



CRJ 523 Network Criminology: Social Capital and Resource Mobilization

Arizona State University

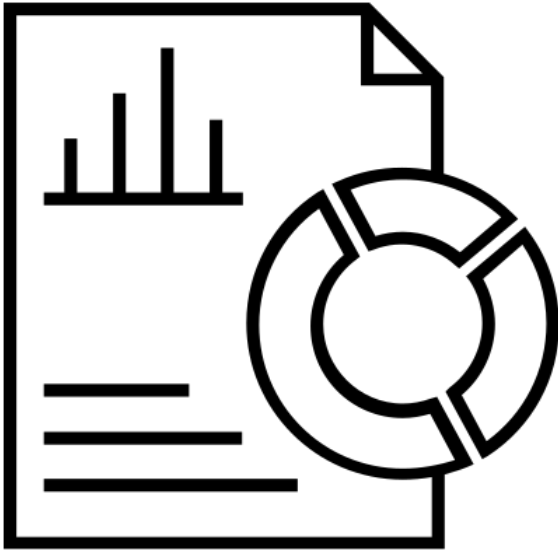
Olivia Shaw, M.S.

Eric Alarcon, B.S.

Noah Miller, B.S.



Overview



- **Purpose:**
 - The intention of this study was to examine why unemployment was rampant in poor urban black communities, specifically examining the activation of social capital (i.e., the function of network referrals)
- **Methods:**
 - Qualitative Analysis
 - Question of Network Theory:
 - Cooperation/Capitalization
 - Sample:
 - Midwestern City (unspecified)
 - 103 low-income African Americans (nearly 50/50 male to female)
 - Variables:
 - Social Capital
 - Individual properties, dyads, and communities of residence (concentrated disadvantaged and less disadvantaged)
- **Findings:**
 - Reputation, status, tie strength (dyad characteristic), social closure (willingness to mobilize ties), and concentrated disadvantaged communities were all found to be considerations prior to individuals making referrals

Benefits/ Significance (Smith, 2005)



- This study goes beyond the scope of previous literature
 - Previous research was concerned with employer discrimination or lack of substantial social ties to explain unemployment in black communities, suggesting there is an access issue
- Smith, implores that access is only one piece of the unemployment puzzle and that the activation of social capital (job-finding assistance) is a barrier as well
 - Black people are reluctant to assist others dependant on their reputation (laziness, unreliability, if they take the “street” to the job) in addition to previously mentioned individual characteristics
- Further demonstrates that the perception of risk is important as well
 - Individuals are reluctant to offer positions in fear that they be damaging their own reputations thus limiting potential promotions (or even resulting in the loss of the job)

Limitations (Smith, 2005)

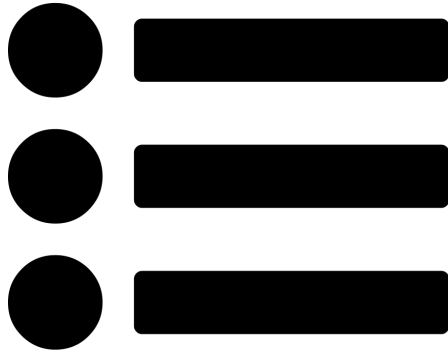


- The research only surveyed black residents of poor urban communities
 - This leads to question whether Smith's findings are a cultural phenomenon and therefore not generalizable to white residents or other differing racial/ethnic groups



Mentoring, Social Capital and Desistance (Brown, 2010)

Overview (Brown, 2010)



- **Question:**
 - To what extent could a mentoring process grounded in the precepts of intervention identified above address and ameliorate problems of low social capital?
- **Methods:**
 - Qualitative analysis
 - Setting:
 - Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO)
 - Participant selection:
 - Mentees-
 - Mentors- Through newspaper articles
 - Variables
 - Offender mentoring
 - Social capital
- **Results**
 - Improved access to social capital
 - Power imbalance

Benefits/ Significance (Brown, 2010)



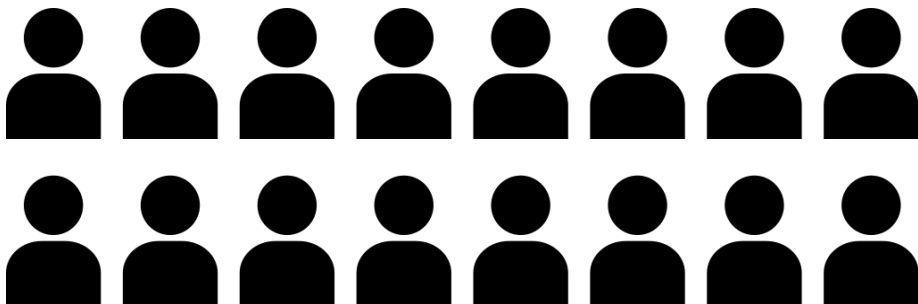
- **Practicality**

- SNA helps us move beyond the theoretical concept of social capital within neighborhood settings, to include analyses within less conventional settings (prisons)
- Moves away from the analysis of only juvenile populations
 - Informs contents of Life course Criminology
- The use of social network analysis provides important information about the needs and barriers specific to female offenders, a population that has largely been ignored both theoretically and methodologically by the field of criminology and criminal justice
 - In the end, such information can be used to amplify programs that strengthen mentoring partnerships for incarcerated females



Help or Hindrance: Female Probationers' Navigation of Supervision Requirements Through Personal Support Networks (Goodson, 2018)

Overview



Purpose

- This study wanted to take a look at how female offenders interact with their peers in their network. Everything from positive influences to negative influences.

Sample

- The sample consisted of 41 female felons. The qualitative data was collected by conducting semi-structured interviews with open ended questions.

The three goals of the study were

- Defining the characteristics of female offenders interactions with people within their network
- Characteristics of positive vs. negative network members
- Characterizing “most helpful” and “least helpful” network members

Findings

- A little under half of their network involved family members (47.94%) On average these women experienced frequent contact, strong relational closeness, moderate geographical closeness, and long relationships
- The most supportive people were Mother and siblings, But the least helpful were also family members because it was hard to detach from them. Most common type of support was transportation, financial assistance, emotional support
- Negative network members female, varied in age, shared relationships with participants that were 7 or more years in length, had previously been under correctional supervision, interacted infrequently with the participant, and were disproportionately comprised friends. Negative network members yielded a slightly higher average score of summed resource support.

Data

TABLE 1: Tie Characteristic Measures and Variable Values

Tie characteristic measure	1	2	3	4	5	6
Frequency of contact	<i>Less than monthly</i>	<i>About monthly</i>	<i>2 to 3 times per month</i>	<i>Weekly or about weekly</i>	<i>Daily or about daily</i>	—
Relationship closeness	<i>Very distant</i>	<i>Distant</i>	<i>Somewhat close</i>	<i>Close</i>	<i>Very close</i>	—
Geographical distance	<i>Different state</i>	<i>Same state</i>	<i>Within an hour of home</i>	<i>Same city</i>	<i>Same neighborhood</i>	<i>Same house</i>
Relationship length	<i>Weeks</i>	<i>Months</i>	<i>Less than a year</i>	<i>Several years</i>	<i>7 or more years</i>	—

Benefits



Value

- Goodson (2018), provides research in an area that is often understudied
- Many of the previous studies focused on male peer relationships.

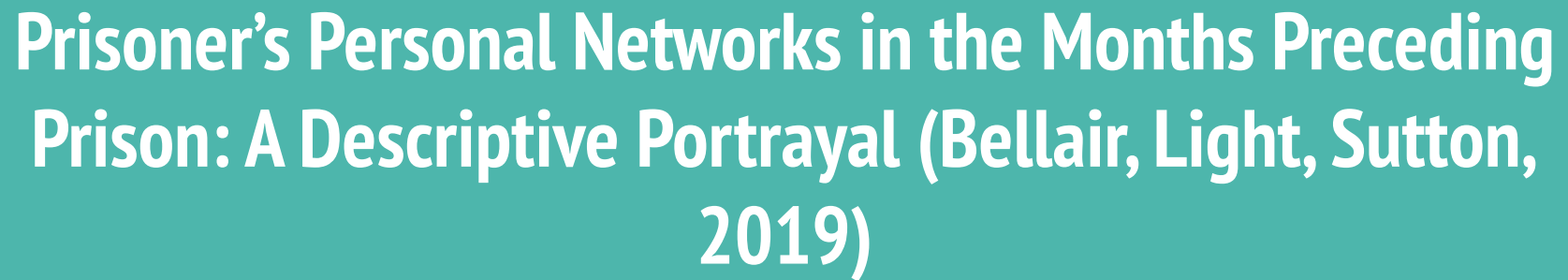
Support systems

- This study provides gendered differences in support systems when people get out of prison.
 - How strong of an affect family has on re-offending and compliance
- It also helps advance research on what are the more important things that someone needs to be successful when out of prison
 - Simple things such as car rides and emotional support go a long way

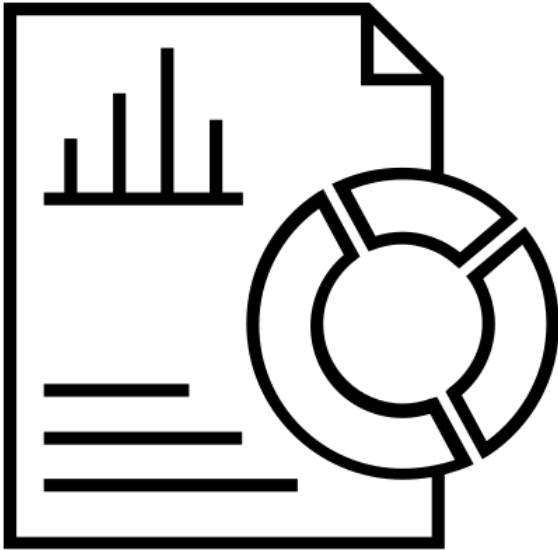
Limitations

- Some of the limitations of this study were that this study did not take into account contextual differences such as mental health
- The sample size was fairly small

Further research should focus and include multi-level modeling to predict type of resource accessibility



Overview



- **Purpose:**
 - Provide a “descriptive portrait” of a prisoners’ network size, density, the types of relationships (kin and non-kin), and the nature of said social ties (i.e., whether these networks (or alters) reinforce criminal behavior or are involved themselves)
- **Methods**
 - Descriptive Quantitative Analysis
 - Network Theory Question
 - Capitalization - focuses on social capital within networks
 - Sample:
 - Inmates in minimum and medium security prisons
 - Inmates must be between the age of 18 and 32 (age crime curve)
 - Variables:
 - Social Capital
 - Network Structure
- **Findings:**
 - Support networks are large, dense, and primary comprised of family members and romantic partners

Benefits/ Significance

Table 2. Negative Social Capital of Alters Within Total, Kin, and Nonkin Personal Network.

Panel A: Total network (n = 236)									
Proportion	Alter's prior criminal involvement			Alter crime opportunity			Perceived alter reinforcement		
	Ever gang	Ever prison	Ever arrest	Opportunity for crime	Crime with	Drugs with	Favor crime	Trust more	Encourage crime
0	210/88.6%	153/64.6%	61/25.7%	124/52.3%	170/71.7%	92/38.8%	221/93.2%	198/83.5%	180/75.9%
.01-.2	7/3.0%	22/9.3%	9/3.8%	14/5.9%	13/5.5%	10/4.2%	5/2.1%	10/4.2%	12/5.1%
.21-.4	15/6.3%	41/17.3%	64/26.2%	40/16.9%	32/13.5%	48/20.3%	8/3.4%	16/6.7%	28/11.8%
.41-.6	4/1.7%	16/6.8%	42/18.6%	26/11.0%	15/6.3%	38/16.0%	3/1.3%	7/3.0%	11/4.6%
.61-.8	1/0.4%	5/2.1%	37/15.6%	16/6.8%	5/2.1%	27/11.4%	0	1/0.4%	5/2.1%
.81-1.0	0	0	24/10.1%	17/7.2%	2/0.8%	22/9.3%	0	5/2.1%	1/0.4%
Panel B: Kin network (n = 208)									
Proportion	Alter's prior criminal involvement			Alter crime opportunity			Perceived alter reinforcement		
	Ever gang	Ever prison	Ever arrest	Opportunity for crime	Crime with	Drugs with	Favor crime	Trust more	Encourage crime
0	193/92.3%	143/68.4%	64/30.6%	131/62.7%	175/83.7%	110/52.6%	200/96.0%	186/89.0%	179/85.6%
.01-.2	2/1.0%	6/2.9%	2/1.0%	2/1.0%	3/1.4%	3/1.4%	1/0.5%	3/1.4%	3/1.4%
.21-.4	11/5.3%	31/14.8%	49/23.4%	29/13.9%	13/6.2%	30/14.4%	5/2.4%	10/4.8%	17/8.1%
.41-.6	2/1.0%	22/10.5%	40/19.1%	24/11.5%	15/7.2%	38/18.2%	3/1.4%	3/1.4%	6/2.9%
.61-.8	0	3/1.4%	24/11.5%	8/3.8%	2/1.0%	15/7.2%	0	3/1.4%	2/1.0%
.81-1.0	1/.05%	4/1.9%	30/14.4%	15/7.2%	1/0.5%	13/6.2%	0	4/1.9%	2/1.0%
Panel C: Nonkin network (n = 147)									
Proportion	Alter's prior criminal involvement			Alter crime opportunity			Perceived alter reinforcement		
	Ever gang	Ever prison	Ever arrest	Opportunity for crime	Crime with	Drugs with	Favor crime	Trust more	Encourage crime
0	131/88.5%	117/79.1%	69/46.6%	78/52.7%	102/68.9%	54/36.5%	141/95.3%	130/87.8%	110/74.3%
.01-.2	0	1/0.7%	1/0.7%	1/0.7%	3/2.0%	0	0	0	1/0.7%
.21-.4	3/2.0%	6/4.1%	6/4.1%	4/2.7%	4/2.7%	1/0.7%	2/1.4%	3/2.0%	4/2.7%
.41-.6	9/6.1%	11/7.4%	13/8.8%	16/10.8%	13/8.8%	17/11.5%	4/2.7%	6/4.1%	13/8.8%
.61-.8	1/0.7%	0	5/3.4%	6/4.1%	3/2.0%	7/4.7%	0	1/0.7%	5/3.4%
.81-1.0	4/2.7%	13/8.8%	54/36.5%	43/29.1%	23/15.5%	69/46.6%	1/0.7%	8/5.4%	15/10.0%

- Provides an analysis of an individual's social network prior to the incarceration
 - This allows for a retrospective glance as to why an individual may have been encouraged to engage in criminality and to evaluate whether such individuals are socially isolated (as prior research would suggest)
 - This may also allow policy makers to determine if services missed this potential offender or whether policies need to be implemented to provide support to such individuals
- Demonstrates that prisoners do have possess wide and dense social networks
- Showed that a majority of prisoners' networks comprise of at least one alter (node) with an arrest history
 - However, about 7% of the sample stated that at least one alter would view them favorably if they engaged in a crime

Limitations (Bellair, Light, Sutton, 2019)



- Strictly surveyed individuals in minimum or medium security prisons
 - Though this represented 70% of the ODRC (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction) it excludes offenses that constitute maximum security prisons
- Sampling frame consisted of ages between 18 and 32
 - The range was based on the age crime curve, however future research may be interested in the network of older inmates, especially considering that old inmates hold a higher social status within prison hierarchies (Kreager et al, 2017).
- Failed to receive extensive networks where the prisoners' prior to incarceration had criminal influences in networks (prisoners may not have included people in prison in their nonkin network and their networks were restricted to only five names)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Discussion Questions

- Bellair and others found in their sample that the overwhelming majority of its prison sample do not have a single node in their network that would be proud of them for committing a crime nor encourage them to commit crime (75% stated this was true). If it's not for social capital then what could be a reason some of these people chose to commit a crime?
- Bellair, Light, & Sutton (2019) did not survey those in maximum security prisons? If they did, is it reasonable to assume that the social networks of these prisoners would have been more socially isolated (without “important” social ties) or had more criminal influences?
- Is it reasonable to believe that Smith (2005) findings would be applicable regardless of ethnic/racial classifications?
 - Similarly, would this be applicable for people outside of concentrated disadvantaged communities? Do you think all people review an individual's reputation, and bond to that person to determine if they should mobilize their social capital? Is it more evident in lower-income communities or concentrated disadvantaged because the risk of hurting their own position is more severe?
- Goodson's research focused on female networks and support system. Would this study look the same if it was for males? Why or why not?
- Considering that family was the most helpful yet more hurtful part of the network, how does family structure play a role in helping/hurting an individual on probation/parole?

Discussion Questions (cont.)

- Brown (2010) spoke of mentoring as a way to increase social capital, what other forms of social capital may be pivotal to desistance from crime that were not addressed in the article?
 - Participation in programming? Educational/ vocational?
- A statement was made in the article that there has been some confusion about the efficacy of mentorship programs in the desistance process, after reading Brown's (2010) article, do you think that mentoring is beneficial in obtaining social capital and therefore contributes to the desistance process? Why or why not?
- How might social network analysis address the factor of race in the reentry process and the accumulation of social capital through mentorship?
- As previously incarcerated individuals leave prison, one factor that has dominated society is the entrenchment of technology. That being said, how might the concept of mentorship be re-invented with modes of technology? How might this increase or decrease the attainment of social capital?
- How might legitimacy affect the ability to form trust through mentoring and obtain social capital?