

2018

Recidivism levels, unemployment programs, and the effects on different characteristics of criminal offenders

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**Recidivism levels, unemployment programs, and the effects on different
characteristics of criminal offenders**

by

Colin Strickland

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Major: Political Science (Public Policy)

Program of Study Committee:
David Andersen, Major Professor
David Peterson
Matthew DeLisi

The student author, whose presentation of the scholarship herein was approved by the program of study committee, is solely responsible for the content of this thesis. The Graduate College will ensure this thesis is globally accessible and will not permit alterations after a degree is conferred.

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2018

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Reese and Lynda Strickland. Thank you for always pushing me to dream big.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. David Andersen, and my committee members, Dr. David Peterson, and Dr. Matthew DeLisi, for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research.

In addition, I would also like to thank my friends, coaches, colleagues, the department faculty and staff for making my time at Iowa State University a wonderful experience.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to discover how unemployment programs that aim to alleviate criminal activity and recidivism happening in the United States of America affects different types of offenders. It analyzes an unemployment program called The New York Center of Employment Opportunities, which offers comprehensive employment services exclusively for people with criminal records. The study observes the recidivism results of offenders who took part in the program and compares the differential characteristics of how offenders responded to CEO. By learning about the strengths and weaknesses of the CEO program and how it has affected different areas of offenders, we can better develop and improve programs to alleviate the issues of unemployment and diminish criminal activity and recidivism. We learned from the study that not all types of offenders are affected by the same types of treatment or correctional programs because they possess many different characteristics, traits, and backgrounds.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The criminal justice system is an extremely important aspect of the overall function of the United States of America because it provides safety and security for all the nation. “Over the last three decades of the 20th century, the United States engaged in an unprecedented prison-building boom that has given our nation the highest incarceration rate in the world” (Wagner, 2014). These rising incarceration rates have caused the nation to spend billions of dollars. “Over the past three decades, state and local government expenditures on prisons and jails have increased about three times as fast as spending on elementary and secondary education” (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

The criminal justice field uses many methods to try and alleviate criminal acts and recidivism rates including corrections, rehabilitation, predictive tools and studying offender’s behaviors, traits, and backgrounds. Traits such as age, gender, type of offense, socioeconomic status, education levels, and even the type of corrections criminals are put through, are all major characteristics found as to why a person may commit a crime or recidivate. One of the factors that has been found to reduce recidivism is whether offenders have received unemployment training. However, we do not know if unemployment programs that aim to alleviate recidivism levels impact all types of offenders equally. By analyzing the recidivism rates of criminal offenders with different characteristics who completed the NYC CEO program, we can learn more about how different types of criminal offenders respond to unemployment programs who aim to alleviate recidivism rates among offenders.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The criminal justice system is one of the most important institutions in any governmental structure. “The purpose of the Criminal Justice System is to deliver justice for all, by convicting and punishing the guilty and helping them to stop offending, while protecting the innocent” (Richard Garside, 2008). Law enforcement, the court system, and corrections are the three major institutions that establish the criminal justice system. The goal of the entire process is to correct deviant behaviors and stop a person from reoffending and returning, which is also known as recidivating. There are lots of variables questioned as to why a person recidivates and many scholars have found many major characteristics and traits as to why a person may reoffend.

Gender, race, ethnicity, age groups, and the type of criminal offense are important factors that attribute to recidivism rates among the large population of diverse offenders in the United States. Recidivism rates are found to be highest during the earliest periods of being released back in the community for offenders. Michael D. Harer is the author of the article “Recidivism Among Federal Prisoners Released in 1987”. He found that many offenders recidivate within the first 6 months of their release while even more reoffend within the first year. Patrick Langan and David Levin are the authors of “Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994”, and found many other important characteristics regarding recidivism. Numerous offenders are rearrested for committing new crimes within their first three years of being released. A major cause of why offenders return to prison is because they have committed different crimes or they have violated a technical condition or their release, such as failing a drug test, missing an appointment with their parole officer, or being

rearrested for a new crime” (Langan and Levin, 2002). Many of the most common types of offenses that attribute to recidivism include violent criminal offenses and drug charges.

Demographic characteristics of offenders are extremely important in correlation for the recidivism of offenders. For gender, it was found that men are more likely than women to be rearrested, reconvicted, resentenced to prison for a new crime, and returned to prison with or without a new prison sentence. In regards to race, blacks are more likely than whites to recidivate. For ethnicities, Non-Hispanics are more likely than Hispanics to recidivate. For age groups, the younger a prisoner is when released, the higher the rates of recidivism are (Langan and Levin, 2002). Other important results found that criminal records, substance abuse, family stability, post release employment, and community socioeconomic characteristics all significantly predict and affect recidivism rates for offenders.

Rehabilitation and correctional prisons are both tools used that are believed to be a very important step in preventing offenders from recidivating. Even more important to an offender’s success once outside of the correctional system, is the type of correctional program they were involved in. Some people believe that serving time behind bars is not as successful as a rehabilitation program; while others think the complete opposite. It is important to analyze and compare both types to indicate which method will fit better with individual offenders based on their characteristics. This will better help keep a person out of the criminal justice system permanently.

“The United States of America spends nearly 70 billion dollars annually to place adults in prison and jails, and confining youth in detention centers” (Hawkins, 2010). Many wonder if investing billions of dollars into corrections is the most efficient way of stopping crime. Questions arise as to whether private or public prisons are more successful in

preventing recidivism because there are significant differences between them. Lonn Lanza-Kaduce, Karen F. Parker, and Charles W. Thomas found that offenders released from private prisons had lower recidivism rates than public prison offenders for all indicators of recidivism except 'technical violations'. The amount of time it took to fail for released offenders found that public prison offenders released recidivated more quickly in the first three months than private prison offenders released. "Private prison releases were more successful than were their public prison matches" (Lanza-Kaduce, Parker, & Thomas 1999).

Other than health care, throughout the past twenty years, expenditures on corrections have grown more rapidly than any other spending category of state budgets. "Recidivism is a significant issue when one considers that over 630,000 prisoners are released each year and that more than 95% of all state prisoners will eventually be released from prison" (Sabol et al. 2007). Barriers including lack of health care, job skills and education are prominent beliefs as causes of incarceration and recidivism. Solving these issues are believed to be a step in the correct direction to alleviating criminal offenses and recidivism. One possible solution to these issues are to have prisoners work and / or participate in education programs. Prisoners take part in these programs for many reasons which include social interaction, "something to do", potential impact on parole, increased probability of being employed after being released, or even being encouraged to participate by correctional officials. The effects of these programs are believed to lower prisoner recidivism.

Norman H. Sedgley, Charles E. Scott, Nancy A. Williams, and Frederick W. Derrick found that prisoners who are not involved in a prison job or education program had higher recidivism rates than those who were involved. Prisoners who are involved in programs, initially have extremely low recidivism rates. The rates of recidivism increase as time goes

on for both offenders involved in prison programs and those who were not. Prisoners employed with a Prison Industry Job had smaller recidivism rates than any other type of offenders. Being involved in a job or educational programs had little to zero effect on drug and alcohol abuse for prisoners but had substantial effects with recidivism rates. Those taking part in an education or job program tended to serve a lesser number of months in prison than those not involved. “The overall conclusion is that effective job and educational programs can create economically significant cost savings for state prison systems, with fewer inmates returning to prison at all and some returning later than previously expected” (Sedgley, Scott, Williams, & Derrick, 2008).

According to the U.S. Department of Justice in 1999, over 500,000 criminals exited from state and federal prisons and approximately 2 million will be released from parole or probation. Offenders who possess lower socioeconomic profiles often have little to no professional work experience which is a major cause for criminal acts and recidivism rates. Offenders given the opportunity to work when released from prison are found to recidivate less than those who do not. “Work appears to be a turning point in the life course of criminal offenders over 26 years old. Offenders who are provided even marginal employment opportunities are less likely to reoffend than those not provided such opportunities” (Uggen, 2000).

Rehabilitation programs are also found to be useful in deterring crime and keeping offenders from recidivating. Hendricks, Werner, & Turinetti found many important keys about the benefits of treatment and rehabilitation. For treatment to be beneficial, the offender must complete the entire program. Offenders who only partially complete their treatment programs recidivate quickly and regress back to their old ways. Data found from these

authors concluded that rehabilitation and treatment programs tend to lower recidivism rates if completed. Beneficial ways found in reducing recidivism include focusing on identifying high-risk triggers or situations that increase the likelihood of committing an offense. Seto and Barbaree found that offenders must accept responsibility, victim empathy, understanding of one's offense cycle, and the development of an individually tailored prevention plan. Scholars found that the age, type of offense, and degree of an offense may correlate to how successful a rehabilitation program can be. For psychopaths and rapists, rehabilitation programs may not be very successful (Seto and Barbaree, 1999). For youth offenders, addressing the problem and trying to correct it early in their life by using a rehabilitation program was found to be much more successful. Failure to complete a program found recidivism rates to be much higher than those who successfully finished.

Barriers such as lack of health care, education, and job skills are major contributors to arrests and recidivism rates. Age, gender, type of offense, socioeconomic status, education levels, and even the type of corrections a criminal is put through, are also major characteristics found as to why a person may reoffend. Data has found that private prison institutions are more successful than public institutions but are also significantly more expensive to operate (Lanza-Kaduce, Parker, & Thomas 1999). Prison employment and education programs have been found to reduce recidivism rates greatly in the early periods of an offender's release. Findings also concluded that the ability to complete a rehabilitation program will lessen the chances of offenders breaking the law again, but not all programs are as successful as others (Hendricks, Werner, & Turinetti 2006). If the offender does not participate, programs have little to no effect. Rehabilitation programs that are not as successful need to be either eliminated or improved to match more successful programs that

are creating lower recidivism rates. Age, type of offense, and degree of an offense may correlate to how successful a rehabilitation program can be. Younger offenders are found to better respond to rehabilitation and treatment programs. Older criminals with higher offenses do not respond well to rehabilitation programs. Higher level offenders such as psychopaths and sexual offenders may be better off being sent to a correctional facility rather than a rehabilitation program that can be manipulated. Offenders possess many characteristics and background traits that cause criminal behaviors and recidivism rates and different programs have different effects on different offenders.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH QUESTION AND THEORY

Research Question

Do unemployment programs that aim to alleviate recidivism levels impact all types of offenders equally?

Theory

Substantial criminal activity in the United States has created a dire need for change in the American criminal justice system. “Corrections spending is now the third-largest category of spending in most states, behind education and health care” (Mitchell and Leachman, 2014). Criminal offenders come from many diverse backgrounds and have a plethora of characteristics and traits that cause them to recidivate. Important characteristics that cause offenders to recidivate include the age, race, type of criminal offense, education history, employment history, and the custody of children. We have learned that people who do not have sufficient access to healthcare, education, and unemployment are not able to provide for themselves and are more likely to break the law than those who do have accessibility to them (Sabol et al. 2007). These attributes of criminal offenders in the United States often come hand in hand and are many times linked to each other.

Corrections and rehabilitation programs are necessary but cost billions of dollars annually to fund. Many studies conducted on rehabilitation programs find positive effects overall on the offenders who had completed the programs, helping them to not recidivate. More specifically, unemployment programs are often used to give offenders an opportunity to work when they finish their sentence. Studies have found that unemployment programs that aim to alleviate recidivism levels have had a positive impact overall on offenders’

recidivism levels who have completed their assigned programs. Although the studies found positive effects in recidivism for offenders who had completed the programs overall; there is still a gaping hole on whether this is true for all types of offenders.

Studies regarding other types of rehabilitation programs in the literature review found that the success levels of rehabilitation differed among many specific traits of offenders. This was because certain characteristics of offenders were not benefited by certain types of rehabilitation. Examples of specific characteristics that made a difference in the types of rehabilitation offenders were involved in, included the age of an offender, type of offense, degree of an offense, socioeconomic status of an offender, and education levels of an offender. These characteristics correlated differently to how successful different rehabilitation programs were for individual offenders. For unemployment programs that aim to alleviate recidivism levels, the success of the program will vary depending on the different characteristics and backgrounds of offenders.

CHAPTER 4. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The success of unemployment programs that aim to alleviate recidivism levels will vary depending on the different characteristics and backgrounds of offenders. Unemployment programs are the type of rehabilitation that is focused on in the study because unemployment is highly correlated with recidivism rates in the United States of America. First, I will analyze the New York Center for Employment Opportunities Program Study and expand upon how it works, to determine all the important characteristics of the study including who was involved, the sample size, and what the unemployment program specifically consisted of. Next, I will analyze the results of Cindy Redcross' program study to see how it affected recidivism rates among the criminal offenders who were involved within the Center for Employment Opportunities program.

Finally, I will use the CEO Program Study data previously conducted by Cindy Redcross and implement a more in-depth analyzation and comparison. My design will compare, and analyze different characteristics of released offenders who were involved in the New York Center for Employment Program Study and were incarcerated within the three year follow up period. In order to establish how many of the characteristics were not affected by the unemployment program that was aiming to alleviate recidivism. By analyzing which characteristics were not affected by the Center for Employment Opportunities program, we can learn more about what types of offender characteristics are best affected by unemployment programs that aim to alleviate recidivism levels. The results will also establish keys that are crucial to alleviating the issues of unemployment which will result in lower criminal activity rates. The final step will be establishing how the program could be improved to better alleviate in the amount of criminal activity and recidivism rates. Learning

more about the strengths and weaknesses of job programs like CEO and how they affect certain traits of criminal offenders' recidivism levels is a good way to discover if preventing crime is a better resolution than responding to it.

CHAPTER 5. DATA ANALYSIS

The Center for Employment Opportunities program is based in New York City, New York. “CEO is a comprehensive employment program for former prisoners, a population confronting many obstacles to finding and maintaining work” (Redcross et al., 2009). The program provided temporary, paid jobs and other learning services to try and improve released offenders’ labor market and reduce their recidivism rates. The study used random assignment and compared offenders assigned to two different groups. The first was the Program group, which made offenders assigned to it eligible for all of CEO’s services. These services included a pre-employment class, a transitional job, job coaching, job development, parenting classes, and post-placement services. The second group was the Control group, which only allowed individuals assigned to it to be eligible for a shorter version of the pre-employment class and access to a resource room with basic job search equipment. The type of equipment available were items such as computers and fax machines.

“The goal of the CEO program model is to provide former prisoners with (1) immediate work and pay through a day-labor approach, (2) necessary work experience for finding more permanent jobs, and (3) a way to build work-related soft skills (Redcross et al., 2009). The CEO program model includes a four-day pre-employment life skills class to prepare participants for the transitional job, for job searches, and for employment after the transitional job. Participants begin their transitional jobs after they finish the class; they are assigned to daily work crews for four days a week, each with its own CEO supervisor. Transitional jobs consist mostly of maintenance and repair work conducted for city and state agencies at several dozen sites around New York City” (The Urban Institute, 2010). The study enrollment was conducted between January 2004 and October 2005 and resulted in a

sample of 977 former prisoners: 568 in the program group and 409 in the control group. The research team tracked all sample members for three years following random assignment.

Redcross Findings

The CEO Program Study was operated as intended and results found that the program significantly reduced recidivism. Redcross found many important keys and proved CEO provided noteworthy reduction in recidivism among released offenders. One key result found was that CEO's impacts were stronger for those who were more disadvantaged and at a higher risk of recidivism when they enrolled in the study. "For example, among the subgroup with four or more prior convictions at the time of study entry, CEO reduced convictions for new crimes by 12.8 percentage points. Among the subgroup with fewer prior convictions at study entry, no statistically significant difference in new convictions was found between program and control group members" (Redcross et al., 2009). Other significant results from the study found that CEO substantially increased employment early in the follow-up period, but the effects faded over time. This increased employment level was of course due to the temporary jobs provided by the program. "Rates of recidivism in the first year were 12 percentage points lower for the program group than for the control group (35 percent, compared with 47 percent); this impact represents a 26 percent reduction in recidivism" (Redcross et al., 2009). A final important key found was that CEO reduced recidivism for new crimes and decreased recidivism over the follow up period. "CEO reduced overall recidivism; during the three-year follow-up period, 70 percent of the control group experienced some form of recidivism, compared with 65 percent of the program group" (Redcross et al., 2009). These findings by Redcross provided evidence that the CEO

Program in New York City significantly reduced recidivism among the overall sample of offenders.

My Study

My study used the CEO Program Study data previously found by Cindy Redcross and implemented a more in-depth analyzation and comparison. In my study, recidivism is defined as, “to be incarcerated within the three-year follow up period of the CEO Study”. I began my data analysis by running a t-test on all of the 977 released offenders that had been incarcerated over the three-year follow-up period. Results found that offenders who had taken part in the CEO program had a reduction in recidivism compared to those who had not taken part. Nearly 64% of offenders who did not participate in the CEO Program were found to be incarcerated over the three year follow up period while only 59% of offenders who participated in the CEO program had recidivated.

The next step was analyzing and comparing different individual characteristics and traits of these released offenders from the study to see what percentages had been incarcerated within the three year follow up period. I did this to find out if any specific type of characteristics of offenders responded positively or negatively to the CEO Program. From the literature review, I learned that there are many important characteristics of recidivating offenders that include race, age, type of crime, education history, employment history, and having children. By learning about which characteristics responded positively and negatively, we can learn more about important characteristics and how to further alleviate recidivism. To accomplish this, I ran t-tests on different characteristics of the offenders who had been incarcerated over the three-year follow up period. Characteristics that were analyzed included: race, age, prior drug convictions, prior violent crime arrests, possession of a high

school diploma or GED, employment histories, and those with children under the age of eighteen. Authors in the literature review reported that these offender characteristics were all found to be noteworthy in understanding why a criminal may reoffend. Authors who found these characteristics to be important included Harer, Langan, Levin, Gavazzi, Sedgley, Scott, Williams, and Derrick.

My Results

The results found that the CEO Program reduced incarceration levels of offenders during the three year follow up period. For offenders who were involved in the program group, less than 60% of offenders recidivated in the three year follow up period. For offenders who were in the control group, nearly 64% of offenders recidivated in the three year follow up period.

Results based on Incarcerated Offenders

Table 1. Offenders that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.59859 (568)	.63569 (409)
Significance Level	.2389	

With further testing, the results found statistical significance in the CEO Program reducing recidivism among many different characteristics of released offenders, but not all of them. The following were the results found from offenders who fit different character descriptions and were incarcerated within the three-year study.

Results based on an Offender's Race

Table 2. Hispanic Offenders that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.60000 (175)	.57851 (121)
Significance Level	.7133	

Table 3. Black Offenders that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.58726 (361)	.67176 (262)
Significance Level	.0305	

In the literature review we learned that race was a major factor when analyzing recidivism. Results from the study found that there was no statistical significance for Hispanic Offenders that were ever incarcerated within the three year follow up period. There was little difference in the recidivism percentage of Hispanic offenders that participated in the CEO program and those that did not partake in it. Exactly 60% of Hispanics in the program group recidivated while less than 58% of Hispanics who were in the control group recidivated. Unemployment programs aiming to alleviate recidivism levels were not beneficial for Hispanic offenders, but were extremely beneficial for African American offenders. Black offenders that participated in the CEO program study had a much lower recidivism percentage than black offenders who did not partake in the program. Less than

58% of Blacks in the program group recidivated while 67% of Blacks who were in the control group recidivated. A possible reason for this could be that African American offenders statistically come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and are not given the same job opportunities as others. Results found that Hispanics were not statistically significant while Blacks were statistically significant. This is the first example showing that not all types of rehabilitation work for all types of offenders.

Results based on Offenders with Children

Table 4. Offenders with Children under the age of 18 that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.54724 (254)	.66667 (186)
Significance Level	.0109	

Table 5. Offenders ordered to provide child support that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.47917 (48)	.67568 (37)
Significance Level	.06938	

The CEO Program made a major impact among offenders with children under the age of 18. For these types of offenders that were involved in the CEO Program, less than 55% recidivated within the three year follow up period. Nearly 67% of these offenders who did

not partake in the program recidivated. The reduction in recidivism was also impactful for offenders ordered to pay child support. Less than 48% of offenders ordered to pay child support who took part in the CEO Program recidivated within the three year follow up period. For those ordered to pay child support and were in the control group, nearly 68% recidivated. It is possible unemployment programs had a large impact on offenders with children under the age of 18 because they have a responsibility that goes farther beyond themselves. Offenders may feel a need to take care of their families because they are responsible for others and not just themselves and their actions affect more people.

Results based on an Offender's Past Criminal Behaviors

Table 6. Offenders with Prior Drug Convictions that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.59158 (404)	.64407 (295)
Significance Level	.1581	

Table 7. Offenders with Prior Violent Crime Arrests that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.63636 (272)	.68382 (374)
Significance Level	.2081	

In the literature review we learned that more serious level crimes resulted in higher recidivism rates. In the study, results found that unemployment programs do not have a statistically significant effect on offenders with prior drug convictions or prior violent crime arrests. For offenders with prior drug convictions, 59% of those involved with the CEO program recidivated while 64% of offenders with prior drug convictions who were in the control group recidivated. For offenders with prior violent arrests, nearly 64% of those involved with the CEO program recidivated while 68% of offenders with prior violent arrests who were in the control group recidivated. This could be because offenders who commit higher level offenses often have bigger problems such as mental issues that need more treatment. This example illustrates that not all types of treatment work for all types of offenders.

Results based on an Offender's Educational Achievement

Table 8. Offenders who possessed a High School Diploma that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.56463 (294)	.57919 (221)
Significance Level	.7416	

Results from the study found that the CEO Program was not statistically significant for offenders who possessed a high school diploma or GED. For offenders who possessed a high school diploma or GED, 56% of those involved with the CEO program recidivated while 58% of offenders who possessed a high school diploma or GED who were in the

control group recidivated. In a future study, it would be interesting to analyze different levels of educational achievement and the effects of unemployment programs.

Results based on an Offender's Past Employment Experience

Table 9. Offenders that were ever Employed 6 Consecutive Months that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.57738 (336)	.59449 (254)
Significance Level	.6767	

Another characteristic that the CEO Program that had no statistical significance in affecting was offenders who had 6 consecutive months of employment prior to their initial arrest. For offenders who had 6 consecutive months of employment prior to their initial arrest, nearly 58% of those involved with the CEO program recidivated while 59% of offenders who had 6 consecutive months of employment prior to their initial arrest who were in the control group recidivated. This means for offenders who had prior working experience, the unemployment program was not successful in alleviating recidivism. It is probable that a job program is not going to be nearly as effective for people who have working experience as it would be for offenders without working experience.

Results Based on an Offender's Age

Table 10. Offenders aged 25-30 that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.53333 (135)	.54639 (97)
Significance Level	.8448	

Table 11. Offenders aged 31-40 that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.58989 (178)	.69355 (124)
Significance Level	.06347	

Table 12. Offenders aged 41+ that were ever incarcerated within the 3 Year Study		
	Program Group	Control Group
Means	.60959 (146)	.56191 (105)
Significance Level	.4521	

The final type of offender characteristic analyzed was age groups. The study divided offenders into three age groups that included: 25-30 years, 31-40 years, and 41+ years. Results found that the CEO Program had the biggest effect on offenders aged 31-40, and a negative effect among those who were 41+ years old. For offenders aged 25-30, 53% of

those involved with the CEO program recidivated while 54% of offenders aged 25-30 who were in the control group recidivated. For offenders aged 31-40, 58% of those involved with the CEO program recidivated while 69% of offenders aged 31-40 who were in the control group recidivated. In the final age group of offenders 41+, nearly 61% of those involved with the CEO program recidivated while 56% of offenders aged 41+ who were in the control group recidivated. This could be because hardened offenders who have lived a life of crime are tough to create change in. They may often feel it is too late to make a change and start a career when crime is what they are accustomed too.

In summary, these characteristics were important to analyze because certain characteristics were found to have benefited from the CEO program significantly compared to others that did not. Important findings discovered that those with children under the age of eighteen and ordered to pay child support were greatly benefited from the CEO Program. This could be because offenders felt they had the responsibility of a family to take care of. The reduction in recidivism was substantial and the program made a difference for those with children. Offenders with serious offenses such as prior drug convictions and violent crimes were not greatly benefited from the CEO Program. For race, African Americans benefitted greatly from the CEO Program but Hispanics did not. Individual offenders that were younger, African American, committed higher level crimes, and had families to take care of were greatly benefitted by the CEO Program. Those that were older, Hispanic, had working prior working experience, and a high school diploma or GED were not greatly affected by the program. The CEO Program was beneficial because it gave offenders the opportunity to learn, gain work experience, and have a starting point to get on track to a better life.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

The study found that unemployment programs that aim to alleviate recidivism rates did not affect all types of offenders equally. The program made a difference among offenders overall, but when looking at individual characteristics, this was not the case. The study concludes not all types of corrections and rehabilitation programs are meant to match all types of offenders. Offenders come from different cultures and different backgrounds possessing all different types of traits. In a future study, it would be beneficial to look at a more in-depth study of different characteristics. One prime example would be analyzing higher levels of education and how the CEO program affected recidivism rates. Examples of this could be analyzing offenders who had experience with trade-schools, some college, and a college degree. Another example could be observing different types of job experience offenders had and how the CEO program affected recidivism rates. The United States spends billions of dollars annually on the criminal justice system while the amount of incarceration rates is substantial. By analyzing offenders on an individual basis and learning about which types of programs work best for certain types of offenders, we can further alleviate recidivism rates. Funding spent on these areas could be used in creating job, education, and rehabilitation programs for at risk offenders to avoid committing future crimes

From the study, we learned that that four major characteristics benefited greatly from the unemployment program. The first characteristic was offenders who were African American, this could be because they statistically come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and are not given the same job opportunities as others. The second characteristic that benefited greatly was younger aged offenders. Younger offenders may have benefited more from the unemployment program because they feel they still have a

chance to create a positive change in their life. Unlike older aged offenders, they are not hardened to a lifetime of crime and still have an opportunity to become a productive member of society. The third characteristic that benefited greatly from the program was offenders who children under the age of 18. Unemployment programs such as CEO gave offenders the opportunity to provide for their family so that is probably why it was so beneficial. Offenders who have children under the age of eighteen may feel a bigger responsibility that goes farther beyond themselves. The final characteristic that was benefited greatly by the program was offenders who were ordered to pay child support. This is probably because failure to pay child support resulted in trouble for the offenders and the CEO program allowed offenders the chance to find a job and pay the child support they owe. The CEO Program was beneficial in some ways for all because it gave offenders the opportunity to learn, gain work experience, and have a starting point to get on track to a better life. These characteristics were important to analyze because certain characteristics were to found to have benefited greatly from the CEO Program, while others did not. The program did not affect all types of offenders equally because offenders come from different cultures, backgrounds and possess many distinctive traits. Therefore, offenders need to be evaluated and placed in the correct types of programs that will benefit them the best based on the characteristics and traits they have. A revolution for a change in the criminal justice system is needed and the people of the United States deserve better.

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