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Prison Programs to Reduce Recidivism: What is the Ideal Structure of an
Inmate Reentry Program?

by

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ABSTRACT

In the United States' correctional system, inmate programs within prisons often do not reduce recidivism. Recent surveys have shown that across the country many prisons have a form of a Prison Based Animal Program (PAP). This study examines the effect that Prison based Animal Programs have on reducing recidivism through their therapeutic effects, focusing specifically on identifying the best practices for structuring such programs and measuring outcomes, for which there is little research. The research is based on a review of journal articles, industry reports, and a case study of a PAP. The analysis incorporates the shift in emphasis from retribution to restoration in current views of correctional facilities. This research points to the value of increasing adoption of PAPs because of their effects on reducing recidivism. The literature review starts with the definition of recidivism and the difficulties with measuring it. It then examines the current state of the prison industry and the two philosophies of correctional facilities – punitive and rehabilitative. It moves on to an assessment of PAPs, their types, leading operating practices, associated performance measures, their benefits and risks, as well as the funding challenges they face. Following this literature review and research analysis, recommendations are formulated regarding the use of PAPs across federal and state prisons. These programs typically survive on community volunteers and donations and occasionally grants, and therefore a more stable funding source, such as from federal or state governments, would be merited. Grants designed specifically for PAP programs should be created. Through an analysis of the available literature on the prison industry, on other prison programs aimed at reducing recidivism, and on current PAPs, the ideal structure of a prison-oriented program is developed. The conclusions drawn from this research will aid in the strategic recommendations for a BA Honors Business Strategy Capstone client in spring term 2016.

INTRODUCTION (DEFINING PRISON BASED ANIMAL PROGRAMS)

Few researchers have examined the benefits of Prison-based Animal Programs (PAPs) for prisoners, the animals, and the community. In this context, community is defined as the immediate neighborhood in which the prisoners will live once they released from prison. According to Strimple (2003), inmates benefit from learning life-enhancing skills, and communities benefit by lower recidivism rates (Strimple, 2003). This is an important finding given how many people are incarcerated in the US. This number grew steadily for nearly 30 years, through 2008; recently it has been slowly decreasing, but as of 2012, there were still over 2 million people incarcerated in prisons and jails across the country (James, 2015). The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) reports that since 1990, an average of 590,400 inmates have been released annually from state and federal prisons and that almost 5 million ex-offenders are under some form of community-based supervision (James, 2015). The BJS's most recent study on recidivism showed that within five years of release nearly three-quarters of ex-offenders released in 2005 came back into contact (committed a crime) with the criminal justice system, and more than half returned to prison after either being convicted for a new crime or for violating the conditions of their release (James, 2015).

Scholars of public policy and government officials continue to debate how to rehabilitate individuals held in American correctional facilities (Esperian, 2010). Correctional facilities are often seen as places of punishment. The question remains whether such punishment is beneficial to the inmate and the community? I would argue

that correctional facilities should not only punish but also rehabilitate these inmates. This rehabilitation can take the form of education programs to reform them in a way that inmates can become law-abiding citizens contributing to the welfare of the community and society (Esperian, 2010).

Currently 60% of prison inmates cannot read above sixth grade level, this could be an indicator of a major reason for their criminal activity. They have often tested at the lowest levels of educational achievement, and display the highest levels of illiteracy and educational disability of any segment in our society (Esperian, 2010: 320). Offender reentry can include all the activities and programming conducted to prepare prisoners to return safely to the community and to live as law-abiding citizens. Some ex-offenders, however, eventually end up back in prison (James, 2015).

The value of increasing emphasis on recidivism-focused programs, will go hand in hand with the shift in emphasis from retribution to restoration in current views of corrections. Increasing research into PAPs will support not only the perception but the role of prisons as centers of rehabilitations and not just punishment. PAP programs challenge inmates to train and prepare a dog to go into someone's home. However, the minimal education attainment of inmates will be one factor to be considered when structuring a PAP.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review discusses three critical aspects of this thesis. First, I will look at the current state of the prison industry and the history of prison programs. Second, I will examine the reentry programs for prisoners and their effectiveness in reducing recidivism. In examining reentry programs, I will focus on the types of programs that exist currently, how they are funded and what the public's view of them is. As noted above, there appears to be a shift in perception of prisons as centers of rehabilitation, not just punishment. I also will look at program structure, assessing the characteristics of the most effective programs.

Third, I will examine Prison Animal-based Programs (PAPs) and specifically how these types of programs are a form of rehabilitation for inmates by providing them with a marketable skill set—dog-training—to use when looking for a job after they are released from prison. This type of rehabilitation can provide them with a possibility to obtain a job that pays a livable wage and deter them from returning to criminal activities. PAPs serve as a form of rehabilitation for prisoners and to reduce recidivism, benefiting the community.

To begin this discussion it is important to establish the working definition of recidivism that will be used throughout the rest of the thesis.

What is Recidivism?

Recidivism is a return to criminal behavior after release. The effectiveness of corrections is often measured by the rates of recidivism (Esperian, 2010: 320). Within three years, 50%-70% of inmates who have been released are incarcerated again (James, 2015). Among the factors that affect recidivism rates are socio-economic status, effectiveness of post release supervision, length of incarceration, the severity and seriousness of the crime committed, and educational attainment of the individual (Esperian, 2010). Statistics support the claim that educating prisoners contributes to the reduction of recidivism. In various studies conducted within prisons involving two groups (one group experiencing the intervention and the other being a control group), members of the group, which participated in some type of vocational or academic program, experienced lower rates of recidivism than members of the control group (Esperian, 2010).

Nathan James offers another view of recidivism in his report for the Congressional Research Service (James, 2015). In this report, James defines recidivism as the “re-arrest, reconviction, or re-incarceration of an ex-offender within a given time frame” (James, 2015: 1). James argues that the definition of recidivism can affect how recidivism is measured. As anticipated, he found that the broader the definition of recidivism, the higher the measured recidivism. Reflecting a broad definition of recidivism, most studies include technical violations of an offender’s parole or probation (James, 2015). James argues that

there are two competing philosophies about what recidivism should mean. The first philosophy states that any new contact with the criminal justice system, no matter how minor, should be considered recidivism on the part of an ex-offender. On the other hand, the alternative philosophy argues that recidivism should be more narrowly defined as the commission, by an ex-offender of a new crime, resulting in a new sentence. What one includes in the definition of recidivism has a substantial impact on the rate of recidivism reported (James, 2015). Defining what recidivism is and how to measure it is therefore of key importance when discussing prison reentry programs.

After discussing the varying definitions of recidivism, James analyzes the difficulties of studying recidivism. The first difficulty arises with tracking it. Recidivism involves following the cases of individuals for a number of years and relying on state or national-level data sets that contain inherent inaccuracies (James, 2015). This becomes difficult when individuals cross state lines requiring the consultation of the FBI's master database of convictions (James, 2015). One key claim James and Esperian both make is that the longer released prisoners went without being rearrested, the less likely they were to be rearrested (James, 2015; Esperian, 2010; James, 2007). This can be evidence of their abstinence from any criminal activity.

In addition to the difficulty with measuring recidivism, the costs of recidivism continue to increase and become a larger share of state budgets. Recidivism has an enormous financial toll on society, incarceration costs are so high that even a small reduction in recidivism could easily produce budgetary savings that outweigh the costs of reentry programming (Bloom, 2006). According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the average per prisoner cost of incarceration in state prison in 2010 was approximately \$28,000 per year, and in 2012 it averaged to \$31,286 (James, 2015: p.1; James, 2007; Henrichson and Delaney, 2012: 70). Christian Henrichson, and Ruth Delaney (2012) surveyed 40 states representing more than 1.2 million inmates (of 1.4 million total people incarcerated in all 50 state prison systems), the total per-inmate cost averaged to \$31, 286 and ranged from \$14,603 in Kentucky to \$60,076 in New York (Henrichson and Delaney, 2012: 70). As a result of high costs state correctional facilities seek to

reduce their inmate populations and costs while protecting the public safety, and effective inmate reentry programs can help accomplish this (Henrichson and Delaney, 2012). More than 15 states have engaged in “Justice Reinvestment,” a comprehensive data-driven process that identifies opportunities to reduce prison costs and reinvest the resulting savings into projects for the reduction of recidivism (Henrichson and Delaney, 2012). Kansas and Texas have used the Justice Reinvestment approach, resulting in an overall state budget reduction of 1.5 percent (Henrichson and Delaney, 2012: 71).

The Prison Industry

The Correctional Facilities industry owns, manages and leases prisons, community correctional facilities and juvenile detention centers on behalf of government agencies. Currently Corrections Corporation of America with 36.8% of the market, and The GEO Group Inc. with 27.5% dominate the market share. Only 30 states allow the private operation of correctional facilities; the remaining 20 prohibit this ownership structure due to issues with overcrowding, security, prisoner treatment and rehabilitation and ethical issues surrounding profiting from crime (O’Hollaren, 2015). There have been recent controversies involving riots over poor sanitation and the lack of adequate healthcare for inmates. These incidents have raised further questions regarding the human rights records of private prisons (O’Hollaren, 2015). The revenue of this industry is \$4.9 billion dollars annually with a profit of \$640.9 million (O’Hollaren, 2015). Decreasing crime and incarceration rates and increased scrutiny have resulted in marginal growth rates for the industry in recent years. From 2010-2015, the industry grew just 2%, and it is expected to grow 1.7% in the next five years (O’Hollaren, 2015). The profit margins decreased from 14.1% in 2011 to 12.3% in 2015. In 2015, the crime rate in the US decreased by 1.1% and the incarceration rate fell 0.4%. The ultimate cause of the decreasing crime rates is unknown, but the decrease in incarceration rates can be attributed to a conscious effort by the US government to reduce overcrowding in prisons. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the percentage of state prisoners in private custody fell from 7.2% in 2012 to

6.8% at the end of 2014 (O'Hollaren, 2015). Unless the industry is able to demonstrate to the public and policymakers that it provides humane care for inmates their revenue will continue to fall at an increased rate.

The majority of the facilities are located in the southwest and southeast part of the US, with Texas, Florida, and Georgia being the largest players housing about 75% of the private establishments. However, when it comes to population, the West (California) has 4% of the establishments and about 17% of the inmate population. Private correctional facilities charge fixed per diem rates based on occupancy, the reduction in the inmate population reduces demand for their services and increases their fixed costs. This was the cause of the decreasing profit margins. Public scrutiny is an important factor because of the number of controversies surrounding treatment of inmates. In the coming five years, the industry revenue is expected to continue to decline at an annualized rate of 0.2% the decline is a result of the continued falling incarceration rates (O'Hollaren, 2015). Private correctional facilities earn all of their revenue from contracts with federal and state governments, thus government consumption and investment affect the demand in the industry (O'Hollaren, 2015).

Most former prisoners experience difficulty finding a job after release, many lose work skills and are given little opportunity to gain useful work experience (Visher, et al., 2008). The availability of job training programs in prison has declined in recent years (Visher et al., 2008). In 2005, 40% of state and federal prisoners had neither a high school diploma nor a GED program (Visher, et al., 2008). Because finding a job is an important goal for released inmates, the most useful programs and services are job training (Visher, et al., 2008). Employment is an important component of the reentry process, because having a job provides a sense of structure and responsibility to former prisoners. Those without previous work experience are the most vulnerable to go back to prison (Visher, et al., 2008). In 2008, Visher et al. conducted a study to observe the amount of time it took for released prisoners to find a job. From his study he concluded that individuals with weak employment and educational histories needed additional assistance to find a job (Visher, et

al., 2008). The respondents who held a prison job and those who participated in job training programs had better employment outcomes after release and were interested in participating in community programs to further improve their work skills (Visher, et al., 2008). Visher's (2008) findings highlight the important of prerelease programs designed to provide inmates with marketable skills to integrate back into the community and find a job with a livable wage (Visher, et. al, 2008). There is a relationship between wages and recidivism: released inmates who made more than \$10 per hour were half as likely to return to prison than those making less than \$7 per hour (Visher, et. al, 2008). While finding and maintaining employment is only one among a number of challenges for returning former prisoners, it has an enormous impact on avoiding recidivism.

Reentry Programs

Prison reentry programs fit into three main categories: jobs in the prison setting; short-term vocational training in prison; and short-term assistance in the job search process upon release (Bushway, 2003). Other programs merge two categories, most commonly providing training inside prison along with job search assistance outside of prison. Prison programs provide: a form of rehabilitation for the inmate; they can help manage the population by occupying the time of the inmates; aid in the operation of the prison; possibly generate new revenue; and provide a way for prisoners to “pay back” their debt to society (Bushway, 2003). The question to be answered is whether any of these will reduce recidivism; the answer often given is “MAYBE” (Bushway, 2003).

In a report for the Congressional Research Service, Nathan James, an analyst in Crime Policy, outlines prison reentry programs and the risk factors for recidivism (James, 2015). Ex-offenders are less educated, less likely to be gainfully employed, and more likely to have a history of mental illness or substance abuse—all of which have been shown to be risk factors for recidivism (James, 2015). Approximately 1 in every 107 adults in the US is incarcerated in some type of correctional institution. Twenty-three percent of federal prison inmates, 31% of state prison inmates, and 37% of jail inmates reportedly have a

disability, with mental and learning disabilities reported in significant numbers (Huss, 2013). The prevalence of disabilities in the incarcerated population is 2 to 3 times as high as that of the household working population (Huss, 2013).

According to Nathan James (2015), there are three facets associated with offender reentry programs: programs that take place during incarceration, which aim to prepare offenders for their eventual release, programs that take place during offenders' release period, which seek to connect ex-offenders with the various services they may require, and long-term programs that take place as ex-offenders permanently reintegrate into their communities, which attempt to provide offenders with support and supervision (James, 2015; James, 2007). Work programs can include a range of services such as job-readiness classes, vocational education, GED certification, job training, and job placement (Cullen et al., 1990). The design of these programs is important because it allows for the observance of the factors that make these programs work. For example there is a difference in the needs of inmates with previous work experience and those who do not have any. For those inmates with no prior work experience, community-employment programs will be more effective once their needs are identified and linked to specific services (Cullen et al., 1990).

In the 1990s, a new generation of community employment programs for ex-offenders emerged, which were run by nonprofit organizations working closely with the criminal justice system. Employment programs targeting a reduction in recidivism must help inmates with basic life skills such as: job readiness, social support, job-placement assistance, and continued support after a job is secured (Cullen et al., 1990). There is a wide array of offender reentry program designs, and these programs can differ significantly in range, scope, and methodology. Work programs are common in prison, but they are not necessarily designed to reduce recidivism. Prison work programs have a multi-faceted mission and not all prison programs provide rehabilitation (Bushway, 2003). Jobs in prison either are on-site jobs or work programs in the community, and these types of jobs have been and remain very common. On-site programs such as working in the kitchen and preparing lunch for other inmates are present across the board, but work programs that try

to directly address reentry and rehabilitation, whether by offering more structure or creating connections between the prison and community programs, often face substantial interference from prison management (Bushway, 2003). In order for a prison work program to be effective, it must cause a large-scale change by focusing on changing an individual's preferences or fundamental orientation. A change in fundamental orientation refers to desistance (Bushway, 2003).

Researchers in the offender reentry field have suggested that the best programs begin during incarceration and extend throughout the release and reintegration process (James, 2015). Just as Esperian (2010) finds, James (2015) also observes the relative lack of highly rigorous research on the effectiveness of some reentry programs. James also makes note of an emerging "what works" literature which suggests programs focusing on work training and placement, drug and mental health treatment, and housing assistance have proven to be effective (James, 2015; James, 2007). This report further discusses the setup of prison reentry programs by discussing the government's involvement in them. The federal government's involvement in offender reentry programs typically occurs through grant funding, which is available through a wide array of federal programs at the Departments of Justice, Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services (James, 2015; James, 2007). It is important to note that only a handful of grant programs in the federal government are designed explicitly for offender reentry purposes. In response to this scarcity, the Department of Justice has started the Reentry Council to coordinate federal reentry efforts and advance effective reentry policies (James, 2015; James, 2007).

Education programs can emphasize academic, vocational and social education. Inmates who participate in prison education programs improve their capabilities for employment, and undergo a smoother transition back into society (Vacca, 2004). Effective education programs are those that help prisoners with their social skills, artistic development, and techniques and strategies to help manage their emotions, emphasizing these can lower recidivism (Ripley, 1993; Vacca, 2004). In addition to aforementioned skills, Ripley (1993) highlighted the importance of incorporating moral guidance, critical

thinking, problem solving and reasoning skills to reentry programs (Ripley, 1993; Vacca, 2004).

Inmates are more inclined to participate in programs where they see clear opportunities to improve their skills and capabilities (Vacca, 2004). Vocational programs experience success because they are kept separate from traditional prison routines, provide follow-up services for inmates once released, and provide marketable training skills (Vacca, 2004). Factors that determine the success of prison programs are influenced by the values and attitudes of those in charge of them (Vacca, 2004).

Perceptions of Prison-Oriented Programs

Esperian (2010) discusses the history of correction education programs and how the public views them. These views are both positive and negative. This work also discusses the current reentry prison programs and the opinions of participants. Corrections are characterized as places of punishment and retribution – not much rehabilitation. Current views reflect a pendulum swinging back to a preference for rehabilitation. Starting in the late 1960s, the public was concerned more about rising crime rates and thus they wanted corrections to move away from rehabilitation toward a greater concern for crime control (Esperian, 2013: 319). Currently the financial and human costs of retributive crime control policies are being reexamined. Some are questioning the justification of incarceration and surveillance and if they indeed have reduced crime. Esperian describes this as the retributive school of thought (Esperian, 2010: 320). According to Esperian, there are some who think that if you make prisons a nightmare the prisoners develop an inability and unwillingness to take responsibility for committing their crimes, they grow angrier and angrier about being treated like animals (Esperian, 2010: 322). The restorative justice is not what is sought, which is a type of rehabilitation for inmates.

Esperian (2010) provides interview data about the prison programs intended to prepare inmates for reentry into society. He conducts interviews with individuals in corrections work. From these interviews he observes a common denominator among them:

the appreciation for the need to create a positive outreach for felons through state-sponsored intervention programs and eliminating the barriers to this effort (Esperian, 2010: 327). One of his interviewees states the following: “The turnaround rate (recidivists) is high, and the reason, primarily, is their not being able to find jobs. In this sense education is a good idea because not working in a suitable job often results in hanging out with old friends and falling into the same bad habits” (Esperian, 2010). Members of the public and stakeholders of the prison industry, who are against programs like PAPs, argue that a person in prison does not deserve comfort or affection because he/she is being punished. However, those who are against reentry programs do not take into account that it is more cost effective to rehabilitate than punish inmates in a medium security prison, where offenders will be released in the near future. This is because during the inmate’s time in prison programs like PAPs can address the issues that put them in prison initially, and prevent recidivism, thus saving taxpayer money and creating safer communities (Turner, 2007; Vacca, 2004).

Funding for General Prison Programs

As prisons have withdrawn from direct service provision, they have increasingly called on non-governmental organizations to serve and care for ex-prisoners. There is a new industry emerging, the ‘prisoner reentry’ or ‘prisoner reintegration’ industry (Kaufman, 2015). NGO’s run voluntary and mandatory programming for the growing number of released prisoners: approximately 7.7 million in the United States (Kaufman, 2015). These programs are focused on modifying ex-prisoners’ cognitive processes, skills, resources, opportunities, rights, and group memberships (Kaufman, 2015). Other resources for prisoners are nonprofit organizations, which are funded by grants and donations, both of which are limited. The donations inflow to nonprofits could be increased if public awareness were raised about the need for rehabilitation and the positive payoff PAPs.

Prison-based Animal Programs

Prison-based animal programs (PAPs) incorporate animals into correctional facility programming. They are a prevalent type of prison program throughout the U.S. In 2006, of the 46 states that participated in a national survey, 36 states reported having PAPs at 159 sites (Bacci, 2014; Bacci, 2013; Furst, 2006). PAPs are implemented in the United States, Canada, and Australia, among other countries (Turner et al., 2007). The earliest PAP was a livestock care program in Wisconsin, established in 1885 (Furst, 2006). A cable television program called “Cell Dogs” broadcasted in 2004 increased the visibility of these types of programs. Some states have adopted the concept to a greater degree. The State of Washington, for example, has Animal Programs in all 12 of its correctional institutions and the State of Missouri has programs in 18 of its facilities. These programs conform to a philosophy of “restorative justice,” a philosophy that proponents claim needs to be adopted by all departments of correction (Huss, 2013). In a journal article by Mulcahy and McLaughlin (2013), the authors review the evidence of the benefits specifically offered by Prison-based Animal Programs. They began by looking at the current programs established in Australian correctional facilities. The PAPs in these facilities have received endorsements from key stakeholders and accolades in the media (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013). Their article provides a review of the literature surrounding PAPs. Mulcahy and Deidre’s findings highlight that PAPs vary in design and few are subjected to research and evaluation (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013). What currently is known about PAPs is that animals are used therapeutically in prisons and other settings. PAPs have intuitive value and have been associated with positive anecdotal reports, and they benefit the social integration of prisoners (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013). The social integration of prisoners includes abstaining from criminal behavior, achieving reasonable standards of health, and integrating into the community (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013). Their study makes the case for more extensive research in order to identify the program features that most commonly benefit prisoners. Further research into PAPs will serve as a guide for the introduction of

new PAPs with structures tailored to maximizing positive payoffs. There is a growing body of research that indicates a positive relationship between pet keeping and human health. Research has shown that within institutional settings such as hospital, nursing homes, and psychiatric institutions, animal programs have been associated with an improvement in social and/or disciplinary behavior of residents. Benefits include a reduction in anxiety, impassivity, and boredom (Furst, 2007). However these claims will only overcome scrutiny if PAPs are evaluated and supported by research evidence to substantiate the anecdotal claims (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013). Mulcahy and Deidre's study was based on an Internet search in July of 2011. They used the search terms: *prison, prisoner, inmate, offender and pet, pets, dog, dogs, animal, animals, therapy or programs and rehabilitate*. Their search identified 186 articles for review of which only 11 were significant to the topic of PAPs (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013). The variables most commonly examined across programs were the frequency of internal misconduct and/or post program recidivism. These variables were viewed as indicators of change, or rehabilitation, and the majority of studies indicated positive outcomes (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013). One of the missing parts of these PAPs studies is that while reporting a positive impact on program participants, they do not provide comparison data for non-program participants (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013). Because this PAP research only focused on recidivism and disciplinary behavior, other potential benefits have not received extensive consideration. The impact of psychological health on prisoners needs to be considered, as does the positive impact on prison culture.

Types of PAPs

PAP programs include a variety of animals such as dogs, horses, farm animals, wild animals, and other domesticated animals (Bacci, 2014). The primary animal involved in PAPs is dogs (66.2%). The community service design (40.4%) is the most common model of PAP that incorporates dogs. The next most common animals involved in PAPs are horses (12.7%) and cattle/cows (12.7%) (Furst, 2006). The different types of PAPs are visitation programs, wildlife rehabilitation programs, livestock care programs, pet adoption programs, service animal socialization programs, vocational programs (animal handling

and care only), community service programs, and multimodal programs (Furst, 2006; Huss, 2013). Visitation programs are those where companion animals are brought to the facility by an organization like the humane society, in wildlife rehabilitation programs inmates care for injured wildlife and get them ready to be released once healthy, and livestock care involves farm animals and milking, calf raising, and sometimes fish breeding (Furst, 2006; Huss, 2013). In vocational programs inmates are trained and certified in animal grooming, and multimodal programs have a vocational and community service component (Furst, 2006; Huss, 2013). The focal programs of this paper are 1) pet adoption programs, in which animals are adopted and cared for by inmate handlers; 2) service socialization program in which the inmates work with puppies and dogs to teach basic commands after which the animals will go on to specialized training; and 3) community service programs in which inmates train and care for animals that are adopted out to the community (Furst, 2006; Huss, 2013). The shelter and rescue organizations look for care, socialization and basic training for their dogs to make them more adoptable, and if they have an overflow they can use a PAP for their increased capacity (Huss, 2013). Another not very common type is training private client animals. In Northwest Indiana the Westville Correctional Facility working with the organization Mixed Up Mutts (MUM) has a general training program for animals from rescue organizations but also provided dog-training for the general public. They trained over 200 dogs belonging to the public (Huss, 2013). Also in three prisons in Indiana the Indiana Canine Assistance Network, ICAN, worked with the inmates to train dogs to act as service animals for children and adults with physical or developmental disabilities (Huss, 2013). Another type of PAP is having Facility animals. For these types of PAPs, cats are most commonly used, and they live their lives at the facility (Huss, 2013). In 2011, a sheriff in Lincoln County Nebraska adopted three cats for placement in the commons with about 20 inmates. The sheriff who instituted the program had considered a program for years (Huss, 2013).

Most PAPs have two clear emphases: therapeutic benefits to prisoners and preparing dogs for adoption. These emphases require different evaluative processes because they will target a different type of offender (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013).

Benefits of PAPs

One of the greatest benefits these animal programs have on inmates is therapy. These benefits have been concluded from anecdotal reports of already established programs (Deaton, 2005; Vacca, 2004; Fournier, 2007; Turner, 2007; Visser et al., 2008; Strimple, 2003; Furst, 2006). These benefits have been associated with lower recidivism rates, increased self-esteem, alleviation of loneliness, decreased in violent behavior, decrease in depression, decrease in anxiety, increase in social skills, responsibility and parenting skills (Huss, 2013; Strimple, 2003, Turner, 2007; Vacca, 2004; Merriam-Arduini, 2000). A program in Ohio reported inmate violence decreased as much as 50% over a five-year period. The Cell Dogs program found that in 13 states where programs are instituted the dog programs reduced violence by about 40%. Many programs state that the dogs have a calming effect and improve everyone's mood (Huss, 2013). A qualitative study conducted by Merriam-Arduini (2000) concluded that those inmates who participated in a PAP had considerable improvements in behaviors, specifically in areas of respect for authority, social interaction, leadership, improvement in honesty, empathy, self-confidence, and pride of accomplishment, and reported a zero recidivism rate (Merriam-Arduini, 2000; Bacci, 2014; Bacci, 2013). One program in Washington reports that the average 3-year recidivism rate in the state is 28% but it is only five percent for inmates that have participated in its PAP program (Huss, 2013). Another benefit for the inmates, in some institutions, is the pay for the program is better (\$2 per day) along with improved living conditions (Huss, 2013). A few inmates saw their participation in the PAP as a way to pay their debt back to society, in particular those inmates who trained service animals (Turner, 2007).

Due to the prevalence of disabilities among inmates, PAPS and service animals can be considered as an auxiliary aid for an inmate with a disability, and the ADA and Rehabilitation Act Section 504 requires correctional institutions to provide aids or services

if reasonable (Huss, 2013). For example, Monroe Correctional Complex Special Offender Unit established in 2006, houses mentally ill inmates in its PAP. The inmates provide foster care for young or feral kittens that need socialization and human context to be adoptable (Huss, 2013).

By working with dogs, inmates learn and develop patience, which is transferable to interactions with people. Patience is also developed through interactions with other inmates who kept asking the dog handlers about their dog and the program they were a part of (Turner, 2007). The program taught the inmates responsibility, and gave them parenting skills, which many will use to help re-establish their relationship with their children. Social skills, such as the inmates' abilities to relate to others, their compassion and communication were improved by belonging to the animal program (Turner, 2007). The inmate dog handlers feel this because of the level of trust instilled in them to fulfill the program's expectations and goals, which they have to live up to. Through this process they get challenged (Turner, 2007).

The improved social skills are complimentary to the increase in self-esteem (Turner, 2007; Vacca, 2004). The most cited benefit from qualitative studies is the improvement of the inmate's self-esteem, which is linked to increased responsibilities and the trust others have in them, especially that of the prison staff. The inmate dog handler's self-image benefits from the sense of accomplishment they receive when they successfully train their assigned dog (Turner, 2007; Vacca, 2004). All the skills and other psychological benefits affect the inmates' life outside of prison (Turner, 2007; Vacca, 2004).

For the correctional facility these programs can contribute to creating positive community relations created by the engagement of inmates in community service and the general atmosphere of the prison is improved (Deaton, 2005; Furst, 2006). The Kit Carson Correctional Center, a medium security prison in Colorado, developed a service dog-training program, which upon evaluation the program it was concluded it had enhanced the morale of inmates and staff at the institution, and led to a decrease in high blood pressure and anxiety (Turner, 2007). Other studies have cited a normalizing and

calming effect on the institutional setting of the prison. Working with dogs reminds inmates of home, the inmate handlers feel a sense of freedom because they get time away from other inmates. They can walk around and do not feel so controlled by the environment (Turner, 2007). If the inmate dog handlers live in a dorm, the stress levels in the dorm are decreased, as well as the number of conduct reports, thus helping the inmate's morale while easing stress (Turner, 2007).

For the community organization in charge of the program, these programs help broader social issues such as the rescue of animals and helping those with disabilities (Furst, 2006). Rescuing organizations can increase their capacity, and the animals in the program have increased adoptability (Turner, 2007; Huss, 2013). Programs focused on service dogs increases the number of dogs available for persons with disabilities. Dogs raised in prison settings have a higher success rate than puppies in typical service dog training programs. Moreover the length of time it takes to accomplish the initial service dog training in a correctional institution can be cut in half compared with foster homes in the community (Huss, 2013). The service dogs trained in correctional facilities are often given free of charge to those who need them the most (Huss, 2013; Turner, 2007).

Ethical Implications, Risks and Challenges

Each correctional facility must determine whether the benefits outweigh the challenges to maintain the program (Huss, 2013). The program needs to, at a minimum, meet the guidelines set by the American Veterinary Medical Association. These include providing veterinary care, appropriate training, exercise, and socialization (Huss, 2013). The animals need to thrive, not survive (Huss, 2013). Administrative support is key to the program's success. It is common for correctional facility staff to be hesitant in supporting the PAP, because they see it as a privilege for a prisoner to have a dog (this goes back to the punitive versus rehabilitative debate) and any changes in the administration are highly risky for an existing program within the prison (Huss, 2013).

The most common risks associated with PAPs are risks to inmates, such as biting. Other challenges are liability issues and ethical implications (Huss, 2013). Evaluating the risks involved with a prison-based animal program is fundamentally important for the program's success. The program's instituted policies need to ensure the safety of the participants to reduce the liability to the institutions and organizations involved (Huss, 2013). When companion animals are part of an environment the possibility of an injury exists. However, the ability of an inmate to successfully sue for such an injury is limited by a form of worker's compensation used when an inmate is injured during the course of a work program. Thus the inmate is barred from suit (Huss, 2013). Even if the incident falls outside the purview of a worker's compensation program there are still hurdles to a suit (Huss, 2013). There are few reported cases of inmates injured by animals in PAPs, and most of these are minor bites or scratches and have not resulted in reported litigation (Huss, 2013). The ownership of the animals is maintained by the rescue organization. However cases exist where the ownership of the dogs in the program was transferred to the correctional facility upon the dog's arrival on the premises, and upon the dog's release from the facility ownership was re-established to the rescue organization (Huss, 2013). This transfer of ownership alleviated insurance coverage issues, especially when it is cost prohibitive for the rescue organization's liability insurance to cover the dogs while they were in the program (Huss, 2013).

Funding

A universal challenge for these programs is consistent financial support (Huss, 2013). Donations and volunteers are the basis of most of the programs. Grants are used too (Huss, 2013). To solve the funding struggles, some programs have trained privately owned animals and sell dog beds made by the inmates (Huss, 2013). Training privately owned animals could be a source of income for the programs and provide inmate handlers with opportunities to hone their skills while dealing with members of the public. The complications with this type of program include: dealing with the negative impact of a

privately owned dog being injured during the animal's time in a program (Huss, 2013). Adoption fees are a source of revenue too (Huss, 2013).

Some states have engaged in justice reinvestment. In 2007 the Minnesota legislature allocated \$1.9 million in state funds to implement the Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (MCORP) (Duwe, 2012). Implemented in 2008, MCORP began the reentry process the moment inmates entered the correctional facility and enhanced the service delivery by increasing the extent to which offender's access employment, housing, and programming in the community (Duwe, 2012). Grant Duwe (2012), the director of Research and Evaluation for the Minnesota Department of Corrections, used a randomized experimental design to evaluate the effectiveness of the Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (MCORP), Duwe's study demonstrated that MCORP significantly improved employment rates, decreased homelessness, broadened offenders' systems of social support, and increased the extent to which offenders participated in community support programming (mentoring, restorative justice services, and faith-based programming). (Duwe, 2012). MCORP was effective in decreasing reoffending because it increased the extent to which offenders were employed, involved in community support programming, and able to develop systems of social support (Duwe, 2012; Bloom, 2006). The Second Chance Act of 2007 (Community Safety Through Recidivism Prevention) is a congressional attempt to provide transition services that will increase the chances that ex-offenders find work after release from prison, with its main goal: to lower recidivism rates (Weinman, 2007; Burt, 2010; Burt, 2014). It represents an investment in strategies to reduce recidivism and increase public safety and reduce corrections cost for state and local governments (Council of State Governments, 2015). The Second Chance Act provides federal grants to state, local and tribal government agencies and nonprofit organizations who provide a broad array of programs and services that enable an easier and smoother transition from prison to community (Weinman, 2007; Burt, 2010; Burt, 2014; Council of State Governments, 2015). These transitional services include job training, education

assistance, substance abuse counseling and treatment and mentoring program (Weinman, 2007; Burt, 2010; Burt, 2014). The Second Chance Act has funded programs that have served over 137,000 released inmates (Council of State Governments, 2015). In fiscal year 2015 the Second Chance Act provided \$68 million in funds, the same amount will be provided this year (Council of State Governments, 2015).

On February 18, 2015, the Bureau of Justice Assistance released the Second Chance Act Comprehensive Community-Based Adult Reentry Program Utilizing Mentors FY 2016 Competitive Grant Announcement (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) seeks high-quality mentoring programs that provides a solid foundation upon which effective mentoring approaches and programs are built. These characteristics include: “strong, formalized partnership between the mentoring organization, the department/entity responsible for the state/local/tribal correctional facility, and the individual correctional facility/facilities that are releasing the mentoring program participants”; demonstrated support for and commitment to the mentoring process, Clear policies and procedures that define the content of the mentoring program (based on adult learning theory and tailored to the needs of individuals), formal pre-service and in-service training for mentors on topics such as evidence-based offender management practices, methods to link individuals returning from incarceration to needed programs and services in the community, criminogenic needs and their relationship to the likelihood of recidivism, strategies to help hold individuals accountable in the community while supporting their participation in treatment, methods to promote behavioral change; ongoing data collection and evaluation systems and demonstrate a cost-effective program strategy which provides mentoring and other services to a minimum of 150 individuals returning from incarceration during the 3-year project period among many other requirements (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016: 5-6). It is a difficult and long process to obtain funding from this act but it is not impossible. There are other grants too, from foundations and associations such as the

American Humane Association, American Humane Association Meacham Foundation Memorial Grants, American Humane Association Second Chance Fund, and American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Equine Fund, and Animal Behavior Society Grants and Awards, and Animal Concerns. These latter grants are not specific to correctional facilities but are to the well-being of animals and showing that they will also benefit other community members will increase the chances of obtaining them (James, 2015).

Administrative and Policy Aspects of Programs

PAPs are attractive because of the benefits to the correctional institutions, inmates and animals. However, risks can be hard to overcome, but they are manageable with suitable training and policies. If properly structured, with the needs of the animals considered, these programs will have a positive impact. The correctional facility is responsible for assessing itself as an adequate place of a PAP. All of the parties involved need to ensure that each animal is being viewed as an individual to determine whether the facility is an appropriate placement for the animal (Huss, 2013).

Management and record keeping need to be established from the beginning. The program needs to have policies and procedures in place regarding all aspects of the animal's time in the facility. Record keeping will be conducted by the organization in charge of the PAP, the correctional facility, the volunteer trainers, and the inmate handlers. Having inmates assist with record keeping helps teach valuable skills. The inmates along with the volunteer trainers will keep record of the inmate handler's progress to help determine when the animal is ready for adoption or suitable for the next step of training as a service animal (Huss, 2013). All animals need to be sterilized to decrease birthrates and the animal's stress (spraying, marking or fighting) (Huss, 2013). The adoptions can be done through the correctional facility program itself rather than the respective local rescue organization (Huss, 2013).

Facility design

Another hardship faced by PAPs is the allocation of space. The space needs to allow for free movement for the animal and easy cleaning, as well as no sharp edges or gaps that can lead to injuries and ensuring that resting surfaces are comfortable soft and washable (Huss, 2013). If dealing with cats, vertical dimensions are important (Huss, 2013). Other things to consider are the heating, cooling and ventilation systems are being adequate so animals can maintain their body temperature (Huss, 2013). The visual environment, such as lighting, natural light and the ability to look outside via a window, and visual contact with other animals of the same species is important for the mental well being of the animal. Auditory and olfactory environments are important too (Huss, 2013). Housing the animals is not as difficult as it may seem. There are two options for them, living with the inmates in their cell or in a kennel (referring specifically to dogs) (Huss, 2013). The dogs each can have a crate in the dormitory/room where their inmate handler resides, and the handlers are allowed to take them outside for toileting at any time (Huss, 2013). The dogs need a secured fenced area for them to run (Huss, 2013).

Inmate Selection Criteria

There is competition for participation in these programs. The screening of the inmate participants varies by program but often inmates with a history of domestic violence, child abuse, or animal abuse are not eligible for the program (Huss, 2013). Other inmate dog handler application criteria are having a high school diploma and a history of good conduct (Huss, 2013). More explicitly, the inmates who qualify for the program are interviewed by the staff and must show “exemplary behavior, good hygiene, psychiatric stability, a pro-social attitude and a high level of participation in correctional programs” (Huss, 2013).

Once the inmate handlers are interviewed and selected they are paired with a dog, for which the inmate handlers care and train (Huss, 2013). It is cost advantageous and better, because of their experience, if the training for the inmate handlers is provided by outside volunteers from the organization itself. Moreover, once the program has been

operating for a while at the correctional facility more experienced inmate handlers can train other inmate handlers (Huss, 2013). The organization chooses which dogs should participate because they know the dogs (Huss, 2013). The ICAN program in Indiana uses only positive reinforcement to train the dogs; the ICAN trainers train the dog handlers through outside volunteers, more experienced inmates and coursework (Huss, 2013).

Performance Measures

The limitations of the qualitative studies conducted on PAPs are small participant size. The method to collect data is through interviews with questions such as, “What is the experience of the offender participating in the canine program?” Once this qualitative data is gathered, the transcripts are coded and put through peer debriefing. After the coding the data are organized to locate themes and generate interpretations (Turner, 2007). Of all the studies conducted through this methodology, the following themes were identified: patience, parenting skills, helping others, increased self-esteem, social skills, normalizing effect, calming effect on the environment (Turner, 2007).

A range of methodologies has been used to assess behavioral and emotional variables such as recidivism, disciplinary reports, and the psychosocial states of participants. Findings are promising and point to emotional and behavioral competences of PAPs participants (Bacci, 2014). The small number of respondents makes it difficult for benefits, like increased self-esteem, to be quantified (Huss, 2013). Mulcahy and Deidre’s (2013) research concluded that recidivism may continue to be the gold standard for assessing PAPs’ effectiveness, and programs that aim to produce well-trained animals can measure their success through adoption or placement rates (Mulcahy and Deidre, 2013). The identified themes in the qualitative data collected from established PAPs can be used to evaluate other programs and measure their success, using pre- and post measurements as evaluations (Turner, 2007). These themes are patience, parenting skills, altruism, self-esteem and social skills. The use of qualitative and quantitative research will provide concrete evidence to support the positive outcomes associated with PAPs, which will help gather further support and funding, leading to the sustainability of PAPs (Turner, 2007).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Many studies have indicated that reentry initiatives that combine work training and placement with counseling and housing assistance can reduce recidivism rates (James, 2007). Recidivism has an enormous financial toll on society, incarceration costs are high that even a small reduction in recidivism could easily produce budgetary savings that outweigh the costs of reentry programming (Bloom, 2006). In 2010 the average yearly incarceration cost per prisoner in state prisons was approximately \$28,000 in 2012 it averaged to \$31,286 (James, 2007: p.1; Henrichson and Delaney, 2012: 70). Other unavoidable costs of recidivism to families and communities are decidedly difficult, almost impossible to quantify (Burt, 2014). Approximately 2.7 million children in the United States have a parent who is incarcerated, the negative effects of incarceration extend to them (Burt, 2014; Council of State Governments, 2015). The incarceration of parents caused children to be denied adequate support and care, this causes structural damage to families, resulting in the further deterioration and destabilization of communities and public safety, children are the building blocks of communities, thus adequate support for them is a must (Burt, 2014; Burt, 2010). As a result of high costs state correctional facilities seek to reduce their inmate populations and costs while protecting the public safety, and effective inmate reentry programs can help accomplish this (Henrichson and Delaney, 2012). After release inmates return to distressed communities and their highest priority is getting a job (Bloom, 2006). Having a job has the potential to reduce the economic incentive to commit crimes, as well as connecting ex-prisoners with positive community social networks, and creating a daily routine for them (Bloom, 2006). There is mixed evidence about whether increasing employment for ex-prisoners reduces recidivism (Bloom, 2006; James, 2007). The factors predictive of offender recidivism are static and dynamic. Static factors include age, gender, race and criminal history; dynamic factors are factor that change, including criminogenic needs (substance abuse, antisocial lifestyles), personal distress (anxiety, depression, schizophrenia) and social achievement (marital status, level of

education, and employment). These dynamic factors have a strong association with recidivism risk (Duwe, 2012). Decreasing recidivism is an important part of the reentry process, but it does not include other relevant factors, such as the emotional and psychosocial state of the inmates (Mitchell et. al, 2014).

What Works?

It is important to note that the Second Chance Act does not provide a complete second chance at life outside of prison, employment is critical for reintegration but the psychosocial stability of inmates is critical too (Weinman, 2007; Burt, 2010; Burt, 2014). The success of a reentry program should not revolve around just lowering recidivism rates, it needs to extend to include the therapeutic and rehabilitative benefits they provide. Education programs show that post-secondary education had a strong effect on reducing recidivism, prison-based mental health treatment programs have also reduced recidivism (James, 2015; James, 2007). These mental health programs are not focused on prisoners with a diagnosed mental illness, instead they focused on problem solving, goal setting, managing stress and fear, and improving cognitive skills, which was found to have a positive effect on recidivism (James, 2015; James, 2007). After reviewing the available literature, the programs that have showed effectiveness on the reduction of recidivism have attributes such as: coordinated pre-release and post release services, the reentry process begins as soon as the inmates set foot in the correctional facility, they involve the community, last more than six months, and focus on developing job skills, social skills and other essential skills needed for effective reintegration into the community (Bloom, 2006; Henrichson and Delaney, 2012; James, 2007; James, 2015). By focusing on these areas lower recidivism rates, increased self-esteem, decreased sense of loneliness and gaining marketable skills (social and job related) and education (Mitchell et. al, 2014; Bloom, 2006; Henrichson and Delaney, 2012; James, 2015; James, 2007). There are state funded reentry

programs that support this claim (Bloom, 2006; Henrichson and Delaney, 2012; James, 2007; James, 2015).

In 2007 the Minnesota legislature allocated \$1.9 million in state funds to implement the Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (MCORP) (Duwe, 2012). Implemented in 2008, MCORP began the reentry process the moment inmates entered the correctional facility and enhanced the service delivery by increasing the extent to which offender's access employment, housing, and programming in the community (Duwe, 2012). Grant Duwe (2012), the director of Research and Evaluation for the Minnesota Department of Corrections, used a randomized experimental design to evaluate the effectiveness of the Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (MCORP), Duwe's study demonstrated that MCORP significantly improved employment rates, decreased homelessness, broadened offenders' systems of social support, and increased the extent to which offenders participated in community support programming (mentoring, restorative justice services, and faith-based programming). (Duwe, 2012). MCORP was effective in decreasing reoffending because it increased the extent to which offenders were employed, involved in community support programming, and able to develop systems of social support (Duwe, 2012; Bloom, 2006).

In Oregon and Michigan, for example, community supervision officers communicate with inmates before their release to describe the expectations for their behavior in the community and establish continued programming priorities. A needs assessment is conducted to help assign offenders to the appropriate level of supervision based on their risk of reoffending and need for targeted services (Henrichson and Delaney, 2012).

Currently there is a need for more regular national-level recidivism data (there were almost 20 years between the BJS's two reports on recidivism) (Bloom, 2006; Henrichson and Delaney, 2012; James, 2015). Policy workers need to assess current reentry programs to ensure there is enough coordination of the existing programs that can be used to help released inmates. These evaluations are needed to show what is working and to see if the

funding appropriated for the reentry programs and activities authorized by the Second Chance Act is serving all the programs that help with the reentry process (James, 2015).

Recommendations to Create a Prison Based Animal Program

Effective reentry planning begins by preparing inmates for release as soon as they enter prison. To identify the inmate's needs (Job Skills, Social Skills, Emotional Support, Education) a screening instrument to help the staff identify priority areas for intervention needs to be use, as well as develop case management plans. For a community dog rescue organization to effectively create a prison based animal program they need to shift their focus and alter their core competencies and operations to the prison industry. The focus of PAPs are the inmates and their effective reintegration back into society. The organization will use dogs to help the inmates and by doing so the dogs and the community also benefit. The community dog rescue organization will experience a shift in focus from the rescue dogs to the benefited inmates. The inmates are the primary focus because only then will the actions of the programs truly benefit them. Once the organization's operations revolve around the inmates they can coordinate the curriculum for the program, the training of the dogs, and training of the inmate volunteer dog handlers. Not only this, but the gathering of funds for the program will need to revolve around the dogs and the inmates. Having a PAP will enhance an organizations competitive advantage and allow them to reach increased sources of funding such as grants outside of the animal welfare scope, increased cash donations from the community and more fundraising opportunities. The increase in revenues will be used to coordinate the program's operations. There are two types of operations for an effective reentry program. The first one begins in the correctional facility. That is where the training and the learning of skills and therapeutic benefits take place. At the same these are going on the community organization needs to build a network for the inmates to take part in once released. To create this network outside of the correctional

facility the community organization will have to find partners that are willing to offer jobs with livable wages to the released inmates. Writing letters of recommendations and providing support during the first months of release are critical for the ex-inmates' success. For many of the released inmates the community organization they work with is the only person they can count on in the community, and it is vital that the organization has the adequate tools to provide help for anything an ex-inmate may need.

PAPs are attractive because of the benefits to the correctional institutions, inmates and animals. However, risks can be hard to overcome, but they are manageable with suitable training and policies. If properly structured, with the needs of the animals considered, these programs will have a positive impact on the inmates, the animals, the correctional facility, the community organization in charge and the community which the inmates will become reintegrate back into once released.

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