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Introduction

- ❖ In 2016, the United States had 2,162,000 individuals under some form of incarceration within correctional facilities (BJS, 2019; Here, 2019; OJP, 2019).
- ❖ With an incarceration rate of 665 per 100,000, the United States has the highest incarceration rate of any statistical reporting country on Earth (Initiative & Sawyer, 2019)
- ❖ Many of the people who are detained in the jail or prison system are incarcerated on low-level offenses or because they do not have the ability to post bail (OJP, 2019).
- ❖ From a moral and economic standpoint, there is a need to decrease the number of people incarcerated in the U.S.
- ❖ One method of accomplishing such a task is to assess the needs and risks associated with releasing offenders into the community. Such a procedure could also aid in the reduction of recidivism by helping to address the needs of those who are released (Baglivio, 2009).

Definitions

- ❖ **Recidivism** – after being released from incarceration, the rate at which an offender commits another crime and is either rearrested or reconvicted.
- ❖ **Incarceration** – the act of putting in prison or another enclosure.
- ❖ **Risk Assessment** – assessing the likelihood of future offending for the purpose of the identification of higher risk. Higher risk individuals are identified to refer them to intervention services (Haque, 2016) and/or to take other actions to reduce risk.

SAQ

- ❖ The **Self-Appraisal Questionnaire (SAQ)** is a self-administered measure consisting of 72 true/false questions which yield seven subscales.
- ❖ The SAQ total score places an offender in one of four categories from low to high risk for recidivism for both non-violent and violent behavior.
- ❖ High risk offenders were nine times more likely to experience violent recidivism as compare to offenders classified as low risk.
- ❖ Of the seven subscales, six are used for the prediction of recidivism and the seventh is used to measure an offender's anger levels (Mitchell, Caudy, & Mackenzie, 2012).
- ❖ Five of the 72 questions are used to attempt to detect deception.
- ❖ The SAQ was validated using 3700 American and 1000 Canadian adult male offenders (Andreu-Rodriguez, Peña-Fernandez, & Loza, 2016).

ORAS

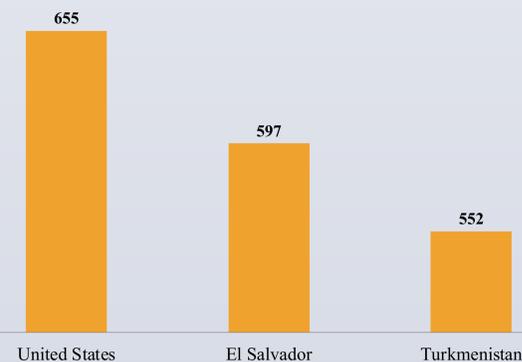
- ❖ The **Ohio Risk Assessment System** is a composite of five assessment instruments that are intended to measure recidivism risk for offender populations (Latessa et al., 2017).
- ❖ While within the justice system, the offender is assessed along the five following points: 1) pretrial, 2) community screening, 3) community supervision, 4) prison intake, and 5) prison re-entry.
- ❖ For low risk individuals an optional sixth screening tool is used.
- ❖ Creation of the ORAS was performed by performing face-to-face interviews and using questioners with 1,857 offenders concerning 200 possible risk factors of recidivism. Factors found to have the greatest association with recidivism within a specific subscale were kept (Latessa et al., 2017).

Advantages and Disadvantages

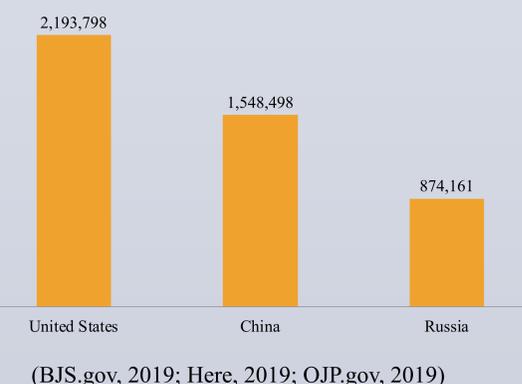
- ❖ Advantages of the SAQ include short administration time, group administration, resistance to deception, and ease of administration.
- ❖ Disadvantages include being validated using mainly male subjects and administration to individuals different from the standardization base (Léveillé, Marleau & Dubé, 2007)
- ❖ Advantages of the ORAS include being a structured assessment tool that can give detailed assessments of offenders at multiple times within the justice system.
- ❖ Disadvantages include high level of training and administrative cost needed for effective administration (Singh, Desmarais, & Dorn, 2013)

Data

Incarceration Rate Per 100,000 In 2016



Prison Populations in 2016



Discussion

- ❖ Assessment of offender needs and recidivism risk can be accomplished through unstructured and structured approaches.
- ❖ An assessor must take into account the depth of information needed, population to be assessed, and the budget allowed.
- ❖ Assessment gained through structured assessment instruments produce results with greater accuracy and reliability than those obtained with unstructured approaches (Singh, 2013).
- ❖ Although both the SAQ and the ORAS are useful tools in determining offender needs and risk of recidivism, both have limitations (Lovins et al., 2017).
- ❖ The SAQ and ORAS have limitations in predicting subclasses of recidivism and risk of recidivism for minority groups, female offenders, juveniles, and individuals diagnosed with mental illness (Haque, 2016).
- ❖ Additional validity and reliability studies on the aforementioned populations could help reduce such limitations (Singh, Desmarais, & Dorn, 2013).

References

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