

Public Administrators against Prisoner Reentry and Reintegration

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List of Definitions

Some of these terms may have multiple definitions. Therefore the definition provided is the one that will work best for the subject matter of the study.

Community	A geographical location of people that includes counties, cities and townships.
Community Supervision	The act of an offender released from prison reentering the community under the supervision of a community supervision officer such as a parole officers, in which they have to adhere to restrictions on behaviors.
Correctional Facility	A facility that serves as a prison. For the sake of this paper, correctional facility will refer to a prison (can be listed as a detention facility)
Designer Drugs	Drugs created for the purpose of getting around drug laws
Ex-Prisoner	An individual who has spent time in prison but no longer resides in a correctional facility. Ex-prisoner can be interchanged with released offender.
First-time Offender	An individual who is being introduced to the criminal justice system and has no record of criminal behavior
Incarceration	The act of an offender being placed in prison.
Mental Health	Mental disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar
Offender	An individual who has committed a crime and been convicted.
Parole	Conditional release from prison, usually due to good behavior.
Prisoner	An individual who is serving time in a prison facility.
Probation	An alternative

Recidivate; Recidivism	An offender who after their release from prison continues to commit illegal acts and ends up going to prison again.
Reentry	After serving their sentence in prison the offender is released back into the community.
Reformed	An offender, who served time in prison, completed their community supervision program and does not commit any more crimes, by becoming a part of the community once again.
Rehabilitation	For the purpose of this paper rehabilitation will be will refer to offenders who reenter the community and do not revert to criminal behaviors
Reintegration	After serving their prison sentence and completing their community supervision program the offender becomes part of the community again.
Released Offender	An offender who has been released from a prison.
Repeat Offender	An offender who keeps committing crimes.
Revocation	The act of the courts or supervision officers removing offenders from parole or probation for their inability to comply with restrictions set by the officers and the courts, and placing them back into an institution.
Technical Violation	Actions committed by an offender while not against the law, but are against the restrictions set forth by the local, state or federal courts and by supervisions officers.

List of Abbreviations

CJS	Criminal Justice System
DFPS	Detroit, Flint, Pontiac, and Saginaw
MDCH	Michigan Department of Community Health
MI	Michigan
MI Leg.	Michigan Legislature
PPCP	Preventing Parolee Crime Program
P.I.	Principal Investigator
Reg. Sess.	Regular Session
SCAO	State Court Administrators Office
SVORI	Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative

Abstract

Every year, the criminal justice system releases thousands of offenders back into society, usually into the communities where the offender first committed their crime. Within three years, as many as two-thirds of all released offenders will return to the criminal justice system by means of arrest or incarcerations for new crimes, or recidivating, falling back on the same criminal behaviors that landed them in the criminal justice program in the first place. Currently there are prisoner reentry programs, such as parole, that exist to help offenders reenter society and not fall back on their criminal behaviors. However, if as many as two-thirds are returning to the criminal justice system, the programs are not working. The offenders are returning to prison and go through the reentry process again. If released offenders are continuing to recidivate, fall back on criminal behaviors, prisoner reentry programs are not working. This study will attempt to identify what factors affect the ability of offenders to complete community supervision programs, such as parole and probation, and what is causing them to be re-incarcerated, or reduce their ability to graduate from their designated reentry program, therefore, jeopardizing their chance at reintegration. Research has found that technical violations, too many strict parole conditions, education, mental illness, drug addictions, and probation officer personalities, lack of employment, or ties to the community lead to the inability of released offenders to complete their parole sentence or graduate from a reentry program. Groups such as the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Program, Step-Down Program, Preventing Parolee Crime Program, Mental Health and Drug Courts have seen these barriers and have made moves to address them. To confirm the literature collected, the methodology will consist of a summary of Michigan Governor Rick Snyder's Public Safety Plan and a critique of the Plan against collected literature.

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Every year, thousands of offenders are released from state prisons (Fretz 2005, 102). In 2002 alone, 600,000 offenders were released from state prisons back into the community (Fretz 2005, 102). The 'Mass Exodus' from prisons to society has become a concern for both policy-makers and former prisoners leaving the institutions after serving their prison sentences. In previous studies, the focus has been on the high rate of released prisoners returning to a correction facility, such as a jail or prison. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the causes of the revolving door that exists between the communities and prisons.

Regardless of the total number of prisoners released each year nationwide, there are a consistent number of ex-offenders returning to prison. "Research has shown that roughly two-thirds of former prisoners will re-offend within three years of release" (Rakis 2005, 7). *See Appendix 1 for Rate of Recidivism Pie Chart.* If two-thirds of released offenders return to prison within three years, there is a problem with the system. If the number of returned prisoners was smaller, the failure of prisoner reintegration could understandably be blamed solely on the released offenders. However, two-thirds of the total number of released offenders returning to prison is staggering. With such a high rate of reincarceration, offender behavior cannot be the only reason for recidivism, which is when offenders revert to criminal behaviors after release from a correctional facility. Administrators and policy-makers need to address the factors working against offenders trying to reenter into the community.

Directly related to the high recidivism rate of released offenders is prison overcrowding. It is important to remember that repeat offenders, or released offenders, are not the only ones entering the prison system. In addition to those individuals that have been in prison and released into mainstream society and failed to reintegrate, new offenders are being introduced to the system. As the rate of recidivism is high, it seems logical that many of those individuals entering prison for the first time will join the ranks of the repeat offenders.

Purpose Statement and Research Question

The purpose of this study is to determine why parole and probation may not succeed in reintegrating released offenders into the community. By evaluating studies on parole and probation, it will be possible to identify what factors work against offenders, thus preventing

them from fully reintegrating into the community. For the purpose of the study, community will generally be defined as a geographical unit of people into which offenders return after their release from prison. The question for this study is: what main difficulties are parolees and probationers facing upon release from prison? Do these difficulties account for the high rate of recidivism among offenders resulting in reincarceration?

Literature Review

Before discussing the barriers that affect offender reintegration, it is necessary to understand a few of the basic theories in community corrections relevant to the subject. First will be prison as a form of deterrence in order to show how the threat of imprisonment is supposed to deter members of the community from committing crimes. After individuals have committed crimes, been convicted, and served time in prison, community corrections reentry programs probation or parole are common. Through these community correction programs released offenders will work towards rehabilitating, changing their behavior from negative (criminal) to positive (law abiding). If rehabilitation occurs then it is less likely that they will recidivate. However, if they do recidivate, prison overcrowding will become a concern. It is important to look at what factors can impede the process of not only rehabilitation but also decrease recidivism and prison overcrowding.

Prison as a Form of Deterrence

One of the rationales behind creating laws prohibiting certain behaviors is that the prospect of spending time in prison will deter potential offenders from committing a crime. The thought of spending time in a prison cell, cut off from the outside community is theorized to be a disincentive that would deter criminal behavior.

In some circumstances, this rationale does apply to offenders who have already been through the criminal justice system (CJS). Offenders who have already been in prison will be less likely to reoffend. According to the “simple specific deterrence theory”, an individual who has committed a crime and served a prison sentence will know what it was like and do what they can to avoid repeating the experience (DeJong 1997, 562).

Although the “simple specific deterrence theory” sounds logical, it is interesting to note that prison sentencing simply does work that way. Studies have shown that individuals who are

familiar with the CJS on a personal level (experienced offenders) are not suitably deterred from recidivating, or falling back on criminal behavior. (DeJong 1997, 566). Experienced offenders already know what to expect if they return to the CJS. If the offender already has experience with the system, they will not fear going back because they survived it once and can do so again.

Like experienced offenders, first-time offenders are not going to be suitably deterred either. In contrast offenders going to prison for the first time are more likely to demonstrate criminal behavior in the future (DeJong 1997, 568). Once introduced into the prison system, a new offender will become acquainted with the prison routines and start to adjust accordingly. Once these adjustments become second nature, new offenders will not fear the system. If offenders do not fear the CJS, the theory of deterrence does not work. Two main reasons for the theory of deterrence not having the desired effects on offenders are community correction programs like probation and parole where offenders reenter the community under supervision and attempt to rehabilitate.

Probation

One reason the theory of deterrence has not had its desired effects on offenders, whether they are new or experienced is probation. In 1841, John Augustus created probation when he became interested in offender punishment (Wodahl and Garland 2009, S86). Augustus firmly believed that the prevention of crime and the reformation of criminals was the reason for laws concerning crime, but he did not think the system allowed offenders to rehabilitate so they could reintegrate into the community after their release from prison (Wodahl and Garland 2009, S86). Probation became an alternative to a prison sentence where the CJS releases offenders back into the community under supervision of a community corrections officer. During this period of supervision, there are restrictions placed on offenders that would, in theory, discourage or prevent future criminal behavior.

Probation appeals to offenders because it offers an alternative to prison, so they often agree to plead guilty to their offense (Wodahl and Garland 2009, S90). Probation offers a way to avoid the threat of overcrowding prisons by allowing offenders to remain in the community with supervision. However a downfall with probation is that an offender, regardless of the number of offenses on their record, will fail to recognize a reason to rehabilitate if there is the possibility of probation. Remaining in the community with restrictions has shown to be a better alternative to

complete loss of freedom. Probation offers offenders the opportunity to rehabilitate their behaviors while on community supervision, thus providing a better chance of reentering the mainstream society.

Parole

Parole, unlike probation, came to the United States from Europe. The creator of parole, Maconochie, implemented the *mark system*, a system where the offenders would receive points for good behavior and employment. If inmates earned enough points for good behavior and obtained employment, they could eventually be released from prison after serving only a portion of their original sentence (Wodahl and Garland 2009, S85).

Good behavior while in prison, combined with employment, implies that an inmate has reformed their behavior and would be able to support him or herself once they earned their release from prison. This led to the creation of community supervision programs like parole. “The existence of parole and parole consideration is an incentive for good behavior by inmates and for program participation that can be beneficial, even if not truly voluntary” (Seiter and Kadela 2003, 364). Having a goal provides motivation for improvement. In the case of prison inmates, the goal of early release from prison would provide suitable motivation to improve their behavior.

Once an inmate receives parole, the offender reenters the community under the supervision of a corrections officer who enforces the terms of parole which include restrictions on parolee behavior. “Parole officers are charged with enforcing condition of release, including no drug use, finding and maintaining employment, and not associating with known criminals” (Petersilia 2001, 364). Parole officers have a responsibility to the offenders on their caseload. Part of their responsibility is to help offenders reenter the community. Essentially, once on parole, the offender is part of a correction program.

In previous years parolees in many of the jurisdictions were required to follow the law, report regularly, and meet with their parole officers at work or at home (Travis and Stacey 2010, 606). Parolees must also obey restrictions on relocating to another residence, restrictions on changing residence (Travis and Stacey 2010, 606). Finally parolees are not allowed to own weapons or possess/use controlled substances (Travis and Stacey 2010, 606). These were basic conditions set upon a parolee once starting the program. Overall, these rules are fair because they

all require parolees to follow the law and in theory, would prevent recidivism. Parolees during community supervision are expected to rehabilitate so they can reenter mainstream community. If a parolee is unsuccessful in completing their community supervision, they will not be rehabilitated and sent back to prison.

Rehabilitation

The main support for the existence of parole and probation is the theory of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is usually seen as a means to reform the behavior of offenders so they may eventually be fit to function in mainstream society on a day-to-day basis. Functioning in mainstream society on a day-to-day basis would include being able to support themselves and their families if they have one.

One aspect of the rehabilitation theory is that behaviors seen as criminal are the product of actions or environments an individual is placed in. "It is assumed, first, that human behavior is the product of antecedent causes" (Allen 1959, 63). According to Allen, human behavior is caused by the environment and actions of individuals in that specific environment. An environment becomes criminal if the individuals in that environment are criminal. Therefore, if the environment is classified as criminal, then human behavior, which is influenced by the environment, will become criminal.

In order to address criminal behavior, Allen suggests that it is necessary to have punishments that are therapeutic. "It is assumed that measures employed to treat the convicted offenders should serve a therapeutic function; that such measures should be designed to effect changes in the behavior of the convicted person in the interest of his own happiness, health, and satisfactions and in the interest of social defense" (Allen 1959, 63). Therapeutic measures will seek to correct criminal behavior and direct the behavior of offenders toward positive things that will make not only their lives safer and happier, but also make the public safer.

A step toward prisons sentences that have a therapeutic function is to see incarceration as a way to reform, not punish. Prison as a sentence for criminal behavior will cause an individual to lose their liberty, thus making incarceration a punitive action meant to punish offenders for their behavior (Allen 1959, 68). If prison is only seen as a tool to punish and deprive offenders of their liberty, they are less likely to reform their behavior. A punishment, in this case deprivation of liberty, is only going to force the deviant, the offender, to focus on why they are in

prison and how long until they are released. If prisons serve a therapeutic function, offenders will be able to address the underlying causes of their criminal behavior, resulting in the potential for offenders to be released from a detention facility and successfully reintegrate back into mainstream society.

Recidivism

Offender rehabilitation is not always successful as some revert to criminal behaviors. When offenders revert to criminal behavior, they are recidivating. Recidivism although a common term in the criminal justice field, lacks a concrete universal definition. In 1942, Harry Willbach wrote an article discussing three of the common definitions of recidivism and why they do or do not work. Although the article is 70 years old, the definitions that he discusses are still current and applicable. Some aspects of each definition work while others do not. The three definitions include prior arrests, prior incarceration, and prior convictions. For the purposes of this paper, recidivism will be defined as offenders having prior convictions on their criminal record.

Recidivism based on prior convictions includes only those offenders who have been found guilty of criminal actions. For this study the focus is on offenders who are guilty of criminal actions. This is important as the purpose of this study is to look at barriers that affect offender reintegration. The most effective way to judge this is to look at only those individuals who have committed a crime. The study would be thrown off if those who have not committed an offense or have not served time in jail are included.

Recidivism cannot be defined as individuals with prior arrest on their record because of the simple fact that an arrest record does not mean criminal record. In criminal cases, suspects are arrested merely because they are suspected to have had a part in the crime only to be released when they are proven innocent (Willbach 1942, 32). If the prior arrest did not lead to conviction, then the individual did not recidivate as there was no history of criminal behavior.

Recidivism, for the purpose of this study, cannot be defined as an offender with a record of prior incarceration either. Not arrest lead to incarceration, just as nota all arrests lead to convictions. Depending on the charges offenders may escape incarceration by receiving a formal reprimand, orders to pay a fine, taking part in community supervision, or they could have their charges dismissed, or they could be acquitted (Willbach 1942, 33). This definition does not take

into consideration that not all individuals who have been convicted in previous cases were incarcerated. Therefore, previous incarceration is not a good standard definition because it leaves out a good portion of offenders who fall back on criminal behaviors. As this study is looking the barriers that affect reintegration this definition could work because it focuses on only those individuals who have been in prison before. However, it does not work because an individual who was not previously sent to prison for their criminal actions can revert to their criminal behavior again and be sent to prison.

Prison Overcrowding

If the barriers preventing offender reintegration into mainstream society are not identified and addressed, prison overcrowding will continue to be an issue. In 1983, prison overcrowding was already becoming a topic of concern for public officials as well as taxpayers. With two-thirds of released offenders being reincarcerated, our prisons will continue to be overcrowded (Rakis 2005, 7). Incarceration as a common sentence for criminal offenses leads to detention facilities being overcrowded (Price, Weber, and Perlman 1983, 222). It is not enough to say that repeat and first-time offenders are continuously populating already filled prisons. It is also important to look at how overcrowding happens.

Overcrowding is the result of three main components. The first is that the number of crimes is increasing (Price, Weber, and Perlman 1983, 223). When the number of crimes increases, so does the number of people incarcerated. Second, there is a greater demand for severe punishments for those committing crimes (Price, Weber, and Perlman 1983, 223). The trend that is seen in the CJS is longer prison sentences for offenders. If longer prison sentences are the 'more severe punishments' the detention facilities will remain heavily populated. The third factor is the discretionary choices of officials in the CJS: prosecutors, judges, and public defenders (Price, Weber, and Perlman 1983, 223). If the "interdependent factors" as Price, Weber and Perlman call the three components, are not addressed, the overcrowding of detention facilities will not be corrected. Therefore, to decrease the prison population, it is necessary to identify what specific factors are working against offenders during the reintegration process.

Section Review

Deterrence, probation, parole, rehabilitation, recidivism and prison overcrowding are six common terms in the criminal justice field. Prison as a form of deterrence is used to persuade individuals to not demonstrate criminal behaviors. If criminal actions are taken, probation and parole are two forms of community supervision that are in theory supposed to rehabilitate offenders so they may reenter mainstream society and become a functioning member of the community. If ex-prisoners who were convicted of a crime are not successful in community reintegration they return to a detention facility leading to an overcrowding of the prisons until they can restart the reentry process all over again. With an understanding of these six theories it is easier to look at what factors are working against offenders in the reintegration process.

Factors Working against Offenders in the Reintegration Process

This section will focus on the barriers, or factors, that prevent offenders from successfully reintegrating into mainstream society. Each subsection will focus on a specific barrier to explain how it impedes the reintegration process. Then following the description of the barrier there will be a hypothetical example to illustrate how the barriers affect offender reintegration.

Progression from Prison to Probation

Probation as a sentence for punishment raises some questions as to whether it is an effective means of dealing with offenders. Foundational literature on the subject shows that there is no progression from prison to probation. No progression from prison to probation can lead to a lack of punishment range, creating a one size fits all system for offenders. “There has been a failure in the country to develop and institutionalize a range of punishments lying between incarceration and probation” (Morris and Tonry 1990, 314). According to this argument, for reintegration to be more attainable, it may be necessary to provide a gradual progression from prison to probation. This would allow for the offenders to slowly adjust to the restrictions of their probation, and life outside of prison. If there is no progression, released offenders would suffer a ‘shock’ upon being thrown into a whole new situation without conditioning.

A second argument presented by Morris and Tonry is that there should be uniformity among criminals and their punishments. In this circumstance uniformity refers to a standard that

states specific crimes committed by individuals in specific circumstances should be punished in a similar manner. “Crimes of equal severity committed by criminals with equal criminal records should be punished identically” (1990, 315). The saying “one size fits all” does not apply to community corrections. If there is one standard punishment for all crimes, then it is less likely that offenders will rehabilitate. Morris and Tonry would like to see a uniform punishment for criminals with similar backgrounds who have committed similar crimes. This would allow for the creation and implementation of specific treatments to address not only criminal behavior, but also the underlying causes of criminal behavior.

Hypothetical Example

Jack has been in prison for ten years. During the last ten years he has seen other criminals who came from a neighborhood like him and committed a similar crime get longer or shorter sentences. While there was little uniformity in their punishments, they all suffered from a lack of progression from the detention facility to probation. Jack has no knowledge of what to expect from probation, let alone how to survive independently outside of a prison. Now that he is on probation and in the community he feels overwhelmed to the point where he starts to become angry and frustrated. Finally, the anger and frustration reaches a point to where he commits a new crime and has his probation revoked. Since Jack did not have a progression from prison to probation he had little warning of what to expect once he was outside the prison walls and ended up violating his probation, thus returned to prison.

Probation Officer Typology

The scholar, Carl B. Klockars in his article “A Theory of Probation Supervision” (1972) discusses four types of probation officers. These typologies of probation officers represent the different categories of officers, which can affect the likelihood of released offender completing their program successfully.

The first group of officers is what Klockars refers to as *law enforcers*. Law enforcers take great care in pushing forth the image of an authoritative figure and enforcer the law (Klockars 1972, 550). “Of prime importance to such officers are (a.) court order; (b.) authority; (c.) decision-making power; (d.) officer responsibility for public safety; and often (e.) police work” (Klockars 1972, 550-551). These particular officers are strict in that every rule and law is applied

with no room for wiggling or leniency. If a released offender is careless or unintentionally breaks a condition of their probation, the law enforcer will revoke the probation. Law enforcers can have a negative effect on released offenders because there is no 'wobble room' for unpreventable circumstances.

The second type of probation officer is the *time server*. Time servers, come in to work, do their job, go home, and wait for their paycheck. These officers "see their jobs as having certain requirements to be fulfilled until retirement" (Klockars 1972, 551). Officers who fall into this category are less likely to take an interest in improving their job skills. They are going through the motions as dictated by their job description. An officer who cares only for the paycheck is not going to supervise their probationer as closely as they should. They are also less likely to try and find treatment options to help the offenders succeed in the reintegration process. When time servers only show up for work in order to receive a paycheck and are not invested in the success of their probationers, released offenders will have a higher likelihood of recidivating.

The third typology includes officers referred to as *therapeutic agents*. This type of officer is concerned with providing the probationer the necessary treatments to help the released offender successfully reintegrate into the community. One part of the treatment that a therapeutic agent may engage in is studying the history of the offenders on their caseload (Klockars 1972, 551). A second part of the treatment is that the therapeutic agent would work with the probationer to reintegrate the offender by focusing on three specific aspects (Klockars 1972, 551). First they would work on social skills so the released offender will learn how to interact with others, thus making it easier to reach out to members of the community for help or support (Klockars 1972, 551). Second, they would work with psychological issues to help the offender work through any issues they may be suffering due to their background (Klockars 1972, 551). Third, the therapeutic agent would provide the offender with an opportunity to work through their feelings (Klockars 1972, 551). A therapeutic agent, while helpful, can cause a probationer to become dependent on the officer. If the dependency is not censored, the probationer may not be able to function independently once their term of probation is up and revert to their previous criminal behavior because it is familiar.

The final typology of probation officers is the *synthetic officer*. The synthetic officer is a mixture between a law enforcer and therapeutic agents. "He sets for himself the active task of combining the paternal, authoritarian, and judgmental with the therapeutic" (Klockars 1972,

552). An officer who has the ability to combine the parental and authoritative roles is likely to be more effective in aiding an offender in reentering society and preventing recidivism. The synthetic officer provides the best chances for a probationer to reintegrate. An officer who combines law enforcement and therapeutic methods together will be able to create a balance between the two extremes.

Hypothetical Example

Daniel has been released from prison and assigned to probation. Upon leaving prison, he is informed that he will need to participate in anger management classes. The law enforcer will follow this requirement by making sure Daniel attends his anger management classes, but the officer does nothing more beyond that point. When forced to go to anger management, Daniel is not going to feel like he is learning anything because he has no choice but attend and does not understand why he should be there, nor does he feel that anyone cares he is there.

In contrast if Daniel were to be assigned to a probation officer who is a time server, he will be informed he has to go to anger management classes but there is not authority figure present to ensure he attends. Time servers will only tell Daniel to go to anger management but do nothing beyond saying he should go and how it will affect his rehabilitation and reintegration if he does not attend. In this circumstance failure to attend anger management and improve his temper will result in probation revocation.

If Daniel were to be assigned to a therapeutic officer would be forced to go. However, unlike the law enforcer, the therapeutic officer will work with Daniel on a personal level. Working not only in the anger management classes but also on a one-on-one basis with his probation officer, he will learn that his anger stems from his childhood where he was physically abused for more than decade. The therapeutic officer will set him up to work with a counselor to work past those issues so they can address the underlying cause of his anger and treating it like a symptom not a cause. What this does to rehabilitation and reintegration process is increase his chance of success because he is being nurtured in a way that will allow him to understand why his actions are not permissible.

Finally the synthetic officer will be stern and make sure Daniel goes to anger management. However, the synthetic officer will also work with Daniel to ensure the classes are teaching him something that will help him with rehabilitation and reintegration by having him

understand where his anger comes from, how to deal with his anger and how the classes pertain to real-life. This will aid Daniel rehabilitation and reintegration process by showing him why his behavior is not permissible and teach his techniques to redirect his anger in a way that is not threatening to himself or members to the community.

Too Many Parole Conditions

Parole, in theory, is supposed to assist released offenders in the community reintegration process. Under this form of supervision, parolees will be subject to restrictions on behaviors that have the potential to lead to criminal actions. The restrictions serve as ways to enforce non-criminal behavior. Upon prisoner release from detention facilities, there will be no leniency for behaviors that can lead to recidivism and reincarceration (Seiter and Kadela 2003, 364). Offenders are under a tremendous amount of pressure upon reentering the community. When the pressure of being on parole and trying to obey all parole rules, released offenders may not use drugs, alcohol or engage in criminal behavior because it is familiar to them and can act as a form of stress relief (Seiter and Kadela 2003, 364). If a released offender makes one mistake that violates the conditions of their parole, such as the use of drug or alcohol, they will go back to prison and repeat the cycle all over again.

As stated in the problem, the total number of prisoners failing to reintegrate into the community successfully after release from prison is close to two-thirds (Rakis 2005, 7). Of the two-thirds of ex-prisoners returning to prison, the majority are committing technical violations (Seiter and Kadela 2003, 380). Technical violations are actions committed by an offender that are not against the law, but against the restrictions specified in their terms of parole imposed by the judge and parole officer.

In addition, individual parolees could have extra restrictions imposed on them along standard parole conditions. “Three-quarters of the jurisdictions in 2008 require parolees to maintain employment or educational program participation, report any arrest, comply with medical/drug testing, make a first arrival report, and pay fees and restitution, and prohibitions against contact with undesirable associates” (Travis and Stacey 2010, 606). Based on the case and nature of the criminal offenses of the offender, the judge or parole officer may impose additional conditions. These extra conditions ensure the offender takes every precaution necessary to prevent recidivism. However, too many rules are hard to follow. An increase in

parole conditions increases the likelihood of an offender committing a technical violation. The more rules and restrictions placed on an offender, the more likely it is for the offender to unintentionally commit a technical violation while trying to obey another restriction.

Hypothetical Example

John is on parole upon release from prison. According to the conditions of the parole sentence, John has to adhere to the extra stipulation of mandatory enrollment in an educational program or gaining employment. Before going to prison, John had a high school degree. After serving time in prison John was unable to finance higher education at a vocational school, community college, or university. Therefore, the only option was to find employment. An additional restriction for his parolee stipulates that he is not allowed to work construction. However, John has experience and talent in construction work. Without training or experience in other fields John is unable to gain employment, cannot fund an educational program and is sent back to prison for technical violation of parole.

Education

Education, or lack of education, can be a roadblock, or stopping point for an offender trying to reenter the community. As stated in the section above on parole, an offender must be enrolled in an educational program if they are not employed at the time of release. Unfortunately, education tends to be a low point for many offenders as they may not have obtained a high level of education prior to incarceration (Rakis 2005, 8). Limited educational achievement will set the tone for their ability to meet their parole conditions. Before entering the CJS, some offenders had little education achievement and may not have had the opportunity to advance their education while in prison. If their parole conditions require enrollment in an educational program, they can go back to prison if they fail to enroll and stay enrolled.

Regardless of the fact that lack of enrollment in an educational program can place them back in prison, offenders will be disadvantaged and risk reincarceration without education. Without an education, an offender will find they are unable to gain employment because they will lack the necessary skills and experience required to hold a job. Without the job, an ex-prisoner cannot earn an income to support them and could be risking parole revocation due to lack of employment. This becomes a vicious never-ending cycle.

Hypothetical Example

Kimberly has been in prison for possession and use of illegal substances. Now that she is on parole she needs to find either a place of employment or enroll in an education program. Prior to her incarceration, Kimberly had obtained her high school diploma, but did not do that well throughout high school. Her GPA is not high enough to get into a local community college let a university. Since she cannot enroll in higher education program due to her inability to be accepted she needs to find a place of employment. Employers are being uncooperative in the hiring process because she does not have a higher education degree (Associates, Bachelors etc.) and does not possess the minimum math and literacy skills to hold most jobs. As Kimberly does not have a strong final transcript from her high school or a degree from a higher education institution she is unable to find employment to pay for education even if she were accepted. As a result of not obtaining employment or enrolling in an educational program her parole is revoked and she is returned a detention facility.

Employment

As stated above, offenders who have ties to the outside community have a higher likelihood of successfully completing their reentry program. One of those ties is employment. If an ex-offender has a source of employment, they may be motivated to “stay clean” and not fall back on criminal behavior, as they know it could cost them a source of income. A barrier that many former offenders face upon their release from prison is “a poor employment history and the lack of marketable skills” (Rakis 2005, 9). During their prison sentence, they may have been unable to develop skills that would benefit them in the job market. After these offenders return to the community, they will encounter difficulty in finding employment because they lack the basic skills and experience in the workforce.

In addition to released offenders not having the necessary work experience or skills necessary to gain employment, they also face difficulty in finding employers willing to hire an individual with a criminal record. Employers are sometimes unwilling to hire candidates because of the negative connotation attached to being an ex-offender (Petersilia 2001, 366). An offender could have all of the necessary skills to gain employment and do very well; however, they may never get the chance as many employers refuse outright to hire released offenders. Some

employers will see the criminal record and automatically assume that the ex-prisoner is going to revert to their previous behaviors resulting in a re-arrest.

Even if ex-prisoners are fortunate to have employment when they leave their correction facility or gain employment after leaving, conditions of parole can affect their ability to keep their position. After gaining employment, ex-prisoners may experience difficulties related to having a parole officer (Rakis 2005, 10). As stated in the section concerning parole as a program itself, regular meetings with their parole officers can be a mandatory part of their program. Depending on the workload of the parole officer, there may be limited time for the officers to meet with the parolee. If a parole officer's work load is heavy the meeting might need to be conducted during the hours the parolee is scheduled to work. Some employers may not understand that the meetings must take place. However, as with many occupations, bosses do not care about personal or legal commitments.

While employment may be a tie to the outside community that would serve as motivation to reintegrate into society, it can also be a requirement of parole. As explained in the section above, maintaining employment can be one of the extra conditions imposed upon a parolee. If an offender, whose conditions of parole state that the individual in question must maintain employment, cannot find employment, they could return to prison for failure to meet all parole conditions.

Hypothetical Example

Jane has been released from prison on community supervision. According to her community supervision stipulations, she must either enroll in an educational program or obtain some form of employment and retain it. Even though she graduated high school with high honors she does not have the option of enrolling in an educational program because she does not have the necessary finances. Jane was successfully obtained a job working as a waitress at a local diner where the boss is strict with attendance and days off. When her employment began she made sure her boss knew that she was on parole and would need to meet with her parole officer. The boss is fine with the meetings as long as they do not interfere with the work schedule and the meetings were not allowed to happen at work because it would be bad for business.

The first four meetings with her parole officer were handled with no difficulty and she proved that she was reforming and reintegrating back into mainstream society. However, when it

came time for her fifth meeting, the parole officer's schedule did not allow for the meeting to take place on Jane's day off. Jane discussed the situation with her boss to find out that she would be terminated from her job because she could not adhere to the terms set at the beginning of her employment. After being terminated from her job through no fault of her own, Jane's parole is revoked and she is sent back to prison.

Housing

Lack of housing for an offender after their release from prison is a direct result of limited education and employment prospects. Without adequate housing, offenders will have an increased chance of recidivating as they are exposed to alcohol, illegal substances, and difficulties with employment (Listwan 2009, 156). Ex-prisoners who are not able to find housing will run the risk of being exposed to influences that promote behaviors that lead to potential criminal actions.

Lack of housing can cause a great deal of stress on any individual. The stress level for a released offender is going to be greater because they are unfamiliar with the outside community after being in prison. Once the stress becomes too much for an offender, they may find solace in the forms of drugs, alcohol, or other previous criminal behaviors. The use or possession of drugs and alcohol is against the conditions of parole and will result in the revocation of parole. In order to relieve the stress an offender may feel at being in the community they will sometimes turn to drugs and alcohol. In addition, the simple fact of an offender not having a place of residence can also cause parole revocation and reincarceration. The threat of parole revocation is heightened when an offender does not have housing because the probability of contact with 'less desirables' is increased. As noted in the section discussing *Too Many Parole Conditions*, one restriction can require not contact with people deemed less desirable. If an offender is homeless there is less control over who they come in contact with.

Less desirable people are individuals who are former criminals themselves or could have a bad influence on an offender trying to reintegrate. As a result of an offender without a place to live will be living on the streets unprotected against bad influences of less desirables. In addition, how are offenders, homeless or otherwise, supposed to know who is an undesirable?

Hypothetical Example

At the beginning of his parole, Jameson had a job and was able to rent a place to live. While he was working and maintained a place of residence, he was removed from negative influences of drugs and undesirable people. However, due to mass layoffs at his company, Jameson was one of twenty individuals to lose his job. Without his job he was unable to maintain his home and had to be evicted. Now, he is living on the streets and exposed to negative influences that could promote illegal behavior. He knows that drugs are bad and knows how to avoid them. However, he does not understand what an undesirable individual is or how to identify one. One day, his parole officer caught him talking to an individual about the previous night's baseball game. Unbeknownst to Jameson, his companion is the member of a dangerous gang who skipped out of prison on a technicality. As socializing with undesirables is against his parole Jameson is sent back to prison.

Drugs

A final barrier that can prevent offenders from reintegrating into mainstream society is the use or abuse of drugs. In the 1980's, there was evidence that the United States was aware of the burgeoning number of crimes committed and the subsequent cost of incarcerating these offenders (Nored and Carlan 2008, 329). In addition, the number of crimes committed that included drugs was also on the rise (Nored and Carlan 2008, 329).

Drugs become an issue for offenders after their release from prison because they, the released offenders, now had access to drugs. While in prison, offenders have no access to drugs and can fight against their addictions (Harrison 2001, 464). Although offenders accused of using or abusing drugs can stay clean while in prison, studies show that offenders are likely to resort to their addictions upon release from a detention facility (Harrison 2001, 464). Once released offenders are on their own in the community, there is nothing preventing them from falling back on to old habits, drug use and criminal activity (Harrison 2001, 464). After offenders revert to their drug and criminal routine, the cycle of prison to community begins again.

Hypothetical Example

Zane grew up in a neighborhood where drugs were the norm of that specific demographic. By the time he was 30, he had been sent to prison for multiple crimes including

possession of drugs. When he went to prison, Zane had no choice but to quit his drug habit. As he gradually became less and less reliant on drugs, he was able to function without resorting to criminal behavior. While on parole Zane began to feel the pressure of being under constant supervision, and reentering the society. In addition, it does not help Zane that when he was released from prison on community supervision that he was sent to his home community. His home community is where he learned that drugs and criminal behavior was an acceptable part of community. When he returned he felt himself falling back onto his old habits because they were familiar actions in a familiar environment. Eventually, he breaks down and starts to use drugs again and is sent back to prison.

Mental Health

One concern for state released prisoners is how to manage their health. An understated fact is that ex-prisoners tend to have more health concerns than is seen in the general community. Included in the health of offenders is mental health, which is prevalent in prison populations as 15%-24% of American inmates that have a severe mental illness (Baillargeon, Binswanger, Penn, Williams, and Murray 2009, 103). The individuals represented in this statistic are more likely to recidivate after release from prison because they will not have access to the necessary medical treatments to manage their conditions as they did while in prison.

Released offenders with medical conditions, including mental health, are a danger to the community due to the rate of homicides committed by offenders who have a higher end mental illness like schizophrenia. Studies have revealed that of all the groups of offenders those who have schizophrenic and non- nonschizophrenic commit homicides at a higher rate (Baillargeon, Binswanger, Penn, William, and Murray 2009, 105). If researchers and policy-makers are aware of this phenomenon, then they need to create policies and services to allow mental health patients on parole to have access to the necessary treatments so they may complete their parole program. Parole officers need to arrange for mentally ill offenders to get in contact with services that will help them after their parole is over.

Another factor that must be considered in the reincarceration debate is the lack of mental health facilities available to offer their services to prisoners with mental health conditions. In states such as Michigan mental health hospitals have closed down. Upon closing, the patients of these hospitals were left to their own devices. When mentally ill individuals have nowhere to go,

they will not always have the necessary medications and treatments for their conditions, thus making their behavior unpredictable, sometimes even criminal.

Hypothetical Example

Luke was diagnosed with a severe mental illness in his teens. Up until graduation from high school his family provided him with the financial and emotion support he needed to manage his condition. In addition, while he lived with his family he never had to worry about his medications as he always had them. Not long after his 21st birthday, his parents were killed in a car accident leaving him with no family to help him with his condition. Eventually, his loss of control led him to criminal behavior and time in prison. While in prison he was able receive his prescription medication and have someone on hand to help him manage his condition. When he left prison and entered the community on parole, he was still able to get access to his medications. However, when he successfully completed his parole sentence he was left to his own devices, with no access to his medications because of a lack of financial backing. With no one available to help him when he needed it he was not always able to control his condition, thus leading him back to criminal behavior.

Section Review

If issues of prisoner reintegration are to be successfully addressed, it is vital to understand what factors prevent ex-offenders from reentering mainstream society. If the factors preventing reintegration are examined, policy-makers, administrators and criminal justice workers will be better informed when making newer regulations concerning prisoner reintegration.

As described, there are eight main factors that can lead to the failure of ex-prisoners reintegration after release from prison. Lack of progression from prison to probation places all offenders into one specific mold with very specific punishments. Placing prisoners into molds does not work because not all prisoners are the same, therefore they should not be treated the same. When all consequences are identical, there is an increased likelihood that the underlying cause of criminal behavior will go undetected and untreated. CJS experts and policy-makers should consider the fact that not no one is from the same mold and a universal punishment is not going to help address the underlying causes of criminal behavior. Instead, policy-makers and CJS experts can come up with phases that would take place between prison and probation to help

offenders address the underlying causes of their behavior and prepare them for the living on their own in the community.

The success of a released prisoner on probation relies heavily on the personality of the probation officer assigned to any given offender. This does not mean that an offender's inability to complete their probation program is the sole fault of the probation officer. Rather it means that the personality of the probation officer will affect how well the offender will function during their probation. If the officer is only working for a paycheck and is not invested in the community or the offender, then the offender is less likely to get the treatments they need to successfully reintegrate. In contrast, an officer who is truly invested in the welfare of an ex-prisoner and their ability to reintegrate back into society is more likely to see that the offender has access to necessary resources and services to help with reintegration. Policy-makers and CJS experts need to pay attention to the attitudes and tendencies of the individuals responsible for supervising offenders in the reintegration process. If supervision officers are not invested in helping offenders reintegrate, are the community and the offenders truly being helped? No because the process will start all over again.

Parole, while a good reintegration program, has become littered with numerous conditions that parolees are expected to comply with during their community supervision. When more and more conditions are made to restrict the activities and behaviors of offenders, reintegration becomes harder. Too many parole conditions open the door for conflict. When there are too many conditions, there is the distinct possibility that some of the conditions will contradict each other. When these conditions contradict each other, offenders will have a harder time staying out of prison due to technical violations. It may also be necessary for Policy-makers and CJS experts to address the possibility that some of the conditions are outdated or inapplicable to modern society. If there are conditions that are outdated or generally ineffective to begin with, there is no need to have them in place when there are so many other restrictions.

Education by itself can be the biggest factor working against offenders trying to reintegrate into mainstream society. Without an education, offenders cannot hope to get any of the better paying jobs. If offenders cannot obtain employment, they must enroll in an education program. Some offenders, prior to conviction and incarceration graduated high school or had obtained a GED. The next logical step would be to pursue education at a vocational school, community college, or university. However, in order to attend a higher education institution they

must have some form of monetary support to afford the tuition, and not all offenders will be awarded the grants, scholarships, or loans necessary to attend school, therefore they need a job. Even though they are not in school yet, they are working. Unfortunately, obtaining and retaining employment can be tricky for released offenders due to the stigma attached to their backgrounds and the inconvenience of meetings with community supervision officers. This step can be tricky for policy-makers and CJS experts to address. However, if it is addressed, such as eliminating the demand for enrollment in an educational program, there will be less stress on an offender who cannot control the cost of education or the admissions process.

Education does not only affect the ability of an offender in finding a job it can have long lasting effects on the matter of housing. Part of community supervision is learning how to survive on one's own after release from prison. This includes the offenders' ability to put a roof over their heads. If they do not have an income they will not be able to pay the rent or purchase a place to live. The CJS and policy-makers need to find ways to address problems offenders have in reference to appropriate housing. If this is addressed, there will be one less stressor to make released offenders vulnerable to criminal behavior that put them in prison in the first place.

Mental health has become a hot topic in the CJS as many offenders in detention facilities have mental illnesses such as schizophrenia. While in prison, these individuals have the access to proper treatment to manage their conditions. Once mentally ill offenders are released from prison and have completed their community supervision, they may not be able to afford their medication for their condition due to lack of employment. If mentally ill offenders are without their medication for too long, criminal behavior can return, thus putting them on the road back to prison. For this to be addressed, policy-makers and CJS experts need to study how the mentally ill affect the prison population and what can be done to help these offenders once they leave the detention facility. Providing treatment during incarceration and community supervision is not enough, they need to be taught how to manage their conditions in the long-run so they do not recidivate.

The final barrier discussed is drugs. Many offenders prior to incarceration, during incarceration, and those in the reintegration phase have had involvement in the drug industry, whether that be dealing or using. While in prison, the strict supervision and routine makes it easy for offenders to go through detoxification and stop using illegal substances. However, once they leave a prison, they do not have a familiar routine and while they may be under supervision, it is

not like it was in prison, therefore it is easy to succumb to old addictive behaviors. It is vital for policy-makers and CJS experts to find new ways to address drug problems as locking drug dealing/using offenders up is not working as they are returning to their addictive behavior after leaving a detention facility.

Evidence of Administrators Identifying the Problem

As the previous section illustrates, there are factors that work against offenders trying to reintegrate into mainstream society. These factors are not always intentional, but they are always present. However, the good news is there are some corrections agencies in the United States that recognize the deficiency in corrections programs. “In recognition of the high failure rates of ex-inmates, correctional organizations across the country have implemented reentry programs to assist offender [sic] as they reintegrate to the community” (Wodahl, Ogle and Heck 2011, 219). Groups that have been created to counteract the recognized deficiencies preventing offender reintegration are taking necessary steps to correct the problems.

In order for these improvements in correctional programs to take place, extra funding may be required. If this is the case, the federal government can supply funding. “Funded largely by federal dollars, these programs assist offenders in many ways including job training and placement, substance abuse treatment services and housing assistance” (Wodahl, Ogle, and Heck 2011, 219). Extra funding allows initiatives to be created to help offenders reintegrate. An example of an initiative is the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative, a federal initiative that will provide funding to states to create or enhance reentry programs for offenders who commit serious and violent crimes to help offenders reintegrate. The funding also allows programs such as the Step-Down Program, Preventing Parolee Crime Program, Mental Health Courts and Drug Courts improve the rate of offender reentry by addressing reintegration barriers.

Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative

One example of an initiative that can help correctional programs address the factors described above is the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI) of 2003. This federal initiative provides funds to states that wish to either create or enhance their reentry programs and services (Listwan 2009, 154).

SVORI used federal funding to create services to address housing, substance abuse treatment, and employment, which are three of the factors that work against offender during the reentry process. SVORI provided aid to communities to “develop more effective systems of service delivery in terms of housing, substance abuse treatment, and employment” (Listwan 2009, 155). Policy-makers in states that utilized the federal funding took note of the factors that were preventing offenders from reintegrating and created or enhanced services that addressed these factors.

Step Down Program

A program that takes reintegration of offenders and the factors that work against it to another level is the Step-Down Program in Colorado. This program acknowledges that the rehabilitation of offenders needs to begin *before* release from prison. The theory behind the Step-Down program is to start rehabilitation when an offender enters the CJS and continue through to the community reentry stage (Fretz 2005, 103). By the time an offender leaves prison, it is sometimes too late to try to reform their behaviors. After release from prison, ex-prisoners can feel overwhelmed by the sudden freedom and responsibilities placed upon them when reentering into the community. If the sudden freedom and responsibilities become too much, a released offender may recidivate. While in prison, there is a routine and the offender receives the necessities such as shelter, food, water, and clothing. Once they leave the prison, it is survival of the fittest, as they will have to fend for themselves.

The Step-Down Program breaks prisoner reentry into specific steps to prepare offenders for their return to the community. The first step will take place in an environment where offenders are not at risk of being overwhelmed from exposure to aspects of life outside of prison before they are prepared (Fretz 2005, 104). This controlled environment, while not necessarily in the prison, prevents offenders from feeling overwhelmed by an early release into the community.

One important aspect of this treatment program is the mimicking of events that occur in the community. After spending time in prison, offenders will be detached from society and unaccustomed to the independence and rigors of the community, which will not have the strict routine present in a correctional facility. “Treatment exercises in the stepdown program mimic as much as possible the challenges that offenders will face in the outside world” (Fretz 2005, 104). In order to prepare offenders for scenarios they could encounter upon reentry, the Step-Down

Section 2: Law Enforcement

- Local Law Enforcement
- Secure Cities Partnership
- Forensic Science Labs
- Holding Offenders Accountable
- Clear
- Fire and emergency Response
- Public Safety Technology

Introduction

Governor Snyder states that citizens need to be confident that their law enforcement, local or otherwise, will respond when members of the community engage in criminal (violent and/or illegal) behavior. “For too long criminals have had the upper hand in Detroit, Flint, Pontiac and Saginaw, knowing that law enforcement did not have the resources it needed to respond fully to these challenges” (Michigan Legislature 2012). He acknowledges that there are currently attempts in fighting the high level of crime in these four cities, only to have his attempts blocked by the CJS. The CJS according to the governor needs to be reinvented because the varying levels of the CJS in these four communities do not collaborate to keep their citizens safe from the behaviors of offenders.

Local Law Enforcement

Snyder proposes that the MI Legislature create a “priority expenditure that amounts to \$10 million of the allotted \$25 million supplied for Economic Vitality Incentive Program (EVIP)” (Michigan Legislature 2012). This priority expenditure would take place for the FY 12 budget for public safety. It is hoped that such an investment would “create long-term, sustainable solutions for local law enforcement, firefighters, emergency responders, the criminal justice system and their communities” (Michigan Legislature 2012). Snyder believes that the priority expenditure in public safety would be necessary because it is a smart investment as it would help Michigan become safer as a state.

Secure Cities Partnership

For Michigan to be safe “both local and state law enforcement are critical components of a safer Michigan” (Michigan Legislature 2012). Thus, more law enforcement is needed in FDPS.

literature. While the entire plan will be summarized only sections relating to the collected literature will be evaluated. The evaluation will not be organized in the order the summary is presented. Instead, it will be arranged in order of the collected literature allowing for a more substantial critique than a few small sections would allow.

Summary of Public Safety Plan as Submitted by Governor Rick Snyder

Section 1: Introduction

On March 8, 2012, a plan proposed by Governor Rick Snyder of Michigan was presented to the First Regular Session of the 96th Legislature of the State of Michigan. His plan, as read to the Michigan State Senate, outlines how to make Michigan more successful. He understands that in order for Michigan to once again be a success, the state must first be safe. Now that safety has been recognized as a barrier to a successful Michigan, Governor Snyder would like to address public safety concerns in four of Michigan's leading crime cities: Flint, Detroit, Pontiac, and Saginaw (Michigan Legislature 2012). For the sake of the study Flint Detroit, Pontiac, and Saginaw will be referred to FDPS throughout the summary and critique to cut down on wordiness.

According to the report, with these cities in such violent disarray, the entire State of Michigan will suffer. Michigan suffers not only from the physical and mental consequences of the violence, but also the economic situation. "A recent study concluded that murders in these 4 cities alone cost Michigan taxpayers more than 1.6 billion" (Michigan Legislature 2012). In the report Governor Snyder is not clear about what his numbers mean. For example, these numbers could be an accumulation of taxpayer money in one year or multiple years. With this amount of money provided by taxpayers it is necessary to address public safety to make the numbers go down.

Snyder's plan calls for an action known as "smart justice". In a system of "smart justice" there would be recognition of "the critical connection between law enforcement, crime prevention, and economic opportunity" (Michigan Legislature 2012). It is Snyder's belief that following a system of "smart justice" would allow for the public safety in the State of Michigan to be reinvented.

Job Plus to help parolees find employment (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554). The program also uses the Offenders Employment Continuum to identify factors that may promote difficulties for offenders trying to trying to find employment and keep it (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554). Finally the program provides literacy and math education to offenders so they can increase their chances of having a job (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554).

The creation of drug courts in states such as Michigan is a step towards addressing substance abuse of offenders. Drug courts became necessary because many offenders are guilty of substance use or dealing (Harrison 2001, 464). Even though drug courts, such as those in Michigan, have proven to be successful, policy-makers and JCS experts need to have more faith in the program. When CJS experts and policy-makers have faith in the drug courts and their treatments, offenders will have a higher likelihood of reintegrating into mainstream society and not regress to their addictions.

CJS experts and policy-makers have seen the success of the drug courts and modeled mental health courts to address offender mental illness. Mental Health courts, which are modeled after drug courts, address mental illness factors that can prevent offenders from reintegrating. Offenders who volunteer to be a part of this program will go through a specialized treatment plan to teach them to manage their conditions (Mental Health Court).

Methodology

For this study an evaluation of the Public Safety Plan submitted by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder to the Michigan Legislature during the First Regular Session (reg. sess.) of the 96th Legislature on March 8th 2012. Evaluating Governor Snyder's plan to address public safety in four of Michigan's most violent cities will illustrate if the literature collected for this study matches what policy makers say is a reality. This form of methodology was also selected as the stated plan involves a city in which I attended school to receive both undergraduate and graduate studies. Over the last five years, I have seen firsthand how the violence has increased in Flint Michigan from year to year. Therefore, I feel that I am qualified to critique a plan which is proposed to help keep Flint, and three additional cities safer, thus making Michigan safer.

First, there will be a summary of Snyder's plan as it was submitted to the Michigan Legislature to provide an in depth understanding of what he would like to see happen and why. Following the summary will be an evaluation of the plan against the previously gathered

drug treatment policies do not understand what they are implementing, they will not have faith in their own programs, therefore the public will not want to invest resources.

Mental Health Courts

A new trend in addressing the barrier that mental illness presents to offenders attempting to reintegrate into mainstream society is the creation of mental health courts. Mental health courts are courts modeled after the drug courts for defendants who volunteer to take part in a treatment plan (Mental Health Court). In Michigan, defendants are able to enter the community under supervision and will work with court staff and mental health professionals to format a treatment plan that best suits the needs of each offender (Mental Health Court). By working with a team that addresses the concerns of each individual voluntary offender with personalized treatment, the chances of recidivism will go down as the offender will know what to do in order to control their condition.

Section Review

Policy-makers and CJS experts are addressing the factors by providing a means to create services to help offenders in the reintegration process through the use of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative. The Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative, uses allocated federal funds to establish services to address three factors that work against offenders in the reintegration process (Listwan 2009, 155). With the federal funding SVORI tries to establish and implement services that address substance abuse treatment, employment and housing.

CJS experts and policy-makers in the state of Colorado addressed the issue of reintegration by creating the Step-Down Program. Step-Down addresses factors preventing offender reentry by creating a gradual reintegration process. The program breaks reentry down into small steps to take away the shock value of sudden freedom from prison (Fretz 2005, 104). By having the gradual reintegration process offenders will learn how to react in given situations that will otherwise result in reincarceration.

Experts in California have also addressed the issue of parolee recidivism by instituting the Preventing Parolee Crime Program (PPCP). The goal of the program is to address employment, housing, substance abuse and education. By addressing these four difficulties appropriately, parolees will have a higher chance at reintegrating. PPCP uses resources such as

(Nored and Carlan 2008, 330). In Michigan, there were a total of 79 operating drug courts and two additional courts in the planning stage in 2010 (MI Supreme Court 2008, 5). In 2007 Michigan had 78 drug courts (State Court Administrators Office). Genesee and Saginaw Counties are among the 78 that have drug courts, which is important as these two areas contain cities that have high rates of prisoner returns (Michigan Legislature 2012).

Drug courts have become necessary for drug treatment programs as many offenders have addictions. “Because the criminal justice system deals with a large proportion of chronic drug abusers, the criminal justice system is an ideal place to organize and provide needed drug treatment services” (Harrison 2001, 464). If the CJS sees a high rate of substance using offenders, then it seems logical that the system would be qualified to provide necessary drug treatment programs. The CJS deals with offenders who have used drugs on a frequent basis and will know how and what kinds of treatments are necessary to address the underlying causes of substance abuse.

In 2006, 2,634 Michigan individuals released from MI drug courts were able to complete a drug court treatment program (MI Supreme Court 2008, 13). Completion of the drug treatment programs caused profound improvements in their employment prospects. “[...] many participants were able to improve their employment status by the time they were discharged or successfully graduated from drug court” (MI Supreme Court 2008, 14). Offenders were able to enter and graduate from a drug court treatment program and gain employment in a state where unemployment is high.

It is not enough to have drug treatment programs or courts to target offenders with drug substance addictions. In order for drug courts and treatment programs to work, the public, policy makers, and those in the CJS need to have faith that the treatment and courts will work. “Perhaps the biggest barrier to expanding treatment for offenders is the belief that treatment does not work” (Harrison 2001, 476). If offenders, employees of the CJS and policy makers believe treatment will fail, it will.

In order for treatment programs and drug courts to have more success in addressing drug use and abuse, there must be education. “It is imperative that the policy-making community and the public at large be educated about the efficacy of treatment in reducing drug use and criminal activity” (Harrison 2001, 477). Education about drug treatment plans and their success can help the public and policy makers believe that the programs will work. If the individuals making the

capabilities and interests of released offenders are identified, the range for a job hunt is narrowed down.

The second service the PPCP provided was substance abuse education and recovery services through two network providers (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554). One of the main pitfalls for ex-prisoners is the temptation to use drugs, which can result in parole revocation and rearrests. The first group the PPCP utilizes is Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery, which provides a four-week tutorial for offenders to learn to recognize, acknowledge and prevent the abuse problems. Part of the education of offenders is acknowledging a substance abuse problem and learning how to prevent it. The second group, Parolee Services Network, gives parolees the opportunity to take part in one of four models of substance abuse treatments. They include short-term detoxification, longer residential drug treatment, housing for up 90 days that was both drug and alcohol free, and outpatient services.

The third service the PPCP offers is education, specifically in math and literacy (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554). This program is beneficial to offenders because some will move at a slower pace than others will. Offenders who are rushed may not learn to their full potential. Math and literacy are the mandatory knowledge bases for basic employment. After completing this program, offenders will have an increased chance of employment.

An evaluation of the program was conducted to determine if the organization was meeting its goals. The results provided a measurable number to indicate positive or negative recidivism numbers of the group. The program evaluation showed obvious success, as offenders enrolled in the program reduced recidivism by 8 percent (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 562). Even though this is not a significant success rate, there are still positive outcomes for the offenders that failed to complete the program. Even if an offender does not complete the program, they will still have the skills and knowledge they gain by enrolling. In addition, they will not be as overwhelmed on their next attempt at reentry (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 566).

Drug Courts

In an attempt to address the problem of drugs among the offender population, states like Michigan have formed Drug Courts. The objective of drug courts is to use allotted resources to target a select group of offenders, those involved in crime where drugs are a part of the offense

Program will mimic these events in a type of rehearsal. In these rehearsals, offenders can learn how to react in a way that will not result in recidivating or committing a new offense. After the completion of this step, offenders can move on to the final phase.

Once offenders have completed the second step, they can move into the final phase, which is moving back into the community (Fretz 2005, 105). After offenders have gone through a controlled environment and rehearsals for life outside the prison, they can reintegrate into the community with confidence.

Preventing Parolee Crime Program

In California, the State Department of Corrections noticed that offenders were encountering reintegration difficulties due to drug abuse, and lack of employment, education, and housing. In response, California created the Preventing Parolee Crime Program, also known as PPCP. To address the problems presented by drug abuse, and lack of employment, and education the PPCP helped offenders contact organizations who offer services to aid them in overcoming these factors.

One action the PPCP took was to employ the aid of two programs to help offenders find employment (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554). The first community-based program is Jobs Plus, which provides a list of employers in nine separate communities that would be willing to hire parolees (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554). This is beneficial for offenders trying to find employment when many employers refuse to hire ex-prisoners. By providing this list, they are increasing the chances of ex-prisoner employment by highlighting job opportunities that offenders may not otherwise identify.

The second community-based employment program is Offenders Employment Continuum. This group sets up workshops that identify any barriers that may present an issue for the offender in gaining and keeping long-term employment. If a program identifies barriers to offender employment early, such as a lack in marketable skills, they can be counteracted so the offender will not meet undue difficulty in the hunt for employment (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554). This program also identifies their job interests and employment capabilities (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554). It is important for released offenders to not only know what kind of jobs interest them, but also what job skills they possess to meet the qualifications. It is possible that their qualifications do not match their interests. If the

With an increase in law enforcement, comes an increase in criminal apprehension. Snyder, after stating that in these cities some officers start each work shift behind on their calls, comes to the problem of limited space to house criminals. “In other [cities] jail space is so limited that only the violent and egregious crimes constitute lodging” (Michigan Legislature 2012). With the lesser non-violent criminals remaining on the streets combined with problems in CJS and high rates of unemployment, there is little fear from the law. With little fear of the law and inadequate consequences for breaking the law, criminals will continue to break the law.

In reference to his previous section where he suggests an investment in law enforcement is mandatory, it is necessary to realize that a simple investment will not fix the structural problems in the CJS. To address this issue he would like the Michigan State Police (MSP) to receive \$15 million extra for FY 13. This money would go towards two schools for MSP recruits. He would like 180 troopers to graduate from these schools. Upon graduation, these new troopers provide support for local law enforcement. In order to get these schools going Snyder sent an advance to the Michigan Legislature to allow classes to begin as soon as June 1, 2012. As more recruits graduate from the MSP schools, groups will be made-up of enforcement officers from federal, state, and local levels to conduct direct patrols and investigate resources in FDPS (Michigan Legislature 2012). These teams will be focused on solving cases that involve violent crimes such as sexual assaults, drive-by-shootings, and homicides.

To further his cause of making FDPS safe and therefore making Michigan safe, Snyder has requested that the “Special Agent in Charge of the FBI in Michigan” team up with the MSP to push the idea of safe streets (Michigan Legislature 2012). The Special Agent has agreed to a partnership. In addition, Snyder sought the help of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Michigan. He believes that this will help to increase the number of criminals brought to justice.

The Evidence-Based Policing (EBP) will be receiving enhanced technology, complements of the MSP. The EBP will need the enhanced technology as their job description is to make it so law enforcement entities will be able to make a prediction as to where crimes are most likely to be committed. By enabling predictions to be made, law enforcement will be able to position their officers and direct their resources to that area to have a better chance at preventing crimes from occurring.

Forensic Science Labs

Another aspect that is necessary for crime fighting is forensic science labs. To stress the importance Snyder would like to see \$5 million added to the MSP Forensic Science Division. Doing so would allow the division to enhance their use of the available forensic services and equipment. An enhancement of the use of forensic services and equipment will make crime solving more effective and efficient. Efficiency and effectiveness of crime solving will come from scientists being able to train more technicians, thus creating more scientists to work in the labs. The more lab workers there are the more likely to get cases solved within a 30 day goal. An increase the number of personnel will eventually help a lab that is scheduled to open in 2013. Even though the increase in staff and money for the labs is important, data collections are also a concern.

Snyder informs the Michigan Legislature that the MSP is working on a process that will help the problems of excessive backlogging and the time of turnarounds. According to the report, even though the process of reducing backlogging and turnarounds is a good thing, it is more important to improve data collection. If there is an improvement in processes of evidence collection (data collection) at the actual scene of the crime, cases can be tracked easier, thus helping prosecution.

Holding Offenders Accountable

This section of the report stresses the importance of making sure offenders are held accountable for their crimes. This is vital in his plan to keep Michigan safer by looking at the four communities that see almost 50% of the parolees in the entire state. “Currently 46% of all statewide parolees report to parole offices located in Detroit, Pontiac, Flint and Saginaw” (Michigan Legislature 2012). With so many offenders in four select areas Snyder feels that it is important that the law enforcement entities should have access to resources to better serve the parolees on their caseload. If resources allotted to law enforcement entities go towards ensuring parolees do not continue to reoffend, there will be fewer released offenders going back to prison.

To help law enforcement entities combat the return of parolees to prison, Snyder declares to the Legislature has created a new initiative (Michigan Legislature 2012). “I am announcing a new initiative to embed a Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) parole officer into each of the local law enforcement agencies that covers these four targets” (Michigan Legislature

2012). Once the initiative is given time to work as the Governor hopes it will, the rate of recidivism will go down due to increased parolee supervision.

In this section emphasis is placed on offender accountability in the city of Flint as there is a high population of parolees within the city boundaries. When members of this population break their parole, they are sent back to prison. However, in Flint, there is little access to space to house them. In 2011, the Michigan Legislature sent \$1 million to the region to help create more jail space. Even though the \$1 million is working, Snyder proposes an additional \$4.5 million to help remove criminals from the streets of Flint.

CLEAR

In 2011 Governor Snyder created a council to work as team to aid the reinvention of Michigan's public safety. "Last year, I formed the Council on Law Enforcement and Reinvention (CLEAR) to act as an advisory team for Michigan's public safety reinvention" (Michigan Legislature 2012). The council is comprised of professionals who will make sound judgments on the Council based on their expertise. The council is comprised of individuals from the following professions:

- Local police
- State police
- The Tribes (Native American Indian Tribes)
- Prosecutors
- Judiciary
- Corrections

Among decisions council's decisions was Executive Order 2011-7, which proposed an increase in the collaboration of law enforcement. The collaboration would then in turn improve the criminal justice information systems (Michigan Legislature 2012). Currently the council is drafting a long-term solution that will address more public safety issues that plague the four designated cities.

Fire and Emergency Response

Snyder emphasizes that public safety is not limited to law enforcement entities such as local and state police, prosecutors, judiciaries, and corrections. Public safety does in fact carry over to fire emergency response. Over forty percent of the arsons that took place during the years

2008-2010 occurred in FDPS. “These four cities also accounted for roughly 43 percent of all arsons in Michigan from 2008 to 2010” (Michigan Legislature 2012). When crimes such as arson are occurring at such an alarming rate the communities as a whole will be affected. “Arson is a growing problem in Detroit, Flint, Pontiac, and Saginaw and threatens not only lives but livelihoods when property is destroyed” (Michigan Legislature 2012). Based on these statistics, Snyder wants to reinvent fire and emergency response along with public safety. In order to reinvent Fire and Emergency response he has decided to create an advisory board that would act in the same method as CLEAR.

Public Safety Technology

Closely linked to the section on fire and emergency response, is the matter of enhancing the link that binds citizens to first responder through the means of technology. Technology has developed enough that citizens will be able to provide first responders with information immediately, rather than waiting (Michigan Legislature 2012).

Currently, according to the report, the “landline voice-based calls” were implemented a minimum of four decades ago, when mobile communication technology was not anywhere near what it is today. Now many citizens use multi-media, smart phones, and other mobile communication devices, and the technology used by first responders has yet to catch up with society. “The future framework, referred to as Next Generation 911, will enable users to send texts, pictures and video to dispatchers who can quickly relay it to emergency responders in the field” (Michigan Legislature 2012). CLEAR will have the responsibility for getting Next Generation 911 started, in collaboration with the fire and emergency response council. Snyder closes this section by stating that Michigan is viewed as a type of leader in the field of public safety communication, regardless of the increasing violence, due to the state possessing the biggest portion of the public safety communications network in the entire country (Michigan Legislature 2012).

Section 3: Criminal Justice

- Mental Health Courts
- High-Risk, High-Need Drug Courts
- Designer Drugs
- Prescription Drug Trafficking

- Video Technology
- Preliminary Exams
- Indigent Defense Commission
- Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence
- Victim Protection
- Organized Retail Crime

Introduction

Snyder's third section, Criminal Justice focuses on investing the necessary resources into the CJS. While closely related to section two, Law Enforcement, section three looks at protecting members of the public. Section three discusses the importance of preventing "non-violent" offenders from becoming violent through the power of influence. To address this concern Snyder claims "alternative treatment programs to those who commit crimes as a result of underlying addiction or mental health issues" can help address offender behavior earlier rather than later (Michigan Legislature 2012).

Mental Health Courts

One of Snyder's main interests is how individuals who have mental health issues (disorders), especially untreated disorders can impact the safety of the public. "When individuals suffering from mental health issues come into contact with the criminal justice system, we must step in and address their mental health needs to prevent an escalation of criminal behavior" (Michigan Legislature 2012). While investigating mental health issues and their impact on public safety, the governor insists that offenders must be held accountable for their actions.

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) has agreed to work with the CJS and corrections to create a long-term plan. Pieces of this long-term plan will include the following:

- Improved mental health services
- Create diversion programs
- Improved inmate management
- Ensure information is shared across the field (criminal justice)

According to the report, MDCH has already begun creating a program and is scheduled

to provide a plan of action no later than July 1, 2012. The purpose behind such a plan is to create a strategy that will potentially lower the number of individuals who have mental health issues and end up incarcerated in detention facilities.

Michigan already has mental health courts that have proven to be successful in providing treatment to qualifying individuals. To maintain the success of mental health courts, Snyder would like to invest \$2.1 million dollars into 8 existing pilot mental health courts and to create an additional one in Saginaw County. The report also includes information from the State Court Administrators Office (SCAO), which states recidivism rates decreased while rates for employment and education opportunities and medication compliance increased in those pilot courts.

High-Risk, High-Need Drug Courts

If there is to be a decrease in recidivism, it is necessary to address the underlying causes of criminal behavior. One underlying cause of criminal behavior is drugs. “Intensive drug court problems address addiction problems that are often the root of criminal behavior” (Michigan Legislature 2012). Courts designated for drug treatments, use their allocated resources to treat drug problems like addiction, and decrease rates of recidivism. Drug treatment courts show success in decreasing recidivism rates because “they provide comprehensive therapeutic treatment and other services to increase a participant’s period of abstinence and reduce the rate of relapse, re-arrest and incarceration” (Michigan Legislature 2012). In addition to reducing recidivism, drug courts save tax dollars by preventing tax payers from paying to house prisoners during a sentence of incarceration. As drug courts are so successful, Snyder proposes creating an initiative for a high-risk, high-need drug court. This drug court initiative would help expand drug courts that currently exist and operate in the counties of Oakland, Genesee, Saginaw, and Wayne.

The purpose of a high-risk, high-need drug court would be to target members of the offender population who are susceptible to the influences of drugs. Implementing such an initiative would work towards decreasing the burden on the corrections system that is already carrying a large load.

The current drug courts are funded by grants that provided the courts with a set amount of dollars. Regardless of how many offenders enter the drug courts the amount allotted to the courts will not increase. In contrast, the new initiative will set a fixed number of dollars, not for the

drug courts, but per each offender. In order to get the initiative moving, Governor Snyder requested that the state Legislature appropriate \$1.25 million. This amount would allow for \$4,500 to be spent on each offender. The money spent on the offenders that qualify would cover:

- Intensive drug testing
- Intensive outpatient treatment
- Alcohol treatment and alcohol monitoring
- Specific staff to work with participants in the drug courts who require a higher level of supervision

Designer Drugs

Identifying drugs and assigning treatment plans are not enough to protect the community from harmful substances. Designer drugs, drugs created to get around the law, are causing problems within the community. Snyder believes that it is vital for the Legislature to “schedule” substances at a faster pace in order to be a step ahead of the individuals who are creating designer drugs. The governor, in his plan, pleads with the Legislature to pass House Bill 5338 and Senate Bill 789 so he can identify them as soon as possible as the passage of the bills would allow MDCH to declare a drug as an imminent public danger.

Prescription Drug Trafficking

The threat of drugs affecting public safety extends beyond designer drugs to prescription drug trafficking. With drug trafficking, prescription drugs, which are legal, are being illegally distributed for illegal use. The Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, commonly known as LARA, is an organization that is attempting to control the illegal distribution of prescription drugs. In their attempt to control illegal prescription distribution, LARA uses an electronic system to track drugs that are dispensed from sellers. House Bill 4369, which was signed into law by Governor Snyder as Public Act 44 of 2012, helps monitor prescription drug distributions.

Video Technology

Another aspect of criminal justice the Michigan Supreme Court is attempting to expand is the use of video technology. Video technology is a way to allow defendants to attend their hearings without leaving their detention facility. Employing video technology for defendant hearings saves tax payers money by not needing to transport the defendant to their hearing,

which can be in another county. If the defendants do not need to leave their detention facilities to attend their hearings there is less of a threat to public safety.

Defendants are not the only members of the criminal justice system that would benefit from the use of video technology. As previously stated, when defendants need to attend hearings that require transportation, guards are assigned to accompany them. While guards are on defendant protection duty, the detention facility is short the regular number of guards in the case of an emergency. Therefore, video technology would be useful if prison guards were allowed to stay within their facility to keep security to a maximum.

Parallel to the advantages of using video technology for defendants and law enforcement officers are the benefits for forensic science lab employees. Sometimes during court cases, forensic science lab experts are called upon to present their findings. If they, the forensic science lab experts, need to travel they will be losing valuable time that could be spent working on another case. The use of video technology would allow them to stay in their labs while they present their findings without losing time working on another case and potentially get backlogged with more cases.

Preliminary Exams

Also part of addressing public safety is ensuring law enforcement officers spend less time in courtrooms during criminal hearings. In order to ensure victim treatment improves and officers are spending less time in courts, reforms need to be made to preliminary exams (Michigan Legislature 2012). Preliminary exams are meetings between the prosecutor, defense lawyer, and the defendant. During this meeting, the group will be able to look at the charges against the defendant and the possible plea negotiations (Michigan Legislature 2012).

Snyder presents a statistic that shows ninety percent of the overall number of felonies committed in Michigan result in a guilty plea (Michigan Legislature 2012). In addition, almost eighty percent of defendants in criminal cases waive the right to a preliminary exam (Michigan Legislature 2012). Snyder would like to see “reforms that require preliminary exam conferences and allow for limited hearsay testimony at a preliminary exam” (Michigan Legislature 2012). A reform of the preliminary exam procedure would limit how much testimony can be based on hearsay which is not fact-based.

Indigent Defense Commission

In 2011 Governor Snyder had success in creating the Defense Advisory Commission. The purpose of this commission is to study and propose solutions to problems facing Michigan's legal defense system (Michigan Legislature 2012). In the future the governor hopes to be able to reform the legal defense system in order help Michigan communities by saving tax dollars and protecting the constitutional rights of residents.

Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

If law enforcement is to respond to crimes effectively, it is important to understand who is committing crimes such as sexual assault and domestic violence. Sexual assault in contrast to the common belief is usually perpetrated by someone who is close to the victim. In addition, to the perpetrators committing sexual assault, it is not uncommon for the same individual to be guilty of domestic abuse as well. These two categories of crimes need to be addressed if Michigan is to become a safer and more successful state. When sexual or domestic crimes occur, the community is affected by victims becoming homeless, the money spent on national health care cost, and the continuous crime cycle.

The importance of addressing these two categories of crimes is backed by statistics of national rate versus the FDPS. The national average of sexual assaults reported in the United States is around 25% (Michigan Legislature). In FDPS, the rate of sexual assault reporting is even lower (Michigan Legislature 2012). To address these crimes Snyder would like to see the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board enhance tools available to law enforcement agencies in order to hold offenders accountable. One specific tool enhancement the governor would like to see is more accurate forensic evidence collection (Michigan Legislature 2012). Recently, MDVPTB was able to gather federal funding for the project by receiving a competitive grant.

Victim Protection

A major concern of Governor Snyder is protecting the victims of crimes. Among the groups he believes need to be given more protection are senior citizens. Senior citizens as the report says are among the groups that are seeing crimes rise due to abuse. To address these issues

Senate Bills 454-468 were passed. These bills address issues such as harsher penalties for senior abuse and guardianship reforms.

The second group that is a concern is those who are victims of human trafficking. Human trafficking has become a large concern because it has become an industry where money can be made. According to the U.S. Department of Justice human trafficking is becoming one of the top criminal industries (Michigan Legislature 2012). This criminal industry is second to the drug industry affects mainly children as they make up around half of the total number of victim (Michigan Legislature 2012). Snyder would like to see the Michigan Legislature take this into consideration as the current laws do not satisfactorily address the issue.

The last group, which affects mainly children, is cybercrimes. The internet allows for sexual predators to befriend potential victims and lull them into a sense of false security until the two parties meet face-to-face. Many times the victims of cybercrimes are youth, therefore it is necessary to educate the youth about cybercrimes. If the youth are educated on cybercrimes and the consequences of being a victim, they will be better prepared to react appropriately if they find themselves in that situation. In addition, education itself will remove ignorance of the crime, which can be the most harmful.

Organized Retail Crime

Snyder wants to see more efforts made toward decreasing organized retail crime. Organized retail crime is different from shoplifting in two respects. First, organized retail crime involves a group of “professionals” such as gangs (Michigan Legislature 2012). Second, where shoplifting includes any form of merchandise, organized retail crime targets specific products and usually are stolen from more than one location. The items stolen as the result of organized retail crime are sold for either cash or drugs. When the products are resold, they can become a danger for buyers because the product could be tampered with. If the products are tampered with, individuals buying the products can be purchasing products that while usually helpful can be dangerous. To address organized retail crime, Snyder would like to work with the Legislature to create laws specific to organized retail crime and not just shoplifting.

Section 4: Crime Prevention

- Community Ventures

- Creating New Paths for Young People
- Strong, Safe Cities
- Truancy
- Successful Prisoner Re-Entry

Introduction

For public safety to be effectively addressed, focus must be given to crime prevention. Crime prevention, according to Snyder, begins within the community and the education of the youth (Michigan Legislature 2012). If a community is a crime hotspot, the youth of the community will not see a better future, believing that what they see around them is all there is. Educating the youth can prove that there can be a future beyond a community that is ravaged by crime and overrun by gangs. If the youth are educated, it is possible to stop the cycle of prison to community before it begins.

Community Ventures

A key to crime prevention is creating and having more jobs. If unemployment is high with few opportunities for gaining employment, criminal activity becomes a source of income for those individuals who do not see another way. In urban areas where unemployment is high the best way to help those who are unemployed is to find a means to create career pathways. FDPS are four areas where citizens are reported to be susceptible to unemployment for longer periods of time in contrast to other Michigan communities. “Cities like Flint, Detroit, Pontiac and Saginaw are hardest hit with citizens remaining unemployed far longer than the average Michigan citizen” (Michigan Legislature 2012). These four areas are prime hotspots for crime because of the lack of employment prospects.

With the aid of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Snyder would like to implement the Community Ventures Initiative. This initiative will be collaboration between both public and private sectors to learn which employers are willing to put forth the effort into creating new jobs (Michigan Legislature 2012). This initiative will also identify key organizations that can provide unemployed residents with job training.

Unemployment itself presents struggles to those who cannot find jobs. One struggle is not having the basic training necessary to hold a job. Without basic job training, employers are not going to be as willing to hire job candidates. Other struggles include access to daycare when

parents are at work and reliable transportation to get to and from a place of employment. A final struggle is obtaining the literacy and education skills necessary for the workforce. If citizens have literacy and other educational skills, such as math, they will have a higher likelihood of obtaining employment.

Creating New Paths for Young People

The best crime prevention technique, according to the governor, lies in the children. Children who are raised in areas like FDPS often become discouraged because of the environment around them (Michigan Legislature 2012). For instance, in these four areas where there is little green space, areas with trees and wide expanses of grass. With little green space children are cut off from potential job opportunities they do not know exist in nature. Lack of exposure to nature does not spark interests in careers that involve nature, like working for the Department of Natural Resources. Snyder mentions that many individuals who have found careers in the Department of Natural Resources did so by completing an internship through the department. He believes this can be a model to create other programs to spark career interest in children in FDPS (Michigan Legislature 2012). If children are exposed to other environments that could lead to potential careers, the crime cycle is being stopped before it has a chance to begin. The crime cycle can be stopped by eliminating the desperation that can come from no employment.

Strong, Safe Cities

Strong, safe cities means ensuring urban areas are safe for residents and that the community and its residents are able to thrive. One way to make urban areas safer is to either demolish or remodel abandoned buildings. When buildings such as offices or homes are left vacant they become safe havens for drug dealers and other crimes. To address this, Snyder simply wants to amend a Michigan law that would prevent the purchase of new properties by individuals who have not paid taxes or own properties that are deteriorating. This action would allow for vacant lots and buildings to be demolished or fixed up, and reduce the number of safe houses for illegal activity.

Truancy

An important aspect of public safety lies in the Michigan education system. Children who tend to miss school are more likely to be involved in criminal activity and substance abuse (Michigan Legislature 2012). In 2010-2011 alone Michigan schools reported 83,491 cases of truancy (Michigan Legislature 2012). Truancy can be addressed as it is often caused by parental neglect and living in a state of poverty.

Snyder has asked that the Department of Human Services (DHS) make a program that would increase the number of social workers to be placed in 135 elementary schools that are located in FDPS. The DHS will be able to place social workers in the environment where their clients, neglected children and those living in poverty reside. By placing social workers in these environments identifying evidence of neglect and poverty will be easier (Michigan Legislature 2012). Observation will allow the social workers to call in child protective services when needed and also provide parents with counseling in order to improve their parenting skills.

In addition, Snyder does not believe that laws making school attendance mandatory for children ages 16-18 is enough. By targeting only 16, 17, and 18 year olds, those children ages 15 and under are not being observed as closely if they are not at school where the social workers are.

Successful Prisoner Re-Entry

Public safety includes ensuring released offenders can successfully re-enter mainstream society without recidivating and going back to prison. Many offenders who are incarcerated will at some point attempt to rejoin society, therefore it necessary for their reintegration to be successful for the sake of public safety (Michigan Legislature 2012). A way to make prisoner re-entry successful is to educate offenders and provide job training. Educating offenders and job training will provide released offenders with an alternative to crime as a means of making a living (Michigan Legislature 2012). If released offenders are educated and have necessary skills that employers are seeking, they will be better prepared to re-enter society and do so successfully.

The State of Michigan has been successful in general at reducing recidivism rates due to the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Program (Michigan Legislature 2012). This is a positive

declaration backed by statistics that show the rate of parole revocation in the State of Michigan in 2011 is at the lowest it has been since 1987 (Michigan Legislature 2012).

Snyder's approach to successful prisoner re-entry is to start working with offenders on the first day of their sentence, not the last few and hope they do well. It is Snyder's hope that if offenders start to prepare for community reintegration when they are sentenced, they will have a higher likelihood of success in their re-entry process.

Evaluation of Public Safety Plan as Submitted by Governor Rick Snyder

Introduction

The plan as submitted by Governor Snyder states that homicide crimes in FDPS cost Michigan tax payers around \$1.6 billion. This staggering bill is only a small part the financial difficulties that low income families can face in these four these areas. When money becomes an issue, some individuals resort to crime. When crime is concentrated into pocket areas like FDPS, the cities involved, and those in the surrounding community, become dangerous. Snyder's plan for public safety lays a strong foundation to help stop the violence in FDPS, and allow Michigan as whole to become safe and prosperous once more.

Parole

The large number of parolees in Michigan presents a potential threat to public safety. The threat is increased in areas like FDPS where 46% of the state's parolees reside. Along with a high percentage of parolees in FDPS, these areas will likely see a high rate of parolee recidivism. The high rate of parolee recidivism is contributed to technical violations, instead of new crimes (Seiter and Kadela 2003, 380). With such a high concentration of released offenders, public safety will become a concern for citizens when the majority of released offenders recidivate.

Parole revocation is a method of holding offenders accountable, especially where there is a shortage of community supervision officers. If there are not enough parole officers available to supervise parolees, then it is more likely that parolees will recidivate due to lack of supervision. The purpose of community supervision is to ensure offenders are obeying the law and dictates of their parole sentence. During community supervision, the parole officer is charged with keeping track of their parolee's behaviors. If there is a lack of supervision officers, offenders will have more opportunities to recidivate.

Prison Overcrowding

The literature collected states that a concern in the criminal justice field is prison overcrowding. When there are too many offenders in a prison, tax payer money needed to fund prisoner increases. In addition, when there is limited room in detention facilities to house more criminals the question of what to do with the offenders becomes an issue. As emphasized in Snyder's section on Secure Cities Partnership, a big concern in some communities is where to house criminals due to limited space to house them such and jails or prisons (Michigan Legislature 2012). In many cases offenders who are considered non-violent are released back onto the streets instead of being placed in detention facilities. This does help decrease the problem of prison overcrowding, but it does not help keep the public safe.

To address the concern of limited jail space for criminals in Flint, Snyder would like to see more money allotted to the region to build more jails. In 2011, the Michigan State Legislature gave the region \$1 million dollars to create more space to house criminals. Even though the \$1 million dollars was sent and is doing its job to create jail space, more is needed. The governor is doing the right thing by seeing an action that has been successful and wanting to build on it by requesting \$4.5 million to be sent to Flint alone to get criminals off the streets. There is little doubt that the extra \$4.5 million dollars would go a long ways to help create jail space. While the public may agree that more mail space is necessary and would be okay with spending taxpayer money on new facilities, there are a few details that could still be provided. First, it would be good to know how many detention facilities will be built and how many offenders could be housed in each. The public would be more enthused if they understand exactly how the money would be spent.

Too Many Parole Conditions

FDPS alone report 46% of Michigan's parolees reside in these four hotspots (Michigan Legislature 2012). In areas like this where almost half of the state's employees reside, it is important to an adequate number of parole officers stationed there to hold offenders accountable for their actions. Offenders that are on parole are expected to follow the law and conditions of their community supervision. When they break the law or their parole conditions it is up to the parole officer to hold them accountable for their actions even if that means sending the released offender back to prison.

However, it is impossible for FDPS to hold all of their offenders accountable if there are not enough parole officers to supervise the parolees. Snyder is taking a step in the right direction by creating an initiative that would place a Michigan Department of Corrections parole officer into law enforcement agencies FDPS. His plan under Holding offenders Accountable is to “embed a Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) parole officer into each of the local law enforcement agencies that covers these four targets” (Michigan Legislature 2012). The plan is a good idea, however as it is presented there are questions that come up.

First, since the plan is to place a *single* parole officer in the “local law enforcement agencies that covers these four targets” the public needs to know exactly how many agencies that there are. If the Governor supplied the number of law enforcement agencies, then the public would know how many parole officers would be present to supervise parolees. It is also important for the public to understand how many parolees are in these four areas. The report says that 46% of Michigan’s parolees reside in FDPS, but the public does not know what the actual numbers are. The public is left to wonder if there are hundreds or thousands of parolees. Keeping the public safe entail allaying the public’s fears and it is impossible to do that if there are not concrete statistics given besides a percent that can mean anything.

Even if the jails are built and can house many offenders, there will always be more individuals brought into the jail. Some of these individuals may be first time offenders, but most of them will be repeat offenders. “After release, if the offender is under supervision, there is zero tolerance for drug use, technical violations, and minor criminal behavior. If a violation occurs, the offender is returned to prison” (Seiter and Kadela 2003, 364).

Education

The literature shows that one the largest factors working against offenders in the reintegration process is education. “One major obstacle is limited education achievement” (Rakis 2005, 8). Without the basic education, offenders will not be able to find suitable employment to afford a place to live, the bare essential like food and clothing, or necessary medication for preexisting medical and physical conditions. This is emphasized in Snyder’s Public Safety Plan when he addresses his vision of crime prevention.

For Governor Snyder, to reduce the level of crime and increase crime prevention the youth need to be the focus of education. He believes it is important to create new paths for the

younger generations by opening up doors to careers and lives outside of their communities. Creating New Paths for Young People, according to Governor Snyder, would expose the youth to opportunities beyond their native communities (Michigan Legislature)

To further his stance on educating the youth, the governor would like to see truancy decrease. According to the Public Safety Plan, the youth who are not at school consistently have higher rates of criminal behavior. Besides wanting to see an increase in social workers placed at elementary schools to identify children coming from disadvantaged or neglected households, the governor would like to see a large rule to be changed. As it stands, the law makes it mandatory that children between the ages of sixteen and eighteen must attend school. The governor would like to see the mandatory school attendance ages to include all ages. His belief is that targeting only ages sixteen through seventeen allows the others to fall through the cracks. In this Snyder may be right. The Public Safety Plan states that children who consistently miss school have higher rates of criminal behavior, if that is true then it is necessary to target all school age children. By the time children reaches ages sixteen through seventeen they have already been heavily influenced by their peers, both good and bad.

Not only would encompassing all ages in mandatory attendance allow for children of impoverished and neglected homes be identified, it would also allow the children to have an increased chance of employment in the future. In order to gain meaningful employment in the future they will need to have the basic skills and knowledge to hold a job. If children fifteen and younger consistently miss school, they will risk falling behind their peers, potentially causing them to become discouraged and give up, opening the door for negative influences.

Employment

Investing in the community will go a long way to decrease the rate of crime. In areas such as FDPS, where there is little opportunity for employment, criminal activity will be on the rise. As stated in the literature, employment is one of the factors that prevent offenders from successfully reintegrating into mainstream society. Lack of employment is not to be blamed solely on limited businesses and job availability. Lack of employment can also be blamed on citizens not have the basic skills and knowledge needed to obtain and retain employment (Rakis 2005, 9). Citizens who do not have the minimum skills and knowledge needed to gain employment they will not get the job. If offenders or citizens in general do not have a strong

history of employment or possess the necessary job skills, employment opportunities will decrease.

Snyder's Community Ventures Initiative is a good start to address the employability of citizens, including offenders, in FDPS. The mission of the Community Ventures Initiative has two objectives. First they will determine which employers would be willing to create new jobs. Second, they will locate organizations that can and are willing to provide job training to community members who are unemployed. To gain inspiration for the program, the Snyder Administration can study the Preventing Parolee Crime Program in California which looks for the barriers that are preventing individuals from gaining employment and identify where an offender has skills or interest (Zhang, Roberts, and Callanan 2006, 554). While the PPCP is targeting only parolees there is the potential to use it as inspiration and create a similar program for all citizens. If offenders and non-offenders have increased chances of employment, crime rates will decrease.

One strong point of Snyder's plan is that he is not targeting on portion of the population, instead he is targeting everyone. The safety of Michigan is not only at risk when released offenders are unemployed but also when public safety and forensic science lab positions remain unfilled. His goal is make Michigan a safer place for everyone and one way of doing that is to address the population of Michigan as a whole as current offenders are not the only ones who present a danger to the public. In addition, the plan will also allow for more individuals to be trained and work for the CJS to address crime. An increase in CJS workers, the more effective and efficient the system will become due to cases being solved at a faster pace and less backlogging.

Snyder's Public Safety Plan addresses the training of more forensic science labs help the CJS by having more employees available to address crime. If forensic science labs are left understaffed, crimes will take a longer time to be solved. The more forensic science lab technicians there are the more cases can be solved at a quicker rate.

Forensic science labs are not the only group of professionals that can have a drastic effect on the safety of the public. Fire and emergency responders play a large role in public safety as they are the first ones on a crime scene. In areas like FDPS where many fire and emergency responders are seeing layoffs, time is lost assessing the scene and apprehending suspects. If Snyder is successful with his plan, fire and emergency responders could become more efficient

in addressing their emergency calls with the implementation of an advisory board similar to CLEAR to reinvent fire and emergency response.

Drugs

As the literature presented shows, drugs are a common problem when it comes to reintegration. While offenders are in a detention facility they are less likely to get a hold of addictive substances (Harrison 2001, 464). Then when offenders are released from detention facilities and back into mainstream community, they usually return to the community they came from (Harrison 2001, 464). When they are back into their native community, they are subject to the same influences that encouraged substance use and criminal behavior (Harrison 2001, 464). Drug courts, courts designed to provide treatment for offenders with drug problems have become a way to address those problems and reduce offender recidivism.

High, Risk- High, Needs Drug Court Drug courts have already been proven successful in decreasing the recidivism rates of participants in the program. This success is possible because drug courts look at drugs as a symptom not a cause. If drug addictions and crimes are to be corrected, it is necessary to look beyond the immediate problem and address the underlying reasons causing offenders to become addicted to illegal substances.

In his public safety plan, Snyder would like to see money allotted to the drug courts for the offenders, not for the court. The money allotted to for each offender's treatment would be spent on:

- Intensive drug treatment
- Intensive outpatient treatment
- Alcohol treatment and monitoring
- Specific staff to work with participants in the drug courts who require a higher level of supervision than their counterparts.

These components of substance abuse treatment form a strong foundation for helping offenders with their addictions. Also, the goal for the amount of money allotted being given to the offender's treatment and not the court is good because it will in theory provide treatment for the offenders with addictions. Although the goal is a good one and should be followed through there is a question in concerns to the money allotment. The goal says the money goes to offender treatment and not the court, there will need to be a way to prove that the money is being spent the way it is attended. It would be prudent for the Governor to devise a way to track the allotted

money and the treatments the offenders are receiving to ensure the offenders are being treated as planned.

Drug Courts are an effective means of dealing with individuals who have been apprehended in drug crimes. However, once these individuals have reached the drug courts it can be too late to do anything for the individual should they prove incapable of rehabilitation. One way to limited the number of drug crimes is to keep up with designer drugs, drugs that are cause problems for the community because they are created to get around the law (Michigan Legislature 2012). When new laws are passed concerning illegal drugs such as, the newest one to be blacklisted, a designer drug has been created. Snyder believes that in order to combat the threat posed by designer drugs is identify them quicker. The plan states that it want to identify designer drugs, but there is little indication of how they will identify designer drugs before they can become a public danger. In addition, the Public Safety Plan is not clear in what it classifies as an imminent public danger. All drugs, prescription or otherwise come with warnings, what makes prescription drugs safe and other not?

Finally there is the issue of prescription drug trafficking. In contrast to designer drugs, the prescription drugs are legal. When these legal drugs are sold and used for illegal purposes they pose a threat to the public. LARA as described in the Public Safety Plan uses an electronic tracking system to keep tabs on prescription drug trafficking. Act 44 of 2012, which will help monitor the distribution of prescription drugs will help catch those responsible for the trafficking of legal drugs. The Public Safety Plan does not indicate whether LARA has been successful in its attempts to track prescription drug trafficking. If it is showing success, the public has not knowledge of whether LARA is successful or how the organization goes about pinpointing who is involved in trafficking.

Mental Health

Snyder's decision to investigate the mentally ill in the criminal justice system is sound. With Michigan not having mental health hospitals, offenders with mental illnesses will enter the CJS and run the risk of not receiving adequate treatment. Previous studies indicate that between 15%-24% of U.S. inmates show signs of mental illnesses (Baillargeon, Binswanger, Penn, Williams, and Murray 2009, 103). As mental illnesses are prevalent in the CJS it is vital that

their needs be addressed. By studying the impact that the mentally ill have on the CJS, it is possible to learn trends that exist between a specific mental illness and crime.

For example, a study has shown that prisoners with psychotic disorders whether they were schizophrenic or not, committed more homicides (Baillargeon, Binswanger, Penn, William, and Murray 2009, 105). If studies are conducted to see which mental illnesses are most often associated with a particular crime, the CJS will have a better understanding of how to treat these offenders. Not only will there be an understanding of what crimes are most likely to occur based on mental illness, but a study could lead to more knowledge of mental illness and how they affect the individual. If there is understanding of the mental illnesses and the side effects, and how they relate to criminal behavior, the CJS will be in a better spot to offer treatment. Snyder's long-term plan, which will be created by the MDCH and the CJS, will work towards providing better treatment options for offenders with mental illnesses. The plan as stated earlier will:

- Improve mental health services
- Create diversion programs
- Improve inmate management
- Ensure information is shared across the field

These four components will be vital to working with mentally ill patients. As there are not mental health hospitals, it is necessary to develop services for citizens, offender or not, who struggle with a mental illnesses. There is also the need to have programs that can help offenders work with their condition so that it does not hinder them in the community. For present a danger to the public.

Improving inmate management within the prisons is necessary if mentally ill offenders are to stand a chance of community reintegration upon their release from their detention facility. Finally, the best way to address the impact that mental health issues have of the CJS and public safety in general, is to make sure that knowledge about the disorders is known to all entities across the criminal justice field.

His request to invest more money into the pilot mental health courts in Michigan is also a step towards helping this select group of offenders. The pilot mental health courts, which are modeled after drug courts, work with offenders to provide treatment. Participation in drug courts is optional for offenders. For those who volunteer, a treatment plan is created that is unique to

the individual. In the mental health courts there is no 'one size fits all' syndrome. Every offender is different, and therefore treatment plans for their mental illness should also be unique. In addition, not everyone responds to the same treatment in the same way. This method will allow mentally ill offenders to work with a treatment that was designed specifically for them to work with their strengths. Increasing funding for these courts will allow more mentally ill offenders to receive necessary treatments. Hopefully, these pilot courts will continue to be a success and become a permanent fixture of the CJS.

Looking Forward

Currently the potential effect the Public Safety Plan will have on offender recidivism or crime rates in general is speculation as only parts of the plan are being implemented. The sections of the plan that are being implemented are either in their planning stages or just getting started with their programs. With only plans and the beginnings of programs existing right now, there is no concrete evidence of how the Public Safety Plan will affect recidivism. Even though the Governor would like to see the entire Public Safety Plan implemented, it is possible that sections of it can still be effective.

Once pieces of the plan have been implemented it will be intriguing to see how crime rates are effective. After implementation of parts of Snyder's plan, studies can be conducted to see if crime prevention is doing what it supposed to, prevent crime. If the studies show that the level of crime has decreased then it would prove that the Public Safety Plan is effective and more pieces should be implemented. However, if the crime rates do not decrease, or decrease minimally, adjustments can be made to the plan to ensure effectiveness.

Closer inspection could show how much the plan affects the factors working against offender reintegration. Some of the sections may prove more effective than others and should have more monetary investment than others that have little effect. The sections that have little effect on recidivism should still receive funding because they have an effect. However, these sections that show some improvement should be evaluated closely to see what necessary adjustments are needed in order to make them stronger. Once the sections have been tweaked and show higher success rates, monetary support can increase. As more sections of the plan are implemented or revoked, studies can show how recidivism rates are being affected if at all.

Conclusion

This study is relevant to public administration because administrators and policymakers are the individuals creating and implementing laws surrounding prison sentencing, and offender reentry and reintegration. As studies have shown, there are problems with the current methods of prisoner reintegration. Problems with probation, parole, employment, education, health, and housing all affect the reintegration chances of offenders. Addressing these factors is mandatory in order for offenders to reenter society and reintegrate into the community.

Although it can be a daunting task to address these factors considering the large number of released offenders entering the community every year, it is not impossible. Administrators need to take inspiration from SVORI, Step-Down and PPCP. These groups have taken on the challenge, created, and enhanced programs to address the factors working against offender reentry and reintegration.

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder has also seen the need to improve some of these factors in his state, especially in Flint, Detroit, Pontiac, and Saginaw. In his Public Safety Plan, this was proposed to the Michigan Legislature March 8, 2012, not only addresses offenders but also the community as a whole. Even though his entire plan is not relevant to the literature collected, it still highlights the same barriers that affect offender reentry. Furthermore, it shows how those barriers that prevent offender reintegration also affect the community as a whole and can create new criminals.

Studying the factors that work against offenders in the reintegration process as well as programs and public safety plans that have been created to address recidivism, policy-makers and CJS experts can start to make adjustments to remove some of the barriers. Thus far studies have been conducted that show elements such as education, mental health, parole itself, and employment play a large role in offender recidivism. If policy-makers and CJS experts study how SVORI, Step-Down, PPCP, and Snyder's Public Safety Plan address these barriers, it is conceivable that more programs can be created using these four anti-recidivism programs for inspiration.

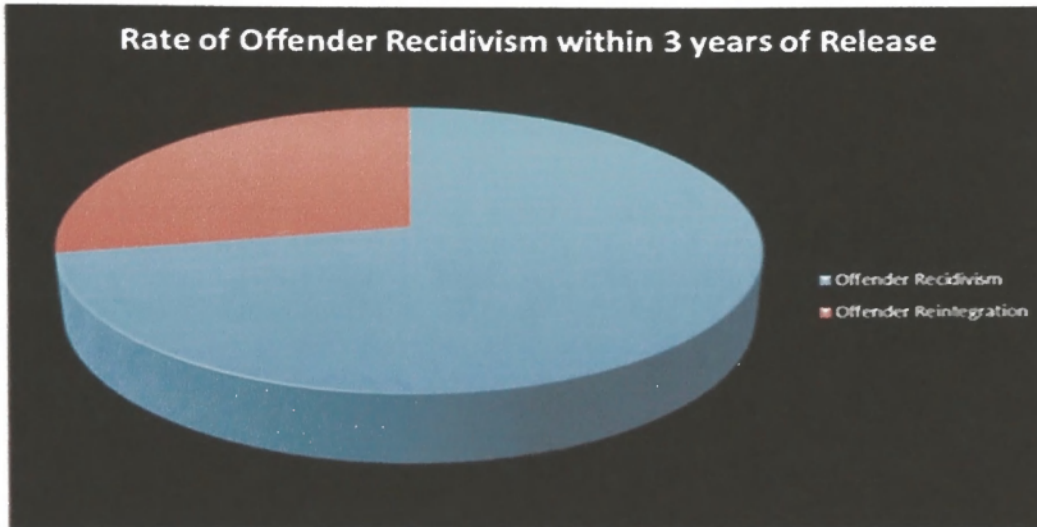
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Appendix

Rate of Recidivism Pie Chart



According to the article, “Improving the Employment Rates of Ex-Prisoners under Parole” by John Rakis, two-thirds of the total number of released offender nation-wide will return to prison within three years. Below is a pie chart to put the statistic in perspective. The chart below depicts the rate of recidivism of 600,000 released offenders (Rakis 2005, 7).