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BOOT CAMP: EFFECTIVE SOLUTION FOR THE CRIMINAL
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Rachel A. Pelta

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BOOT CAMP: EFFECTIVE SOLUTION FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM?

By

Rachel A. Pelta

A THESIS

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

BOOT CAMP: EFFECTIVE SOLUTION FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM?

By

Rachel A. Pelta

In recent years, the criminal justice system has had to look for solutions to ease its overburdened prisons. One popular solution has been the use of boot camps. They include military and rehabilitative aspects that are designed to reduce costs and overcrowding of the traditional prisons and be harsh enough to deter young offenders from recidivating. This thesis looks at the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections boot camp program IMPACT (Intensive Motivational Program of Alternative Correctional Treatment). Three groups are examined over a twelve-month period following release to compare recidivism rates. In addition to recidivism, informal social bonds of individual subjects are examined. Those with these bonds present in their lives are expected to have lower recidivism rates as well. Using analysis of variance and multivariate regression, it was determined that individuals who participated in the boot camp program did not have statistically significant lower rates of recidivism. Individuals with informal social bonds present in their lives did not have statistically significant better performance rates than those without social bonds during the follow-up period. Additionally, boot camp subjects did not have a statistically significant rate of more social bonds. As structured, IMPACT seems unable to achieve the goals of rehabilitation and recidivism.

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This was a long time coming, but well worth the wait. While it seemed like this was never going to be completed, thanks to a great number of people who supported me, it is (finally!) complete. Without their assistance, guidance, and advice, I probably never would have found my way here.

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INTRODUCTION

Alternatives to traditional incarceration have been explored in recent years in an attempt to find solutions for the problems of the criminal justice system. One such alternative is shock incarceration, more commonly known as boot camp. Boot camp programs are used because officials believe that boot camps are cheaper than traditional incarceration and help reduce prison crowding. The public finds these programs attractive because they appear tough on offenders and satisfy the need to punish them (Bourque, Han and Hill 1996a).

Boot camps share a common structure. They were first used for younger offenders convicted of their first offense, usually nonviolent (Benekos 1995). The basis of these programs is a strong sense of military discipline that promotes physical exercise and teamwork. It is hoped that an emphasis on these aspects will teach participants skills that they have been lacking, such as taking responsibility for their actions. In addition, the intensity and severity of the program may deter them from re-offending.

These programs may also include rehabilitative components: educational programs, vocational training, treatment programs for drug and alcohol addictions, stress management and nonviolent conflict resolution (MacKenzie and Souryal 1991). Some programs do not offer rehabilitative programs due to the short duration of the program. There is not a sufficient amount of time to achieve a successful rehabilitation of participants and including rehabilitative components is considered a waste of time and resources in these types of camps.

Most programs also lack significant aftercare and follow up services for participants who graduate from the program. While most programs offer some type of aftercare service to graduates, they do not last long enough, are not intensive enough, or do not offer enough services to graduates to help them through the difficult transition from inmate to citizen. The lack of aftercare and follow-up services affects the formation of conventional informal social bonds that can be important to the success of a boot camp graduate. These informal social bonds include a stable marriage, steady employment or the completion or continuation of a phase of education (Sampson and Laub 1990). If these bonds have been established, they can provide support to the individual and exert social controls over the individual that can influence him or her to resist criminal activities (Sampson and Laub 1990).

This thesis examines whether boot camps are able to achieve the goals of rehabilitation (changing offender behavior) and reduced recidivism (not committing future crimes). If they can, boot camp graduates would have lower recidivism rates than comparison groups. Two variables will be examined as a measure of rehabilitation and recidivism to find out if boot camp graduates are less likely to re-offend upon release implying that they have been rehabilitated. The first variable that will be examined is the number of rearrests. Subjects who are rearrested demonstrate a lack of rehabilitation and a failure of the criminal justice system to deter their recidivism. The second variable to be examined is technical violations, which include drinking alcohol and missing appointments with the parole or probation agent. The average citizen is allowed to do these things without fear of sanctions from the criminal justice system, but parolees and

probationers face this possibility. Committing a technical violation implies that the individual may have been rehabilitated but may be having problems adjusting to free life.

In addition to rehabilitation and recidivism, informal social bonds will be examined to ascertain if individuals who form these bonds perform better than those who do not. Boot camp graduates will be examined to specifically determine if they are forming more of these informal social bonds. Marriage, education, work and living with family will be examined to find out if informal social bonds are being formed. It is hypothesized that if the bonds are being formed, those who have these bonds present in their lives have lower recidivism rates than those who lack these bonds. Problems adjusting to free life may be exacerbated by the lack of informal social bonds leading to a lack of social controls, which may make the individual more likely to re-offend.

PRIOR RESEARCH

The Structure of Boot Camps

The purpose of boot camps is strongly linked to traditions in American culture and correctional history (MacKenzie and Parent 1992). It is thought that individuals living in dysfunctional environments that lack positive organization, such as a stable family structure and a lack of “personal discipline” commit crimes. Boot camps are designed to create inner control over undesirable behaviors in the offender (Benda, Toombs and Whiteside 1996; Smykla and Selke 1995).

Programs can last from six weeks to six months (MacKenzie, Shaw and Gowdy

1993). Daily life is intentionally intense and demanding. Inmates participate in physical labor and military drill, and they are expected to maintain their living quarters and comply with authority. A structured lifestyle is believed to be necessary to give the offender the basic skills they need to survive in a law-abiding society and to assume responsibility for their actions (Mack 1992). Offenders are thought to benefit from this environment by teaching them obedience to authority and respect for others. Participants accept responsibility for their actions and learn the self-discipline they are lacking (Austin et al. 1993; Parent 1994).

Beyond the physical aspects of boot camp programs, some programs place a strong emphasis on treatment components that can include education, counseling and vocational training (MacKenzie 1990). The treatment received in boot camp is intended to promote change and to keep the participant from engaging in criminal behavior. Exposure to education, vocational training, treatment programs and counseling will instill positive, law abiding values in participants and will aid graduates in finding legal employment upon release (Austin et al. 1993). The disciplined lifestyle of boot camp will help enhance a positive self image with counseling and education. The result of the combination is hoped to be rehabilitative for the offender and help prevent future recidivism (Salerno 1994).

Participants volunteer for these programs after being selected from a pool of qualified offenders (MacKenzie 1990). Selection criteria vary but generally participants must be first time nonviolent offenders. They must be able to participate physically and mentally. The definition of “first time offender” varies from state to state and can

include first state felony incarceration to first felony conviction (MacKenzie and Parent 1992).

Goals of Boot Camp Programs

Early reports regarding boot camps claimed they worked well, and more programs appeared as these claims continued (MacKenzie and Shaw 1993; Parent 1994). The lure of these programs was fueled by the notion that traditional prisons do not rehabilitate offenders (Warnock and Hunzeker 1991). The public desire for offenders to be held accountable for their actions through serious and severe punishment was enhanced by the media images of a program that provided a quick fix solution through harsh punishment and discipline (Benekos and Merlo 1995; Parent 1994;).

While the public and politicians may support boot camps, every program is operated differently and the key components of effective treatment have not been identified or examined. (Cowles et al. 1995; Parent 1994; Simon 1995). Goals are vaguely defined and thus difficult to determine if they are being accomplished (MacKenzie, Corbett and Petersilia 1994). Precise definition of these goals is necessary to design a program that is effective and worthwhile to discover if boot camps are achieving stated goals (Parent 1994; MacKenzie and Parent 1992).

Some goals are common to all programs. There are two primary goals of boot camp programs. One is specific deterrence: the use of punishment after a crime is committed to discourage the offender from committing it again. The second goal is general deterrence, or the prevention of crimes before the act through threats or example.

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Other goals include rehabilitation, punishment, incapacitation, controlling overcrowding and reducing the costs of incarceration (Finckenhauer 1982; Mack 1992). These goals can be difficult to set or define. Some programs do not consider punishment an important goal but stress deterrence or reduction of prison crowding (MacKenzie 1994; MacKenzie and Souryal 1991). Prediction of the effectiveness of deterrence is difficult because actual deterrence is also dependent on how much risk an offender calculates before committing a crime, a difficult idea to measure (Finckenauer 1982).

Recidivism

Limited evaluative research exists on the overall effectiveness of boot camp programs and more is needed to find out if program goals are being accomplished (Cowles, et al. 1995; Souryal and MacKenzie 1995). The few studies that have been conducted have not used an experimental design using random assignment to shock incarceration versus prison terms. This lack of random assignment threatens the validity of the studies (Benda et al 1996; Souryal and MacKenzie 1995) and does not allow the researchers to determine if differences in recidivism can be attributed to boot camp (Benda et al 1996).

Currently, no evidence exists that boot camps significantly reduce the recidivism rates of program graduates. No state has reported a statistically significant decrease in recidivism rates of boot camp graduates when compared with similar offenders who served sentences that included community service, jail or prison terms or probation sentences (MacKenzie and Souryal 1991). Boot camp graduates generally have

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recidivism rates comparable to similar offenders who spent time in prison (MacKenzie 1990; Parent 1994). One problem with attempting to measure the achievement of this goal is that recidivism is a difficult concept to measure (US GAO 1993). Studies reach different results based on definitions of recidivism or the methods used to measure it. Since program definitions and participant composition vary from state to state, results are not comparable creating difficulty in drawing meaningful conclusions among the states (MacKenzie 1990).

The few studies conducted to study recidivism rates of boot camp graduates have been disappointing (MacKenzie and Shaw 1993; Sechrest 1989). Groups of boot camp graduates compared with inmates who served traditional prison sentences have only marginally lower recidivism rates that tend to diminish over time (US GAO 1993). MacKenzie and Shaw (1993) found no significant difference in arrests, returns to prison or failures on parole when groups of boot camp graduates were compared with groups of inmates who served prison sentences. Return to prison rates were higher for boot camp graduates for technical violations than new felony convictions.

There is little evidence to support the idea that boot camps can lower the recidivism rates of program graduates. Boot camps may increase the rate of recidivism because of the increased control over graduates during parole (Benda, et al. 1996). While this may seem discouraging, the results thus far are not conclusive and this does not indicate that boot camp programs have failed (Parent 1994). It may be too soon to tell how effective these programs are, and this suggests the need for more research and long term evaluation (Cowles et al. 1995; US GAO 1993).

Recidivism can still be considered an indicator of the ability of the program to achieve the goals of rehabilitation and specific deterrence (Coyle 1990). Careful study should be conducted on the types of offenders selected to participate in the programs to see if those currently being chosen are selected based on the perception that they will succeed (Souryal and MacKenzie 1995). If participants are being chosen based on a “gut instinct” that the individual will succeed, selection criteria should be reviewed before boot camps can be considered a successful alternative to incarceration.

Rehabilitation

Achievement of the rehabilitation goal is linked to decreased recidivism. The model of boot camp assumes that exercise and drill will assist in rehabilitating participants (Warnock and Hunzeker 1991). These activities are assumed to give participants self-esteem, self-discipline and responsibility (all things they are thought to lack) which would give them a sense of achievement (Warnock and Hunzeker 1991). Once they have these skills, they may carry this over to their free lives, reducing the rate of recidivism. States that do include rehabilitative components in their programs focus on having participants deal with substance abuse, job skills, illiteracy, inadequate social skills, vocational training, health instruction, and AIDS awareness (Benekos 1995).

Rehabilitation is achieved in two ways, through transference and treatment (Mack 1992). If rehabilitation through transference occurs, the disciplined and structured lifestyle of boot camp will be carried over to the outside world and continued to be used by the graduate (Mack 1992). Treatment deals with substance abuse problems, hostile or

violent feelings and improving job skills (Osler 1991). By focusing on these issues, treatment allows participants to face and resolve any of these issues (Osler 1991). Successful rehabilitation through either of these methods will lower recidivism rates of graduates. However, no data exist to measure rehabilitation as a separate concept to determine if rehabilitation without recidivism is being achieved (Mack 1992).

Informal Social Bonds

An additional factor can affect recidivism and it should be considered in program design: the informal social bond. Informal social bonds are what link individual members of society to one another and to other social institutions such as work, family and school (Laub and Sampson 1993). This “web” of informal bonds is considered the “conventional” bond to society (Laub and Sampson 1993; Needels 1996).

Interaction with social institutions exerts informal social control over individuals, decreasing crime and deviance (Sampson and Laub 1990). These informal social controls modify the path toward criminality and deviance (Laub and Sampson 1993). In addition to creating an inhibition against criminal activities, individuals also find themselves in more structured and routine activities. As involvement in conventional activities increases, involvement in deviant activities decreases (Horney, et al. 1995). If these social bonds are weakened or broken, an individual becomes more likely to engage in deviant activities (Laub and Sampson 1993).

Marital attachment is one of the strongest predictors of adult criminality. Individual who are married are far less likely to engage in criminal activities (Horney, et

al. 1995). Similarly, individuals attending school are also less likely to become involved in crime and commitment to conventional educational and occupational goals has a similar effect (Horney, et al. 1995). Job stability can also effect future criminal behaviors (Sampson and Laub 1990).

Sampson and Laub (1990) examined the influence of social bonds on individuals and their criminal behavior. They found that “social bonds to the adult institutions of work, education and the family exert...influence on adult crime...” Individuals with strong bonds to job, education, family and spouse were less likely to engage in deviant behaviors. Those with weaker bonds were more likely to engage in these activities. Horney, Osgood and Marshall (1995) found similar results. Individuals were less likely to engage in criminal activities when they had formed bonds to a wife, were in school or working.

Aftercare

Critics have observed that boot camps seem unable to achieve many of the stated program goals, and they claim that this is because of the lack of significant aftercare services for graduates. It seems unlikely that the short boot camp experience, coupled with the lack of aftercare, could cause a complete change in the offender (Souryal and MacKenzie 1995). Without bridge services (aftercare programs), the rate of recidivism among boot camp graduates may not decrease if the skills and techniques participants learned are not carried over into their lives as citizens. (Osler 1991). Change for participants can only occur when treatment and education are offered as part of the

program and for extensive periods after the offender's release, something programs are less likely to provide (Kappeler, Blumberg and Potter 1996).

Many graduates leave the program with the same disadvantages they faced before incarceration, such as lack of work skills or history, and inadequate education. After release they have the added burden of a felony conviction (Kappeler et al 1996). Leaving the boot camp program means an abrupt end to the services, training and treatment they received and participants find themselves having a hard time readjusting to life as a citizen (Osler 1991). The sudden lack of support upon release leaves the graduate in an uncertain situation and can eliminate the possibility of success (Osler 1991). These "reentry" difficulties occur because the graduate moves from a highly structured routine and controlled life to a life without these controls in which choices must be made without guidance. The inability to cope with this sudden change combined with a lack of support from either the family or outside sources can cause problems for the graduate (Kappeler et al 1996). Since the offender is returning to same environment with the same conditions that influenced him or her in the first place, an extended period of supportive services and opportunities must be provided to the offender to aid in the transition to a law-abiding lifestyle (MacKenzie and Parent 1995).

To ensure that the changes a participant started to make during the program are continued upon release, aftercare services should be provided for at least nine months to one year following release (Osler 1991). These aftercare services are essential for the graduate to succeed in the future. Giving graduates the opportunity to continue learning and using what has been learned in the program will increase their chances for success in

the future. It is important that graduates have resources available to assist them with areas such as education and employment. By providing graduates with an avenue for success (e.g., job skills) it is arguable that they will be less likely to commit crimes in the future.

Criticisms

While past studies have shown that black arrestees are more likely to recidivate than white arrestees (DeJong 1997; Smith and Akers 1993; Uggen and Kruttschnitt 1998) studies that examine boot camps have not examined outcome performance along racial lines. Official records show that more blacks than whites are involved in crime (Siegel and Senna 1991) and are consistently over-represented in arrest data (Harris 1991). Several explanations exist for these findings. One explanation is that blacks are over represented in the criminal justice system due to biases of the system (police, courts, juries, etc.) (Siegel and Sienna 1991). This possible discrimination may lead to prejudices in choosing which behaviors are criminally sanctioned and which are not (Harris 1991).

Another explanation is that the disparities are not a result of bias but of ecological differences that create breeding grounds for crime (Siegel and Senna 1991). More blacks than whites reside in some areas characterized by a lack or absence of legal employment and where poverty and limited wealth are the norm (Siegel and Senna 1991). Other explanations exist for why more blacks than whites are involved in the criminal justice system and none are conclusive (Siegel and Senna 1991). There are no

data that can directly explain the positive correlation between race and arrest (Harris 1991).

Additional criticisms exist regarding boot camp programs. Some critics feel that the only reason these programs continue to grow is because legislatures believe that military training can cause a lasting behavioral change in participants (Parent 1994). Other critics argue that while most programs require that participation be voluntary, participants are actually coerced and no one can actually “volunteer” for the program (Salerno 1994). There is a growing awareness about the shortcomings of the military model – a model motivated by punishment and retribution rather than rehabilitation (Sharp 1995).

Prisoner abuse is another criticism of boot camps. Guards working in these programs have broad discretion and are generally untrained (Osler 1991). This leaves open the possibility of the abuse of authority and may bring out the “dark side” of the officers (Benekos 1995; Sechrest 1989). Boot camp prisons might attract the type of staff that might use their position of power and control to take advantage of the inmates and abuse them (MacKenzie and Parent 1992). The use of negative leadership to tear down and then build up inmates teaches them to react aggressively (Morash and Rucker 1990). Each instructor is different, and inmates will encounter different officers throughout the program. The unpredictable style of each guard can lead to stress and cause confusion from inconsistent standards that can create the potential of abuse by the guards and negative outcomes for the participants (Benekos 1995; Morash and Rucker 1990).

Perhaps the most serious criticism is that the definitions of acceptable and unacceptable behavior is based on the middle class idea of punishment (Sechrest 1989). Neither boot camps nor traditional prison sentences will erase the social conditions or problems parolees must face upon release (Sechrest 1989). There will be no long-term deterrent effect if no satisfaction can be found through a legitimate lifestyle (Sechrest 1989). Boot camps were developed as a quick fix solution to a growing problem that satisfied the public need to be “tough on crime” (Osler 1991; Benekos 1995). However, this “well intentioned...legacy of failure”(Benekos 1995) postpones the “real” issue of having to confront the problem of what to do about crime and criminals (Benekos 1995).

ANALYSIS

To better determine the effects of boot camp programs on recidivism rates of graduates and whether subjects with informal social bonds will perform better upon release, secondary data analysis will be conducted. The data were collected by Doris MacKenzie, James Shaw and Voncile Gowdy on the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections (LDPSC) boot camp program IMPACT (Intensive Motivational Program of Alternative Correctional Treatment), over two years (1987-1989). Participants in the program spent 90 to 180 days in a medium security prison engaging in traditional boot camp activities: drill, exercise and labor. The program did not include any rehabilitative aspects such as job training or education. Those who successfully completed the program were released to Intensive Community Supervision.

The researchers examined five offender samples: those who completed the program (program completes), those who started but dropped out of the program (program dropouts), offenders sentenced to probation and not the program (non-participant probationers), parolees who did not participate in the program (non-participant parolees) and incarcerated inmates who were not selected for the program (non-participant incarcerated). The original five groups were eventually collapsed into three groups: non-participants, program completes and program dropouts. The three non-participant samples were matched as closely as possible to the program participant sample by selecting for comparison only subjects who would have been eligible to enter the program.

Samples in this study are somewhat arbitrary. While MacKenzie et al. (1987) used a quasi-experimental design to select and match offenders from each of the sample groups, inclusion in these groups was originally decided by a pre-sentence recommendation by the prosecutor and a judge who chose to follow or disregard the recommendation. While both the sentencing recommendation and judge's decision were based on a number of legal factors, the possibility exists that both the original recommendation and final sentence were influenced by other factors. These factors may have influenced which offender was sentenced to the IMPACT program, probation or incarceration, thus affecting the original sample pool and data samples.

The subjects were followed for one year after release from the IMPACT program while on Intensive Community Supervision, while on parole or during probation. During this time they did not have access to continuing care. A total of 116 subjects completed

the boot camp program, 108 individuals were in the probation sample, 74 individuals were in the parole sample, and 98 individuals were in the incarcerated sample.

Participants in the study completed a self-report questionnaire that asked various questions about their boot camp experience and their adjustment to free life one or more times during the follow-up. These self-reported data were combined with information collected from official records of LDPSC and questionnaires filled out by the parole/probation agent during the follow-up. Information from LDPSC consisted of demographic information and sentence information such as sentence length, release date and criminal history. Parole performance, as evaluated by the agent, was completed each month for the entire 12 month follow-up, (excluding rearrests which were only followed for the first four months of the follow-up), and included items relating to performance on community supervision, performance at work and in school, substance abuse counseling, and further contact with the justice system.

The use of self-report data to measure variables presents problems with the accuracy of reported information. The questionnaire asked respondents personal questions regarding their past activities. Some respondents may have feared that the information would be released to the authorities, so they may have lied about their unreported criminal history. Another problem is that these data were collected 12 years ago. Changes in program structure or participant selection processes may have changed since these data were collected. Consequently, any conclusions that are drawn may be accurate based on the data but inaccurate based on current operating procedures. It is possible that the conclusions and recommendations made in this study may have already

been implemented by the IMPACT program.

The validity and reliability of this research may be threatened by several factors. Because this study relies heavily on official records as a measurement tool, there is a threat to the reliability of the research. Using official records is a problem because much of the data regarding technical violations may be tainted. Since it is the parole or probation agent who decides whether to sanction a technical violation, two individuals may receive two different sanctions. No two agents may use the same criteria to decide if the same technical violation merits a formal sanction versus and informal sanction. This may inflate the rate of technical violations for any group.

Construct validity is threatened because the empirical measures used may be incomplete. Strictly measuring the numerical results of how many graduates fail on parole (and how quickly they fail) does not reveal internal changes that may have occurred in a participant. Release requirements may have been violated when a positive change did occur but a lack of support existed. The instrument used here also does not measure the strength of a social bond. While a bond may have been formed by the subject with one of the variables, this data does not measure how strongly the subject may have bonded with it. Strength of a social bond may affect how well an individual does or does not perform during post-release.

A threat to the external validity of this study is generalizability. While the results of this study may apply to other boot camp programs designed in a similar manner, the results may not apply to all programs. All boot camp programs are not designed alike and do not offer all the same services to participants. This difference in design could

stem from a subculture that exists in Louisiana and nowhere else. Attitudes and perceptions of criminal behavior and how to deal with that behavior would be different in one subculture to the next, affecting how that group of people choose to deal with criminals. The difference in attitudes could affect program design, in turn affecting individual experiences in the boot camp.

A third, unanticipated variable may have also affected the results of this study. This third variable is known as the “aging out” phenomena that has been well documented in criminology literature (Harris 1991). According to the literature, when aging out occurs, criminal involvement decreases with age. Generally the peak age for offending is twenty then drops off as the person ages (Harris 1991). This finding will usually hold true across historical eras, geography and types of crimes (Harris 1991). This implies that the reason offenders stop committing crimes is not due to the deterrent effects of any punishment experienced by the offender but simply because they got “too old” (Harris 1991).

The most significant reason that criminals age out of crime is credited to the acquisition of meaningful and conventional bonds such as gainful employment, continued education, the completion of a phase of education and marriage (Steffensmeir and Streifel 1991). Employment must be meaningful and include financial security and the possibility of advancement. Once steady employment is found, the offender’s attention will shift from criminal activity to law-abiding activity. Their daily routine will change leading that person away from illegal activities and toward legal ones. Establishing and maintaining these bonds orient the offender to conventional society, and

decreases the opportunities for committing criminal acts (Steffensmeir and Streifel 1991).

It is hypothesized that boot camp graduates will not have less technical violations and rearrests than comparison parole and probation groups during the follow-up period. Specifically, boot camp graduates are expected to have similar technical violation and rearrest rates to the parole and probation groups during the follow-up period.

Alternatively, if this boot camp program is successful in achieving the goals of rehabilitation and reduced recidivism, the boot camp group will have smaller rates of technical violations and rearrests. It is also hypothesized that subjects who do not form informal social bonds during the follow-up period will not perform well during the follow-up period. Subjects who have these bonds present in their lives are expected to have less technical violations and rearrests. Boot camp graduates are not expected to have more social bonds in their lives.

Each of the three groups of offenders (shock, prison, probation), will be compared to determine successes and failures, rearrested (yes or no), and technical violations (yes or no). Rearrests and technical violations are used as a measure of recidivism and rehabilitation. Technical violations are defined as positive drug tests, curfew violations, failure to tell the agent of their whereabouts, and missing appointments. These measure will be examined by race (black and white), to determine if black subjects and white subjects recidivate at similar rates.

Four variables will be used to examine the formation of informal social bonds and their possible effects on subjects' post-release performance: employment (working or

not working), education (completed a GED, did not complete a GED), living arrangements (family or not family), and marital status (married, not married). The presence of informal social bonds in subjects with technical violations and rearrests will be examined to determine if the bonds are not as prevalent in those with technical violations and rearrests. It is hypothesized that a subject who recidivates will lack those bonds. Those who have these bonds present in their lives should perform better with regards to technical violations and rearrests.

In the original data set, there is information available for each subject for each month of the 12-month follow-up (rearrests were only followed for the first four months of the follow-up). The data consist of two types of responses. The first is a positive or negative response for the month in which an event occurred. For example, the variable completing a GED was measured as a “yes/no” response for every month (did the subject complete a GED this month?). The variable indicating with whom the subject lived with was measured as a “family/not family” response for each month (did the subject live with family this month?). The second type of variable indicates how many months a subject performed positively on a particular variable. The work (employment) variable was recorded as a numeric value. For example, a value of eight would mean a subject worked for months one through eight of the follow-up period. A value of five would mean a subject worked during the first five months of the follow-up.

Three groups will be examined: those who had been through the shock program and graduated (shock), those who had served traditional prison sentences and are on parole (parole), and those who were sentenced to probation and serving that sentence

(probation). The original data sets were collapsed into one aggregated data set for analysis purposes. The original codings remained intact but were difficult to analyze correctly to answer the questions in this study. For analysis purposes, some variables were recoded into yes/no questions. The work (employment) variable was recoded to ask “Did the subject work full-time at all during the follow-up?” Recoding the data in the manner makes it possible to look at subject and group performance for the entire 12 months at once instead of having to examine the data month by month.

RESULTS

As indicated in Table 1, the majority of cases are in the probation group (42.6%). A majority of sample members are black (64.0%) while 34.5% are white (1.6% of the sample is classified as “missing” for race). The average age of subjects is 23; however, 58.1% of the sample’s age is missing. Using self-reported information at the time of their arrest, 22.8% of the subjects reported they were employed either full or part time. Only 13.2% of the subjects had graduated from high school or completed a GED, and 15.5% had completed some high school. Only 5.8% were married at the time of their arrest.

Two of the variables in this study had significant reporting problems. The age variable will not be used in this analysis because nearly 150 subjects did not have an age recorded. No reason is given for this in the literature provided with the data set. Marital status has a similar problem. Almost 61% of the subjects did not have a marital status

recorded. Again, no explanation is given for this. The marital status variable is used in some models and omitted in others to include a greater number of cases in the analysis. Both types of models are included and analyzed in this thesis to see if significant differences emerge.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Sample Groups: Shock, Prison and Probation (n=258)

Total per group	Percent	Number
Shock	28.7%	74
Parole	28.7%	74
Probation	42.6%	110
Race		
White	34.5%	89
Black	64.0%	165
Missing	1.6%	4
Mean Age	23 years	
Missing	58.1%	150
Subjects Working at Time of Arrest	22.8%	
Completed High School	13.2%	
Marital Status		
Married	5.8%	
Not Married	30.7%	
Missing	60.9%	

Analysis of variance will be conducted to examine two things: if the shock group has the same recidivism rate as the parole and probation groups and if they have more or less social bonds. The groups are compared on the rearrest and technical violation variables first to measure overall performance. The rearrest and technical violation variables are compared with each of the social bonding variables to see if they were or

were not present when the subject recidivated. The groups are then compared with the social bonding variables to see which group had the highest mean.

Table 2 shows the rate of technical violations across group (shock, parole and probation). The relationship between technical violations and group is significant, but eta-squared is very low, .04. This low eta-squared suggests a very weak relationship between the groups and technical violations. The probation group has the highest group mean number of technical violations, 2.55, and the parole group the lowest, 1.49.

Table 2: ANOVA Statistics for Group and Technical Violations and Group and Rearrests^a

Technical Violations			
	Mean	Significance of F	η^2
		.01	.04
Shock	1.74		
Parole	1.49		
Probation	2.55		
Total	2.01 (162)		
Rearrests			
	Mean	Significance of F	η^2
		.42	.01
Shock	.42		
Parole	.29		
Probation	.38		
Total	.37 (77)		
^a alpha = .05			

Comparing technical violations and the social bonding variables two variables are significantly related, completing a GED (F = .02) and working (F = .00) (see Table 3).

The group mean for subjects who did complete a GED is 2.65 and eta-squared is 2.1%, resulting in a very weak relationship. For working, the mean is higher for subjects who did not work during the follow-up, 2.82, and eta-squared is a little higher, 3.5% but also a very weak relationship. The other variables are not significantly related.

Table 3: ANOVA Statistics for Technical Violations and the Social Bonding Variables^a

Variable	Mean	Significance of F	η^2
Compete a GED		.02	.02
No	1.83		
Yes	2.65		
Working		.00	.03
Not Working	2.82		
Working	1.76		
Marital Status		.46	.01
Not Married	1.73		
Married	1.33		
Living Arrangement		.15	.01
Not Family	1.53		
Family	2.13		

^a alpha = .05

The social bonding variables are not significantly related to the rearrest variable (Table 4).

Table 4: ANOVA Statistics for Rearrests and the Social Bonding Variables^a

Variable	Mean	Significance of F	η^2
Complete GED		.52	.00
No	.35		
Yes	.41		
Working		.09	.01
Not Working	.48		
Working	.32		
Marital Status		.56	.00
Not Married	.47		
Married	.37		
Living Arrangement		.63	.00
Not Family	.33		
Family	.38		

^a alpha = .05

Each group is compared on the social bonding variables (see Table 5).

Completing a GED is the only variable significantly related to group (significance of F = .00). The shock group had the highest group mean for completing a GED (39% of those in the shock group completed a GED). However eta-squared is low (.07) suggesting a weak relationship. Marital status was unavailable for every member of the probation group. This may have affected the outcome for this comparison. There is no explanation for the missing marital status for the probation group.

Table 5: ANOVA Statistics for Group and the Social Bonding Variables^a

Variable	Mean	Significance of F	η^2
Complete GED		.00	.07
Shock	.39		
Parole	.10		
Probation	.25		
Working		.74	.00
Shock	.79		
Parole	.75		
Probation	.74		
Married		.53	.00
Shock	1.84		
Parole	1.99		
Probation	Missing		
Living with Family		.61	.00
Shock	.80		
Parole	.84		
Probation	.85		

^a alpha = .05

Multivariate linear regression is used to examine the relationship between the technical violation and rearrest variables and the social bonding variables: working, completing a GED, marital status and living arrangement. Technical violations are examined first and the results are in Table 6. This model includes whether the subject completed a GED, marital status, employment status, living arrangements and race. The value of r-squared indicates that using these variables explain 19.2% of the variation in the number of technical violations. Completing a GED is linearly related to technical violations (significance of $t = .03$). The value of beta for this variable is small and

positive (.26) showing that completing a GED during the follow-up increases the number of technical violations for those subjects, controlling for all other variables. The remaining variables, working, sample, living arrangement, marital status and race are not significantly related to technical violations.

Table 6: Multivariate Linear Regression for Technical Violations^a

Variable	Coefficient	Beta	Significance
Constant	.49		.76
Complete GED	1.17	.26	.03
Married	.13	.02	.84
Work Full-Time	-.10	-.20	.08
Live with Family	.31	.06	.59
Black	.51	.12	.29
Group	.05	.01	.93

^a alpha = .05, r^2 = .19, significance of F = .01

The linear regression model for rearrests and the social bonding variables is not statistically significant ($F = .29$ -- see Table 7). Using these variables explains only 9.06% of the variation in rearrests. None of the variables are linearly related to rearrests.

Table 7: Multivariate Linear Regression for Rearrests^a

Variable	Coefficient	Beta	Significance
Constant	.56		.25
Complete GED	-.05	-.04	.74
Married	-.08	-.05	.70
Work Full-Time	-.03	-.22	.08
Lived with Family	.27	.17	.13
Black	.07	.06	.62
Group	-.19	-.14	.25

^a alpha = .05, r^2 = .09, significance of F = .29

A second set of regression models that omits marital status is conducted to include more cases due to the large number of missing cases for marital status. The first dependent variable analyzed is the number of technical violations (see Table 8). In this model r-squared is weak, only 13.7% of the variation in technical violations is explained using the variables in this model. Completing a GED is significantly related to the number of violations. The relationship has a small, positive beta (.14) showing that completing a GED increases the number of technical violations during the follow-up period. Race emerged as a significant relationship. Coding for the race variable is 0 = white, 1 = black. This beta suggests that black offenders have more technical violations than white offenders. Working full-time during the follow-up period also emerged as a significant variable (.00). This variable has a small, negative beta (-.17) indicating that subjects who work have less technical violations than subjects who do not work.

Table 8: Multivariate Linear Regression for Technical Violations Excluding Marital Status^a

Variable	Coefficient	Beta	Significance
Constant	-.58		.54
Complete GED	.78	.14	.04
Work Full Time	-.10	-.18	.01
Live with Family	.77	.11	.08
Black	.99	.20	.00
Group	.38	.06	.28

^a alpha = .05, r^2 = .14, significance of F = .00

Rearrests are examined excluding marital status and the relationship is not significant (see Table 9). Significance of F is equal to .17 and r-squared is only 14.7% suggesting that very little of the variation in rearrests is explained by these variables. Working was found to be linearly related to rearrests (significance of t = .03). Beta was again small and negative showing that subjects who worked has fewer rearrests than subjects who did not work.

Table 9: Multivariate Linear Regression for Rearrests Excluding Marital Status^a

Variable	Coefficient	Beta	Significance
Constant	.51		.05
Complete GED	.01	.00	.96
Work Full-Time	-.02	-.16	.03
Live with Family	.17	.09	.17
Black	-.04	-.03	.69
Group	-.08	-.06	.41

^a alpha = .05, r^2 = .03, significance of F = .17

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

The results found here should be viewed cautiously for a number of reasons. The type of data used in this thesis does not measure the quality of change that may have occurred in the subjects. Performance is based strictly on numerical outcomes and cannot measure internal changes that may have resulted from any form of punishment. As stated earlier, no qualitative way exists to measure rehabilitation of the subjects who may only be having problems adjusting to free life versus subjects who are not rehabilitated.

Technical violations and rearrests are used as measures of rehabilitation and recidivism. However, the actual determination of officially sanctioning a technical violation may be influenced by the individual parole agent or probation officer deciding whether a violation has occurred and if it should be sanctioned. While there are some clear-cut decisions, other decisions were not so easily made. In these cases, individual decisions by probation officers and parole agents may directly affect how many subjects received a sanction for a technical violation and these decisions would affect the outcomes of these models.

On certain variables, one group may have performed better than another. As a numeric measurement there is no explanation why one group may have performed better or worse. No method exists to measure what kind of access the different groups may have had to different resources during their incarceration or probation or how this may have affected their access to resources in the community.

Using this type of data does not allow for measurement of the quality or strength of social bonds that may have been formed during the follow-up period. Many subjects may have formed the types of bonds measured but may not have bonded fully with them. Without a strong social bond, the subject may not be as successful as a subject who formed a stronger bond. A numerical count of how many subjects formed a bond does not help explain why those with the bonds may have performed differently than those who did not form the bond or how strongly bonded the individual was to the variable.

Overall, the shock group did not perform any better than the parole and probation groups. Although analysis of variance revealed that the shock group did have fewer technical violations than the probation group, the shock group had more technical violations than the parole group. The shock group also had the highest group mean for rearrests. Having more technical violations than at least one group and more rearrests than both groups suggest that subjects may not have been rehabilitated subsequently not reducing recidivism rates. This finding suggests that this boot camp is not successful at achieving rehabilitation and recidivism goals.

Technical violations were significantly related to completing a GED and working. Analysis of variance showed that subjects who did not work had more technical violations than subjects who did work. This finding was not surprising. Subjects lacking the social bond to work were expected to perform worse than subjects who did have this social bond. The surprising result was that subjects who completed a GED during the follow-up had more technical violations than subjects who did not. This result was also true for GEDs and technical violations in both of the regression models: completing a

GED increased the number of technical violations. Interestingly, the shock subjects were the most likely to have completed GEDs during the follow-up period. The reason why shock subjects completed the most GEDs and why those subjects were more likely to have technical violations cannot be ascertained from this data. This finding requires further study to decide if this finding is incorrect or if somehow this social bond affected outcomes differently than expected.

Working full-time was found to be significantly related in the regressions that excluded marital status to technical violations and linearly related to rearrests. As would be expected, subjects who worked during the follow-up period (formed an informal social bond with a job) had less technical violations or rearrests.

Race emerged as significantly related to technical violations in the second set of regression models. Linear regression suggested that blacks had more technical violations than whites. Looking strictly at race and the rehabilitation and recidivism variables showed that 65% of blacks (112 subjects) had a technical violation during the follow-up compared with only 35% of whites (48 subjects). The findings are similar for rearrests: 64.8% of blacks (53 subjects) were rearrested while only 35.2% of whites (23 subjects) were rearrested. Many explanations exist for this finding that the data cannot account for.

As structured, the Louisiana boot camp program IMPACT does not seem able to achieve the goals of rehabilitation and reduced recidivism. Shock subjects had comparable technical violation and rearrest rates and the social bonds examined generally did not seem to improve performance in individual subjects. Only one social bond, education, was significantly related to group, and this bond seemed to have the

opposite affect by increasing the number of technical violations of subjects who completed a GED.

To discover if these results are accurate, a few steps could be taken. A longer follow-up period could be used to follow subjects. Tracking subjects for longer than one year may reveal more changes that occur over the long-term that are not evident in a short term follow-up, such as this. More qualitative measures could be used to attempt to measure the kind of change that took place in the subjects instead of strictly measuring the numerical outcomes.

While this program seems unable to achieve the goals examined here, the program itself as presently or previous structured may be considered successful. Many other factors could be used to measure the success of a program. These results may also indicate the need for more comprehensive after care services for program graduates to help them in establishing strong bonds with society to assist them in the transition to a law-abiding life.

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