RACE, RELIGION, SEX, MARSTAT, NUMCHILD, PRIOR, DEGREE, TERMIN, EMPLOY.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings of this evaluation suggest that individuals enrolled in the Allegheny County Jail Project are less likely to recidivate than those who do not receive rehabilitative treatment. The sample produced a recidivism rate of 37.7%, which is much lower than the 75-80% rate of recidivism stated by Warden Lightfoot in 1999. The lower rate of recidivism produced by the Allegheny County Jail Project clearly shows that it is possible to rehabilitate certain offenders.

This study supports the learning theory. Inmates who are rehabilitated through reeducation and resocialization will be more successful upon release than those who do not receive any treatment. These individuals are reeducated, replacing excuses and justifications for criminal behavior with reasons for following the law.

Additional knowledge concerning the rehabilitation of offenders can provide valuable guidance to policymakers as they prepare to fund and expand reentry efforts throughout the United States. The results of this study can be used to educate policymakers about what type of inmate; sex, prior offense or age, will benefit the most from rehabilitation programs. These individuals may be the ones to focus on, and catering programs to these hopeful individuals may alleviate jail overcrowding and reduce the costs pertaining to incarceration.

This study evaluated the Allegheny County Jail Project and concluded that the program is effective in reducing the rate of recidivism. This information should be used to educate policy makers about the positive effects rehabilitation can have, that keeping people employed and providing services both inside and outside of the jail facility may provide the skills necessary for individuals to become productive parts of society.

Future research concerning this subject should be conducted to further understand the benefits this program has on offenders. The researcher(s) should consider the following recommendations: lengthening the period pertaining to the rate of recidivism from one year to three-years and possibly conducting a longitudinal study to understand the long term effects, and using more variables such as type of offense committed, number of prior offenses committed, enrollment in other rehabilitation or educational program, health issues, such as history of mental health and health issues in general and housing, where an individual was residing before and after incarceration.

Another recommendation is to evaluate what components of the program itself, benefit enrollees the most. By assessing what the enrollees benefit from the most, the program can then be revised to offer the most valuable services to enrollees and maybe not offer other services that do not seem to be beneficial. Another possibility is to evaluate this program with other rehabilitative programs offered in the Allegheny County Jail to assess how successful each program is comparatively. If a longitudinal study were to be conducted it may have to be tailored for changes made to the program. This information would also be helpful in understanding whether changes made to the current program lead to a higher success rate.

These recommendations, if taken into consideration, would paint a broader picture of reentry of offenders from the Allegheny County Jail into a community setting. These variables would provide an even greater wealth of information concerning correlations between recidivism and rehabilitation.

In conclusion, based on the findings of this evaluation, it is suggested that this program be altered, to cater to those who may benefit most, and expanded to help as

many individuals as possible in the Allegheny County Jail. This program has been proven to help incarcerated individuals to make the right choices to stay out of jail once released from incarceration. This is established by reeducating the individual to make choices that he will benefit from. The rehabilitation of offenders is possible and this program if expanded to other jail facilities can be as successful as it was in the Allegheny County Jail. It is also suggested that further research of this topic be conducted to fully understand the long term effects rehabilitation may have on offenders enrolled in this program. The recommendations, if followed and broadened may provide an even greater understanding of recidivism in the Allegheny County Jail.

LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations that apply to this study. The first is the small sample size. The first year that the program was started, the class size was only 51 individuals. The second year was a bit larger, but this program was still trying to find a niche in the Allegheny County Jail. The two classes together only add up to 126 individuals, 4 of which did not receive services outside of the jail, making the sample size 122 individuals. This is a small sample size, but can allow for analysis about the effectiveness of the program. Because the sample size is small the generalizability is questionable.

The second is a significant time interval difference between the one-year period for measuring the sample and the three-year time periods used by others who calculate recidivism. Other studies did use a shorter time frame, but it seems that a longer time frame does help to identify other reasons why individuals recidivate.

The scope of this evaluation covered the effects of several variables on recidivism. To further understand the impact of the Allegheny County Jail Project on recidivism, the evaluation of participants would be helpful. A closer evaluation involving a random sample of inmates at the jail, might also help in bringing this evaluation full-circle. This was not possible at the time of this evaluation, but in the future may be useful in further evaluations.

The last limitation, and probably the most problematic, is the recidivism rate of the general population of the Allegheny County Jail. There is no rate stated on record, for public knowledge. The only rate found was a stated rate by Warden Lightfoot in an article for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. This would be a more sound study if a general rate of recidivism for the Allegheny County Jail were available.

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