

## **ABSTRACT**

Heather D. Collins, INCREASING EDUCATIONAL PRISON PROGRAMS TO HELP REDUCE RECIDIVISM (Under the direction of Dr. Crystal Chambers). Department of Educational Leadership, May 2021.

This study examined the educational gaps in the North Carolina Department of Public Safety and the North Carolina Community College System and its impact on recidivism. The study aims to establish a holistic and comprehensive transition plan for inmates within 12 -24 months of release into society. The study examined classes and training offered to inmates related to educational programs, employment programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming. This data does not reflect the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the inmates. This deviation is a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that prevented entry into prisons and access to inmates for to participate in the research. Invited to participate in this study were fifty to sixty inmates, prison administrators, and instructors who shared their experience and observation of education's impact on rehabilitating inmates and preparedness for release into society. However, due to the pandemic participation was restricted to the instructors that educate in the prison system. The discovery of their experiences speaks to Hirschi's Social Control Theory which seeks to link social controls to recidivism. The controls are attachment to family and friends, commitment to achievements or goals, involvement in prosocial activities, and belief in societal norms, rules, and laws.

Instructor responses identified that the social controls in the life of the inmate assist with obtaining successful reentry into society and reducing the chances of returning to prison. The need for increased learning opportunities for inmate beyond a GED or vocational certificate is desired for inmates that come to prison formally educated. The need for technological resources

are were also made evident during this pandemic. Strengthen the collaboration between the North Carolina Department of Public Safety and the North Carolina Community College System is needed if we are to rehabilitate these offenders. Without a strong comprehensive program we are wasting resources and doing a disservice to the communities we are returning them back to.



INCREASING EDUCATIONAL PRISON PROGRAMS TO HELP REDUCE RECIDIVISM

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership

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of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

by

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INCREASING EDUCATIONAL PRISON PROGRAMS TO HELP REDUCE RECIDIVISM

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## **DEDICATION**

In loving memory of my grandparents

Harriet & Clarence Parks

“Little Acorns Become Great Oaks!”

and in honor of the loving and unwavering support of my family

Darlene C. Thompson, Shanaya M. Bradley, Christopher Jalen & Jonathan David Rhodes &

Lannice L. Collins

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

In 2019, there were 2.3 million individuals incarcerated in jail or prison in the United States: 67,000 of those individuals were in North Carolina (Wagner & Sawyer, 2018, para.1). Twenty-two thousand inmates are released back into society every year (Wagner & Sawyer, 2018, p. 2). During the first year following release, 44% of released prisoners are re-arrested (Alper et al., 2018, para. 2). Many factors contribute to recidivism amongst offenders, such as educational illiteracy, lack of vocational jobs, lack of interpersonal skills, or criminal history, to name a few. Reincarceration rates are the result of two of three individuals released rearrested nationwide within three years (Durose et al., 2014, para. 3). Within the State of North Carolina, the three-year recidivism rate is 40%. While this rate somewhat lower than the national average, it still means that 8,800 people will return to prison soon after release (Markham, 2019, para. 2).

The study completed by the Indiana Department of Corrections showed that “educational programs not only lower re-arrest and re-incarceration rates, but some programs can also lower the punitive sentence of inmates” (Indiana Department of Correction 2016 Adult Recidivism Rates, n.d., para. 2). The educational incentive can result in lower prison populations as the inmates will be released earlier than sentenced. Unfortunately, prison programs’ cutting is frequent because they are not profitable for prisons (Esperian, 1974, p. 316). Research on prison education programs ought to be conducted; without proof of their effectiveness, inmates are vulnerable to budget cuts, program deletions, and increased recidivism.

### **Background of the Problem**

The Department of College and Career Readiness (CCR) under the North Carolina Community College System governed under the Federal Title II law operates the Workforce

Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This legislation is the guiding factor of CCR related to the populations served, services provided, and success measurements. According to the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act (*Book 2 of 2 Books Department of Education 34 CFR Parts 361 and 463 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; Joint Rule for Unified and Combined State Plans, Performance Accountability, and the One-Stop System Joint Provisions; Final Rule E:\FR\FM\19AUR5.SGM 19AUR5 asabaliauskas on DSK3SPTVN1PROD with RULES*, 2016, p. 55,792),

This Joint WIOA Final Rule guides State and local workforce development systems that increase the skill and credential attainment, employment, retention, and earnings of participants, especially those with significant barriers to employment, thereby improving the quality of the workforce, reducing dependency on public benefits, increasing economic opportunity, and enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of the nation.

WIOA Title II includes a requirement that states provide education and education for other institutionalized individuals (Section 225). Corrections education is for criminal offenders (any individual charged with or convicted of any criminal offense) who reside in correctional institutions. The program components for correction education include eight categories of academic programs: adult education and literacy activities, special education, secondary-school credit, integrated education and training, career pathways, concurrent enrollment, peer tutoring and transition to reentry initiatives, and other post-release services to reduce recidivism (Correctional Education: Adult Education and Literacy, 2017, para. 4).

North Carolina community colleges offer more than 90% of correctional educational programming for incarcerated individuals. Adult education and literacy programs have the largest enrollments; the state requires colleges to provide entire for-credit certificates, diplomas,

or associate degree programs. “In 2006, postsecondary educational programs, which were predominately vocational, awarded more than 6,000 vocational non-credit certificates; 1,458 vocational for credit certificates; and nearly 100 associate and bachelor’s degrees to incarcerated individuals” (Kelley, 2019, p. 2).

The Weiser Justice Program, which Guilford College operates, sends professors into prisons to teach business, English, criminal justice, sociology, psychology, and conflict resolution. The course is offered for five semesters and allows incarcerated students to earn up to 30 college credits. Craven Community College offers a class to inmates at Craven Correctional Institution called the Keys to Freedom. It includes soft skills such as; time management, dressing for success, , how to interview, and how to conceptualize life after reentry. Keys to Freedom is an eight-week course taught twice a week at Craven Correctional Institution. Carteret Correctional Center, in partnership with Carteret Community College, has eleven programs. The facility holds graduation exercises three times per year. Programs at Carteret Correctional Center include Adult Basic Education Level 1, High School Equivalency, Adult Basic Education, Human Resource Development, Focus on Freedom, Adult Outreach Correction, Continuing Education Human Resources, Community Based Instruction, Bridges to Freedom, Horticulture, Continuing Education Masonry and the Entrepreneurship program, which instructs students on how to start their own businesses.

Caswell Correctional Center has Community Based Instruction Programs, Human Resource Development, and Thinking for a Change to assist students with transition planning. Anger and Stress Management are included in the ten weeks Human Resource Development Program. Project Re-Entry is a 13-week pre-release program that works on attitude in re-integration, transitional housing, vocational assessment, community resources and services,

employment after release, and budgeting and finance skills for offenders with six to eighteen months remaining on their sentences.

These programs exemplify the autonomy given to each of the fifty-eight community colleges in North Carolina. There is no comprehensive educational programming model that holistically addresses inmate needs upon reentry, including Educational Programs, Employment Programs, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming.

### **Naming and Framing the Focus of Practice**

With such high recidivism rates nationally and within the State of North Carolina, there is a question regarding the adequacy of availability and substance in prison educational programs. The effects of recidivism are not isolated to specific individuals, their families, or communities but impact the public. A research report conducted by the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, Forward Together and Research Action Design (Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families, 2015) reports that people with convictions are saddled with fines and debt at the same time their economic opportunities are diminished, resulting in a lack of financial stability and mobility. Sixty seven percent of formerly incarcerated individuals associated with the survey were still unemployed or underemployed five years after their release (Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families, 2015, p. 9). Despite limited resources, families are often the primary source for housing, employment, and health needs of their formerly incarcerated loved ones, filling gaps left by shrinking budgets of reentry services. They also found that in 63% of cases, the family was primarily responsible for court-related costs associated with conviction (Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families, 2015, p. 9). In this vein, families bear the brunt of financial, emotional, and social costs. Of family members responsible for charges,

83% were women; moreover, 48% of families could not afford the cost associated with convictions (Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families, 2015, p. 9).

The report indicated that 67% of respondents' families helped them find housing (Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families, 2015). Also, 18% of those involved in the survey faced eviction and were denied housing or did not qualify public housing once their loved ones were released from prison (Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families, 2015, pp. 8-9). Thirty-four percent of families reported that they incurred debt to maintain contact with incarcerated family members and pay for phone calls and visits (Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families, 2015, p. 8). One in every two formerly incarcerated persons and one in every two family members experienced negative health impacts related to their own loved one's incarceration (Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families, 2015, p. 7). Families, including incarcerated individuals, reported Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, nightmares, hopelessness, depression, and anxiety (Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families, 2015, p.7).

Herein, colleges and correctional facilities can collaborate to educate inmates, rehabilitate them educationally by giving them tools to succeed in life beyond prison walls. Such a framework for collaboration exists under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). According to WIOA, the Department of College and Career Readiness's mission is to create comprehensive plans to assist in the successful social integration of the newly released inmates.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this focus of practice is to build a comprehensive educational model that will allow inmates who are five years or less from being released to reenter society, successfully

reducing recidivistic odds. Currently, there is no comprehensive plan that addresses all the inmate's educational needs before reentry into society. Many inmates lack the education to advance socially and intellectually, work skills for gainful employment, and skillsets to manage family relations. Out of frustration, they become more apt to recidivate (Esperian, 2010, p. 317). Therefore, through this study, I intend to identify gaps in the North Carolina Community College System's collaborative efforts and the North Carolina Department of Public Safety in providing education and training programs using Hirschi's (1969) Social Control Theory. Hirschi's Social Control Theory states that an individual's connection to attachment, commitment, involvement with and belief to family, society, and achievements are a deterrent to crime. Specifically, I will examine inmates' and prison administrators' perspectives on the collaborative educational programs offered at Langston Community College and East Rock Correctional Institution.

### **Research Question(s)**

This research study will examine the correlation between educational programs, employment programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming offered by Langston Community College and East Rock Correctional Institution and inmate Social Controls. Towards that end, research questions for the proposed study were:

1. How effective are correctional education programs in reducing recidivism at East Rock Correctional Institution?
2. What types of educational programs, employment programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming are most effective at generating Social Controls?

Posted in the survey instrument are questions for the inmates and for the staff who assist with the implementation of these programs.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Hirschi (1969) presented a theory that examined the connection between strong bonds and the likelihood to deviate to explain criminal offending. Social Control Theory operates from the premise that all humans are inclined towards deviance or illegal activity; however, it can be controlled using Social Controls (Smith, 2017, p. 19). These Social Controls are characterized by attachment to friends or family, commitment to goals, involvement with peers or groups, and beliefs towards society and laws. Hirschi's Social Control Theory states that those who have secure attachments to culture are less likely to violate society's norms. The research questions will examine the benefits of the educational/social programs themselves and the bond each inmate has developed in the process.

Attachment refers to the emotional bond between a person and his/her friends, families, and peers. Commitment is the time and effort investment already spent on future goals that are through criminal activity. Time spent in activities outside of crime is known as involvement. Finally, belief is accepting traditional ideas and thoughts (Chriss, 2007, p. 690). In her meta-analysis, Smith (2017) identifies Tibbetts and Hemmen's description of attachment as the most important social bond (p. 19). Attachment is necessary to understand and operate in society's norms and develop a consciousness of controlling oneself (Hirschi, 1969). Arguments exist that the other aspects, commitment, involvement, and belief, are purely contingent upon the individual's attachments.

Commitment is the measure of what may be lost deviating from the social norms. Displayed through education, work experience, and pursuits of other conventionally accepted

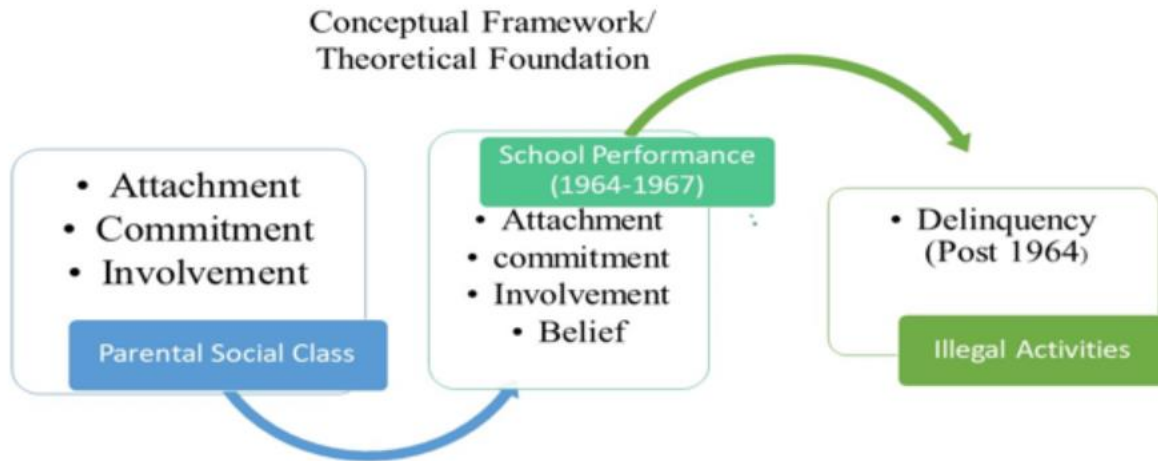


avenues is the control commitment (Smith, 2017, p. 19). Hirschi (1969) believed that active involvement in conventional activities would equate to less delinquency upon being released from prison.

Belief correlates to moral beliefs following the law and society (Smith, 2017). Hirschi (1969) conducted a study performed upon males participating in the Richmond Youth Project were chosen from a random stratified sample. The sample consisted of 3,605 youth and aimed to study the impact of attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. Hirschi drew his conclusions that attachment is primarily essential and that involvement was less impactful (Chriss, 2007; Hirschi, 1969). Figure 1 shows the development of social controls with parental influences on youth. Those controls broaden when youth enter into formal schooling and are introduced to social norms, rules, and regulations.

Hirschi's Social Control Theory has been scrutinized by others and revised by Hirschi himself (Smith, 2017). Social Control Theory's common criticism is that the elements vary widely based on the four categories' definitions. For example, whether the attachments made are prosocial (i.e., mentors) or if the attachments are detrimental (i.e., drug dealer), or the involvement is with religious pursuits or after-hours fun. Additionally, Social Control Theory does not account for continued criminal deviance. Social Controls can be a predictor of whether an individual will deviate, but not continuance or escalation of petty to major crimes.

Social Control Theory is a prominent criminological theory regardless of the criticisms (Smith, 2017). There were no research articles that approach prison programs through the lens of Social Control Theory. No comprehensive educational program currently exists that combines the individual factors of Hirschi's Social Control Theory. This study aims to create a comprehensive and holistic educational model for an inmate within five years of prison release



*Figure 1.* Hirschi's Social Control Theory Framework.

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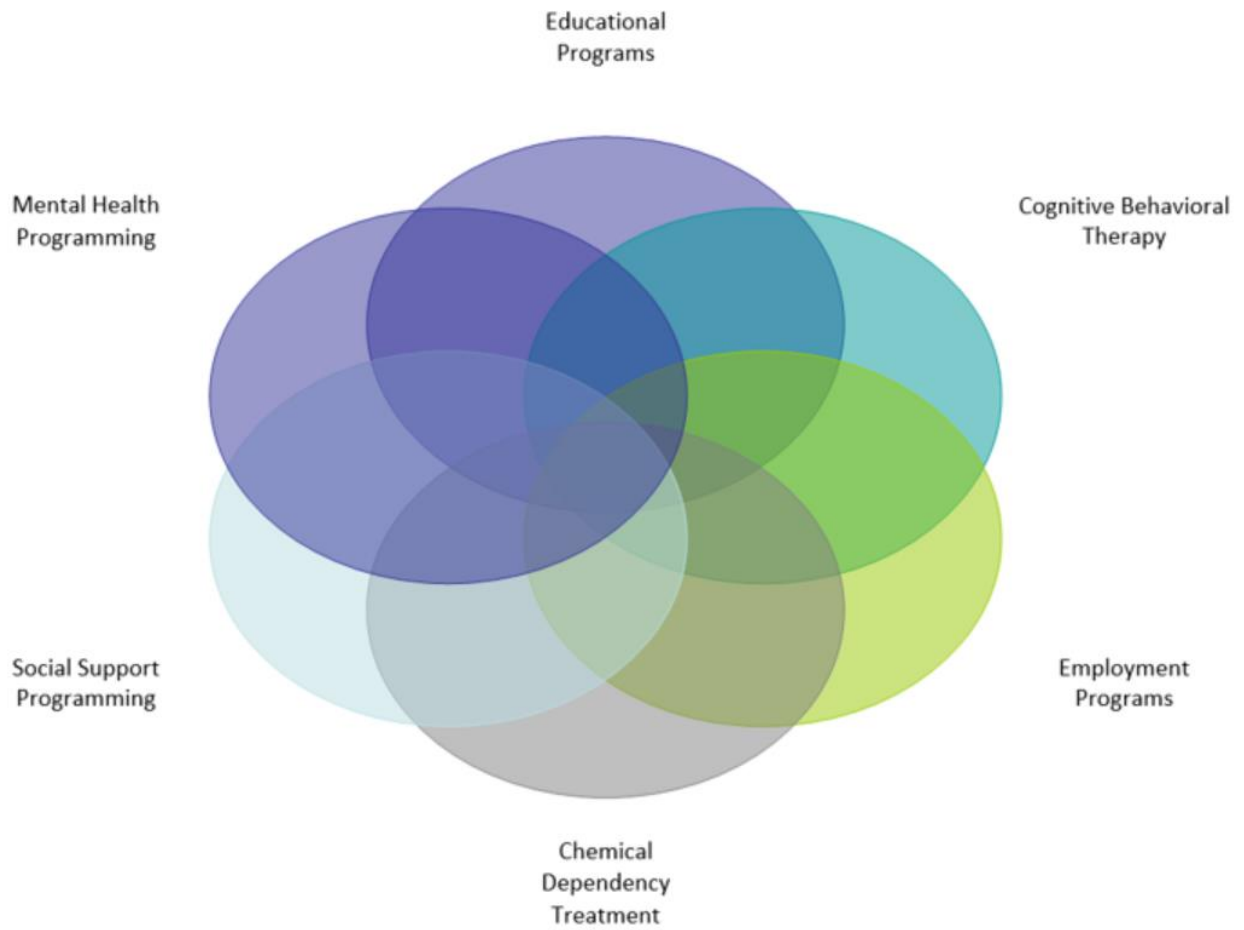
based on the Social Control Theory. Figure 2 shows the interdependence of programs offered in the prison system. The combination of the programs provided to an inmate gives them opportunities to develop more robust Social Controls to aid in recidivism.

For this study, attachment is identified by programs that promote the connections between incarcerated individuals and their families, loved ones, or peers (i.e., father/child programs). Commitment is defined as invested effort and time into a societally accepted skill (i.e., post-secondary correctional education, GED programs, vocational training). Involvement is identified with programs that occupy an offender's time (i.e., sports, animal training, gardening). Belief will be programs focused upon altering the inmate's perception to a socially accepted viewpoint or religious belief (i.e., drug rehabilitation, religious programs, community therapy).

### **Overview of Research Method**

This study aims to create a comprehensive and holistic educational model for an inmate within five years of release from prison based on the Social Control Theory. This study will occur with the currently enrolled inmates in the Langston Community College, College, and Career Readiness Program. The prison in this study is East Rock Correctional Institution. The specific problem is there is not a comprehensive and holistic educational plan that addresses all the educational needs of the inmates before reentry into society; therefore, they are more apt to recidivate. This mixed methods approach will examine the effectiveness of prison education programs, and which types of programs are most effective.

This study is based upon one prison facility, comprised of all ethnicities, and is a male residential facility. East Rock Correctional Institution is an adult male minimum-security prison in dormitory-style housing that houses 612 inmates. Langston Community College works with the prison to provide vocational classes in masonry, horticulture, electrical wiring, and



*Figure 2.* Reentry programming composition.

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foodservice technology. Langston Community College also offers academic courses in Adult Basic Education and High School Equivalency Diploma (ABE/GED). HSE testing is available. Human Resource Development and college correspondence courses are also available.

Inmates may also take part in self-help programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. Substance abuse treatment is provided through the NCDPS Alcohol and Chemical Dependency Programs (ACDP) and other substance abuse programs, including “Big Book Study” and “Twelve-Step Program.” Cognitive behavior programs include “Thinking for a Change.” Inmates may also participate in the Men’s Service Club and various religious services.

Inmates work in prison as maintenance workers, food services workers, janitors, canteen operators, clothes house operators, barbers, library clerks, teacher’s aides, and chaplain clerks. Inmates provide the labor force for Correction Enterprises’ Chase Laundry in Griffinsbury and various inmate construction programs.

This study will use qualitative research methods to examine the educational programming offered at these facilities, connecting with the following stakeholders: Wardens, Assistant Superintendents, Educational Coordinators, Instructors, Inmates, and Work-Release participants. The study will be conducted in the prison setting, and data will be collected via interviews, open-ended surveys, and reflective memos as described in Chapter 3.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

*Academic performance* - the percent of enrolled students eligible for completing a National Reporting System educational functioning level(s) (EFL).

*Adult Basic Education* - Instruction in Adult Basic Education is designed for adults who lack competence in reading, writing, speaking, problem-solving, or computation at a level necessary to function in society, in the workplace, or in the family. Adult Education (defined

according to WIOA): Academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to: (a) read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; (b) transition to postsecondary education and training; and (c) obtain employment.

*Adult Education and Literacy Activities (defined according to WIOA):* Programs, activities, and services that include adult literacy and education, English language acquisition, family literacy, integrated (full implementation of "integrated" is expected in the fiscal year 2016-17) English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation, integrated education and training, and workplace education. (Workforce preparation and integrated education, including career pathways, are a requirement of WIOA implementation.)

*Career Pathway* - the term means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that (a) aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the state or regional economy involved; (prepare an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary options, including apprenticeships; (b) include counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals; (c) includes as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupational cluster; (d) organizes education, training, and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual; (e) enables an individual to attain a secondary diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and (f) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

*Chemical Dependency Treatment (CDT)* - offers individuals the tools needed to break the cycle of alcohol or drug dependency and live a sober lifestyle.

*Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)* addresses the link between dysfunctional thought processes and harmful behaviors through timely reinforcement and punishment and role-playing and skill-building exercises.

*Colleague* - North Carolina's electronic system for data collection and reporting for community colleges.

*Concurrent Enrollment* - enrollment in adult education and credit-bearing academic postsecondary education.

*Digital Literacy* - the skills associated with using technology to enable users to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate information.

*Educational Programming* – the learning progress of each subject in all stages of formal education.

*Employment Programming* – prison labor opportunities as well as participation in programs such as work release.

*English Language Acquisition (formerly ESL - defined according to WIOA)* - Program of instruction (a) designed to help eligible students who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; and (b) that leads to the attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent, transition to postsecondary education, or employment.

*English Language Learner (defined according to WIOA)* - An eligible student who has limited ability in reading, writing, speaking, or comprehending the English language, and whose

native language is a language other than English or who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

*Enrollment* is when a student is assessed and enrolled in 12 hours or more Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, and English Language Acquisition.

*Entered post-secondary or Training* - learner enrolling after exit in a postsecondary educational institution or occupational skills program, building on prior services or training received.

*Gained Employment* – the status of learners who obtain a job by the end of the first quarter after their exit quarter.

*Integrated Education and Training* - service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation (see “Workforce Preparation” below) and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for educational and career advancement. Integrated Educational Technology must include three components: (a) Adult education and literacy activities; (b) Workforce preparation activities, and (c) Workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

*Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)* - education services provided to English language learners (see “English Language Learners” above) who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries that enable them to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the US. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition (formerly English as a second language) and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and may include workforce training.



*Literacy Adult and Community Education System (LACES)* – North Carolina’s electronic system for data collection and reporting for community-based organizations.

*Literacy Education Information System (LEIS)* – North Carolina’s management information system used to collect student data.

*Mental Health Programming* - programs offered to offenders that teach subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generational dependence, and self-actualization of one’s intellectual and emotional potential.

*Participant* – an individual with at least 12 contact hours before separating for a period of 90 days without service or up to 120 days if he/she has a future service date, is reported on the National Reporting System and Statewide Performance Report tables, and is counted toward performance measures.

*Postsecondary Educational Institution (defined according to WIOA)* - an institution of higher education that provides not less than a two-year program of instruction that is acceptable for credit toward a bachelor’s degree, a tribally-controlled college or university, or a nonprofit educational institution offering certificate or apprenticeship programs at the postsecondary education level.

*Prisoner Reentry Concept* – any program that attempts to reduce recidivism for offenders released from prison. This concept focuses on improving services and programming across multiple areas such as housing, education, employment, and substance abuse treatment.

*Reportable Individual (as defined by WIOA)* - an individual who registers with an Adult Education Program or provides identifying information and takes action that demonstrates an intent to use program services but has less than 12 contact hours.

*Retained Employment* – the status of learners who obtain a job and remain employed in the third quarter after program exit.

*Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR)* – a model that calls for offender risk to be assessed using actuarial risk assessment tools validated and normed.

*Social Support Programming* - programs offered to inmates who maintain, develop or enhance prosocial sources of support.

*Workforce Preparation* - activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of academic, critical thinking, digital literacy, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources and information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for a successful transition into (and completion of) postsecondary education and training, or employment.

*Workplace Education* - adult education and literacy activities offered by an eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off-site location designed to improve the workforce's productivity.

### **Assumptions**

There are four (4) main assumptions in this study. These assumptions are centered on Hirschi's Social Control Theory. Each hypothesis is linked to a social bond; attachment, involvement, commitment, and belief. It is known that each inmate has had some familial attachment in his life. What is unknown or assumed is if the inmate has had previous or current challenges in handling family issues. There may be marital, child-related, or parental issues caused by them being removed from the home. We assume a lack of or barrier to communication skills to resolve conflict or bring closure to the strain caused by his crime and incarceration. There is an assumption that the inmate lacks significant influences on his life, such as a

counselor or mentor who can help him navigate difficult times. This is a critical factor in the inmate feeling supported physically and financially upon re-entry into society. Based upon the crime committed, the inmate may not return to his residence; therefore, homelessness is a problem. An inmate is more likely to recidivate just to have a place to live.

What is essential and unknown about the bond commitment is the inmate's ability to see a task to the end or accomplish a goal. There is an assumption that he did not complete schooling and lacked cognitive reasoning skills and the educational training to secure stable employment. The assumption linked to commitment is that the inmate has a low literacy level or no education. Therefore, once he is presented with an opportunity to better himself and either receive a high school equivalency, postsecondary or vocational certification, he will be less likely to recidivate. The assumption is that he will not want to lose the time and effort invested in receiving these items by committing a crime and not utilizing them in society.

Involvement considers the unknown factor of purpose and belonging. Has this individual gained a sense of identity through community, religious, or other prosocial activities? This control must be identified because it speaks explicitly to the inmate's ability to see himself outside of and beyond his crime. Involvement assumes that the incarcerated individual is unbalanced and limited in outside activities, giving him a greater sense of purpose, belonging, and engagement, such as sports, gardening, community, or civic engagement. It assumes that when alternate activities are available, ex-offenders will have a greater chance of deviating from criminal behavior.

When defining the bond of belief, we don't know the political, lawless, or law-abiding climate the inmate grew up in. Therefore, based upon the present circumstance of the inmate, we assume that there was a disregard for socially acceptable behavior. Belief is the knowledge of

being socially accepted. The assumption states that even though the inmate may have paid his dues to society by completing his sentence, there is still the idea that he may not be accepted. No matter how successful he has been in completing education courses and improving his life skills, society will forever cast a dark shadow of his past over his future. This lends itself to the inmate's defeating self-stigma, how he sees himself, and if he can persevere in society.

Belief also assumes that the "rehabilitated individual" has learned from his mistake and accepts societal norms. He is willing, prepared, and ready to be a contributing member of society; therefore, recidivism is not an option.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

This study is a result of the educational and funding requirements given to the Department of College and Career Readiness to offer a comprehensive educational program to incarcerated individuals and assist in creating a comprehensive, holistic model to educate and prepare the individual for re-entry into society.

This study's boundaries include but are not limited to operating in the confines of the prison structure as it relates to interviewing inmates, providing them with surveys, and participating in the reflective memos. This study's generalizability will take sample populations from groups of inmates, road crews, and students in educational, vocational, and life skills classes. These individuals will be within five years of release from prison.

### **Limitations**

In North Carolina, recidivism is measured by criminal acts that resulted in rearrests, reconviction, or return to prison with or without a new sentence for three years following the prisoner's release. Difficulties in measurement are present because the concept is then drastically changed. Therefore, some studies may have a higher recidivism rate because more participants

were arrested than were convicted. The length of time can be one year, three years, five years, or an alternate amount of time-based on the individual. Depending on the time frame, a scholarly practitioner can either over-represent the effect of a program (i.e., a short period) or under-represent the program's impact (i.e., the longer the period, the more participants will have an opportunity to recidivate). "This variation limits comparative research in its ability to conclude accurately, as there is little consistency" (Bales & Mears, 2008, p. 289; Fazel & Wolf, 2015, para. 13; Goshin et al., 2014, p. 109).

Limitations of this study also include time. It takes time to complete a thorough analysis of the time given to collect and verify data, especially when restricted by the prison system's time constraints. It is challenging to work within the prison structure, which includes space availability to complete all sessions and accessibility to inmates (i.e., dealing with transfers and segregation).

Qualitative research generally includes personal interaction, which can often deviate from the subject matter. Therefore, this research method contains open-ended questions, giving the inmate more control over the content of the data delivered. It is the expectation that the responses are truthful.

It is difficult to determine the effect of a compressive educational program because of varied perspectives, which are hard to gauge. This is a result of the lack of statistical data, which would make the procedure more systematic. The qualitative study requires planning to ensure accurate results. Analyzation of qualitative data mathematically is impossible. This type of research is based on opinion and judgment rather than results. Qualitative studies are unique, so they are difficult to replicate.

Interviewer biases could influence the study. The Interviewer is the Director of Transitional & Career Studies at Langston Community College. In this role, the Director is required to offer quality educational programs to the inmates for them to achieve educational attainment and be workforce-ready. The way to eliminate bias is to standardize all interview procedures and limit contact with the interviewees until the scheduled interview.

Another bias is verification. Triangulation can be used in this process to verify data collected with results from other studies that have been completed. Instead of creating a survey, the interviewer should use one that a reputable company has verified.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study will be the discovery of shortcomings in the current educational program. First, it will identify areas of weakness in educational planning and collaboration between the community college system and the prison system. These identified areas will lend themselves to the comprehensive educational model that will be created for the community college system. It is the hope that this model will streamline offerings to the inmates and prepare them for release.

This study will also identify programs that need to be added to the comprehensive model, based upon the research offered by the inmates they identify to succeed in society. This study aims to increase educational programs to help reduce recidivism in communities.

Also, this study seeks to identify and advance educational equity in prisons. All inmates will receive the same opportunity for training and reentry preparedness regardless of where they are housed.

## **Advancing Theory**

The Department of College and Career Readiness under the WIOA Grant 225 is mandated to serve incarcerated individuals. The program components for correction education include eight categories of academic programs: adult education and literacy activities, special education, secondary-school credit, integrated education and training, career pathways, concurrent enrollment, peer tutoring, and transition to reentry initiatives and other post-release services to reduce recidivism.

This comprehensive model will make the federal standards more obtainable for each of the fifty-eight community colleges. It will streamline practices, and no matter which prison within North Carolina the inmate is transferred to, the plan transfers with him and allows the continuity of education.

## **Summary**

The purpose of prison programs is to reduce recidivism and prepare inmates to reenter the community. The program components for correction education include eight categories of academic programs: adult education and literacy activities, special education, secondary-school credit, integrated education and training, career pathways, concurrent enrollment, peer tutoring, and transition to reentry initiatives and other post-release services to reduce recidivism.

This mixed method research examines the effectiveness of prison education programs based on Hirschi's Social Control Theory characteristics. Social Control Theory expresses that the stronger the control to attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, the less likely the inmate will commit a crime (Hirschi, 1969). This research will examine the causal relationship between Educational Programs, Employment Programs, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming.

In chapter 2, Hirschi's Social Control Theory is discussed as the theoretical framework of this focus of practice. Identified in this chapter are the literary works that speak to the educational framework, the challenges in education and employment programming related to recidivism, and the areas in which more research must be done. In chapter 3 the mixed methodology for this research is discussed as well as the criteria for participation in this study. Chapter 4 provides the observation and analysis of the data obtained through the data collection process. This study concludes with the revelation and interpretation of the findings and any recommendations that can be offered to further this study.

This study will also identify programs that need to be added to the comprehensive model based upon the research offered by the inmates they identify to succeed in society. This study aims to increase educational programs to help reduce recidivism in communities.



## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to identify existing gaps in the correctional education system and build a comprehensive educational model that will allow inmates who are five years or less from being released to reenter society. This study seeks to define the relationship between Educational Programs, Employment Programs, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming in a model that will prepare offenders for reentry.

### Theoretical Foundation

In 1969, Travis Hirschi first revealed his Social Control theory in his book *Causes of Delinquency*, which remains a prominent work in criminology. Social Control Theory addresses a fundamental question linked to Thomas Hobbes's work and then Jeremy Bentham. Finally, the work of Cesare Beccaria states that human nature is fundamentally asocial or selfish. This natural passion or pursuit will often result in people committing criminal, delinquent and deviant behaviors because such behavior often results in quick and easy gratification of desires (Costello, 2010, p. 452). For control theory, crime is the result of the individual's calculated rationale. Crime seems the most logical way to obtain desires when consequences appear absent. Because crime comes naturally and can fulfill universal ideas, Hirschi (1969) rejected the question, "Why do they do it?" in favor of the question, "Why don't we do it?" Social Control Theory was now in opposition to strain theory and cultural deviance theory. In his book, Hirschi contrasts Social Control Theory against the others.

Hirschi answers his questions, "Why don't we do it?" by stating that "people who are highly socially integrated or have a strong bond to society, are less willing than those with a

weaker bond to risk the negative consequences that might follow criminal behavior” (Costello, 2010, p. 453). Hirschi identifies social control as attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief.

*Attachment* is the first element of social control that indicates the individual’s sensitivity to others’ opinions. It is the breadth of an individual attached to parents, friends, teachers, and others. This attachment causes concern about their views, and the risk of losing their respect is so significant that the individual is less likely to commit a crime.

The second element of social control is *commitment* to conventional goals, such as educational or occupational goals. Individuals with plans for future advancement are hesitant to risk losing the chance of achieving those goals. Participating in deviant behavior may draw legal attention and prevent job attainment or school enrollment. The value that is placed on conventional goals will determine the likelihood of that person committing a crime.

*Involvement* is the third element of social control. This is defined as the extent to which a person’s time is consumed in conventional or social activities. If time is spent consumed with schoolwork, sports, hobbies, or a job, there is no time left for delinquent behavior.

The final control in the social element is *belief* in conventional norms. This is the extent to which a person believes in the moral validity of laws and standards. The more an individual believes in them, the less likely they are to deviate from them.

Hirschi (1969) notes that these Social Controls are interrelated: “In general, the more closely a person is tied to conventional society in any of these ways, the more closely he is likely to be tied in other ways.” Hirschi stipulates that social theory is a root theory of social integration, and the empirical relationships between elements of the controls are well documented. Therefore, any discussion of the effects of a single aspect of social control on

delinquency would be considered a partial test of the theory rather than a test of theory as a whole.

For his initial test, Hirschi used a sample of 4,077 students from 11 junior and senior high schools in Richmond, California, in 1964. The sample included white and black boys and girls. However, most of Hirschi's empirical test only used white boys in his sample.

Hirschi's Social Control Theory's prediction received empirical support. It revealed several facts about delinquency: delinquent youths have lower attachment levels to parents and school and lower commitment to conventional goals. Delinquent youth are not academically focused, nor are they committed to any long-term plans. Delinquents tend to have a lower level of belief in the validity of laws and norms, so youths with attitudes are more tolerant of crime and are more likely to engage in criminal behavior.

Hirschi received less empirical support for dealing with attachment to friends and involvement in conventional activities. Most studies found no relationship or a weak positive relationship between the two variables. Hirschi (2002) states that "behavior is a function of one's connection to society. Those inside society are controlled by it; those outside society are free to follow their impulses" (Hirschi, 2002). The elements in social control are important in delinquency causation. The general theory points to the lack of social integration as the primary cause of crime and delinquency.

According to the National Council on Crime & Delinquency, best practices in correctional assessment should focus on three objectives: resources should target high-risk offenders, programs should address needs related to each offender's criminal behavior, and case plans should employ strategies that reflect the learning style motivation, capacities, and circumstances of each offender (Ore & Baird, 2014, p. 1). These practices help to identify

criminogenic needs, also called dynamic risk factors (Ore & Baird, 2014, p. 2) Once they are identified, they become essential to case planning and offender treatment.

The Client Management Classification (CMC) system and the Strategies for Juvenile Supervision (SJS) assessment currently include the focus objectives listed above. This approach acknowledges that determining the existence of a particular need is not enough; it is critical to know if the need is related to the criminal behavior of the person and to identify supervision strategies and programs that will help each offender succeed. The CMC and the SJS are similar to Hirschi's Control Theory in that all needs are interrelated and must be addressed comprehensively to bring resolution to the offender.

A core component to the development of risk assessments is "responsivity." Responsivity is defined as tailoring case plans to each offender's characteristics, circumstances, and learning style. Under this assessment, offenders are classified into four supervision strategy groups. This is designed to enhance responsivity, increase offender success, protect the community, improve institutional behavior, and provide critical guidance for developing care plans tailored to the individual's characteristics, circumstances, and learning style of each offender (Ore & Baird, 2014, p. 8).

Selective Intervention (SI) group is characterized by a pro-social value structure and a stable lifestyle. The current offense is usually the first one; therefore, the criminal history is limited. Criminal behavior is linked to a stressful and isolated incident, thereby correlating Selective Intervention to Hirschi's control of commitment. This person values his commitment to his structure, lifestyle, and values and, because of stress, has broken that bond.

Casework/Control (CC) group is characterized by chronic and generalized instability that is often the result of a chaotic and abusive childhood. This instability may be manifested in chemical abuse, emotional problems, and changes in employment and residences.

Casework/Control offenders have average intelligence and possess vocational skills; however, they are unsuccessful because of chemical abuse, low self-esteem, and negative attitudes (Ore & Baird, 2014). This is an example of Hirschi's attachment bond, or, in this scenario, the lack of attachment to a parental figure as a result of abusive behaviors.

Environmental Structure (ES) is identified by a lack of social and vocational skills. These people are influenced by and engage in criminal behavior through their association with more criminally orientated peers. Their involvement in illegal activity is impulsive and the result of a desire to be accepted by others. The need for social skills, assertiveness, and constructive use of leisure time is imperative for this group's success. Involvement as a social control described by Hirschi is this group's link in theory.

The last group is the Limit Setting (LS), characterized by criminal orientation and a lack of commitment to pro-social values. These individuals are motivated by success, power, greed and have no interest in pursuing acceptable social behaviors. These individuals lack belief in social control. They cannot believe in something greater than money or self-fulfillment achieved by the peril of someone else.

## **Literature Review**

### **Pathways and Programming**

According to the Vera Institute of Justice's Pathways from Prison to Postsecondary Education Project (Pathways), there was a multistate demonstration project in three states – Michigan, New Jersey, and North Carolina – intended to create a continuum of higher education

and reentry support services that begin two years before an individual's release from prison and continue in the community for two years post-release, with the goal of educational progression and degree attainment. Before 2013, incarcerated individuals in North Carolina could enroll in college correspondence courses, but there was no coordinated effort to provide a path toward a postsecondary degree or credential.

This independent evaluation of the North Carolina Pathways Program examined the implementation of the program's in-prison and community components, experiences of pathways students and staff, factors that facilitated or hindered their participation in the program, and the lessons learned. This study identified that time is needed to set these programs up effectively. Implementing a prison-based and community-based program with various partners for a diverse population with different educational and reentry needs is challenging. Staff and students reported that a commitment of five years was needed for both the inmate and prison staff to benefit from the program.

In addition, the postsecondary programs in North Carolina were limited to a terminal Associate of Applied Science degree. This program only offered three majors, which were not always aligned with the student's career interest.

Funding is identified as a problem. North Carolina received one million dollars in incentive funding to pilot educational and reentry programs in the prison. Each community received the same budget; however, the funds were spent differently based on the population's needs and size and the available community resources. Amongst the critical needs identified were housing, employment, and transportation. Inmates also addressed the need for referrals to family and substance abuse treatment services.

Establishing a “navigator” is key to the success of the pathways program. This person will link students to reentry services and help them apply for college. Alignment with the Department of Corrections senior leadership for support is a way to solve issues and address any concerns promptly.

Recommendations for the furtherance of the pathways program include five components. Structuring the program’s college components to allow enough time for the inmate to build credits and earn a certification before release is essential. Expanding the state restriction on the types of postsecondary degree programs offered is required. Another component is allowing the inmates to attend college part-time in the community upon their release from prison. Increasing the number of release communities in the program so that ex-offenders can live near their families and supports is another necessity. Finally, ensuring that community colleges and other educational providers are a part of the reentry planning and processes that assist in student enrollment post-release is necessary for success.

### **Rehabilitation**

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, correctional education was the cornerstone of rehabilitation in the prison system (MacKenzie, 2011, p. 4; Rotham, 2016). Prison education was designed to focus on math, literacy, and communication skills training. These classes have evolved into Adult Basic Education, General Education Diploma (GED), English as a Second Language (ESL), education, and vocational and apprenticeship training. These programs are designed to provide incarcerated individuals with the skills they need to reenter the community.

Davis et al. (2008) calls on researchers to address the “black box” of correctional education programs to explain their effectiveness (p. 24). Why are some programs or classes

more or less effective at improving outcomes? Their research includes evidence of a broad level of effectiveness; however, less is known about which components of these programs work best.

Craig (2004) states that “the goal of prison management has been the incapacitation of inmates, and as a consequence of this priority, other organizational goals such as rehabilitation associated programming, often become secondary in terms of the day to day operations of the facility” (p. 84). Simply stated, ensuring the prison’s authority and its personnel over that of the justice-involved individuals is often counterproductive. Treatment of these individuals is demoralizing and does not contribute to rehabilitation. The question of whether imprisonment should serve as a humane form of punishment while rehabilitating the justice-involved individual has been debated since the inception of the penal system.

### **Self-Stigma**

This idea of punishment versus rehabilitation speaks directly to the “self-stigma” of the justice-involved individual who is already battling his actions’ adverse consequences. Self-stigma is defined as how the incarcerated individual now views his self-worth, life, and, most importantly, his options after being released from prison after serving a felony-related term. Evans et al. (2017), in their research, identify the negative stereotypes that are often placed upon this group of people, and this factor contributes to making reentry difficult for the offender (p. 255). It is stated that education in correctional settings can combat some of these stigmas by providing “productive tasks, learning complex materials that promote social awareness and encourages the development of problem-solving skills.”

### **Funding**

A study conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) revealed that people in prison function at an average of an eighth or ninth grade level (Smith, 2001). And



although nearly all the prisons in the country offer educational and vocational programs, only half of the incarcerated individuals participate (Harlow, 2003, p. 2; Lynch & Sabol, 2001, p. 4). Influencing inmates' participation was the 1994 Crime Bill, which prohibited Pell Grants' use for inmates. However, with the enactment of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act in 1994, there has been an expansion into post-secondary education in prisons. In 2015, the Second Chance Pell Grant was piloted to allow 12,000 inmates to participate in post-secondary education to remove correctional education barriers and increase employment opportunities.

If society expects the prison system to educate and rehabilitate these offenders, there must be an understanding of funding postsecondary correctional educational programs. Mercer (2009) articulates that community colleges have been the primary educational services provider to inmates (p. 153). Community colleges offer academic transfer programs, vocational-technical services, continuing education, and community service. Historically partnering with community colleges is dependent upon geographic location and proximity to industry. Mercer (2009) points out "rural areas often have specialized needs for workforce training in specific industries, and community colleges can offer programs and courses to fulfill those needs." Mercer also identifies that educational programs need financial support. If tax dollars are going to fund educational programs, then there should be a tangible sign of the decrease in crime rates in the nation.

### **Social Controls**

In the article "Social Controls and Change During Incarceration," Rocque et al. (2010) assess the impact of prison on Social Controls after release (p. 816). They question whether the "boot-camp" approach of deprivation increases misconduct in an offender. This deprivation includes that of freedom, materials, and relationships. Does this treatment cause the offender to be disconnected from society, therefore, having no inner desire to attain and complete goals? On

the contrary, does the traditional setting give the offenders a sense of community, and are they better adjusted to society by having relationships and contact with the outside world? This study reviewed their level of commitment to themselves and goals set, and their measure of social relationships. These two ideas provided a measure of the inmate's ability to succeed after being reintroduced to society or their lack of attachment, enabling recidivism.

### **Effectiveness**

In 2018, the RAND Corporation aggregated 37 years of research from 1980-2017. This study identified 57 studies that used recidivism as an outcome and 21 studies that used employment as an outcome.

This analysis reported that 28% were less likely to recidivate when compared with inmates who did not participate in correctional education programs. Inmates who received correctional education were as likely to gain post-release employment as inmates not receiving correctional education.

In a comprehensive evaluation, by the RAND Corporation (Davis et al., 2008), "How Effective is Correctional Education, and Where Do We Go from Here," RAND identified the two million adults who are incarcerated and the 700,000 who leave federal and state prison and return to their communities (p. 1). This evaluation also said that 40% would be reincarcerated because of the lack of knowledge, training, and skills to support a successful return to the communities (Davis et al., 2008, p. 1).

Reducing high recidivism rates is why states devote resources to educating and training individuals in the penal system. However, the question is how effective and cost-effective correctional education is? This meta-analysis reviewed correctional education for adults and juveniles and its effects on recidivism and post-release employment outcomes. The report

revealed that inmates who participated in correctional education programs had a 43% lower chance of recidivating than those who did not (Davis et al., 2008, p. 2). Providing correctional education can be cost-effective, and the odds of obtaining employment were 13% higher than those who did not (Davis et al., 2008, p. 2).

This report recommended that policymakers get inside the “black box” of what does and does not work in correctional education. More research designs are needed to facilitate this in-depth research that measures intervention details, such as program dosage, different educational instructional models, and innovative strategies to implement technology in the classroom. It is necessary to establish a study registry to collect the research information and increase and create many experiments that correlate the relationships between institutions, inmates, and educational programs.

In the article, *Unbarring Access: A Landscape Review of Postsecondary Education in Prison and its Pedagogical Supports*, Wilson details the need for comprehensive research into higher education for incarcerated adults (Wilson et al., 2019, p. 10). Her article examines a two-part project by Ithaka S+R to gain an understanding of higher education systems.

Wilson states that it is challenging to evaluate which pedagogical supports are most effective because there are no combined ideas of which types of programs are most successful and the inmates’ needs inside the prison. Wilson said, “Dr. Erin L. Castro, Director of Utah Prison Education project assembled a list of 200 institutions that offer credit-bearing programs, and it has been 20 years since the Department of Education surveyed corrections education (Wilson et al., 2019, p. 10).

Wilson identifies that there should be standard metrics that should be applied to postsecondary education in prison programs (Wilson et al., 2019, p. 10). Those metrics are

retention, employment outcomes, salaries, civil engagement, transferability, and articulation. These metrics, according to Wilson, have never been captured for students who are receiving prison education.

Wilson recommends that a standardized educational data collection across U.S. facilities be implemented to identify the effects of postsecondary education in prison on student outcomes, examine the features of postsecondary education in prison and their effectiveness and study the effectiveness of the Second Chance Pell (Wilson et al., 2019, p. 10). Also included in this evaluation are the types of studies taught, the types of degrees and certification programs that have proven effective, and their implementation strategies. Information from advisors and reentry professionals should also be monitored and recorded.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The literature defines the imminent need for the continuum of higher education and reentry support services in our prisons and community agencies. There has been a gap identified from state to state and in facilities that do not equally prepare inmates for release into society. There are entire communities that lack reentry programs for inmates and support programs for their families to provide stability for that inmate.

If the decision is that prisons will be one of the primary agents of change and rehabilitation, then funding must be designated to provide the resources. One-time funding allocations are not enough to offer continuous programs. Whether states look again to federal appropriations or subsidized local tax programs, financial support must increase. In addition to financial support, there is a need for programmatic support in staffing and materials, such as books and instructional supplies. Another distressing factor is location. When an inmate is incarcerated, it is much easier to educate because he's allowed in that facility. It is designed to

house and train. However, when an inmate is released from prison, he is restricted from where he can receive educational services based upon his offense and his parole conditions. If he is restrained and prohibited from attending higher learning institutions, it is unsure if he has been rehabilitated or just allowed to serve out his punitive time.

Rehabilitation has a new connotation. It is just not time behind bars; it now includes treatment programs that develop the whole person. These treatment programs include educational programs, employment programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency, and mental health treatment. Ensuring that these items are in place enhances the inmate's self-stigma and assists him in returning to society. The lack of these items directly impacts the inmate's ability to secure housing, transportation, and employment and keeps the cycle of poverty going.

In Chapter 3, I will identify the qualitative method that will be used for the research intervention. Hirschi's Social Control Theory's four controls will be explicitly linked to each programmatic aspect of the inmate's preparation for release.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

This qualitative study examines prison education programs' efficiency based on Hirschi's Social Control Theory's characteristics. The Social Control Theory expresses that the stronger the bond to attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, the less likely the inmate will commit a crime (Hirschi, 1969). This research will examine Educational Programs, Employment Programs, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming to generate Social Controls from prison administrators' and inmates' perspectives.

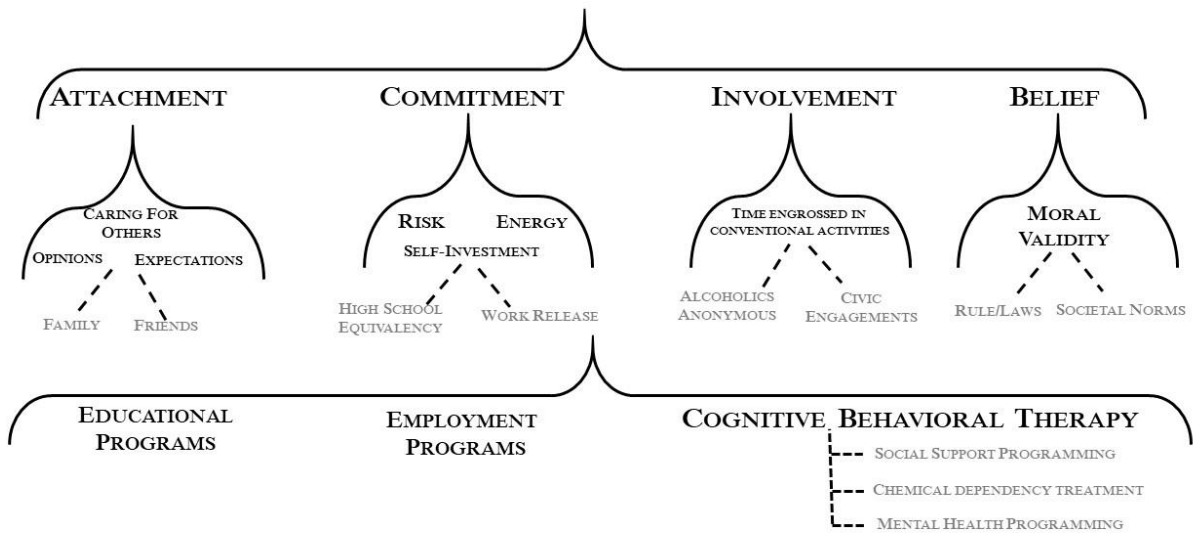
In this chapter, I will identify the research design selected for this study. It will also determine the prison population's characteristics that will be utilized in this study and how the population will be sampled. I will outline the study's procedures and description, how the data were collected analyzed, and the results.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

This study identifies gaps in the current educational model used for inmates preparing for reentry. This study will involve the currently enrolled inmates in the Langston Community College Transitional & Career Studies Program. The prison in this study is East Rock Correctional Institutions. The specific problem is there is no comprehensive plan that addresses all the educational needs of inmates before reentry into society; thus, they are more apt to recidivate. Therefore, this mixed method study will identify the effectiveness of prison education programs and which types of programs are most effective.

Figure 3 displays Hirschi's Social Control Theory's Matrix and its interconnectivity related to social controls, educational programming, employability schema, and cognitive-behavioral therapy. This display illustrates that inclusion in various activities can develop social

# HIRSCHI'S SOCIAL BOND THEORY



*Figure 1. Hirschi's Social Control Theory Matrix.*

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controls. Outside influences that support these controls create sustainability in an individual, and recidivism rates decrease.

### **Population**

The target population is comprised of 50-60 participants. The inmates selected for the study are current inmates who are serving their sentence but within a 12 to 24-month reentry period. The inmate selection includes the ten participants of the work-release offenders. These are individuals who have completed educational and employment training and are now released to work in the community. The second group includes ten current educational programming students and employment students. The third group is currently enrolled in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming. The final group of inmates is ten individuals who served their original sentence, were released from prison, and have been reincarcerated (see Table 1).

On the administrative level of planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs, the Wardens (2), Assistant Superintendents (2), Educational Coordinators (2), and Instructors (8) will participate in the study. The Wardens are responsible for the prison's overall function and ensure that each prison meets the state requirements of offering educational programming. The Assistant Superintendents are challenged with the implementation of classes, the collaboration of relationships with the college, and outside entities that provide opportunities for an inmate to work. The Educational Coordinators are responsible for coordinating classes, enrolling students, and ensuring that they have all requirements needed while incarcerated and before release. The instructors are dually challenged. They are employed by the college but are under the oversight of the prison. They have the complicated duty to teach the content standards and link all skills



Table 1

*Categorical Table of Participants*


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Population	Composite	# of Participants
Work – Release Offenders	Individuals who have completed educational or vocational training and are eligible for work in the community.	10
Educational Students	Students who are currently enrolled in GED/ABE or a degree program.	10
Vocational Students	Students who have completed their general education requirements and are now enrolled in a certificate-bearing vocational training program.	10
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming	Individuals who are enrolled in one or more of these programs receive support for social behaviors and needs before reentry.	10
Prison Administration	Employees of the North Carolina Department of Prison Instruction who serve in the educational division of the prison.	14

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learned in preparation for release or work. This population is displayed in Table 2. It is a categorical table of the participants and the criteria that must be met to participate in the study.

### **Sample and Sampling Procedures**

The type of sampling strategy that will be used for this study is a purposeful strategy. The participants in this study have a direct correlation and experience with the subject matter and include both inmates and administrators.

The criteria for inmate participation in this study require the individual to be incarcerated and enrolled in an educational, vocational, life skills class or assigned to employment. They must also have been re-incarcerated for reoffending. Inmate participants must be within 12-24 months of release from completing their sentence and cannot be in medical or segregation during the study. Participation by inmates will be voluntary and guided by prison staff. Because of the subject matter's restrictive nature, snowballing techniques will not be used, and samples are based on limited class sizes. This study involves a controlled population. If needed, as a result of attrition, samples will be refreshed from this same population.

For administrator participants, they will be asked to participate. All participation is voluntary. It is essential to the data collected that the Warden and the Assistant Superintendent of Programs participate, for they determine which programs will be offered in the facility. There are two to three case managers responsible for the inmates' assignments to educational, vocational, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming. These case managers are also involved in planning visitations of the inmate's family and preparations for release upon reentry.

Table 2

*Hirschi's Social Controls and Linkages*

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Hirschi's Social Control Theory (Bonds)	Linkages
Attachment	Friends, Family, Colleagues
Commitment	High School Equivalency, Post-Secondary Training, Vocational Certification, Work Release
Involvement	Alcoholics Anonymous, WRAP Services, Mentor Programs, Civic engagement, Little League
Belief	Rules, Regulations, Laws and Societal norms

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Charmaz (2006) states, “one stops collecting data when the categories or themes are saturated: when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new insights or reveals new properties.” This is when there is an adequate sample. There was an expected sample size of ten inmates in each category: work release, educational, vocational, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming students. This renders a sample size of a total of thirty inmates and fourteen administrator participants.

The inmates' data collection includes a pre and post-social bond survey that examines their educational program attendance and completion. These questions are open-ended and relate to their assessment in inmate relations and development to Social Controls by participating in educational programming.

This open-ended survey is designed to connect their classroom preparation with their Social Controls and their feelings of increased capacity or diminished attachment. Surveys are available in Appendix B. Interviews with inmates will be conducted between the administering of the pre and post surveys to discover what may be missing from their programming to assist them in reentering. In addition, inmates were given a reflective journal to address their thoughts on their development between communications. North Carolina Department of Public Safety Staff will be interviewed to determine their perspective on inmates' Social Controls and their development through educational programs. This will help triangulate data gathered through inmate surveys and interview data.

### **Ethical Considerations and Informed Consent**

According to the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NC DPS: Policy & Procedure Manual, 2017), the following procedures must be followed to gain access to participants or data. The application must provide a brief but comprehensive description of the

project with enough information to demonstrate the practitioner's ability to conduct the project. The scholarly practitioner will explain what he/she expects staff to do and thoroughly explain the method of preserving confidentiality since this is a significant concern with most research involving offenders. The application contains explicit details on the type of information expected from participants and administrators. They must read the instructions carefully and submit all requested information.

The Informed Consent document contains several required statements which must be applied as written. The scholarly practitioner may use any format he/she desires but must include the 11 required elements.

The following must also be included in the application: copies of any tests, surveys, and interview questions. The merit panel and review committee will need to review and approve copies of the actual tests, surveys, or interview forms. These copies have to be sent via postal mail. Documents must indicate whether the instrument has been field-tested and validated or provide a proposal that incorporates these elements. If the instrument cannot be validated, the scholarly practitioner must justify your study design.

An approval letter from the institution's IRB is required before certification. The IRB from the scholarly practitioner's institution will be the IRB of record. In this case, that IRB needs to have a prisoner representative as a member. If that committee has a requirement of needing an approval letter first, negotiations with that committee will occur. Approval by the Department means that the scholarly practitioner may research the sites he/she has specified. However, the scholarly practitioner will still need to perform the administrative details (e.g., times, dates, room locations, etc.) with appropriate field staff. The certification will include these contacts.

Applications are reviewed as time permits. The Research Merit Panel requires two weeks for review and meets at the Human Subjects Review Committee Chair's discretion. The Human Subjects Review Committee has scheduled meetings on the 3rd Friday of each month. The scholarly practitioner must have received an acceptance letter from the Research Merit Panel by the 1st Friday of a particular month to fall on the committee's agenda. The Divisional Authorizing Authority requires three weeks for review and meets at the Human Subjects Review Committee Chair's discretion. Staff will return incomplete proposals to the investigator.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical problems with research with prisoners result from the complex nature of the correctional settings and the potential research participants' demoralized status. The limitations on personal choice and control are evident and oppressive in detention facilities.

First are those concerns related to informed consent, ensuring that the setting allows for informed consent and refusal. Towards this end, all participation is voluntary, and participants were instructed that they may withdraw at any time for any reason. Second, privacy is difficult to ensure within a correctional setting. In prison, everyone sees who moves where and can assume what that movement means. To maintain privacy, I will hold the privacy of data records generated throughout the study and destroy records within two years of completing the study. Electronic data will be kept on a password-protected computer. Paper-generated data will be held in a locked file cabinet at the investigator's institution of record. Third, ethical research involves the standard of participation. If an inmate does not appear for a scheduled research meeting, it may not be clear whether the inmate has (1) decided not to come, (2) was prevented from coming, (3) has been taken to court for an unexpected appearance, or (4) was presented with an unscheduled family visit. If for any reason, an inmate is not able to complete the research

process, he will be replaced by another participant who meets the criteria and is selected by the prison administrators.

All interviews, surveys, and data collected will be treated anonymously for the inmates' and the prison staff's safety. All data, upon receipt, will be taken out of the prison setting and returned to the scholarly practitioner's office for storage and analysis. The scholarly practitioner and the North Carolina Department of Public Safety will have access to all data collected. Upon three years post-completion of the study, all data collected will be shredded by a reputable company to ensure the destruction of the property.

### **Instrumentation**

Data were collected along four streams. The first stream regards a pre-test survey of inmates and an interview of prison administrators. This data provides a baseline from which analyses can be made. The second regards interviews and journal reflection entries of inmates and a survey of the educational staff in the prison who administer the program components. This stream will generate more detailed data from inmates' perspectives and more specifics from educational programming administrators. The third stream involves a post-test survey of inmates guided by Social Controls theory (see Table 3).

The pre-and post-test surveys are based on Hirschi's Social Control Theory. This has been revised by Hirschi himself on the contingency that the elements of the Social Control Theory vary widely upon the definitions that are applied to the four categories (Smith, 2017). These categories, attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, predict whether the individual will deviate but not of a continuance or escalation of crimes. There is not a valid instrument associated with Hirschi's Control Theory. However, the survey instruments will gauge the individual's desire and preparation not to recidivate based on their views and

Table 3

*Data Streams*

Data Streams Sets	Inmates	Administrators	Former Offender
Data Stream 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-test Survey Social Controls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview Social Controls</li> </ul>	
Data Stream 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview Educational Experiences and Gaps</li> <li>• Reflective Memos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey Educational Programs</li> </ul>	
Data Stream 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-test Survey Social Controls</li> </ul>		
Data Stream 4			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Narrative</li> </ul>



participation in the social controls. The survey instrument begins with the collection of demographic information of each inmate. Their names and opus numbers collected will be replaced by an identifier randomly assigned to each survey.

Each section of the survey serves as a second reporting factor. The first section focuses on the control commitment. Commitment is the measure of what may be lost when deviating from social norms. Commitment is manifested through education and work experience. This surveys the inmate's educational level before incarceration and then identifies the educational and workforce programs the inmate has participated in to demonstrate commitment. It asks the participant also to remember if he completed the program and if he did not why.

The second section of the survey assesses the inmate's involvement while incarcerated and his intentions to continue involvement once released. Involvement is defined as time spent outside of crime. This includes social activities such as sports or hobbies. However, involvement is also linked to social support programs that provide mentorship, counseling, and group settings to engage individuals in positive behaviors. Inmates are asked to identify which programs they have participated in related to educational, vocational social support, cognitive-behavioral treatment, chemical dependency, and mental health programs. Completion is a factor of attained skills and knowledge for the inmate to be prepared for release and reentry into society. Individuals are requested to stipulate if they completed or not. Inmates are also asked to identify what programs they would have liked to have access to while incarcerated.

The third part of the survey focuses on attachment. Attachment refers to the emotional control between a person and his friends, families, and peers. Inmates are asked to explain the status of their relationships with family and friends while incarcerated, such as whether the social

support programs have helped them become better fathers, brothers, sons, or friends, and if the program prepared them to engage in familial duties once released.

The final part of the survey is the belief control. Belief deals with the acceptance of traditional ideas and thoughts. Participants are asked to assess how and if their beliefs about society's norms, rules, and laws have changed while incarcerated and what new beliefs have been developed to ensure successful maintaining of reentry into society. This survey is available in Appendix B.

During the pre-test survey deployment, prison administrators will be interviewed to learn their perspectives on the Social Controls of inmates and inmates' Social Control development through educational programs. Questions address Social Controls from an implementation standpoint and the behavioral results evident in the inmates' day-to-day lives. They were asked from a leadership perspective how they see inmates' morale while inmates are participating in programs and after they have completed them. What programs are missing, and what is needed to fill in this prison system's educational gap? They were also asked to identify the correlation between the prison system and the reentry council and how it works.

The interview protocol is available in Appendix C. Interviews will be audio-recorded, and the scholarly practitioner will take notes. No video recordings will be used during the study. Interviews will be audio-recorded, and the scholarly practitioner will take notes.

In the second stream of data collection, inmates will be interviewed on their Social Controls perspectives and developing those controls through educational programs. This will allow learning, in the inmate's own words, their educational needs and experiences, and gaps. The interview will gather the impact of programming on the life of the inmates. Did they feel prepared to reenter society? What did they expect to receive from attending the program? Did

they get the teaching, training, guidance, and support needed? If yes, the inmate will explain, and if not, the inmate will explain? Another question is how did they feel about themselves after completing the program. Other questions are what supports will they need in society to continue to be successful, and what would they have liked to learn that they didn't learn?

Other questions involve recidivism. If they completed the class and yet recidivated, why? These questions will also determine what they feel is missing in their preparation. In their reflective journal, the inmates are asked to identify which programs they participated in (educational, employment, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency, and mental health programming) and explain why attending these programs was essential to their preparation.

During this phase, inmates were also provided an opportunity to write in journals and document their development through their incarceration process. The reflective memo is a writing assessment that asks them to identify the effects of Social Controls more extensively on their present status and how they perceive their reentry process.

The last component of this phase is a survey to gather data from the educational staff's perspective in the prison who administers the program components. Questions in the survey regard the details of educational programming. This survey is in Appendix B.

The third stream of data is a post-test survey of inmates. A re-deploy of the pre-test is issued to measure changes in Social Controls overtime after educational interventions. Journals and surveys are implemented during a 16 – 18-week semester. Program completion must be attempted for the inmate to have a conclusive determination on how educational programs effective their Social Controls.

The fourth stream is the personal narrative is a method of research that relies on the written or spoken representation of an individual. The narrative research aims to conceptualize the human experience and represent it in textual form. The focus is a storied experience that is gathered through a series of questions, that allows the individual to tell their story.

### **Procedures**

This study aims to examine the efficiency of prison education programs based on characteristics derived from Hirschi's Social Control Theory. Social Control Theory expresses that the stronger the bond to attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, the less likely the inmate will commit a crime (Hirschi, 1969).

This research will examine the correlation between life skill competencies, adult basic education, vocational and postsecondary programs, and workforce readiness. Comprised of 50-60 participants, these participants are selected based upon either a resident or an employee of the correctional system.

Each of the interviews, surveys, and reflective memos will be conducted in the prison setting. Entry into the prison requires an approved application that must be submitted to the IRB Board and then to the North Carolina Department of Corrections. This application includes the survey instrument, interviews, and the topic of the reflective journals. Once approved, contact is made in the prisons with an explanation of the study and the North Carolina Department of Corrections' approval letter. The wardens of the prisons will also give permission and the exact protocol to follow. This protocol includes establishing a point of contact for scheduling all meetings, approval of meeting location and times, approval of prison personnel who can participate, and submission of data and findings within their respective facilities. Then review and approval of the timeline for completion of the research is established.

Once protocols have been given, the point of contact, usually the educational coordinator, will review the inmates based on the criteria provided. He/She will identify the road crew, educational/vocational, and life skills groups. Explanations and consents will be given to the inmates by the scholarly practitioner, and the inmates have a choice of whether they want to participate or not.

Once consents have been signed, copies will be given to the educational coordinator for his/her files, and the scholarly practitioner will take the originals. Interviews will be specifically for prison administration since they can be conducted on a one-on-one basis. All surveys and focus groups will be conducted with the inmates in a collaborative meeting.

The data collected will be reviewed and analyzed. The purpose of this data is to identify gaps in Educational/Vocational Course of Study which may identify the lack of vocational options for available employment opportunities once inmates are released, the lack of degree programs or opportunities to further education once the high school equivalency is obtained, the limited number of classroom seats for inmates before they are released based on a possible waiting list. The data will also identify new career pathways for inmates and the need for Work Readiness, which may identify the lack of resume or credential/training. The path indicates the absence of interview skills and the ability to narrate experiences for reentry. The lack of soft skills needed to maintain employment is another critical data point.

The inmates may identify additional practical life skills to include an increase in services that aid in reentry preparation. These skills include, are not limited to, financial literacy, parenting skills, Recovery Wrap Around Services, and medication management.

## **Data Processing and Analysis**

The software that will be used in assisting with transcribing interviews will be Temi.

Temi is an advanced speech recognition software that allows the researcher to upload the audio file and then transcribes it with timestamps and speakers. Temi provides for review and editing and the ability to export a transcript.

NVivo is a qualitative data analysis computer software designed for qualitative researchers produced by QSR International. NVivo will link all codes and be used for data management and organization. Additionally, NVivo will assist in the structuring of open-ended survey responses and interviews. Information can be imported into NVivo from a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet containing the survey responses.

NVivo will also code the priori found in the short-answer questions in the survey and the reflective memos. The controls being surveyed have been compromised in the lives of the inmates. The assumption is these compromised controls will lead to the criminality of the inmates. The codes assigned to attachment pertain to caring about others and the opinions and expectations of family and friends. Commitment is coded by identifiers that outline areas that inmates took risks put time and energy into areas where there was self-investment. Involvement is any time engrossed in activities. Rules, laws, and societal norms code belief.

This study will attempt to answer the following research questions: how effective are correctional education programs in reducing recidivism, what types of educational programs, employment programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming are most effective at generating Social Controls?

In Chapter 4, the information gathered in the surveys, interviews, and reflective memos will be displayed in various graphs to give an overview of the answers received. Survey data will be reported using descriptive statistics. The constant comparative method will be used to identify gaps and develop themes related to educational needs.

### **Methodological Assumptions and Limitations**

The survey, interview questions, and the reflective memo have been specifically designed to identify the correlation and the increase in Social Controls' significance with the educational programs, employment programs, social support programs, chemical dependency programs, and cognitive behavioral therapy programs. It is the goal to identify gaps in the programming that leave inmates unprepared for reentry into society.

Lincoln and Guba (Naturalist Inquiry, 2018) identify four criteria in establishing the trustworthiness of qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is best defined when participants can see themselves represented in the data. Establishing credibility is created in the thick description by using the participant's voice.

Transferability is establishing that this study can be applied to other contexts (Naturalist Inquiry, 2018). Scholarly Practitioners must demonstrate that the results are generalizable to other institutions. The goal is that this analytical strategy can be used in other collaborative community college and prison contexts to build a comprehensive educational model that will allow inmates who are five years or less from being released to reenter society to reduce recidivistic odds successfully. Currently, there is no comprehensive plan that addresses all the inmate's educational needs before reentry into society. For this reason, the research is recorded and detailed as a matter of dependability. The methods are delineated, and the full research

process is transparent to the reader (Naturalist Inquiry, 2018). This chapter is accompanied by the appendices containing the surveys, the interview questions, and the reflective memo questions that will provide the reader with the process for administering the study and the tools to do so (see Appendix B).

Confirmability requires the scholarly practitioner to make connections with the data and the interpretations. (Naturalist Inquiry, 2018). Close links between data collection and analysis are provided in subsequent chapters.

### **Role of the Scholarly Practitioner**

The qualitative data collected and analyzed will be anonymized to the extent that the scholarly practitioner should not identify individuals who participate in the surveys. This will be exclusive to those individuals who choose to participate in interviews. Survey instrumentation maintains anonymity to elicit honest responses without concern of repercussion.

The scholarly practitioner will need to set aside his/her knowledge, experiences, and beliefs about the subject matter being studied. Complete removal of one's preconceived ideas is impossible; however, being aware of the attitudes, stereotypes, and worldviews that could influence data interpretation is necessary. The scholarly practitioner must use only the information found in the surveys and not insert prejudgments on information rendered during the interview process.

There are a few factors that might influence the interpretation of the data received from the interviews. I am responsible for the educational component that must be implemented in East Rock Correctional Institution. There is a firm expectation from the North Carolina Community College System and the North Carolina Department of Corrections to offer quality educational services and expand services needed to meet the needs of the inmates who will be released.



Being aware of these biases should cause me to be open-minded and conscious of the inmates' responses and conditions through surveys and interviews.

### **Summary**

Chapter 3 is a qualitative look at the effectiveness of educational programs in the prison system. It attempts to answer the question of how effective educational programs are and which programs are most effective. This approach examines a population of 50 to 60 inmates incarcerated in East Rock Correctional Institution and 14 prison employees.

This inquiry is being conducted by administering inmate and prison staff surveys and interviews to assess the participation and completion rate of inmates enrolled in these programs. Also, reflective memos will be given to inmates to share their experiences, successes, and perceived failures of not participating or completing the study program. Inmates will also be able to identify areas that may be missing in their preparation for reentry into society.

This inquiry aims to point to the increase in Social Controls for the inmate to be less likely to recidivate. The data presented in assessing Social Support Programs should identify a stronger or weaker control in the inmate's attachment to family and their support system and involvement in positive activities. In evaluating Educational Programs and Employment Training Programs, the control of commitment is recognized as impacting an inmate's desire to maintain his achievement. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Chemical Dependency, and Mental Health supports are indicators to the social control of belief, this belief in society's rules and what they need to cope with difficult situations. This data will be displayed in Chapter 4 and shows the correlation between Hirschi's Control Theory, Educational Programs, and recidivism.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

The purpose of this study is to identify gaps in the North Carolina Community College System and the North Carolina Department of Public Safety system in the collaboration between the two entities on providing education and training programs. The goal is to build a comprehensive educational model that will allow inmates who are five years or less from being released to reenter society, successfully reducing recidivistic odds.

This research study examined the effectiveness of Educational Programs, Employment Programs, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming in the prison. The research questions for the study are:

1. How effective are correctional education programs in reducing recidivism?
2. What types of Educational Programs, Employment Programs, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming are most effective at generating Social Controls.

This study seeks to show a correlation between Hirschi's Social Control Theory which links the inmate's level of attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief to family, society, and achievements as a deterrent to crime.

### **Pilot Study**

This study piloted by Langston Community College included participants at one correctional facility East Rock Correctional Institution. The target population is comprised of 50-60 participants. The inmates selected for the study are current inmates who are serving their sentence but within a 12 to 24-month reentry period. The inmate selection includes the ten participants of the work-release offenders. These are individuals who have completed

educational and employment training and are now released to work in the community. The second group includes ten current educational programming students and employment students. The third group is currently enrolled in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming. The final group of inmates is ten individuals who served their original sentence, were released from prison, and have been reincarcerated. On the administrative level of planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs, the Wardens (2), Assistant Superintendents (2), Educational Coordinators (2), and Instructors (8) will participate in the study.

The specific procedures for how the prison will identify the participants include voluntary participation by the inmate. The participant must be within 12-24 months of release from completing his sentence and cannot be in medical or segregation during the study.

Covid-19 severely impacted the nature of this study. In March of 2020, the United States of America was ordered to go into quarantine for an unpredictable amount of time. The country was facing an airborne virus that could be transferred unknowingly to another person and or animal. The Center for Disease Control recommended that individuals stay home if possible, when out in public render six feet of space between individuals, wear masks, and wash and sanitize hands as much as possible. This pandemic forced a shut down not only for the community colleges but for the prison where this research was to take place.

The original design of the research plan was to physically go into the prison and offer the inmates the choice to participate in the study. Participants were to be selected from inmates that were already enrolled in educational or vocational classes. They were to participate in pre and post surveys and one on one interviews with the researcher. The North Carolina Department of Public Safety staff was also included in the study to complete a survey. Instructors employed by

the North Carolina Community College system, were also asked to participate in a survey and interviews.

Once this pandemic began to spread the prisons went on CODE-RED. CODE RED is a locked down procedure that only allows for essential personnel to enter or exit the facility. Due to the pandemic, many facilities had to shut down and move their inmates to other institutions because of the lack of personnel available to provide safe oversight of the inmates and the facility. All classes, groups and extra activities that were offered in the prison were cancelled until further notice.

Due to these factors there was no data collected from inmates or the North Carolina Department of Public Safety staff. Participation in this study now centered around the instructors the instructors that are employed by the North Carolina Community College System who did not need North Carolina Department of Public Safety approval. However, all correspondence, collection of consents, survey responses and interviews were transmitted electronically or virtually. Instructors participated by completing an interview and an open-ended survey-based on their observations and experience from working in the prison system. The data collection process was scheduled to cover an academic semester that was not allowed due to COVID restrictions. Instructor surveys and interviews were held over two months.

### **Data Collection**

The data collection for this research spanned two months. I recruited instructors through email and offered the consent to participate. Out of the eight instructors invited to participate, there were six positive responses. The personal interview was conducted, transcribed by TEMI, and the narrative will be included in the analysis.

The interviews and narrative are stored safely on the East Carolina Pirate Drive for confidentiality. The interviews of the instructors were held via Microsoft Teams because of COVID -19 precautions. During this reseach process many community colleges were shut down and encouraged to tele-work from their residence in order to safeguard against the spread of the Coronavirus. In order to gather the data for the interviews, and maintain this precaution, particiapnts agreed to interview virtually. These interviews were also processed and transcribed by TEMI. All paper copies have been stored in a locked cabinet in the office of the researcher.

The data represented in this research is observation and participation as an employee of the North Carolina Community College System. This data does not reflect the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the inmates. This deviation is also a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that prevented entry into prisons and access to inmates for surveys, interviews, and reflective journals.

### **Demographics**

Participants in this study who completed the survey and interview included six instructors who work for the Community College System and teach either General Education Diplomas Classes or Vocational Classes. Represented are two African American females, one Caucasian male, two Hispanic males, and one African American Male. Three of the participants range in age from 51-60, and the other three range in age from 61-70. Table 4 displays the demographics of the instructors that participated in the surveys and interviews.

The participant in the personal narrative is a 49-year-old Caucasian male who is a native of North Carolina. He is a university graduate and former town official who shares his story and perspective of the North Carolina Prison System. He will be referred to as John for this study. John spent 22 months in the prison system for having five driving under the influence charges on

Table 4

*Participant Demographics*


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Participant	Pseudonym Name	Race	Gender	Age Group	Years of Experience	Areas of Teaching Expertise
01	Michael	Hispanic	Male	61-70	10 years	Culinary, Human Resource Development
02	Rebecca	African American	Female	61-70	8 years	Reading, Writing, Math, Science, English, and Social Studies
03	Julie	African American	Female	51-60	12 years	Reading, Writing, Math, Science, English, and Social Studies
04	Matthew	African American	Male	51-60	5 years	Culinary, Human Resource Development
05	Patrick	Hispanic	Male	51-60	14 years	Human Resource Development, Entrepreneurship, Reading, Writing, Math, Science, English, and Social Studies
06	Roger	Caucasian	Male	61-70	17 years	Reading, Writing, Math, Science, English, and Social Studies

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his driving record. His story is told from a personal perspective and is related to Hirschi's Social Control Theory of attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief.

### **Study Results**

The response below is the personal narrative of John. The personal narrative seeks to conceptualize the human experience and textualize it. The personal narrative is the actual thoughts and responses of John prompted by interview questions. The interview questions seek to identify the presence of Hirschi's Social Controls, denote his educational opportunities while incarcerated and ascertain his preparedness for reentry. Because of COVID-19, access to the inmates was denied. John is an ex-offender and not restricted by North Carolina Department of Public Safety and was able to share his experience first hand.

The response of the instructors answer the same questions posed to John in order to show resemblance in the observation of and the actual experience of. Although the instructors observe and interact and are able to make educated responses based on their day to day interactions with inmates. John's responses prove that there is connection between what they see and what actually takes place.

### **Personal Narrative of John**

#### ***Background of the Participant***

My name is John. My former wife and I have twins; they are 18. One attends ECU, and the other attends the University of South Carolina. I served as a town commissioner for 12 years. I am a 1992 graduate of East Carolina University, and I have a degree in Economics. I was on the town board for 12 years and ran several companies. I was 49 when I went to prison. I am a good guy. I went through a bad time. But it has made me want to do better. I am a much better person than I have ever been, and it is because of this experience. I am now divorced. I am

fighting to get my company back from my ex-wife, but I have a better relationship with my two boys.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

I was town commissioner for 12 years. I mean, I would work with farmers, and you know, work with them in a lot of ways, campaigns or whatever. My brother, my partner, and I hit a little rough patch. For me, we weren't getting along, and during that time, I started self-medicating. I was always a heavy drinker, and it got really bad, so to make a long story short, I had a perfect record with no charges, not even a speeding ticket to my record, and within a year and a half roughly, I got five DUI's. No crashes. You know, I just hit rock bottom. I went through several rehabs. They were County club rehabs. You know stay for a month. Nothing to really make me quit until I really bottomed out. I went to rehab four times. So, I would basically walk in and walk right back out.

It was kind of frustrating for my former wife. I would get drunk again, and she would call the Sheriff and tell them to come to get me. I mean, that's still my fault. I would go see the boys, and there would be two Sheriffs in there. They'd tell me that I was still drinking and driving.

After that, I knew when I got five DUI's that it really should have been a felony in that short period of time and that I needed to really spend the time in an actual structured setting. I had an attorney and had a very good attorney. He said, "You can do one year, two years, or maybe even three." I had bombed myself out, so I decided to stay in jail. I was convicted and sent down to misdemeanor confinement because I was not a felon.

In Mabery County, I was in a misdemeanor confinement facility. In misdemeanor confinement facilities, it's like you see 60 days in a pod. No outside. I didn't see sunlight for just under six months. I luckily became a trustee, got to work in the kitchen, got to go outside under



arm guard, and do stuff. When I got there, I did almost a year in county jail. And I was stuck in one area. There's basically a half-quarter of a basketball court, and it's plain inside. There were 34 bunks three commodes, and five showerheads. When you're in there, you got to go to the yard maybe three days a week for two hours.

So, I wanted to get into a prison system and out of this confinement. My sentence was 22 months, and I got out 18 months for good behavior. I got moved to Central Prison, and I was happy. It was much better than being in misdemeanor confinement. When you are in the county district, you're in there with someone who might have stolen a steak from Harris Teeter to someone who killed his wife. You know you're saying that everyone and everybody there is disenfranchised; they don't want to be there. It is very volatile. Prison is more organized. It's like college football and professional football. In prison, you get where you're supposed to go, and you do what you are supposed to do.

So, when I got into Lyman Prison, I was supposed to come in on green clothes but had to come in on medical. Green clothes unit was filled up, so the only place they could put me was in the psychiatric ward. I was in a semi 9-foot cell for two weeks straight and could not leave. I couldn't shower or anything. I had to bathe in the sink. And then I was in with the rest of the population roughly 25 days after arrival. I got out three days a week, Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, for one hour and showering at nighttime. No phone. I had no phone privileges. I couldn't use the phone. It was pretty tough. At that point, I got moved to East Rock Correctional Institution with four months left.

During my time of incarceration, I went to two Seymour County jails for exactly one month each, Peyton County jail for one month, and Mabery County Detention Center misdemeanor confinement for roughly 12 months. Lyman Prison for a little over a month and

four months in East Rock Correctional Institution. Then they moved me to a home camp near home. Mount Pleasant was the closest camp to me. I spent 560 days in five different places across the state.

### ***Social Control of Attachment***

Hirschi's Social Control of attachment speaks to an individual's emotional attachment to their friends, family and peers. Hirschi stated that individuals are less likely to recidivate because they do not want to disappoint those that are closest to them or lose the relationship completely.

#### ***Question 1 - What was Your Relationship Like with Your Family while Incarcerated?***

While I was incarcerated, my mother, my closest friends, and my children decided on tough love. I did not talk to my mother for nine months. They were not answering phones and would not return a letter. My children didn't speak to me for several months. My former wife and I talked almost daily. And I knew when I was going to serve some time; I didn't want my friends to say to me when I call, "How's prison?" I knew that would be a nightmare. I hired my best friend to be my power of attorney and asked him to take care of my business.

I communicated to my children about five months into it, but they really didn't know how to take it. They were in a small private school. They were 15 years old when I went in. They went to school with the County Sheriff's children and some of my other friends' children. So, it was very embarrassing. It was tough. When you are incarcerated and you go to use the phone, there may be 30, 40, or 70 people. You can't talk like you would like to, so people don't know your business. It was very disheartening and depressing. If I had sat and not done anything, it would have overwhelmed me. I told my friends that if you are going to send me anything and do something, send me books.

My former wife and I were together for a very long time. We broke up. She had some vices, and I had some vices. We just made bad decisions. It wasn't infidelity, but we were very close. And we had the business together. We're paying for college (for our sons) and (are) still very much intertwined. We are still in litigation right now for the business. We talk every day. We've been together for 20 some years. She was aware and realized that I needed more than what I was receiving at the "county club" rehabs. I mean, it was nice and comfortable, we played chess, but she knew that was not what I needed. When they shut that door behind me, I was in there. It was tough. Yeah, for 22 months.

I went through a process where I thought about it, but I didn't do it. But I mean, I thought about it, you know? (implied Suicide). Is it worth it? You know, when I get out of here, my mother is not talking to me. I will be divorced, and my business, my children? I think everyone kind of goes with that. I wasn't suicidal, but I did remember this whole thought of, "Is it worth it?" You know it's sad. I drank so much at that point; it took my brain about three months to actually process that what was happening to me was really true. It's like coming out of a coma. You know, you're weak, but I began to think and feel more clearly. And my power of attorney and my poor wife both noticed the same thing.

I had to ask myself, "What am I doing?" I have too much to live for to let negativity well me down. Because bad thoughts come from time to time. So I decided to be more positive. I started writing letters to my mother three and four times a week. I started quoting Bible verses and remained very spiritual to kind of ward off those negative thoughts and feelings. From that point on, I wrote a lot. I'm not trying to write a book. I just started focusing on how I can be the best father, the best son, the best friend that I know I can be. I just wanted to be there for my

family. I know that I am far from perfect, but I try to live my life with as few regrets as possible and not repeat what I have done.

Except for church services, there was no group like Yeoman Ministries or mentors coming to East Rock. You have no idea what it means to a person to have somebody come and see them. These guys have little, no contact with family, random support, and they've got to have someone coming in. So, it's real tough for guys to change without support. Personal mentoring in every prison should be a part of the rehabilitation process. There are plenty of people that want to do it. While it's not the prison's responsibility to recruit mentors, I feel that they could make the process for people and groups easy to facilitate access and entry into the prison to serve inmates.

I had great friends, but it was a little different because I was the first guy on my block to go to prison. So it was a little different. And without that support, it would be tough. Emotional support before and after is huge. It is easier to give support on the inside than it is to give it on the outside. If they are not prepared while they are inside, it's going to be a hard transition. These people's families might say they are supporters, but other family dynamics keep them from being able to provide the emotional support they need. At least on the inside, they are a captive audience; the distractions are fewer.

### ***Social Control of Commitment***

Commitment is defined by Hirschi as the time and effort investment already spent on future goals that are through criminal activity. Individuals are less likely to recidivate because they do not want to lose the time, energy and resources that they used to achieve their goals.

***Question 2 - What Educational or Vocational Programs Did You Participate In while Incarcerated?***

At East Rock Correctional, they had masonry and horticulture. I worked in the laundry that was just rough. I mean, I don't think prison should be fun. They had where you could work on the electrical part for a long period of time. I thought that every jail had a computer center or computer classes available. Yeah, I thought, as long as I am here, I'm gonna enjoy it, brush up on my computer skills. And nothing. And I couldn't believe it.

I did laundry before I got into the Alcohol and Chemical Dependency Program (ACDP). I didn't participate in any of the religious services that were held in prison. I am spiritual; I just chose not to. It was during yard time, and I was locked up, so I chose to go outside. We would walk and see people. People would ask me for help with understanding certain papers or on certain legal matters. Because I was educated, I met with the guys. Other than that, we talked, worked out, and walked. There was not much to do.

You know, they're not even giving inmates the security that they need that when they get out, they will have hope, education, and training. And finding a halfway house that they could go to when they are released. Finding possible jobs, finding companies that are willing to hire ex-cons, there are not a lot of companies actively trying to employ ex-felons.

***Social Control of Involvement***

Involvement is defined as time spent on positive activities outside of crime. This control states that if individuals are involved in groups, pro-social groups, community or volunteer based activities, there is less opportunity for deviant behavior.

***Question 3 – What Groups Did You Participate In while You were Incarcerated?***

In misdemeanor confinement, there is no, and I mean no counseling, no classes, no AA meetings, or anything in midstream or farming counties. You may have a minister come in on Friday every now and then. And some of these guys are doing up to three years of the three years in county jail.

I had the opportunity to do ACDP (Alcohol Chemical Dependency Program) while in prison. And that's why I knew I had to get in there. I wanted to get into the prison. And when I was in misdemeanor confinement, they didn't have anything in there. I wanted at least to do something while I was in there. I thought I'd come out a level one or level three and go straight and take classes at Langston Community College, but I found out they don't do that in East Rock County.

*A level one inmate is an inmate that is in minimum custody and is usually housed at a prison camp. A level three inmate is a medium custody inmate. These inmates are classified based on their offenses. Levels one through three are usually inmates that will eventually reenter society.*

I guess you know I was surprised that there was not much to do. I had to keep myself occupied with more than just walking around the yard. There are no programs available, you are waitlisted, or classes are closed. You had some staff members from top to bottom. Some who really cared and some that didn't. I thought that there would be more information about what is available, what you can do if you want to transfer, and then you can see your case manager. You can tell them what you want to do or take, but then you are waitlisted. They are giving you lots of options, but you're just a number. And then when they transfer you to the prison that has the class you want to take, you still may have to wait three, four months, or six months for a seat to

become available. And your sentence may be up by the time you get to take what you want. A lot of my time was wasted. I could have done a lot more. I thought there'd be some type of something to spend your time other than walking out and hustling.

*It is important to note that there are 56 prisons in North Carolina that all offer different Educational Programs, Employment Programs, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming. The classes that are offered are based upon the labor market of the area, the skill or trade specialty of the community college in that service area, and the Educational Planning Document which is agreed upon between that specific prison and that community college.*

*Inmates upon entry into the prison and completion of their diagnostic test are given a listing of programs that they can participate in. Once an inmate identifies what programs they would like to participate in, they then put in a request to be transferred to that facility that offers that program.*

Everyone in there is hustling. It is hard to be put in that environment. I was one of the very few people there that wasn't gambling or drinking. I was surprised at like, you know, availability of what resources prison had. I think when they do the diagnostic testing, they need to explain that more to the inmates.

*The process of diagnostic testing prepares a summary admission report for new admissions. Social and criminal data will be entered into the electronic record. Also included is the legal aspects of the case; medical, dental and mental health history/psych evaluation; occupational/educational status and interests; vocational programming; recreational preference and needs assessment; staff recommendations, if any; and pre-institutional assessment information. (2) administers and scores psychometric tests; (3) provides casework services for*

*crisis intervention as necessitated by immediate problems of or with an offender being processed; (4) evaluates each case to identify Security Risk Group affiliations, crime-related problems, correctional goals, need for outer controls, and other factors relating to the classification process. (5) administers the Risk Needs Assessment (RNA). (6) Assigns to a housing unit. (7) Records basic personal data for mail and visitation. Explains mail and visiting procedures to offenders. (8) Assists offenders with notifying their next of kin and family. (9) Assigns a register number. (10) Provides offenders written orientation materials. (11) Documents any reception/orientation completed. (NCDPS, 2017 p.2)*

I'm not sure how much influence that has on where an inmate goes as it pertains to classes. It may disenfranchise many. I am not sure. So we need the money, and I understand that they want to do jobs in prison. I am saying that they need to use the diagnostic testing to help them focus on what they want to learn. At least they will leave prison with a trade, get out and not come back in.

### ***Social Control of Belief***

Hirschi's Social Control of belief in conventional norms. This is the extent to which a person believes in the moral validity of laws and standards. The more an individual believes in them, the less likely they are to deviate from them.

### ***Question 4 – Do You Feel that Your Feelings Towards Society has Changed? What are Your Thoughts of the Prison System?***

I'm pretty liberal, conservative. I do not think prison should be your experience at all. But if ever while you're there, we need to have more accessibility to educational programs.

Mentorship, anything that could be volunteer-based and give inspiration. I mean, talking to these



guys, so they begin thinking about the future. Some of these people don't know what they would like to do, what they are good at, and how they see themselves making it on the outside.

I feel that our system right now is more punitive instead of rehabilitative. I know you can't put all your taxpayers' dollars into prisons and not pay teachers. However, we must look at rehabilitative measures if we are going to make a difference. I really thought it'd be a little more, with the fiscal responsibility, of course, and what it cost society. These guys are in a revolving door. And you have to weigh the cost. Is it the prison system or the court system? They have to have something to do. I know they have to do better than what they are doing. Because what they are doing isn't working.

### ***Stigmatism***

A stigma is a mark of disgraced that is associated with an individual based upon a particular circumstance. Ex-offenders often struggles with the stigmatism of their past, always labled a criminal and never being able to rise above their crime. Despite the fact that they served their sentence.

### ***Question 5 – Do You Feel that You Share the Same Stigmatism as Other Ex-Offenders***

#### ***Reentering Society?***

I have a home; I have financial resources, I am unable to drive. But there is the stigmatism of having gone to prison. And I still have some friends that I was very close to. I know I took a nosedive four years even before I went to prison. They say don't hang around with John, they began to isolate me even before I went to prison They are very reserved in their beliefs and associations. So I don't get all the invites I used to get, especially if they are serving alcohol.

I know what I did was a crime. A very serious crime. I could have killed or injured someone. I didn't, but I could have. Crime is crime. Going to prison for any length of time comes with astigmatism. I will be scrutinized by my record. I cannot change my record. So even if I happen to get pulled over and they look at my record, I am already prejudged. Or if someone decides to break into my home, I cannot defend myself because I have been to prison. I am looked at a little bit differently.

I would have been a felon. But because my record was perfect, I was polite to the officers, and I never had any wrecks. I wasn't looting. It could have been a felony, but because of that, they didn't bring it up. It cost me a lot of money. So I can vote. I can carry a firearm. They took my concealed carry, but I can get that back as well.

### ***The Transition Plan***

The concept of the transition plan is comprehensive model that is not available for inmates when they preparing for reentry. They transition plan assist inmates with housing, transportation, employment, medication management and chemical and drug therapy support.

### ***Question 6 – Did You have a Transition Plan for Reentry Into Society? Do You Think that This is Important for Inmates to Have One?***

When I got out, I kind of had to have a plan. And I was surprised that there was no planning put in place for inmates that were getting ready to be released. For those who are incarcerated, an education, job skills are the biggest thing give them hope, so that they have something to do when they get out. They had nothing at East Rock Correctional, and that really shocked me.

Fortunately for me, I had a plan. There was a gentleman that on his way out of jail after being paroled. He slashed the guard's throat, walking out the gate. He didn't kill the guard, but

he did it because he felt like he had no future. He had no family and nowhere to go. He couldn't go to a halfway house because he was a violent criminal. He saw this as his last opportunity to do something, so he did it. Just so he could stay in prison.

So, when I got out, I was financially secure. I had a place to live, and even though I am in litigation, I have a business. The only thing that I cannot do is drive. However, when some of these other guys get out, they have no structure. They are going to send them somewhere. But it's not a package you open up for these people. It's not an easy way for them to get help when they get out. If you don't have another way, they'll take you to a bus station, give you two hundred dollars and send you on your way. I'm surprised at that. That is the ultimate depression. Not to have a place to go. I think there should be some type of better-organized packet with all those things.

### **Observations and Analysis**

I was unable to directly observe prisoners in the North Carolina Department of Public Safety. Face-to-face observations were obstructed by COVID -19, and technological connections were prohibited. It is important to note that there is a lack of technology in the prison system. The classes that are offered do not use computers. If they do, they are not hooked up to a network for safety reason. In addition, during the this time of the pandemic, the limited technology was used for court cases, medical appointments and then visitation with family when possible.

There is a standard practice based on the North Carolina Prison System Handbook that describes inmates' processes when they come into the system. When observing inmates as a sub-culture, it is essential to note that all offenders are treated equally upon entry. Depending on the type of law violated and the offender's age and gender, they are first sent to one of the eight

prisons in North Carolina with a diagnostic center. Diagnostic centers evaluate the inmates' physical and mental health, temperament, education and family, work, and criminal histories. The information is placed into each inmate's prison records. Evaluation of inmates at the diagnostic prisons is also known as processing. Four to six weeks may elapse before processing is completed, and the inmate is classified and sent to another prison. In addition to the processing evaluation and classification, inmates are tested and interviewed to determine the inmate's interests and abilities, which is information to make recommendations for future job and program assignments in prison. Counseling is provided to assist the inmate in making an adequate adjustment to prison.

This evaluation and placement serve as the launchpad for the interviews held by the researcher with the instructors who serve this population daily. The observations of the instructors are taken from their perspectives, regarding their interaction and work with the inmates and analyzed for this research. The questionnaire is available in Appendix B. This population sample includes six instructors: two African American females, two Hispanic males, one Caucasian male, and one African American male. Their instructional expertise ranged from basic K-12 to Human Resources, Culinary, Masonry, and Horticulture.

According to Hirschi's Social Control Theory, I categorized interviewee responses, linking a person's behavior to the four categories of attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief.

### **The Social Control of Attachment: Family & Friends**

How do you perceive the impact of family and friends on inmates' behavior - Negative or positive? Family impact overall is seen as positive. The characteristics of that family also determine the family impact. Instructors deem that the attitudes of family and friends shape that

of the inmate. Strained family concerns, financial issues, and families recovering from the casualty of their loved one's incarceration and create a negative impact, frustration, and a lack of visitation. Positive moral support is needed from friends and family if inmates are going to be successful in society; i.e obtain housing, employment and re-establish meaningful relationships. Positive moral support is the encouragement, assurance and compassion given to an individual, especially during tumultuous times in their lives. These supports help the ex-offender cope with changes in society that they may not have been prepared for.

Michael stated that "the privilege of family visitation is an incentive for inmates to stay in line. The need for that interaction keeps the inmate from violating rules so that they can see their family and not disappoint them losing that opportunity." Julie goes further to stipulate that "the interaction of family and friends sets the tone for the inmate's survival. Support from loved ones helps to re-establish a different outlook for the inmate when re-entering society."

### **The Social Control of Commitment**

How important are goals in the process of reentry? To set goals while incarcerated is just as important as setting goals when back into society. The lack of goals leads to boredom and negative behavior. Goals are important and needed for direction. They provide vision, benchmarks, and touchstones for the journey. Goals are linked to motivation which translates into progress.

Michael states that "goals are important for inmates, but, unfortunately, they don't set goals. That is why they keep coming back, and teaching goal setting is important. Many of them have dreams; however, if you do not set goals to fulfill, they are just dreaming."

Matthew believes that "developing short- and long-term goals should be a priority before offenders are released back into society. Short-term goals should include a plan for short and

long term housing, mental health and medical care referrals, financial plan, and other community referrals. Long-term goals should continue emphasizing mental health and financial plans with offenders working towards life-coping skills and career development.”

Patrick shares that “actively pursuing measurable, scaffolded goals provides focus and renewal when the unforeseen challenges, distractions, naysayers, and detractors appear.”

### **The Social Control of Involvement**

What social connections are needed for inmates to be successful in society? Instructors shared that one of the primary connections that inmates need for success on the outside is the continuation of drug rehabilitation for many of the inmates. Because many of the inmates have access to drugs on the inside, they have never overcome their addictions. Some of them developed addictions to handle the mental pressure of being incarcerated. Inmates also need access to mental health support and stress management. Instructors identify that reclaimed freedom comes with the responsibility to now manage that freedom, and often it is overwhelming if they are not taught how to handle it.

Access to Social Services for food, housing, and transportation is a necessity. Not knowing who or where to go for assistance drives ex-offenders to recidivate. Employability skills, soft skill training, decision-making skills, and human-interaction skills are seen as vital elements to success and building new relationships. Teaching ex-offenders how to be relatable and relay their experiences in a manner that demonstrates a rehabilitated stance is required. Incarceration can often times limit an ex-offenders ability to be open towards new experiences or people. Being guarded is a survival mechanism used by many on the inside. However, when an individual reenters society being relatable, communicating, and sharing is apart of building new opportunities for advancement.

Linking ex-offenders to religious-based organizations, role models, and mentors to increase a person's sustainability and give them accountability is also seen as a mandatory requirement for ex-offenders. Providing them with positive influences away from temptation is necessary.

### **What is the Impact of Groups on the Behavior of Inmates?**

The impact of groups on inmates' behavior can be significant; however, the number of groups offered on the inside is sometimes minimal. Groups provide optimism and support and allow the inmates to learn from one another. Positive advice, moral and ethical behavioral support is a by-product of groups offered in which inmates participate. Groups provide a positive impact on mental health and serve as a good use of time.

Patrick states that “inmates are social creatures just as much as the un-incarcerated. Involvement in groups and activities has a tremendous effect on inmate's mental health and their success at completing their corrections programs without having added disciplinary actions and punishments.”

### **The Social Control of Belief**

How does incarceration influence an inmate's behavior, self-image, and self-stigmatism? Instructors shared that negative behaviors do not change initially because of incarceration. They need to maintain those characteristics ( tough, guarded, defensive and sometimes disrespectful) to be able to navigate and survive on the inside. This is especially the case when it is the inmate's first time being incarcerated. Incarceration causes trauma, separation anxiety, anger, and a lack of personal responsibility. Low self-esteem is also a by-product of imprisonment. Figure 4 identifies those emotions attached to self-stigmatism in the behavior cycle.



*Figure 4. Self-Stigmatism.*

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In his response, Patrick states that “many critics quip that the only thing they learn in prison is how to be better criminals. Some justice-involved people seem to function best in prison; however, I believe people can make significant changes in their lives if they embrace different, positive decision-making models and take ownership of their actions. Known as ‘personal responsibility.’ If an inmate embraces and engages in that concept, he is less likely to come back.”

Based on the personal convictions of the inmate, significant changes can be made in his life for the better. Those changes are a result of taking personal responsibility for his actions, for his treatment, whether mental, health, chemical, or alcohol, and for his plans for the future upon reentry. Accomplishments of goals in prison have a positive influence on an inmate’s outlook on himself and his belief in himself that he can be successful.

Rebecca states that “incarceration causes different impacts. Some inmates are shaken or traumatized by the isolation of incarceration and separation of the family. These inmates seem to want another chance to make corrections and reconnect with loved ones. On the other hand, some inmates refuse to take responsibility for themselves. They become angry and blame others for their situation. These inmates seldom succeed with reformation.”

Michael states that “most offenders’ behaviors will not change if they are incarcerated simply because prison teaches you criminal behavior. For instance, if an offender works in the kitchen, they will be asked to steal and shown how to do it. There are very few offenders who do not let their prison experience alter their behavior.”

### **How or Does an Inmate’s Attitude Change Before Being Released to Society?**

Through instructor observation, once an inmate has been notified that his transition process to released has begun, there is an eagerness identified in some to return to society. There

are those whose dispositions are more optimistic than ever before. Those who have completed GED or vocational certifications have hope that and a restored belief that they have a chance to make it. Aspirations of plans and ideas dominate the conversation of those who plan never to return to confinement. These inmates understand that their progress is based on their attitude toward life, the system, and the rules that they must follow on the outside.

On the contrary, there are those who have no change in their demeanor. Usually, those are the ones that we know will be back. They mock those who are trying to do better and become agitators in every setting they are in. These inmates usually are ones with nowhere to go, no plans, no family. They are trying to err to overturn their release so they do not have to leave.

### **What are the Needed Skills for or Reentry?**

For inmates to be successful in society, the following skills sets were identified from the interviews: reading skills, math skills, writing skills, life coping skills, employability skills, communication skills, computer skills, financial literacy, entrepreneurship classes, soft skills, degree programs (i.e., associates, bachelors, and masters) and vocational skills or trades.

### **Additional Themes**

#### ***What suggested Changes Need to be Made to the Prison Education System?***

To provide more educational options to inmates, the following suggestions were made: shorten the number of weeks of classes to offer more sessions. Classes are currently offered on a semester basis that range from 16 to 18 weeks. Offering a variety of classes simultaneously so that offenders can receive as much training as possible is also suggested. Create pathways for inmates while in the system, so the certification path is clear and seems obtainable.

Link similar educational levels together to educate inmates on their level and do not struggle with content. Doing this will increase inmate morale in classes. Consider the learning challenges

of inmates, including comprehension, and consider implementing educational accommodations.

*Inmates are only placed in alternative prison settings if they have been officially diagnosed as an adult with intellectual disabilities and cannot function in the main stream prison setting. Many learning challenges such as lack of comprehension, ADHD, and dyslexia are not documented until an instructor and inmate identify extensive learning challenges.*

### ***How Can Student Engagement be Increased?***

Instructors believe that inmates should be required to make some form of investment in their education: “Put some skin in the game.” Make the programs more relatable and earn a certification in an actual profession to get hired even with a record. Identify another reward method besides “gain days” for inmates to achieve so they take their classes seriously.

*Gain Time “gain days” is sentence credit awarded to eligible offenders, who are serving sentences for crimes they committed prior to October 1, 1994, for their participation in work and/or program activities. Offenders who work full-time, or participate in full-time programs or sentence credits rated programs that will assist their productive re-entry into the community*

### **Summary**

How effective are correctional education programs in reducing recidivism at East Rock Correctional Institution? Generally speaking, educational programs in the prison system prove beneficial by providing educational programs that give inmates a skill or trade to succeed upon reentry into society. Academic preparedness allows inmates to plan how they will support themselves in society and not have to struggle for resources. For those inmates who already have strained family and financial circumstances, employment is essential. Without hope or opportunity for economic sustainability, the inmate will recidivate and return to the prison

system. However, possibilities seem to be limited by prisoner abilities to navigate educational programming within the prison.

Educational training also speaks to their change in belief about society and that they must contribute to their communities growth. Education changes the stigma of self-worthlessness about themselves and creates a positive impact in their lives. Once an inmate is educated and ready for release, there must be a linkage with businesses that are willing to hire justice-involved individuals or, once again, the effort to educate is futile. Exploration of entrepreneurship is an undeveloped option for inmates as well. The need for classes and business administration must be integrated into the education offered for former inmates to be successful.

Instructors shared a belief that educational and health plans need to be on an individual basis. Programs cannot be a generic blueprint that inmates are assigned to, and there is an expectation of growth or transformation. Using the diagnostic tool at the beginning of sentences can be used to develop that plan.

Expressed in the research was the lack of options that inmates can access in facilities, the lack of diversity of classes, the limited number of inmates served at one time, and the absence of degree programs. This is an opportunity for improvement and investment in our communities through deterred recidivism.

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION**

North Carolina Community Colleges provide more than 90% of correctional educational programming for incarcerated individuals. The adult education and literacy programs have the largest enrollments, and the state requires colleges to offer entire for-credit certificates, diplomas, or associate degree programs. These programs exemplify the autonomy given to each of the fifty-eight community colleges. There is no comprehensive educational programming model that holistically addresses inmate needs upon reentry, including Educational Programs, Employment Programs, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Support Programming, Chemical Dependency Treatment, and Mental Health Programming.

With such high recidivism rates nationally and within the State of North Carolina, there is a question regarding the adequacy of availability and substance in prison educational programs. The effects of recidivism are not isolated to specific individuals, their families, or communities but impact the public.

Herein, colleges and correctional facilities can collaborate to rehabilitate inmates educationally, giving them tools to succeed in life beyond prison walls. Such a framework for collaboration exists under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). According to WIOA, the Department of College and Career Readiness's mission is to create comprehensive plans to assist in the successful social integration of the newly released inmates.

The purpose of this focus of practice was to build a comprehensive educational model that will allow inmates who are five years or less from being released to reenter society, successfully reducing recidivistic odds. Therefore, this study aimed to identify gaps in the collaborative efforts of the North Carolina Community College System and the North Carolina Department of Public Safety on providing education and training programs using Hirschi's

(1969) Social Control Theory connects the inmate's level of attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief to family, society, and achievements as a deterrent to crime.

The Coronavirus – 19 pandemic shifted the entire process of the research project. The uncertainty of this virus and its ability to be spread amongst humans and animals caused a nationwide shutdown for more than a year. Therefore all permissions needed to interview and survey inmates and prison staff was denied and the research was restricted to the instructors employed by the North Carolina Community College System. It is important to note that inmates are a protected population in society and it the the responsibility of the state to ensure that they are not made vulnerable to exposure of the virus or any other harmful activity. Therefore access was limited to only essential personnel.

In addition, the prisons lack technological infrastructure to host virtual classes which would enable synchronous learning opportunities and trainings. Funds at this time are not allocated for technology and therefore all classes where unable to be held. The lack of personnel also limited the ability for the researcher to receive any documents that could aid in the study. All North Carolina Department of Public Safety resources were devoted to the maintaining of the prisons that were open, limiting the spread of the virus, and developing plans of operation for the re-opening of facilities.

This research study examined the effectiveness between educational programs, employment programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming offered by Langston Community College and East Rock Correctional Institution and inmate Social Controls. This examination was done through the lens of the instructors that teach, facilitate and observe inmate behavior and activity on a daily basis.

## Summary of the Findings

Though the research was limited because of COVID-19, the responses of the instructors indicate the presence of Hirschi's Social Control Theory in their observations and involvement with inmates. Hirschi's Control Theory states that an individual connected to and impacted by the control of attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief is less likely to commit crimes or, in this case, less likely to recidivate.

In examining the social control of attachment, family and friends' impact can be either positive or negative. From the instructors perspective, the attachment control of family is positive. Familial supports are required to give the inmate hope and a safety net while readjusting to society. The strength or weakness of family support is displayed through visitation or the lack thereof. Inmates often express in classroom writing assignments or in open discussion the status of their family relationships. The provision of housing, transportation, and finances is also needed because of the time it may take for the inmate to establish a new life outside of incarceration. Consideration must be given to the case that many families have experienced financial hardship, communication deficiencies, and complete separation due to imprisonment. Reconciliation to the family unit must be addressed in many situations.

Commitment to goals provides a prescription for success when an inmate reenters society. Goals are linked to motivation, motivation is linked to progress, and progress is correlated to sustainability in society. Commitment to goals allows an inmate to see beyond momentary satisfaction, delay instant gratification and achieve long-term goals.

Involvement allows for connections for successful reentry that begins on the inside and translates to outside accountability for success. The accessibility to groups can help inmates process mental health, chemical dependency, and stress management, to name a few. Linking

offenders to mentors and religious groups is key to providing safe places and giving them positive influences away from temptation.

Responses from the instructors also indicate their observation of groups, group participation and the need for more groups as excellent on the mental health and psyche. It provides optimism and a sense of belonging to a greater purpose. Instructors also express that collaboration of the inmates aids in their ability to navigate and successfully complete their sentences. For an inmate to know that they are not by themselves provides another level of optimism. The disadvantage is that groups on the inside are minimal, and inmates do not have access to available groups to help build self-esteem, personal understanding, and life planning. There are multiple reasons for lack of group offerings; lack of space, lack of prison personnel, the unpredictable daily happenings in the prison setting that require the rescheduling of groups and activities, and the lack of outside groups that are willing to offer services on the inside.

Self-stigmatism is a factor of the social control of belief that is combated through the following ways: achievements, access to sustainability, and the ability to contribute to society. Belief in society happens when an inmate understands his personal responsibility for his plight and decides to no longer contribute to the community's delinquency.

Another finding was that of addiction. Instructors expressed that there are many that are incarcerated because of their addictions. Their addiction maybe what caused them to commit the crime and therefore they are now in prison. However, there are those who have never been incarcerated, separated from their families and are unsure of how to navigate the process on the inside. There are a number of individuals that develop habits on the inside as a coping mechanism. These inmates where not orginally diagnosed with a drug problem and are not



receiving drug and alcohol treatment. Once they are released they take this addiction with them into society.

Instructors identified the need for inmates to develop goals. Goals assist with direction and focus and give the inmate the control of commitment. How do we give individuals goals. How do instill in them the need to strive for accomplishment and instill a sense of purpose? This ideology connects strongly with the notion of “personal responsibility.” Personal responsibility is an internal characteristic that is enacted by the inmate that says they are responsible for their actions, decisions and takes ownership for the direction of their life. Teaching these concepts can be apart of the rehabilitative process.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

The purpose of this research study was to examine the correlation between educational programs, employment programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming offered by Langston Community College and East Rock Correctional Institution and inmate Social Controls.

Towards that end, research questions for the proposed study follow:

1. How effective are correctional education programs in reducing recidivism at East Rock Correctional Institution?
2. What types of educational programs, employment programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming are most effective at generating Social Controls?

The remainder of this chapter will examine the study findings alongside the literature frameworks to explore the framework's commonalities or validity.

Hirschi (1969) presented a theory that examined the connection between healthy controls and the likelihood to deviate to explain criminal offending. This Social Control Theory operates from the premise that all humans are inclined towards deviance or illegal activity, but they can be controlled using Social Controls (Smith, 2017). These Social Controls are characterized by attachment, commitment to, involvement with, and belief shared by “prosocial” individuals. Hirschi’s Social Control Theory states that those who have secure attachments to society are less likely to violate society's norms.

Hirschi (1969) notes that the social controls are interrelated. The scholarly practitioner indicated that the existence and further development of social controls were exhibited and needed to prevent recidivism throughout the research. Attachment to family and friends was the most substantial control present and required for the offender's success. An inmate’s internal motivation to be successful upon reentry is fueled by family support and sustained by ensuring that the inmate does not disappoint them by re-committing crime, causing additional pain of financial hardship and separation.

Hirschi (2002) denotes that a lack of social integration is the primary cause of crime and delinquency. Responses confirm this notion to be both positive and negative. Instructors noted that it is the hope of positive social interaction that leads to change in behavior, an increase in self-awareness and self-esteem, and the ability to see that inmates’ contribution matters to society. That positive social interaction also provides accountability for the ex-offenders on the outside to balance resources and a safety net.

If an inmate struggles with identity, self-worth, and a lack of familial supports, the impact of social integration on the inside will be negative. Individuals on this path will settle for existence and acceptance instead of survival and assurance of who they are and their future

goals. These individuals do not integrate with peers that will hold them accountable for making wise decisions.

Moreover, the research has shown that groups are limited in the prison section. They are determined by what can be offered at various correctional facilities, the number of seats available for the group or class, the limited section and session offerings, and the number of inmates placed on the waiting to attend the class. To teach integration, integration opportunities must be provided.

### **Pathways and Programming**

The Vera Institute of Justice Pathways from Prison to Postsecondary Education Project (Pathways) was a multistate project intended to create a continuum of higher education and reentry support services. The research identifies that the North Carolina Community College Educational programs do not offer offenders pathways to continue their education. There are no Curriculum programs in which inmates who are already degreed can further their education. They must either refute educational training or enroll in a vocational program to learn a trade. In addition, the skill or trade that they learn based upon where they are incarcerated may not be in the labor market where they return to society. Pathways that link High School Equivalency to Human Resource Development to Vocational or Curriculum Degree programs are non-existent. The diagnostic test is not related to providing an inmate with a plan that will give the best education, rehabilitation, and reentry strategy.

The lack of transitional programming and planning for inmates is also evident. Not all areas have a functioning reentry council. Not all areas can offer transition fairs that include employment, job, housing, medical and transportation resources.

## **Rehabilitation**

MacKenzie (2011) and Rotham (2016) identified education as the cornerstone of rehabilitation in the prison system. Prison education was focused on math, literacy, and communication skills training. Today ideology has evolved, yet there are groups of individuals who are left out of this rehabilitation.

Some inmates still leave prison illiterate. They are re-introduced to society without a High School Equivalency or a vocational skill or trade. These individuals usually receive no treatment and end up recidivating and returning to prison to complete their full sentence if paroled early. Second is the incarcerated group and have their high school diplomas, bachelor's degrees, and some their master's degrees. There are no added classes to enhance their skill set or prepare them for an entrepreneurial opportunity.

The needs of education in a progressive world require technological skills, soft-skill development, financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills, and the ability to communicate effectively. Inmates are not being rehabilitated; they are being guarded until release.

The holistic approach to rehabilitation includes employment programs, cognitive behavioral therapy, social support programming, chemical dependency treatment, and mental health programming. These programs are limited in state facilities, and inmates must request transfers to "possibly" receive these services. Many inmates do not receive services that will transfer with them into society because there is a lack of a transition plan that allows for continuity.

## **Limitations of the Study**

Limitations of this study include time. It takes time to complete a thorough analysis of the time given to collect and verify data, mainly when restricted to the prison system's time

constraints. Another limitation is working within the prison structure to include space available to complete all sessions and accessibility to inmates (i.e., dealing with transfers and segregation). Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a significant delay in the application process to get into the prison to work with the prison staff and the inmates. Once the application was received and processed, it was denied due to the contagion of the disease.

Qualitative research generally includes personal interaction, which can often deviate from the subject matter. Therefore, this research method contains open-ended questions, giving the inmate more control over the content of the data delivered. It is the expectation that the responses are truthful. The application to complete one on one interviews with the inmates was denied. The only interviews and interactions that took place were with the instructors.

Another limitation of this study is the sample size of the participants. Because of the Coronavirus, inmates and prison staff were unable to participate. This brought the sample size from fifty to sixty participants down to six. If full participation was granted, the perspective and voice of the inmates would be displayed in the findings. There would be specific indicators of the social controls present or not present in the lives of the inmates. The needs for programmatic changes for reentry would also be identified.

The final limitation of this study is the a priori knowledge of the researcher. This prior knowledge may have caused the researcher to be blinded by data that may have developed as a result of the interview questions and surveys. The theoretical framework was the guiding factor for the development and interpretation of the questions.

### **Implications of the Findings for Practice**

Because of COVID-19, the implications of this study are limited. The breadth of research needed to support the totality of this research endeavor was inconclusive. There are areas of

review for the Community College system to consider when addressing the classes offered in the prison system.

The research revealed a need for more diversity of courses, vocational and educational, to be added to the class offerings. The collaboration of the North Carolina Community College system to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction needs to be strengthened. Not all inmates desire a vocational certification. They have expressed to their instructors that they would like to pursue their Masters or Doctoral degrees. There is a misconception that most inmates are uneducated, this is untrue. Missing from course offerings are also practical applications, such as financial literacy, entrepreneurship classes, and stress management.

Measures also need to be put in place for inmates who have learning disabilities. The process for inmates to request accommodations to be successful is lengthy, and frequently, they run out of time before they are granted. The lack of opportunity to differentiate learning levels resulting from the lack of classroom space and teachers willing to teach in prison are additional restraints.

There is also a need for more rehabilitative services. Not every prison carries the same programs. For an inmate to receive specific treatments, he must request be transferred to the facility that offers them. Once the request is processed and he is transferred, there is still a waiting process for the inmate to receive the services. Sensitivity training for prison employees is an identified need. The lack of support and concern from prison staff for inmates and their rehabilitative needs is evident in many cases.

There is also a need for community partnerships within the prison. This includes community groups, religious organizations, mentors, and role models. These partners provide the social control of involvement for the inmate while incarcerated, and upon release, accountability

partners should already be in place to provide support. Community Partnerships can increase the skills of the inmates by providing employment and apprenticeship opportunities. These partnerships provide safe havens for assistance with housing, transportation, familial supports, and chemical support and other educational opportunities.

Finally, a comprehensive plan for inmates who are being released into society is needed. Many inmates lack family support and have nowhere to go after the stay at the half-way house. Besides, with the lack of employers who are willing to hiring ex-convicts, there is a significant delay in ex-convicts' ability to find employment, housing, and transportation.

### **Recommendations**

This scholarly practitioner recommends that, when feasible, this study be used to survey and interview the inmates about their Social Controls that are created, developed, or remain unaffected through prison programming. Only when the prisoners' perspective is assessed will there be a clear picture of the benefits of educational prison programs on the reduction of recidivism.

It is recommended that we address the purpose of the prison system. Is the purpose of what we do to punish or rehabilitate? If we are to rehabilitate then an indept look at the types of programs offered is necessary. It is evident, based on the recidivism rate that we are throwing good money away, if we are not helping these individuals prepare for reentry in society. How do we provided individualized support for inmates? Understanding that everyone's needs are different yet provide a quality program for all.

Addressing the population of inmates who are released from prison illiterate is crucial. What are their options and their recidivism rate because of the lack of skills needed to secure employment? Program evaluation is also an aspect that needs to be investigated to determine the

effectiveness of that program. It is also recommended that the prison and business demographics be considered when planning for vocational programs. This also lends itself to the cost analysis of educational programs, equipment needed, and the possibility of budget restraints.

The disruption of instruction due to COVID-19 has also illuminated the need to address technology in the prisons. Inmates have not had an educational programs in over a year. This is due to many facilities remaining on CODE-RED and the restrictions still set in place by the North Carolina Department of Public Safety. How do we continue to educate in the midst of a pandemic? The need for technological infrastructure ranging from network services to computers or tablets in order to implement on-line instruction needs to be addressed. Providing synchronous instruction is essential for the forward progress of prison education. Which then identifies the need for distance education teaching and training for instructors in a prison setting.

### **Next Steps**

The College and Career Readiness Program at Langston Community College is now aligned with offering not only the educational course offerings preparing students for the GED/HiSet but now all of the vocational programs. The program will now offer four pathways for students to obtain their GED/Hiset but a vocational certification as well. For Langston Community College those pathways are Culinary, Masonry, Carpentry, and Electrical Wiring. All students will receive an HRD component integrated into the course curriculum.

In addition, the college will begin preparing all students with a transition profile that begins with their educational experiences and workforce development skills in order to help them market themselves in society.

Once the pandemic has ended and prison restrictions are lifted, it is the goal of the researcher to develop a future study based upon this problem of practice. To identify the gaps in



the system and skills needed from the perspective of the inmates is essential to providing a possible educational system restructuring. This method will include the axial coding method. This will enable the researcher to look at the data without a theoretical lens and discover what themes and codes arrive from the data.

### **Conclusions**

“Studies have shown that inmate participation in education, vocational and job training, prison work skills development, drug abuse, mental health, and other treatment programs, all reduce recidivism, significantly.” – Congressman Bobby Scott (Scott, 2004, para. 1). The ultimate goal is to allow those who have served their penalties an opportunity for rehabilitation and a chance to become contributing members of society. By building the bond of attachment to families and friends, celebrating the completion of commitments that produce achievements, providing opportunities for involvement in groups for long-term accountability, and renewing the belief that they have in themselves and society, rehabilitation programs can make a difference. Incarceration will serve a two-fold purpose to rehabilitate and educate for the benefit of the community.

For long-term success, a comprehensive plan must be developed that provides an inmate being released into society with the necessary resources to be successful. That plan starts on the inside and is a holistic approach to reducing recidivism. To build this comprehensive plan, there must be a more vital collaboration with the Community College System and the North Carolina Department of Public Safety.

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# APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

9/11/2020

<https://epirate.ecu.edu/App/sd/Doc/0/G6GTEFOS2MC4B1O37HL5SF1501/fromString.html>



**EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY**  
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## Notification of Initial Approval (Committee)

From: Social/Behavioral IRB  
To: [Heather Collins](#)  
CC: [Crystal Chambers](#)  
Date: 9/11/2020  
Re: [UMCIRB 19-001945](#)  
Increasing Education Programs in the Prison System to Reduce Recidivism

I am pleased to inform you that at the convened meeting on 9/2/2020 2:00 PM of the Social/Behavioral IRB, the committee voted to approve the above study. Approval of the study and the consent form(s) is for the period of 9/2/2020 to 9/1/2021.

The Social/Behavioral IRB deemed this study Minimal Risk.

As the Principal Investigator you are explicitly responsible for the conduct of all aspects of this study and must adhere to all reporting requirements for the study. Your responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Ensuring changes to the approved research (including the UMCIRB approved consent document) are only initiated with UMCIRB review and approval except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All changes (e.g. a change in procedure, number of participants, personnel, study locations, new recruitment materials, study instruments, etc.) must be prospectively reviewed and approved by the UMCIRB before they are implemented;
2. Ensuring that only valid versions of the UMCIRB approved, date-stamped informed consent document(s) are used for obtaining informed consent (consent documents with the IRB approval date stamp are found under the Documents tab in the ePIRATE study workspace);
3. Promptly reporting to the UMCIRB all unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others;
4. Applying for continuing review and receive approval of continuation of the study prior to the study's current expiration date. Application for continuing review should be submitted no less than 30 days prior to the expiration date. Lapses in approval (i.e. study expiration) should be avoided to protect the safety and welfare of enrolled participants and liability to the University; and
5. Submission of a final report when the study meets the UMCIRB criteria for closure. Study approval should not be allowed to expire simply because the study is completed, rather the UMCIRB should be formally notified of study completion via the final report process.

The approval includes the following items:

Document	Description
Increasing educational programs in the prison system to help reduce recidivism(0.01)	Study Protocol or Grant Application
Informed-Consent-Documents_IEPPTHRR_Revised_09 01 20.doc(0.04)	Consent Forms
Informed-Consent-Documents_IEPPTHRR_STAFF_Revised_09 1 20.doc(0.03)	Consent Forms
JII Post-Survey(0.01)	Surveys and Questionnaires
JII Pre-Survey(0.01)	Surveys and Questionnaires
Justice Involved Individuals -Reflective Memo Questions for Journal.pdf(0.01)	Surveys and Questionnaires
NCDPS Staff Interview Questions(0.01)	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions
NCDPS Staff Survey Questions(0.01)	Surveys and Questionnaires
Offender Recruitment Script_Revised.docx(0.03)	Recruitment Documents/Scripts
Personal Contact Recruitment Script_Revised.docx(0.01)	Recruitment Documents/Scripts
Recruitment Script Revised.docx(0.03)	Recruitment Documents/Scripts

For research studies where a waiver or alteration of HIPAA Authorization has been approved, the IRB states that each of the waiver criteria in 45 CFR 164.512(i)(1)(i)(A) and (2)(i) through (v) have been met. Additionally, the elements of PHI to be collected as described in items 1 and 2 of the Application for Waiver of Authorization have been determined to be the minimal necessary for the specified research.

The following UMCIRB members were recused for reasons of potential for Conflict of Interest on this research study:

None

The following UMCIRB members with a potential Conflict of Interest did not attend this IRB meeting: None

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IRB00000705 East Carolina U IRB #1 (Biomedical) IORG0000418  
IRB00003781 East Carolina U IRB #2 (Behavioral/SS) IORG0000418



# APPENDIX B: JUSTICE INVOLVED INDIVIDUAL SURVEY

3/27/2020

Justice Involved Individual - Pre-Survey

## Justice Involved Individual - Pre-Survey

Increasing Educational Programs in the Prison System to Reduce Recidivism

1. Name

---

2. OPIS Number

---

3. What is your race/ethnicity?

*Mark only one oval.*

African American/Black

Caucasian/ White

Hispanic

Asian

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is your Gender

*Mark only one oval.*

Male

Non-binary

5. What is your age range?

*Mark only one oval.*

21-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61-70

71-80

6. What is your highest level of education PRIOR to incarceration?

*Mark only one oval.*

High School

Associates Degree

Bachelors Degree

Masters Degree

Doctoral Degree

Vocational or Trade Certification (i.e. Welding, HVAC, CDL)

7. Are you a first time offender?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

8. If you are a REOFFENDER, how many times have you recidivated?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Have you ever been enrolled in an Educational Program while incarcerated?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

10. If yes, please list the names of the educational programs you were enrolled in?

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11. Did you complete the educational program?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

12. If no, please explain why?

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13. Have you ever been enrolled in and Employment Training Program while incarcerated?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

14. If yes, please list the name of the Employment Training Program.

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15. Did you complete the Employment Training Program?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

16. If no, please explain why?

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17. Have you ever been enrolled in a Social Support Program while incarcerated?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

18. If yes, please list the name of the Social Support Program you were enrolled in?

\_\_\_\_\_

19. Did you complete it?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

20. Have you ever been enrolled in a Chemical Dependency Program while incarcerated?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

21. If yes, please list the name of the program you were enrolled in?

\_\_\_\_\_

22. Did you complete the program?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No

23. If no, please explain why?

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24. Have you ever been enrolled in a Mental Health Program while incarcerated?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No

25. If yes, please list the names of the programs you were enrolled in?

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26. Did you complete the program?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

27. If no, please explain why?

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28. Based upon the programs that you have participated in and successfully completed, do you feel prepared for reentry?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

29. If yes, please explain why?

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30. If no, please explain why?

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31. Are there any programs you would like to have access to while incarcerated for preparation for reentry?

*Mark only one oval.*

Option 1

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# Justice Involved Individual - Post-Survey

Increasing Educational Programs in the Prison System to Help Reduce Recidivism

1. Name

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2. OPIS Number

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3. How have your relationships been impacted since incarceration?

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4. Do you feel you have a greater connection to friends and family or no? Please explain.

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5. What goals have you set for yourself while incarcerated?

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6. What goals have you set for yourself once re-entered into society?

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7. What activities/groups have you been involved in while incarcerated?

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8. What groups do you plan on continuing in once released from prison?

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9. How have your beliefs about society changed? Do you see rules and laws differently?

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10. What new beliefs have you developed that will help you be successful upon reentry into society?

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11. How have your goals changed your character or behavior?

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12. Do you feel ready and supported to be successful in society?

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## APPENDIX C: NCDPS STAFF SURVEY

3/27/2020

NCDPS Staff Survey Questions

### NCDPS Staff Survey Questions

Increasing Educational Programs in the Prison System to Help Reduce Recidivism

1. Name

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your race/ethnicity?

*Mark only one oval.*

African American/Black

Caucasian/ White

Hispanic

Asian

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your Gender?

*Mark only one oval.*

Male

Female

Non-binary

I choose not to answer

- 4. Do you see the impact of family and friends as positive or negative on the impact of the inmates character?

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- 5. What connections are needed for offenders to be successful in society?

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- 6. How important are goals for offenders to remain free after release?

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- 7. What impact does involvement in groups and activities have on the behavior of inmates?

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8. How do you view the importance of group involvement once they are released?

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9. How do you feel incarceration has impacted the behavior of the inmates?

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10. Do you see change in the character or attitude once an inmate is preparing for release?

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11. What skills are needed for an inmate to be successful upon reentry?

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12. What supports are needed for an inmate to be successful upon reentry?

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# APPENDIX D: REFLECTIVE MEMO QUESTIONS FOR JOURNAL

3/27/2020

Reflective Questions for Journal

## Reflective Questions for Journal

Increasing Educational Prison Programs to Help Reduce Recidivism

1. Name

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2. OPIS Number

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3. Please describe your relationships with the following people since you have been incarcerated

*Mark only one oval.*

- Parents
- Spouse
- Children
- Any significant other

4. Has your commitment to educational/vocational training increased or decreased?

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5. Has your involvement in groups or activities positively or negatively impacted you?

*Mark only one oval.*

- If positive please list what you have learned, achieved or gained from the experience.
- If negative, please explain why this group/activity did not impact you?
- If negatively impacted, please share what you might change to make it better.

6. How has your belief in the laws of society changed?

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# APPENDIX E: NCDPS STAFF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

3/27/2020

NCDPS Staff Interview Questions

## NCDPS Staff Interview Questions

Increasing Educational Programs in the Prison System to Help Reduce Recidivism

1. Name

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your race/ethnicity?

*Mark only one oval.*

African American/Black

Caucasian/ White

Hispanic

Asian

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your Gender?

*Mark only one oval.*

Male

Female

Non-binary

I choose not to answer

- 4. Do you see the impact of family and friends as positive or negative on the impact of the inmates character?

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- 5. What connections are needed for offenders to be successful in society?

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- 6. How important are goals for offenders to remain free after release?

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- 7. What impact does involvement in groups and activities have on the behavior of inmates?

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8. How do you view the importance of group involvement once they are released?

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9. How do you feel incarceration has impacted the behavior of the inmates?

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10. Do you see change in the character or attitude once an inmate is preparing for release?

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11. What skills are needed for an inmate to be successful upon reentry?

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12. What supports are needed for an inmate to be successful upon reentry?

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## APPENDIX F: NCDPS DENIAL EMAIL

**RE: [External] Fw: Dissertation: Increasing Educational Programs In the Prison System to Help Reduce Recidivism**

Mitterling, Linda <linda.mitterling@ncdps.gov>  
Wed 10/14/2020 10:57 AM

To: Collins, Heather Darlene <collinsh07@students.ecu.edu>

This email originated from outside ECU.

Hi, again Heather –

I just got an answer back on your request. Unfortunately, I was told that we are not in a position right now to accommodate your research request due to all of the COVID issues that the agency is dealing with at this time. Researchers are being allowed into facilities. Offenders are not on work release right now, and educational programs are trying to get going.

The project sounds very interesting and is a good project for another time, but right now is not that time. I cannot even give you a timeframe that would be a good time. Until the COVID situation improves, we have to protect the safety of those under our care and those employed by the agency. We are sorry that we are not able to approve this research project.

Sincerely,  
Linda Mitterling

**Linda Mitterling**  
Director of Administrative Analysis  
Reentry, Programs and Services  
NC Department of Public Safety  
3040 Hammond Business Place  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
Mail: MSC 4221 - Raleigh, NC 27699-4221  
Phone: 919-324-6488  
Fax: 919-715-7754  
[linda.mitterling@ncdps.gov](mailto:linda.mitterling@ncdps.gov)

