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CONVICTED DRUNK DRIVERS IN A DAY REPORTING CENTER PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This study examines a drunk driving population sentenced to a Day Reporting Center in a south-western Indiana county from January 2002 through December 2003. Specifically, using cross-tabulations and chi-square analyses, this study concentrates on the "exit status" and "post-program recidivism" among those participants. The results of this study suggest that placing convicted drink drivers in a Day Reporting Center program may be a viable and effective alternative to imprisonment.

Keywords: day reporting center, drunk drivers

INTRODUCTION

Originating in England during the 1970s and afterwards developed in the United States in the mid-1980s, day reporting centers (DRCs) are intermediate sanctions that combine a high level of control with the delivery of treatment and other services needed by the offenders served. In fact, day reporting centers are increasingly being used across the United States as a community based intermediate sanction offering an alternative to both imprisonment as well as traditional probation. As Bahn and Davis (1998) put it, day reporting can be defined as a highly structured non-residential program utilizing supervision, sanction, and services coordinated from a central focus. According to Parent (1995), DRCs are a relative new intermediate punishment that "combines high levels of surveillance and extensive services, treatment, and activities" (p. 125). In 1986, the Crime and Justice Foundation in Boston in collaboration with the Hampden County Sheriffs Department in Springfield, Massachusetts established the first DRC in the United States (Curtin, 1996). In their

National Institute of Justice report, Parent, Byrne, Tsarfaty, Valade, and Esselman (1995) had identified two primary purposes for establishing DRCs - to provide offenders with access to treatment and to reduce or restrain the imprisoned or jailed population.

Also, "all DRCs appear to be less expensive than imprisonment" (Bahn and Davis, 1998 p. 148).

"The DRCs differ considerably in administrative staffing, operating costs, criteria for eligibility, size of enrollment, and rules for program completion" (Bahn and Davis, 1998, p. 148).

All programs share the basic criterion of requiring clients to check in daily with their respective supervisors at DRCs, submit itineraries for approval, and go through the required treatment services. Since DRCs are non-residential programs, the common factor among all clients is that they are allowed to stay at their own homes (Lurigio, Olson, and Sifferd, 1999). The majority of the DRC clients live with their families or significant others or parents; others live by themselves or with their relatives.

As Gibbons and Rosecrance (2005) put it, DRCs are very flexible and as a result, programs vary tremendously. DRCs are used at various stages of the criminal justice processing.

Many are convicted offenders on probation; some are placed in DRCs as an alternative for jail sentence as well as pre-trial detention, and some of these programs are used as "back-end" strategies (Gibbons and Rosecrance, 2005). The services offered in DRCs also vary widely.

These include any, but usually not all of these - job-search assistance, substance abuse counseling/treatment, group/individual counseling, job-placement services, educational/vocational programs, life-skills training, health skills training, housing assistance, recreation and leisure programming, day care support, literacy programs, and community service placement (Gibbons and Rosecrance, 2005). As Cromwell, Alarid, and Del Carmen (2005) point out, "the theory behind DRCs is that offenders will stay out of trouble when they are occupied, especially with activities that will improve their chances of a more normal life-for example, by obtaining a GED or finding a job" (p. 190).

Empirical studies focusing on DRCs in the United States have been reported since 1990.

Although the number of DRCs is steadily increasing throughout the United States concentrating on varied types of offenders, previous researchers have paid little or almost no attention to convicted drunk drivers sentenced to these programs. The present research examines a convicted drunk driving population sentenced to DRC in a southwestern county in Indiana; we refer to this county as "Southwestern County". This study includes those convicted drunk drivers who were sentenced to the DRC program and also completed their sentences in that county from January, 2002 through December, 2003; afterwards, all participants were followed through the end of June, 2004 for recidivism reports. In other words, the follow-up period was a minimum of six months. Specifically, this study concentrates on the "exit status" and "post-program recidivism" among those participants.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

A review of research findings on DRCs reveals two issues. First, these programs are administered by public (county sheriffs department or county community corrections office) as well as private agencies. Second, the target population and also the program goals are diverse.

Even so, all DRCs have been established to divert offenders from jail or prison, and to reduce

recidivism through delivery of treatment services (Parent et al., 1995).

In general, DRCs vary from one jurisdiction to another in terms of program emphasis. On one side, several programs emphasize the availability of treatment services for participants who would otherwise not have those services available to them (Lurigio et al., 1999; McBride and VanderWaal, 1997; Lucas and Bogle, 1997a, 1997b; Parent et al., 1995; Diggs and Piper, 1994).

On the other side, many programs emphasize other issues. Programs such as the southwestern North Carolina DRC emphasize surveillance, not treatment (Marciniak, 1999). However, one common goal of all DRCs in the United States is cost-savings. For instance, the DRCs in Hampden County, Massachusetts, Harris County, Texas, Maricopa County, Arizona, and Orange County, Florida, identify cost-savings as their primary goal (Parent et al., 1995). In fact, participants in all DRCs are mandated to pay a non-refundable enrollment fee as well as a weekly service charge; at the same time, placement of offenders in DRCs save the expenses for incarceration. In addition to cost-savings, restraining or reducing jail/prison overcrowding is a mandate of the aforementioned DRCs in Massachusetts, Texas, Arizona, and Florida (Parent et al., 1995). Also, some programs like the Cook County, Illinois, DRC emphasize improving the percentage of court appearances among pre-trial clients (Lurigio et al, 1999).

Day reporting centers vary widely in their target populations. The majority of the participants in DRCs across the United States are substance abusers or have a history of substance abuse (Parent et al., 1995). Also, some DRCs target probation violators, both felons and misdemeanants (Marciniak, 1999). In addition, some DRCs in Virginia accept referrals from judges, parole boards as well as probation and parole officers (Lucas and Bogle, 1997a, 1997b).

Furthermore, while some DRCs target non-violent offenders, graduates of various residential programs, and pre-trial defendants (Roy and Grimes, 2002; Lurigio et al, 1999; Parent et al., 1995), other DRCs such as the Salt Lake City, Utah DRC target only probationers and parolees (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2000).

A number of previous researchers have reported the percentages of participants who had successfully exited their DRCs; these percentages varied from 84 percent to 13.5 percent. The highest percentage (84%) of successful exit was reported by Diggs and Piper (1994) from their study on the Orange County, Florida DRC administered by the Community Corrections Department of the County Corrections Division. In contrast, Marciniak (1999) reported the lowest percentage (13.5%) of successful exit from her study on a southeastern North Carolina DRC. As for failure or unsuccessful exit from the DRCs across the United States, only a few researchers have examined the factors related to such exit. For instance, Humphrey (1992) reported these factors - continued drug use, absconding, non-compliance with program rules, and loss of job as well as loss of residence, during program supervision. Among all the published reports available to date, Marciniak (1999) used statistical analysis to ascertain the factors (employment, education, and living situation) that were significantly related to participants' unsuccessful exit.

Regarding post-program recidivism among participants who had successfully exited their DRC programs, only a handful of previous researchers have investigated this issue. To date, only six published reports have been available to this end. In all these reports, the researchers measured recidivism as re-arrests on new charges. However, clear information about the percentages of post-program recidivism among successful participants has been available from these four studies:

(a) 44% in the Salt Lake City, Utah DRC (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2000);

(b) 22% in the Fairfax County, Virginia DRC (Orchowsky et al., 1997); (c) 20% in the Metropolitan DRC, Boston, Massachusetts (McDevitt et al., 1997); and (d) 14.9% in the Maricopa County, Arizona DRC (Jones and Lacey, 1999). In the first study, the follow-up period was one year, while in the second one, the follow-up period ranged from two months to twenty months. While the length of follow-up period was two years

in the fourth study, no such time period was noted in the third study. In two other studies, Lucas and Bogle (1997a, 1997b) maintained that recidivism reports on all successful participants were not available consistently.

For example, in their study on the Richmond, Virginia DRC, out of a total of 149 successful participants, they could find such reports on 95 subjects; 14 of them recidivated.

As for convicted drunk drivers sentenced to DRC programs, only one published study has been available to date. Jones and Lacey (1999) investigated convicted drunk drivers placed in the Maricopa County, Arizona DRC program. More specifically, the authors focused on repeat drunk drivers. They reported that almost 15% of the participants who successfully exited the program had recidivated during the two-year follow-up period. No further investigation was conducted to figure out whether any factor was significantly related to their post-program recidivism. However, one important fact was - all participants in this DRC were released from jail early to be placed in the program. Also, the length of time they spent under the program supervision was equal to their remaining jail-time.

THE DRC PROGRAM IN THE SOUTHWESTERN COUNTY

The Community Corrections Office at the Southwestern County, Indiana started a DRC for adult offenders in September, 1996. The target population includes non-violent class D felons and all non-violent misdemeanants who do not have a high school diploma or are illiterate, are underemployed, have low cognitive skills, and have problems of alcohol/drug abuse (Roy and Crimes, 2002). In accordance with Indiana Code 11-12-2-9(e), the ratio between the number of participants and the number of supervisory staff is 10:1. Offenders are placed in this DRC at two stages - pre-trial and post-trial. At the post-trial stage, most clients are placed in the program as an additional condition of their probation sentence, while others are directly placed in this DRC in lieu of their jail sentence (Roy and Grimes, 2002).

According to the DRC rules, each participant must report to the Community Corrections Office weekday mornings (Monday through Friday) to get their daily schedules approved (by their respective

case managers), and attend any class/treatment outlined in their program schedules.

The DRC staff conducts random drug tests and alco-sensor tests at the Office as well as the clients' residences. Violations of rules (technical and/or drug-test) are noted by case managers and reviewed by the Director to determine whether the participant remains in the program.

Roy and Grimes (2002) previously studied this DRC program. However, that project included all offenders who successfully exited this program or failed to complete the program from January 1998 through December 1999. Compared to this previous study, the present research focuses exclusively on convicted drunk drivers sentenced to this DRC.

Overall, it is apparent from this review of previous research findings on DRC programs that little attention has been paid to convicted drunk drivers sentenced to these programs.

Therefore, this study will expand on the literature by focusing on the exist status and post program recidivism of convicted drunk drivers participating in the Southwestern County Day Reporting Center beginning 2002 through the end of 2003. In the Southwestern County, convicted drunk drivers are sentenced to this program administered by the County Community Corrections Office. As mentioned earlier, this study focuses on "exit status" and "post-program recidivism" among those offenders placed in the program from the beginning of 2002 through the end of 2003. For the purpose of this study, "recidivism" is measured as re-arrests for committing new offenses after the participants successfully exited the program during the two-year study period.

METHOD

Data Sources and Subjects

Data were coded from individual offender case files maintained by the Community Corrections Office. Initially, all 67 convicted drunk drivers who were sentenced to this DRC and either successfully or unsuccessfully exited the program during the study period were included.

However, due to inconsistencies in the available information, 16 subjects were dropped. Detailed information regarding the subjects' prior offense history, prior sanctions, and post-program recidivism was gathered from the criminal history information system maintained by the County Superior Court.

The following independent variables are used in this study: age, race, sex, marital status, education level, offense (drunk driving) class, charge reduction, sentence type, sentence length (i.e. the number of days spent by the subjects under program supervision), prior OWI offense, prior jail commitment, prior imprisonment, prior community corrections placement, prior placement in the DRC, prior drug/alcohol offenses, and prior drug/alcohol counseling. The mean age of the subjects was 38.6 years. About 90 percent of the subjects were white. Also, the majority of the subjects were male (80.4%), not married (66.7%), and had an education level of high school or less (88.2%). As for offense class, 76.5% of the subjects were misdemeanants. The original charges were reduced for two subjects (4%). Regarding sentence type, 50 subjects (98%) were sentenced to the program as a condition of probation, and one subject (2%) was placed as sentence modification (jail sentenced modified after spending certain amount of time in jail). The sentence length varied from 14 days to 475 days with an average of 57.34 days.

Although this range was quite extreme, the majority of offenders (78.4%) were sentenced to 180 days while 7 (13.7%) were sentenced to less than 180 days and 4 (7.8%) were sentenced to more than 180 days. The majority of the subjects had no prior OWI offense (60.8%), no prior jail commitment (94.1%), and no prior imprisonment (88.2%). While 53% of the subjects had history of prior community corrections placements, about 90% of them had no prior placement in the DRC. As for prior drug/alcohol offenses, 98% of the subjects had such records. Also, about 41% of the subjects had documented prior drug/alcohol counseling.

The outcome measures used in this study were "exit status" and "post-program recidivism". Both variables were dichotomized as follows: (a) exit status - successful (code 0) and failure (code 1), and (b) post-program recidivism - no (code 0) and yes (code 1).

FINDINGS

Findings of the study are divided into two sections: exit status and post program recidivism. Each is discussed below. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), the following formula should be used to determine whether the sample size is large enough to run any sophisticated analysis: " $N >_{\geq} 50 + 8m$ " (where m is the number of independent vari-

ables) for testing the multiple correlation and $N > 104 + m$ for testing individual predictors" (p. 117). Because our sample size does not meet the stated requirements ($N=S$ 1), our analysis is limited to cross tabulations and chi-square analysis using Cramer's V statistic to test for the strength of the relationship (Vito & Blankenship, 2002).

Several of the independent variables were either excluded from the analysis because they were measured at the interval level or collapsed into nominal level variables. Additionally, other variables were removed from the analysis after a review of the frequencies revealed that several of the variables had low responses therefore, decreasing the likelihood there would be enough data in each cell to allow for meaningful chi-square analysis. The following variables did reveal such variability that examining the relationship between these and exit status, and post program recidivism deserved further examination: age, sex, race, sentence length, prior community corrections referral, and prior drug and alcohol counseling. A review of the results is provided in the following section.

Exit Status

As the previous literature has suggested, the majority of DRCs are interested in reducing the overall costs of correctional systems as well as reducing overcrowding. By diverting the offenders into community alternatives, such as DRC, the overall correctional costs and institutional overcrowding are supposed to be reduced. Given that context, successful or unsuccessful completion of any program may negatively impact the ultimate cost-savings should an offender be unsuccessfully released from the program and in some instances diverted back to incarceration. Hence, this study seeks to examine the characteristics of drunk drivers placed in DRC by their exit status.

A review of the data reveal a near even split between those offenders who successfully completed the program (51.0%) and those who did not (49.0%). Table 1 presents data examining the relationship between exit status and age at the time of entering the program, sex, race of the offender, and sentence length. Results from this table indicate the majority of offenders participating in the program were 36 or over (64.7%). When examining the relationship within age categories, data revealed essentially no differences between those who succeeded and those who failed. For example, of those offend-

Table 1
Relationship between Exit Status, Age, Sex, and Race

		Exit Status			
		Successful		Unsuccessful	
		No.	%	No.	%
Age	Up to 35	9	50%	9	50%
	More than 35	17	51.5%	16	48.5%
Sex	Male	21	51.2%	20	48.8%
	Female	5	50%	5	50%
Race	White	26	56.5%	20	43.5%
	Non-white	0	0.0%	5	100%
Sentence	< 180 days	2	28.6%	5	71.4%
Length	180 days	23	57.5%	17	42.5%
	> 180 days	1	25%	3	75%

ers who were 35 or under at the time of their participation in the program, 50.0% ($n=9$) successfully completed the program while 50% ($n=9$) did not. For those who were 36 or older, 51.5% ($n=17$) successfully completed the program while 48.5% ($n=16$) did not. A chi-square test examining the relationship between the observed and expected frequencies revealed no significant difference between these groups. When examining the differences by sex, the data revealed a similar picture. Although the majority of the participants were male, they were also evenly split between those who were likely to successfully complete (51.2%) versus those who were not (48.8%). The same was true for females who experienced a 50% split between those who successfully or unsuccessfully completed the program. In terms of race, since there were only five non-whites in the entire population, it was difficult to draw any definitive conclusion about their success or failure. However, for whites, we continued to find a similar pattern. Approximately 56 percent of whites successfully completed the program while approximately 44 percent did not. A frequency distribution of sentence length revealed the need to categorize sentence length by less than 180 days, 180 days, and more than 180 days. Although not statistically significant, these data revealed some interesting findings. Proportionately those sentenced to less than or more than 180 days were more likely to be unsuccessfully released from the DRC program (71.4% and 75.0% respectively) than those offenders sentenced to 180 days (42.5%). The explanation for this finding deserves further attention and is out of the scope of this study.

Table 2 presents data examining the relation-

Table 2
Relationship between Exit Status, Prior Community Corrections Placement, and Prior Drug or Alcohol Treatment

		Exit Status			
		Successful		Unsuccessful	
		No.	%	No.	%
Prior Community Corrections Placement	Yes	15	55.6%	12	44.4%
	No	11	47.8%	12	52.2%
Prior Drug or Alcohol Counseling	Yes	3	75%	1	25%
	No	23	50%	23	50%

ship between exit status, prior community corrections placement, and prior drug or alcohol treatment. As previously mentioned, the majority of DRC participants had at least one previous referral to a community corrections sanction (53.0%). Of those who had a previous referral, 52.0% (n=26) successfully completed their current referral to DRC. The majority of those who had some previous form of community corrections placement successfully completed this program (55.6%), while the majority of those who did not have a previous community corrections placement did not successfully complete the DRC program (52.2%). When exploring the relationship between those who had prior drug or alcohol counseling and exit status, data revealed that only 4 (8.0%) had any prior drug or alcohol counseling. Of those, however, 75% did successfully complete the program, while there was a 50.0% split between successful and unsuccessful completion for those offenders who had not received previous drug or alcohol counseling. Chi-Square and Cramer's V measure of association were computed for each of these relationships. However, there were no significant differences in these groups. One explanation for this finding is the size of the population was not large enough to allow for variability in the groups. Although the cell sizes were large enough to run chi-square and Cramer's V, a larger population size could provide additional explanation such as predicting the outcomes.

Post-Program Recidivism

Another way to examine the success of DRC programs was to explore the post-program recidivism of the participants. A review of the offenders' criminal history records revealed that following completion of the program, 13.7% (n=7) had at

least one drunk driving conviction, 9.5% (n=5) had at least one violent offense, 3.9% (n=2) had at least one property offense, and 7.8% (n=4) had at least one other drug or alcohol offense. Two of these offenders had at least one drunk driving charge and at least one other offense while one offender had at least one drunk driving and one violent offense. Since there was very little variation in the types of offenses that were committed, the variable post program recidivism was collapsed into a dichotomous variable recording whether the offender had committed any new offense following release from the DRC program. Overall, there were 15 (29.4%) participants that had some post program recidivism.

Table 3 presents data describing whether age, sex, race, and sentence length were related to post-program recidivism. Data indicated that within age categories the majority of offenders regardless of age were not likely to re-offend, however, it appeared that those who were 36 or older were less likely to re-offend (78.8%) than those who are 35 or under (55.6%). In terms of sex, it appeared that the majority of both males (70.7%) and females (70.0%) were less likely to re-offend as were whites (76.1%). One interesting finding was that non-white DRC participants were more likely to re-offend (80.0%). Although interesting, this finding must be evaluated with caution because of the low number of non-whites included in the population (n=5). In examining the relationship between sentence length and post program recidivism, although not significant the results suggested that those offenders sentenced to 180 days were less likely to recidivate (22.5%) than those offenders sentenced to less than

Table 3
Relationship between Post-Program Recidivism, Age, Sex, and Race

		Post-Program Recidivism			
		No		Yes	
		No.	%	No.	%
Age*	Up to 35	10	55.6%	8	44.8%
	More than 35	26	78.8%	7	21.2%
Sex	Male	29	70.7%	12	29.3%
	Female	7	70%	3	30%
Race	White	35	76.1%	11	23.9%
	Non-white	1	20%	4	80%
Sentence Length	< 180 days	3	42.9%	4	57.1%
	180 days	31	77.5%	9	22.5%
	> 180 days	2	50%	2	50%

Significant at <.10 level

180 days (57.1%) or more than 180 days (50.0%).

Overall, these findings were consistent with previous literature that suggests offenders age out of criminal activity after their mid-20's. When using a Chi-Square analysis examining the relationship for age and sex, only age of the offender revealed a significant relationship with a Cramer's V of .24366 and significant at the .08 level. Although the strength of this relationship is small, it did suggest a relationship existed and further analysis would be appropriate.

		Post-Program Recidivism			
		No		Yes	
		No.	%	No.	%
Prior Community Corrections Placement	Yes	16	59.3%	11	40.7%
	No	19	82.6%	4	17.4%
Prior Drug or Alcohol Counseling	Yes	2	50%	2	50%
	No	33	71.7%	13	28.3%
Exit Status	Successful	20	76.9%	6	23.1%
	Unsuccessful	16	64%	9	36%

Table 4 presents data describing the relationship between post program recidivism and prior community corrections placement, prior drug or alcohol counseling, and exit status. Results from these data revealed that the majority of offenders had no post-program recidivism (70.0%). However, for those who did have some prior community corrections placement, the majority did not have any indicators of post program recidivism (59.3%). Of those who participated in prior drug or alcohol counseling, half committed some form of post program recidivism while the other half did not. In examining exit status and its relationship to post program recidivism, data indicated that regardless of exit status, the majority did not recidivate. For example, 76.9 % (n=20) of those successfully released from DRC and 64.0% (n=16) of those who were unsuccessfully released did not recidivate. A chi-square analysis revealed only one significant relationship: prior community corrections placements and post program recidivism with a significance of .07 and a Cramer's V of .25395. Although a significant relationship did exist, it was weak at best but did point to the need for further exploration.

DISCUSSION

Previous research has traditionally assessed the effectiveness of day reporting center programs by examining the entire population. Thus far, only one study assessing the effectiveness of day reporting centers on drunk driving has been conducted. Therefore, the present research expands the literature by further examining the specific relationship between drunk driving offenders, exit status and post program recidivism.

Previous research has suggested that exit status can be a strong predictor of future success. Research examining the success rate of program participants varies from a low of 13.5% (Marciniak, 1999) to a high of 84.0% (Diggs & Piper, 1994). This study fell essentially in the middle of these findings with 51.0% successfully completing. Although not at the top of the spectrum, these findings still suggest we should see a lower recidivism rate or higher successful reintegration back into the community.

In general, day reporting centers seek to divert offenders from jail and reduce recidivism through the delivery of treatment services. The previous literature suggests the rate of accomplishing these goals vary by program. This specific DRC program does hold treatment as one of its primary goals. Therefore, a reduction in recidivism should be achieved through program participation not just surveillance. Studies examining effectiveness of day reporting center programs defined effectiveness as a reduction in recidivism irrespective of offense revealed a wide variation in recidivism rates following program completion ranging from a low of 15% (Jones and Lacey, 1999) to a high of 44% (BJA, 2000). These inconsistencies in program completion suggested a need for further replication and exploration particularly focusing on convicted drunk driving. Unfortunately, our findings were not as encouraging as the Jones and Lacey (1999) drunk driving study. Our data revealed that approximately 30 percent of the offenders had at least one conviction after completing the DRC program and 13.7% had at least one post program conviction for drunk driving. Although not as high as 44% recidivism reported by the BJA (2000), our results were not as encouraging as we would have hoped. They do, however, suggest a need for further exploration, particularly expanding the number of offenders included in the study and extending the time period for analysis.

Additionally, a review of our data revealed that the majority of drunk driving offenders sentenced to the day reporting center were male, white, and over the age of 35. Unfortunately, we were not able to compare these findings to the general day reporting center population, nor the overall community-based corrections population. Further exploration of this group may be warranted. Overall, this study does fill a gap in the literature. There is a need for further exploration and future study.

LIMITATIONS

Although this research serves as a foundation for future exploration, there are three noteworthy limitations. First, the size of the population used in this analysis only totaled 51.

Because of the low number of participants it was impossible to conduct any predictive analysis that would allow the researchers to further explore the nature of any of the relationships. As mentioned in the previous section, future research needs to be conducted over a longer period of time to allow for a larger population size. In addition, by reviewing these data for longer periods of time, more meaningful recidivism data could be evaluated.

The second limitation of the present study dealt specifically with the recidivism data. In the state of Indiana, each county is responsible for maintaining its criminal history database. At this point, there is no centralized mechanism to allow the databases to communicate with one another. Therefore, in reviewing the criminal history records, the researchers must assume that the DRC participants never moved, nor did they get arrested for drunk driving or any other offense in another county or state. Obviously, this is most likely not the case. However, because of the lack of communication between systems it is impossible to determine to what extent this may be true. Future research projects should endeavor to further explore this phenomenon.

Data collection and record keeping were the third and final limitation. Over the past 10 to 15 years, most criminal justice agencies have strived to include technological advances within their agencies and across cities, counties, and states. With that technological advancement, however, comes some potential for error—both human and technological. A review of these data revealed some of those concerns with a paperless approach. There were originally 67 offenders identified for inclusion in this

studied. A review of the database revealed that incomplete information existed on 16 of the offenders. Therefore, they were excluded from the analysis. In most instances, incomplete data were a result of either not being logged into the computer or through human error on the data collection instrument. As with any criminal justice agency, this limitation was reflective of well intentioned, hard-working professionals who for whatever seemingly legitimate reason failed to record all of the information. There was no way to determine how those excluded offenders might have impacted the final analysis.

CONCLUSION

As society and politicians continue to focus attention on the serious ramifications of drunk driving and the increase in the punitive response of the criminal justice system, there is a need to explore alternatives to imprisonment. Placement in day reporting centers is one of those options.

As mentioned, previous research has examined the effective of the DRCs on other types of offenders but only one study examined the impact on convicted drunk drivers. Overall, this study adds to the current literature by examining the relationship between convicted drunk drivers placed in a day reporting center program. The findings from the present study reveal a few implications for future research. First, future research should seek to increase the number of offenders included in the assessment. This may be accomplished by extending the length of time studied to four or five years rather than two. Additionally, it is important to examine recidivism at various intervals such as six, twelve, and twenty-four months. This will allow for conclusions to be drawn on not only post-program recidivism but the length of time to failure. These findings may provide insight into how best to address the needs of the participants following their release from the program. Ideally, data should be collected from a system or statewide database that would allow the researchers to at least track recidivism within the state rather than just the county studied.

Second, additional studies should seek to compare the success rate of all offenders to convicted drunk drivers placed in day reporting center programs. These comparisons would allow researchers and policymakers to determine whether there is something unique about the drunk driving offender

population and ultimately their participation in a DRC program. This is especially critical for programs such as this one where treatment rather than stringent supervision is the primary goal.

Finally, although there were only two significant relationships identified (post-program recidivism and sex and age), there were several interesting findings that deserve closer inspection.

For instance, these findings did suggest that age and sex were related to outcome. Although the strength of these relationships was small, a larger sample might influence the findings. Another interesting issue was — how did prior placement in a DRC program impact the overall success as well as the length of time in the program. These were all issues that warrant further explanation but they were beyond the scope of this study.

The results from this study suggest that placing convicted drunk drivers in a DRC program may be a viable and effective alternative to imprisonment. Further longitudinal study is needed to examine the extent and specific impact of this alternative placement. There is a need to address the convicted drunk driving population in ways other than strict confinement.

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