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LIFE ON PAROLE: An Extended Investigation of how Pre-release and Post-Release Factors
Contribute to Desistence from Crime

by

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Abstract

Prevention of recidivism is the universally accepted goal of the New Zealand/ Aotearoa justice system, the nation's Department of Corrections, politicians and public ("Our vision goal and priorities reducing re-offending", New Zealand Department of Corrections, 2015). What can be done within prisons prior to release and then in the community post-release to reduce recidivism needs to be better understood. Parolees endure significant challenges when they transition back to their communities. Finding suitable accommodation, confirming stable employment, and maintaining prosocial support networks rate highly among these challenges (Bucklen & Zajac, 2009). While a high proportion of parolees fail to meet these challenges and recidivate soon after release, there are some who do not. Understanding the factors that enable those who avoid further convictions post-release is an important step in designing interventions and processes that might lead to higher a proportion of parolees similarly succeeding (Polaschek & Yesberg, 2016). Of equal importance is the need to understand the factors that increase parolees' risks of recidivating. Measures have been designed by researchers to understand first, how men prepare for, and conceptualise, their re-entries and second, how they then experience life on parole. The Release Plan Quality (RPQ) measure was designed to analyse prisoners' release plans and rate their quality on various metrics. Another measure, the Parole Experiences Measure (PEM) rates the quality of parolees' experiences during re-entry and transition (Wilson, Kilgour & Polaschek, 2013). This thesis examines the PEM and the RPQ in relation to four recidivism outcomes at one-year post-release, namely; conviction for breach of parole conditions, reconviction for new offending (excluding convictions for breach of parole), new convictions for violence offences and convictions leading to reimprisonment. Logistic regression analysis results indicated that PEM outcomes were more predictive of the four recidivism outcomes than the RPQ results. Better RPQ results did, however, predict better PEM results. PEM results (particularly PEM

results from the PEM external circumstances subscale) at the two-month mark post-release were found to best predict the four recidivism outcomes. This indicated that environmental issues external to the parolee such as employment and accommodation were more likely to impact risk of recidivism than internal, personal factors such as mental health and personal attitudes. The effectiveness of the PEM two-month results for predicting the four recidivism outcomes remained after controlling for possible confounding variables. This research suggests first, that parolees who have better release plans will have better experiences when on parole and second that parolees who have early positive experiences on parole particularly in relation to external factors such as employment and accommodation are somewhat more likely to remain crime-free post-release.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Governments of New Zealand/ Aotearoa ('NZA') and the people they represent demand diverse outcomes from their correctional services and institutions ('Corrections') (John & Marie, 2005). Most NZA citizens, however, have little to no contact with, or in-depth understanding of, the prison system (Ross & Richards, 2003). A lack of in-depth knowledge, however, in no way prevents many of us from having strongly held opinions on what should transpire within our penal system (Bennett, 2016; Pratt, 2008; Pratt & Clark, 2005).

Some see the NZA prison and parole systems as, first and foremost, institutions of rehabilitative reform. Others put punishment and deterrence before rehabilitation (Apel & Diller, 2017; Lee & McCrary, 2017). This retributive sentiment has, in recent decades, made significant inroads into the nation's psyche as waning public tolerance for crime and continuous media attention whets the collective thirst for punitive sentencing (Frost, 2010; Oleson, 2015). The mainstream political parties play their part in this process by being overtly willing to accommodate populist law and order tropes - especially during election years (Ward, Day & Casey, 2006). A third, perhaps more pragmatic view is that a successful prison is a well-managed caretaking facility that employs modest, empirically tested and attainable programmes that influence some of its residents to live more orderly lives post-release (Newbold, 2008; Porporino, 2010).

Despite the many, often irreconcilable, roles expected of Corrections, there is a common thread that binds the varied viewpoints. There is a degree of unanimity for the view that the sine qua non of all correctional interventions is to reduce future offending ("Our vision goal and priorities reducing re-offending", New Zealand Department of Corrections, 2015; Serin, Lloyd, Helmus, Derkzen, & Luong, 2013). In other words; those offenders who experience the corrections system should not do it repeatedly. This thesis hopes to add to the

extant knowledge on what works to reduce recidivism in NZA. It will look at how prisoners plan for their release with the aim of seeing if better quality planning has a role to play both in how men experience their parole and their risk of recidivating. The quality of planning and the quality of experiences on parole will be further analysed to see if there is any relationship with a range of recidivism outcomes examined at one-year post-release. With the view that the prime goal is to reduce recidivism, this introduction delves into the wider realm of what works in both prison and on parole to achieve this aim.

Politics: a constant influence on Corrections

Both recent National and Labour-led NZA coalition governments have committed to dramatic reductions in offending (“Evidence-based practice/reduced re-offending by 2017”, New Zealand Department of Corrections, 2015). In June 2012, the then National-led government introduced a system-wide plan within the justice sector to reduce criminal offending. Corrections’ part of the plan was to commit to reducing re-offending by 25 per cent by 2017. Four years later the Police Minister referred to figures that indicated reductions of 5.6% in reconvictions together with a then-record number of prisoners in NZA institutions (“Reoffending and Reintegration in Aotearoa New Zealand”, 2018).

The October 2017 change in the NZA government did not put an end to politicians suggesting that they have the policies and determination to lower offending rates. In the face of a new all-time record-high prison muster of 10457 (November 2017), the Labour-led coalition government pronounced that it would reduce recidivism by 30 per cent over fifteen years (“Andrew Little says he will reduce the prison population”, 2017). At least the new Minister of Justice, Andrew Little, acknowledged that the goal was ambitious. Considering that the Minister stated that “he had no plans to revisit the bail laws, switching the focus to crime prevention, prisoner rehabilitation, and rolling out more therapeutic courts, which can divert offenders away from jail and into treatment if they plead guilty” (“Government wants

to axe new prison and lower prison muster” 2017, November 5, para. 11), it seems unlikely that he will be any more successful than his predecessors in reaching these goals. This thesis, in contrast to the political approach noted above, intends to focus on a number of factors that display evidence for their efficacy in reducing recidivism.

Recidivism in New Zealand/ Aotearoa

Obviously, not all former prisoners will achieve the level of behavioural change that keeps them out of prison long-term. In reality, a significant proportion of high-risk parolees re-offend and are reinterred within months of release (Polaschek & Yesberg, 2016). Many manage to fall foul of the judicial system within weeks of release with approximately one-quarter of high-risk parolees find themselves reimprisoned within 12 weeks of release, with nearly half of them being locked up again within a year (Breetzke, Polaschek, & Curtis-Ham, 2019).

Some high-risk parolees, however, do better (Chamberlain, 2018). They serve their sentences and, post-release, manage their affairs in ways that do not expose themselves to ongoing involvement within the criminal justice system (Farrall & Calverley, 2005; Maruna, 2001). An interesting truism is that at some point in their lives, nearly all offenders, including those with the longest records, stop committing crime (Healy, 2017; Laub & Sampson, 2001; Wolfgang et al., 1972). It is tempting to suggest that offenders grow out of criminal behaviours as they mature but perhaps the more accurate observation is that not much is known in detail about why offenders stop offending in their own time (Healy, 2017; Wolfgang et al., 1972). With the intention of adding to our understanding of what increases parolees’ chances of success, this thesis examines a number of interventions (both pre and post-release) from the Parole Project dataset, that are hypothesised to be linked to the better outcomes for parolees. For the purposes of this thesis an intervention is considered to be any action taken with an offender that is carried out with the intention that it might benefit

that person in his attempts to live crime free. This means that such activities as release planning and the monitoring and rating of a parolee's experiences on parole are considered to be interventions (McGuire, 2001).

The literature reviewed for the thesis will touch on the aspects of release, re-entry and re-assimilation into the community where possible. It will also review research that addresses recidivism and measures taken to reduce recidivism in a more general scope. It is noted that for a subject that impinges directly on the lives of a worldwide prison population of more than 10 million, there is a relative paucity of research that directly addresses these questions ("More than 10.35 million people are in prison around the world, new report shows", World Prison Brief, 2016).

Issues with Past Research

Caveats apply to much of the research that is *prima facie* relevant to the matters addressed in this thesis. Not only is there relatively little applicable literature to consider, but the literature that does exist is often of limited value to the NZA prison/parole paradigm. Penal systems, and the communities they serve, differ significantly from nation to nation (Mears, Cochran & Cullen, 2015; "International Incarceration Comparisons", 2018), meaning that research conducted in say the United States will likely demonstrate poor reliability and validity when applied to NZA prison populations (Winfrey, Newbold & Tubb III, 2002). There will be significant variance in culture, demographics, penal processes and legislative approach that reduces the reliability and validity of any foreign-domiciled intervention (Mears, Cochran & Cullen, 2015; Monahan & Skeem, 2016). This issue is addressed in more detail later in this thesis.

In addition to the variance found between different national prison populations, there exists significant variance within individual populations (Taxman, 2014). From their personal experiences, parenting, education, culture and intelligence to the kinds of crime they

committed, the variance between offenders means that any general intervention programme is likely only going to be relevant to a small percentage of prisoners in any system (Taxman, Department of Corrections 2014). The need to tailor programmes to the offenders' specific needs is addressed later in this thesis.

The Unique New Zealand / Aotearoa Paradigm

NZA is a South Pacific island nation home first to Māori and then colonised by the British (Oliver & Williams, 1981). In 2018 Māori were a minority of the population but accounted for more than half of the penal muster (New Zealand Department of Corrections, 2018). These factors, inter alia, make for a unique NZA prison paradigm (Deane, Skogstad & Williams, 1999). In 2017 the prison population passed the 10,000-inmate mark for the first time ("Briefings: NZ prison population set to soar to 12,000", 2017). This equates to a nearly four-fold increase over the previous three decades and means that in terms of percentage of total population, we have the seventh largest prison population in the OECD (Beyond the Prison Gate, 2016; Statistics New Zealand, 2017). Māori representation in these statistics is also at historic highs. Māori represent about 15% of the population yet figures released in February 2017 stated that 56.3% of all prisoners identify as Māori (Beyond the Prison Gate, 2016). Māori fare badly both in the sentence type and, for custodial sentences, length of sentence (Beyond the Prison Gate, 2016; "How to cut the prison population by 50% in five years", 2018). A Māori convicted of a crime has seven times the likelihood of being imprisoned when compared to a Pākehā who has committed a similar offence, and he is 11 times as likely to be held without bail as the similarly charged Pākehā (Carr, 2017). Were Māori to be imprisoned at Pākehā levels, the total NZA prison population would be less than 5000 ("How to cut the prison population by 50% in five years", 2018). Any research focussed on rehabilitation and recidivism in NZA must address these issues. As psychologists conducting research on a population that consists of a majority of Māori men, we are under

various ethical obligations to consider the unique position Māori have in the NZA community of peoples. An example of these ethical obligations is detailed in clause 1.3.1 of the New Zealand Psychologists Board code of ethics which states:

“Psychologists, individually and collectively, seek to be informed about the meaning and implications of the Treaty of Waitangi for their work. This includes an understanding of the principles of protection, participation and partnership with Māori.” (New Zealand Psychologists Board, 2012).

The status of NZA as a bicultural nation, and the growing recognition of the importance of the Treaty of Waitangi in how Maori are treated in NZA, are further examples of the unique NZA corrections paradigm (Treaty of Waitangi, 1840). With these matters in mind, some of the more relevant literature is discussed below.

Chapter 2: Literature

The literature review covers the essential elements of the research this thesis describes. The current state of research into what works both before and after release is one focus of this review. The value of planning for release and the importance of how people experience their parole is a second focus, especially in relation to how these factors relate to recidivism.

Interventions Prior to Release

Research from multiple countries indicates that participants who complete scientifically planned programmes specifically tailored to their particular risk profiles offend less frequently post-release than comparable non-participant prisoners. Various other programmes such as vocational training and violence reduction programmes also contribute to a lower risk profile on release (Aos, Miller & Drake, 2006; Polaschek, 2011).

One in-depth study driven by the bureaucratic desire to reduce the need (and therefore the cost) of building new prisons in the state of Washington, USA, systematically reviewed 571 control-group paired studies across both adult and juvenile correctional situations (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006). These studies occurred over a period of more than forty years. Nearly all of them were from English speaking populations and most were domiciled in North America. The goal was to use available evidence-based research to answer the deceptively simple question ‘what had been tried, that had worked, to reduce crime’ (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006, p.63). Each programme was examined not just for success or failure but also for the level of statistical improvement each demonstrated (Drake, Aos, & Miller, 2009).

Graduates of the various programmes had their criminal records re-examined (without their knowledge) 13 years after their participation. Changes in offending for the adult programmes ranged from a 5.9% increase in committed offences to a 20.0% decrease. On

average, adult offending dropped from 64% to 59% which equated to a programme-wide 6.3 % reduction. Programmes initiated within the prison before release and programmes commenced within communities after release were both shown to have, on average, a positive effect (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Drake, Aos, & Miller, 2009).

In seeking to reduce Washington State's future prison construction bill, these authors reported that prisoners who participated in, and completed, cognitive behavioural treatment programs were the most likely to show decreased recidivism rates (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006). The Washington study, and similar literature, suggest that well-designed interventions can reduce the risk of reoffending for the graduates of such programmes (Harland, 1995; Losel, 1995; McGuire, 1995). The more successful programmes tended to identify a subset of offenders and tailor the intervention to their specific risk profile. This approach to treatment has been developed further into the Risk Needs Responsivity design for intervening with offenders and this is discussed in more detail below (Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, 2006; Polaschek, 2011).

Risk Needs Responsivity. Most NZA interventions target prisoners deemed to be high-risk for reoffending, conviction and reimprisonment (Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, 2006; Polaschek, 2011). These interventions and programmes adopt Andrews, Gendreau and Bonta's risk, need, and responsivity approach (RNR), a process accepted by many western nations, including NZA, over the last three decades.

The essential RNR principles are:

1. Programmes target the higher risk categories of offenders;
2. Programmes target identifiable risk factors; and
3. Programmes enable prisoners to use their existing skills to engage with, and respond to, the programme (Bonta, & Andrews, 2007).

Interventions structured upon the risk, need, and responsivity principles have demonstrated favourable effect size in reducing recidivism (Andrews et al., 1990; Harland, 1995; Losel, 1995; McGuire, 1995).

The risk principle. The risk principle says it is best to treat those who pose a high risk of reoffending rather than those with low-risk profiles. Research supports the efficacy of the risk principle (Lowenkamp, Latessa & Holsinger, 2006). Similarly, research has shown that targeting low-risk individuals can be harmful and counterproductive to the aim of reducing recidivism. In other words, targeting low-risk men can actually raise their likelihood of reoffending in the future. (Lipsey & Wilson, 1998).

The need principle. This principle dictates that the individual's unique criminogenic characteristics need to be identified and addressed. Criminogenic characteristics can include the propensity to associate with criminals or gangs, substance abuse problems and violent or abusive modes of addressing social conflict (Goldstein, 1993). Reducing these factors has shown to reduce risk of reoffending in NZA (Polaschek, 2011).

The responsivity principle. This principle says an intervention will be most effective when it is designed to match the individual's personal criminogenic paradigm. Intelligence, culture, motivation, commitment to change are among the many and varied factors that come together in a unique pastiche for each parolee (Bonta & Andrews, 2007).

Interventions developed broadly in accordance with these three remits have shown success in reducing reoffending (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Hollin & Palmer, 2006).

Despite successes, there exist subsets of prisoners within the wider prisoner population about whom little is known, and for whom successful interventions are consistently hard to design (Polaschek, 2011). Violent male offenders who maintain high-risk levels for both violence and other criminality is one such group (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Polaschek 2011; Polaschek & Collie, 2004).

Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy. If RNR is the go-to model for assessing prisoners and identifying their relevant and specific criminogenic needs (with a view to designing appropriately matching interventions), then cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) has become, perhaps, the go-to theory of psychological therapeutic intervention (Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005). A number of authors have delivered research results that suggest CBT is the most effective psychological rationale on which to design interventions aimed at reducing recidivism. Dr Paul Gendreau, one of the original developers of RNR wrote “when it comes to reducing offender recidivism, the only game in town, is appropriate cognitive-behavioural treatment which embodies known principles of effective intervention” (Gendreau, Goggin, Cullen, & Andrews, 2000, May 2001. p.11). A corollary to Gendreau’s high praise for CBT is the developing understanding that programmes based solely on experience, intuition or good intentions rarely realise positive results (Aos, Miller, & Drake 2006; Lipsey & Cullen, 2007).

NZA Anti-Recidivism CBT. Intensive treatment programmes designed on CBT principals first appeared in NZA prisons in 1989 with the Kia Marama programme (Hudson, Wales & Ward, 1998). The Rimutaka Violence Prevention Unit (RPVU) established in 1998 (and now named Te Whare Manaakitanga, Polaschek, 2009) is an example of programmes that came later and were designed to treat violent male offenders (Polaschek, Calvert & Gannon, 2009; Polaschek, Wilson, Townsend & Daly, 2005).

The RPVU enrolled 112 medium to high-risk prisoners in its first study. These participants were matched to prisoners in a 112-person non-participant control group. The research group partook in 330 hours of various interventions over an eight-month period. Classes were two to three hours long and scheduled four times each week. As well as these intensive classes, the participants were involved in a range of routine prison activities including general education courses, fitness regimes, and cultural programmes. Results were

modest but statistically significant. Three and half years (on average) after release 10 to 12 per cent fewer RPVU graduates had been convicted for another violent crime when compared to the non-participant control group (Polaschek, 2011).

Another NZA home-grown intervention known as the Montgomery House Programme (MHP) began in 1987. Directed at high-risk violent male offenders this programme employed social learning theory, an early precursor to CBT (Berry, 1999). Social learning theory holds that people's behaviour, to a degree, is acquired from those with whom they interact (Rosenstock, Strecher & Becker, 1988). In recognition of this tenet, the MHP residential offender treatment programme proactively fostered a culturally safe environment for Māori participants (non-Māori also participated) by incorporating tikanga and other traditional Māori knowledge systems and protocols consistent with social learning theory. Subjects included anger management, literacy and education, communication skills and drug and alcohol coping skills (Berry, 1999).

Although the programme was studied for efficacy several times, it was not until Behrens' 1996 study that a robust evaluation with a matched risk control group was employed. Nearly six years after treatment, Behrens' study concluded that participants in MHP were statistically indistinguishable from the matched control group on a range of measures pertaining to post-release recidivism (Berry, 1999). In a later, supposedly better-resourced evaluation of MHP, Berry, (2003) found that six years' post-treatment 58% of the treatment group had received new convictions for violent crime compared to 78% of the non-treatment control group. A twenty per cent improvement in this field is considered an excellent result (Berry, 2003).

A Success. Terrill, Robertson and Lammers, (2014), conducted research with adult male Māori inmates considered to be at high risk of recidivism. Their goal was, inter alia, to see how these men responded to the intensive in-prison rehabilitation programme known as

the Special Treatment Unit Rehabilitation Programme or “STURP” (Terrill, Robertson & Lammers, 2014). The RVPU was the forerunner to the STURP. Eventually four STURPs were established at different prisons around NZA (Department of Corrections, 2018).

STURP delivers intensive, group-based criminogenic CBT and Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) based treatment to males assessed to be at high risk of violent reoffending (Kilgour & Polaschek, 2012). It is a live-in, full-time programme that lasts nine months. Corrections calls STURP cohorts ‘communities of change’ (Department of Corrections, 2009). Corrections says this about the programme:

“The Special Treatment Unit Rehabilitation Programme (STURP) is based on best practice principles in the correctional and psychological fields. It aims to address the complex offence-focused needs of male offenders with a high risk of general and violent re-offending. These units aim to provide living environments which, within custodial requirements, reflect and enhance the goals of the specialised rehabilitation programmes provided. The units require a high level of collaboration between custodial and programme staff to create a pro-social non-offending environment (Lucy King, personal communication, Oct, 2011)”.

The communal focus extends to both staff and inmates. The underlying rationale is to encourage participants to value their role in a functional community and to make decisions based on what might benefit the community. Participants must actively participate in all aspects of the process. The programme is available to prisoners over the age of 20, serving two years or more and deemed to be of high-risk of future reimprisonment. Their offending must include a violence conviction (Kilgour & Polaschek, 2012).

Recognising the overrepresentation of Māori in the treatment groups, STURP has a strong focus on Māori offending. Each of the six component learning modules focuses on a

tikanga Māori concept such as whakawhānaungatanga, (introduction and connections) and te taha whanau (building and valuing relational skills). The last of the modules is mai ki te po Table 1.

Recidivism improvement percentages at one-year post-release of 12 programmes operating in NZA prisons in 2015.

	Percentage-point reduction in Reconviction rate (12-mnth follow-up)
Special Treatment Unit Rehabilitation programme (STURP)	-17.1%
Special Treatment Unit – Child Sex Offender prog	-4.1%
Medium Intensity Rehabilitation programme	-4.2%
Young Offenders programme	-6.7%
Drug Treatment Unit programme (3 months)	-5.0%
Drug Treatment Unit programme (6 months)	-4.8%

Short Motivational programme	-5.7%
Trade & technical training	-5.0%
Employment-related training	-4.9%
Short gains	-3.8%
Release to Work	-4.2%
Out of Gate	-5.2%

(Beyond the Prison Gate, 2016).

ki te ao mārama – ‘from the world of darkness to the world of light’” (Department of Corrections, 2006).

Upon completion of the STURP, graduates participate in post-treatment assessments and attend a skills maintenance group (Kilgour & Polaschek, 2012).

The recidivism rates of STURP graduates are encouraging. In one study, a sample of 111 graduates was matched to comparable controls and examined for statistical difference in reoffending post-release. After six months the graduates showed a 14% reduction in offending compared to the controls. At 12 months the non-imprisonment improvement was at 9.2 % (Dickson, 2014).

Successful programmes, however, are few and far between. From 11 of 12 programmes operating in 2015, statistical improvements in recidivism fell between four and six per cent. The twelfth, the STURP, showed a reduction in reoffending of 17 per cent. The results appear in table 1.

Reintegration Strategy Missing. Commentators regularly point out that NZ Dept of Corrections does not have a well-developed release and integration strategy.

“In 2015, Corrections spent \$169 million on rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, but only about \$10 million of this went into reintegration. That means \$159 million was spent on rehabilitation. This is almost a total waste of taxpayer’s money if the Department does not have a realistic, financially supported reintegration strategy. It didn’t have one in 2011. Five years later, it still doesn’t have one.” (Eleven of the twelve prison rehabilitation programmes, 2016).

Post- Release Interventions

Success and Cost-effectiveness. The quality of experiences (and interventions) while on parole and the connection, if any, of these experiences to recidivism is important to this thesis. The literature posits a line of research that suggests post-release interventions meet the definitions of success and cost-effectiveness better than pre-release interventions (Andrews et al., 1990; Lipsey & Wilson, 1998). The literature also suggests that post-release interventions work better than pre-release efforts at reducing recidivism (Andrews et al., 1990; Lipsey & Wilson, 1998).

“Of all the factors that influence public safety, correctional service providers in collaboration with releasing authorities can affect the safe release of offenders into the community. There is solid evidence supporting the premise that the gradual and structured release of offenders is the safest strategy for the protection of society against new offences by released offenders” (Quinsey, Harris, Rice & Cormier, 2005, p.18).

Planned and assisted assimilation back into the wider community prepares offenders for the usually daunting responsibility of feeding, clothing and housing themselves. Ongoing support and monitoring after release are factors that play an important part in developing high rates of successful reintegration and lower reoffending rates (Harman & Hann, 1986).

Barriers to Post-Release Interventions. If financial, professional, and community resources dedicated to prisoners at release and during their re-integration into the community is the most efficacious in terms of reduced reoffending and return on investment, then why does this approach not take centre stage in battling recidivism? It is not difficult to hypothesise why governments will not establish comprehensive post-release reintegration plans. Post-release programmes demand significant resources to monitor and respond to known risk factors (Altschuler & Brash, 2004). Some researchers suggest that the process should be taken even further with suitably trained professionals providing guidance with life goals, aspirations, and planning post-release (Seiter & Kadela, 2003). Any initiative that gave offenders reasonable housing, guaranteed employment with income sufficient to live safely (as well as free ‘life-coach’ counselling) when released from prison would likely be political strychnine (“Sensible sentencing encompasses two very distinct trusts and purposes”, 2018; Pratt, 2008; Pratt & Clark, 2005).

The Sensible Sentencing Trust (SST), victims and the organisations that represent them would see such comprehensive support as a reward for criminal behaviour. They would rightly point out that many people in NZA struggle to feed, clothe and house their families (Gibson et al., 2017; “Sensible sentencing encompasses two very distinct trusts and purposes”, 2018). Many face these difficulties without ever falling foul of the law and these people might understandably find it difficult to comprehend why significant resources found their way to those who had (Stephens, Waldegrave, & Frater, 1995). The entire NZA social welfare system would need reinvention to adequately address the genuine needs of struggling law-abiding citizens before prisoners were, as a matter of course, released into safe, well-funded comprehensive programmes as described above (Boston, Dalziel, & John, 1999).

Culture – Māori in the System

Māori occupy a special place in the context of the NZA community (Byers, 2002; Humpage, 2006). This special status is recognised in both the Treaty of Waitangi and recent legislation (Treaty of Waitangi, 1840; Kingi, 2007). The deference to culture and whanau in the New Zealand Sentencing Act 2002 legislation is one of many recent developments in response to the significant overrepresentation of Māori in corrective custody. This act of government states in part:

“S.8 Principles of sentencing or otherwise dealing with offenders

- (i) must take into account the offender’s personal, family, whanau, community, and cultural background in imposing a sentence or other means of dealing with the offender with a partly or wholly rehabilitative purpose” (New Zealand Sentencing Act, 2002 s. 8).

There exists a raft of research and recorded korero that addresses the problem of Māori overrepresentation in the penal system. Some commentators such as Roberts (2003) maintain that rehabilitation is largely impossible without understanding and incorporating the offender’s cultural mores into the programme’s design. This, however, is not an unanimously endorsed approach (Marie, 2010; Roberts, 2003). Marie, 2010, for example, stated that there is no evidence to support NZA’s Department of Corrections’ theory that “Māori offending and overrepresentation in prison is the predictable fallout of Māori culture suffering an existential impairment from European colonisation” (Marie, 2010, p. 283). She points out too, that this approach has not yet lowered Māori conviction or incarceration levels – despite its years of favour. A danger with the cultural empowerment movement, she says, is that offenders might interpret the information in a way that allows them to shift responsibility for their actions to external factors. This, says Marie, can result in offenders

developing an unwarranted sense of entitlement which could negatively interfere with realistic intervention programmes (Marie, 2010).

The opposing, and presently favoured view is that culture is at the very centre of rehabilitation and the prevention of reoffending. The importance of culture is now reflected at every level of the NZA corrections system (Tipa, 2007). Language, history and traditional Māori knowledge (mātauranga) programmes now exist within NZA prisons. This process extends beyond the prison environment with Corrections approaching Māori communities to seek their advice and input (Tipa, 2007).

Transition is Important and Difficult

The transition period is central to this thesis. Release plans are developed in the weeks prior to release – a time that can be considered to be part of the transition. The quality of the release plan and the individual's quality of life experiences after release will become two of the factors examined in relation to the various 12-month post-release recidivism outcomes.

Well-designed interventions in the first month's post-release have been shown by past research to be effective in reducing reoffending (Opie, 2012). Opie, 2012, and other researchers have shown that helping with accommodation, employment and the other challenges faced by parolees is perhaps the best way to reduce many of the pressures and stresses that accompany release and lead to recidivism. Lack of housing, money to feed and clothe oneself, fears of unemployment and accessing health care featured as common worries for the newly released and, her research shows, all of these factors contributed to decisions to re-offend. In addition to the stress caused by needing to find the basics like food, clothing and shelter there were additional serious stressors in the form of the isolation, marginalisation and the loneliness many prisoners face upon release. The lack of solid relations with friends, and whanau and the difficulty of re-establishing these contacts or establishing worthwhile new relations plays into this difficult milieu as well (Opie, 2012).

Programmes that addressed these stressors were considered best by ex-prisoners. For example, the 'release for work' programmes enabled prisoners to gain some financial stability and to learn how to handle everyday activities like cooking, budgeting and work attendance. These skills could be developed with the prison institution taking care of the extremely important and risk-fraught accommodation element. Programmes that allowed the prisoners to develop work skills led to 'a sense of self-esteem and self-worth, security, respect, trust in others and, critically, a sense of hope for their futures' (Opie, 2012, p.93).

Not all researchers agree with RNR approaches to treatment. Corrections in NZA is, according to Opie 'dominated by practices of risk assessment, security, monitoring and compliance. These approaches begin in the prison – for example, by demanding completion of 'psychological programmes focused on identifying causes of their offending' (Opie, 2012, p.81). Opie concludes by maintaining that the programmes and approaches on offer are far too general in scope, humiliating for prisoners and exclusionary of family/whanau.

Opie is also critical of a corrections service that pays slavish respect to psychological research, but which ignores desistance processes and programmes developed within the social sciences. 'In doing so, they have weakened their ability to critically appraise the research that falls within their boundaries and they miss the key aspects of 'situation, context and structure' that encompass real-life experiences' (Opie, 2012, p.106).

Release to One Hundred Days Post-Release – Release Plan Preparation

The period that is of particular interest to this thesis covers the weeks prior to release through to 100 days post-release. This period is central to understanding why some parolees succeed and others do not. Newly released parolees face a stressful and complicated process readjusting to a world where they must take responsibility for every aspect of their lives. Compounding difficulties arise for those who possess close to nothing in the way of resources upon release. Unfortunately, this is a state of affairs common to many parolees.

Those first weeks on parole can be traumatic for many offenders, especially those that cannot return to a stable home. Research shows those that those who face unstable living situations are highly likely to re-offend (Burnett, 2010).

In anticipation of release, many prisoners in NZA prepare release plans as their parole date approaches. Research shows that parolees with better quality release plans are less likely to offend within that 100-day period than those with less comprehensive plans (Richards, 2016). The quality of any release plan, however, is dependent upon the circumstances the parolee faces on release. Those individuals that have no home, employment or family assistance waiting for them on the outside will be seriously restricted as to how comprehensive they can make their plan (Polaschek, Yesberg, & Chauhan, 2018).

Release Plan Quality Protocol (RPQ)

The RPQ was created to rate parolee's plans for their likelihood of facilitating successful re-entry into the community. The coding protocol assesses the quality and comprehensiveness of parolees' plans across five domains namely: accommodation, employment, prosocial support, antisocial associates, and idiosyncratic risk management strategies (Willis & Grace, 2008). The literature on these factors is considered below.

Accommodation

A safe and dependable abode is considered the "the lynchpin that holds the reintegration process together" (Bradley, Oliver, Richardson, & Slayter, 2001, p. 1). Without safe and reliable accommodation, a parolee will face a more stressful re-entry and will be significantly more likely to re-offend than those who have a safe place to stay. O'Leary, et al (2013) suggest that parolees who had safe and adequate accommodation on release were as much as 20 per cent less likely to re-offend (Hammett, Roberts & Kennedy, 2001; Metraux & Culhane, 2004). A place to live is more than simply a place where a parolee can sleep at night. Suitable accommodation means a place where the parolee can set up home without

fear of being asked to leave or being evicted for any number of reasons (Lutze, Rosky, & Hamilton, 2014). New Zealand has, in 2019, a shortage of housing (Saville-Smith & Saville-Smith, 2018). Shortage drives rental prices up and availability down. The current shortage of public housing in NZA makes this problem even more acute for parolees who would not figure at the top of most landlords' list of desired tenants (Graffam, Shinkfield, Lavelle & McPherson, 2004). Those providers who do accept tenants with extensive criminal records are perhaps offering accommodation that is unsuitable due to its proximity to high crime areas (Evans, Blount-Hill & Cubellis, 2018). A result of this is that many parolees will seek to live with family members on release (Robson, 2015). Living with family or friends is not always an option, however. Some offenders are released on parole conditions that specifically prevent them from residing near victims - a group that often includes family and acquaintances. Sometimes family cannot meet their own needs satisfactorily let alone those of another person newly released from prison. A simple lack of the necessary resources is another reason that parolees may be unwelcome with friends and family (Baldry, McDonnell, Maplestone, & Peeters, 2002; Pogrebin, West-Smith, Walker, & Unnithan, 2014; Roman & Travis, 2004; Visser & Travis, 2003).

Some nations have invested heavily in halfway housing. Canada for example, which has a significantly lower recidivism rate than NZA, has over 400 tax-funded halfway house facilities (Bell & Trevethan, 2004). In NZA halfway houses usually exist in a less formal way. Such accommodation is normally the domain of private faith-based initiatives, and are of inconsistent quality (Conradson, 2008).

The Grace Foundation is an example of an NZA half-way house programme. From 2007, it has grown to offer 21 accommodation units in the South Auckland. This foundation combines the provision of accommodation with health services and education and employment initiatives (Grace Foundation Charitable Trust, n.d). Most of the foundation's

residents come from prisons in the Auckland region. Others seeking shelter there tend to be from marginalised groups such as the homeless and victims of domestic abuse (Mortimore, 2016).

Other providers of halfway housing may be driven by profit motives. Investors in bottom tier rental properties can be guaranteed a constant flow of rent-guaranteed tenants if they become a recognised halfway house (Johnson Listwan, Colvin, Hanley & Flannery, 2010; Yeboah, 2000).

Employment

After finding a place to stay, a job is frequently viewed as the next most important goal for the new parolee and, just as finding a new home is hard, so too is getting a job. Finding employment has, in various studies, been shown to be predictive of ongoing offence-free behaviour (Shinkfield & Graffam, 2009; Zamble & Quinsey, 1997).

A majority of those who have a history of offending are unemployed when they commit their crimes. Those who have a job to go to after being released are twice as likely as the unemployed to stay crime free (Borzycki, 2005; Bahr et al., 2005).

The hurdles facing parolees when seeking employment are legion (Webster, Hedderman, Turnbull, & May, 2001). The process alone is stressful to the point that many will not even try. A ubiquitous question in employment questionnaires and applications is “do you have a criminal record? If yes, then provide details below” (Fletcher, 2001). It is hard to be overly critical of employers for choosing the conviction-free applicant over someone with a significant record or a person who has recently been imprisoned (Holzer, Raphael & Stoll, 2006).

Parolees often have no qualifications or skills. Nor do they usually have many relationships with people that are fully employed and who might have connections that lead to job referrals (Webster, Hedderman, Turnbull, & May, 2001). When this is compounded

with poor social and communication skills and low self-esteem, low motivation to proactively seek employment is a common result (Graffam et al., 2004; Webster, Hedderman, Turnbull, & May, 2001).

These difficulties do not mean that it is impossible for parolees to find employment. The kind of jobs realistically available, however, often exacerbate many of the issues parolees face upon release (Webster, Hedderman, Turnbull, & May, 2001). Low wages, part-time or shift-work jobs often fail to cover the bills. They are also the kinds of jobs that no one else wants and are unlikely to be precursors to a meaningful career. These jobs may also put the parolee in constant contact with co-workers who themselves are parolees. Low motivation to stay in such employment is an obvious outcome as is the temptation to return to significantly more lucrative criminal activity (Newbold, 2016).

The choice to return to criminal activities may seem all the more worthwhile when the parolee's actual skill set is examined. Many have skills and contacts that make criminal activities far more financially rewarding than low-paid wage work (Newbold, 2016). Dealing drugs, manufacturing drugs, burglary and fencing stolen goods are examples. In addition to the significantly higher financial rewards, the individual has a certain personal agency in such activities. In other words, they are self-employed and in charge of their own destiny until they are caught and convicted. They also do not see any of their pecuniary rewards diverted to the IRD, ACC or court fines (Borzycki, 2005; Newbold, 2016).

Social Support

Social support from the community into which a parolee is released is important in developing an environment in which reoffending is less likely (La Vigne, Naser, Brooks & Castro, 2005). Such support takes many forms. Practical support like giving a newly paroled person some basic household items is something that will make a difference. The less immediately obvious value of positive human interactions and other forms of emotional

support should not be underestimated (Bales & Mears, 2008; Jiang & Winfree, 2006). An alternative to enjoying this kind of pro-social support is for a parolee to embed himself with other offenders and anti-social acquaintances. The risk of reoffending rises significantly when this option is chosen (Mills, Kroner & Hemmati, 2004). There exist a number of other hurdles to obtaining social support upon release. Stigmatization, discrimination as well as fear, lack of confidence and isolation and a range of similar factors make accessing social support difficult (Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006; Horney, Osgood, & Marshall, 1995; Laub & Sampson, 2001; Visher & Travis, 2003).

Family input is important. At nearly every important juncture within a working release plan, family input can be the difference between success and failure (Baldry et al., 2003). From an abode to immediate financial support for expenses and even employment opportunities, helpful family can be the most important resource (Bahr et al., 2005; Hepburn & Griffin, 2004; Shapiro & Schwartz, 2001; Sullivan, Mino, Nelson, & Pope, 2002).

Unfortunately, family support that, as noted above, can be so valuable to a successful re-entry often gets withdrawn if it was there anyway. The levels of desire, ability and commitment to helping a parolee rarely remain constant. Conflict, financial stress, and a growing sense of being impinged upon can all hasten the collapse of whanau support (Christian, Mellow & Thomas, 2006).

Frequently, family members remain involved in criminal activities or are themselves imprisoned (Beddoe, 2014). Many have substance abuse problems which makes quitting very difficult for the parolee living in the user's environs. In fact, social support from family living these lifestyles may ultimately be detrimental to a parolee seeking to live a crime-free life. Parolees facing these issues "can experience significant loneliness and boredom as they attempt to avoid former antisocial peers" (Richards, 2016, p.21).

Although newly paroled prisoners usually need social support from friends and family, it is common for feelings of stigma and exclusion to get in the way of making a request for help. Also, parolees are frequently prevented by parole conditions from returning to the locales where this kind of support is likely to be found (Clear, Rose, & Ryder, 2001; Richards, 2016).

Personal Factors

High-risk offenders are often saddled with a range of personal attributes that make forging a more normal life outside prison difficult. Mental health issues, physical disabilities, literacy deficiencies and associated learning issues and chronic disease are more common amongst those who have been imprisoned than those who have not (Fletcher, 2001; Makkai & Payne, 2003). Similarly, drug and alcohol dependence are more prevalent in this group - a problem that complicates and often worsens poor anger management skills and emotion regulation (Hammett et al., 2001; Mallik-Kane & Visser, 2008). Problems with coping with anger and stress are common amongst those who have been imprisoned. This, combined with the various other complications they face, makes establishing a home, maintaining a job and developing worthwhile relationships even more difficult (Hammett et al., 2001; Mallik-Kane & Visser, 2008).

Nature of Parole

Parole is the medium of supervision that is intended to assist releasees to re-join society. The research on this subject, however, suggests that parole in the form of a basic monitoring service does little to reduce reoffending (Richards, 2016; Bonta, Rugge, Scott, Bourgon, & Yessine, 2008).

Current thinking suggests that parole supervision must be more than a watchdog service that monitors for parole breach or new offending. This research suggests that parole supervision is more effective when it embodies elements of proactive assistance (Kennealy,

Skeem, Eno Loudon, & Manchak, 2011; McNeill et al., 2012; Robinson, VanBenschoten, Alexander, & Lowenkamp, 2011).

Parole as a form of intervention

A parole service that is actively invested in the parolee's success can be a powerful form of intervention that can reduce risk of recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Bonta et al., 2011). In accordance with the precepts of risk, needs and responsivity, parole officers manage the nature and levels of supervision in response to each offender's risk profile. They should also establish working relationships with offenders by attending to each parolee's, personal criminogenic needs (Yesberg & Polaschek, 2015).

Every person in NZA who receives a two-year or longer prison sentence faces a period of parole supervision. For such offenders the minimum period of parole is six months while the maximum can extend to the length of the individual's life for certain offences (Richards, 2016). Most prisoners (not subject to specific non-parole conditions at sentencing) become eligible to apply for parole after serving one-third of their sentences. Those prisoners who were imprisoned for a period of two years or more automatically receive a minimum of six months of parole supervision. Prisoners who received a life sentence can be released from prison but will remain subject to a lifetime of parole supervision (Richards, 2016).

Although systems akin to Parole predate modern prisons, parole's relation to recidivism is not well understood. The little research that has been undertaken on this subject provides somewhat contradictory outcomes as to its efficacy (Schlager & Robbins 2008; Solomon, Kachnowski, & Bhati, 2005). Parole systems based on surveillance alone have been correlated to raised levels of reoffending where, conversely, systems of parole that value and encourage the development of an adult and supportive relationship between parole officer and parolee are linked to reductions in recidivism (Bonta, et al. 2008; Skeem, et al.

2007). Parolees can have unrealistic expectations from their parole supervisors, and this can, in some cases, mean that a realistic and trusting relationship is never formed. “Accustomed to being told exactly what to do and how to do it, they often expect their supervision officers to forge a path for them—get them a job, find the right drug treatment program (Nelson, & Trone, 2016, p.2).” The role of relationship building is challenging for the officers as well. They begin their supervisory role with minimal information on their charges and ideally move from this point to one where they can have meaningful input into the parolee’s choices for a crime-free life (Lovins, Cullen, Latessa & Jonson, 2018).

Nelson and Trone, (2016) opine that “When supervision works well it provides some of the ballast people need during their first months in the community, but many newly released inmates find it hard to meet the broadly defined conditions of probation and parole (Nelson, & Trone, 2016, p.2).” Nelson and Trone (2016) have identified an important issue. How much is the right amount for parole supervisors to undertake on behalf of their charges? It should be remembered that in NZA these workers are not employed as life coaches for newly released offenders. The research suggests, however, that some input along those lines from supervisors leads to better experiences for parolees and this, in turn, means lower rates of recidivism.

Introduction to the Current Research

The present thesis investigates two hypothesised influences on recidivism. The first is the quality of a prisoner’s release plan. The second is the quality of a parolee’s experiences on parole. This research investigates the quality of men’s release plans and experiences during transition from prison to the community with a view to understanding these experiences and the likelihood that they have a role to play in successful re-entry into the community. This research employs a longitudinal design with its participants being imprisoned men soon to be released but considered to be high-risk of reoffending.

The Release Plan Quality protocol (RPQ) provided the data on the quality of release plans and the Parole Experiences Measure (PEM) the data on the men's parole experiences. This research analyses this information to see if it is predictive of a range of recidivism outcomes during the first 12-months post-release.

Chapter 3: Method

The Parole Project

Data for this thesis is sourced from the Parole Project. This longitudinal research endeavour, and its associated dataset are products of Victoria University's Criminal Justice

Laboratory; a part of the university's School of Psychology. Commencing in 2017, the Criminal Justice Laboratory relocated with its progenitor, Professor Devon Polaschek, to the University of Waikato where both existing and new research projects continue to access the Parole Project's data (Gywnne 2016; Richards, 2016). The Parole Project data flowed from interviews with a 304 high-risk men released on parole after imprisonment for violence offences. The experiences of these parolees were documented over the year following their release to obtain data pertaining to rehabilitation, re-entry, reintegration and recidivism. Victoria University's School of Psychology received ethical approval for the Parole Project in November 2010. All participants provided fully informed consent prior to any participation in the research (Gywnne 2016; Richards, 2016)

Participants

The Parole Project participants were either graduates from the High-Risk Special Treatment Unit Rehabilitation Programmes (STURP) or men who constituted a control group. The control group men were serving similar sentences for similar crimes as the men who participated in the STURP programmes but had not graduated from a STURP-level treatment intervention. While not participating in STURP, the controls received various other treatments in the usual course of their sentences. For example, 32% of the control men received individual treatment from psychologists and 68% had participated in various lower intensity programmes. Both groups of men were similarly approaching their prison release dates (Gywnne 2016, Richards 2016).

Potential participants had to be 19 or older, have received a two-year or longer custodial sentence and be scheduled for release within 10 weeks of the commencement of the project to be considered. All participants qualified as being at high-risk of future offending (Gywnne 2016, Richards 2016).

The Parole Project research team recruited participants in consultation with the New

Zealand Parole Board and Corrections staff. Department of Corrections provided information on STURP graduates who were close to release. All qualifying participants were fully informed as to the nature of the study and gave informed consent prior each period of interviewing and data collection.

Selected and consenting participants were interviewed for the first time while still in prison. Interviews lasted between one and three hours and occurred as close to the participant's release date as practically possible. All interviews occurred within the six-week period preceding release. Participants were advised that the study was independent from the Department of Corrections and that they could withdraw consent at any time during the process. Following the interview, the participant would be told about the second follow-up interview and consent to participation in this second interview was sought at this time. The follow-up interview occurred as close to the two-month post-release point as practically possible (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016).

At around two-months post-release, one of the researchers would contact the participant's probation officer. The officer was tasked with ascertaining if the parolee would continue in the study. The parole officer would get the consenting man's contact phone number or alternatively arrange a time he could be contacted at Community Probation Services. The researcher would thus contact the participant and interview him over the phone for about 40 minutes. Some participants had already been returned to prison and for these participants, second interviews were conducted over the prison phone. In the second interview, men were quizzed about their experiences in a range domains including accommodation, finances, social and community support, employment, substance use, physical and psychological health, use of leisure time, level of association with criminal peers, and attitudes towards criminal associations and criminal activity in general (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016).

Each participant's probation officer was also interviewed by phone at the two-month post-release point. The officers' views on their clients' progress (or lack of it) were sought in this phone interview (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016). The typical participant would be a Māori man who was nearly 33 years old. He would most likely have been imprisoned for a violence offence and he would have been convicted of his first offence at about the age of 16. This typical participant would have received 73 previous convictions, including five for violence. His current sentence would be about four and one-quarter years in prison and upon release, he would face nearly a year on parole (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016).

Release Planning

In anticipation of release, prisoners in NZA prepare release plans as their parole date approaches. The quality of a parolee's release planning is important to this thesis. Comparing such planning against that man's actual experiences on parole and then ultimately looking at these factors together with his recidivism history is at the core of this study. Research shows that parolees with better quality release plans are less likely to offend within the 100-day transition period than those with less comprehensive plans (Richards, 2016). The quality of any release plan, however, is dependent upon the circumstances the parolee faces on release. Those individuals who have no home, employment or family assistance waiting for them on the outside will be seriously restricted as to how comprehensive they can make their plan (Polaschek, Yesberg, & Chauhan, 2018).

The Release Plan Quality Protocol (RPQ) assesses a parolee's release plan to see if it addresses the various factors that are central to successful re-integration. The RPQ scores release plan quality and comprehensiveness over across five categories. These categories are: accommodation, employment, prosocial support, antisocial associates and idiosyncratic risk management planning. Each domain is rated on a four-point scale, with a rating of '1' indicating non-existent or unhelpful plans, and a rating of '4' indicating plans that are

constructive, stabilizing, and confirmed. Total Release Plan Quality scores (the planning metric taken from the Parole Project and used extensively in this thesis) are the sum of ratings across each domain, producing an overall RPQ score between 5 and 20 (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016). The full RPQ protocol is provided in Appendix A.

The Parole Experiences Measure (PEM)

Prisoners prepare release plans while still in prison. After they leave prison, the Parole Experiences Measure (PEM) can be used to understand how the men actually experienced their lives while on parole (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016). The PEM results can be compared to release plans to see if better experiences were linked to better plans. The PEM results can also be compared to recidivism outcomes to better understand the relationship between parole experiences and recidivism. This thesis relies on total PEM results, the internal wellbeing subscale and the external circumstances subscale. For each of these three PEM measurements results garnered at both six-months post-release and two-months post-release are relevant (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016).

PEM Procedure. The data that formed the PEM were collected by Parole Project researchers and subsequently coded by Dickson et al. for use in a number of research projects. The PEM comprises 12 items (these 12 PEM items are detailed in Appendix B) divided equally between two subscales; the external circumstances subscale and the subjective wellbeing subscale. Lower scores indicate poorer quality experiences and, conversely, higher scores represent better parole experiences. The external circumstances subscale assesses parolees' experiences with accommodation, personal support, finances, antisocial associates, alcohol use, and drug use. The subjective wellbeing subscale measures the parolees' current personal perceptions of their experiences, including mental health, physical health, negative emotions, positive emotions, overall affect on both the day he attended the interview and over the preceding month. The PEM total score is the combined

means of the external experiences and internal wellbeing subscales (Gwynne, 2016).

To administer the PEM, a coding scheme was designed and matched to participants' responses. The responses for the extremes of the scale (1 or 4) were identified and the applicable guidelines for such responses were negotiated between two participant raters. After these terms were agreed upon the criteria for the middle ratings of 2 or 3 were similarly established. Parolee self-report responses were corroborated against information obtained from the participant's probation officer. The raters then employed a test subsample of approximately 100 participants to trial the protocols mentioned above for efficacy. Responses that did not fit adequately within the coding scheme were identified and used to adjust the protocols accordingly (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016).

The even-numbered (1,2,3,4) scale was selected in response to research that indicated that median number response categories (found in odd-numbered scales) can be overly favoured by respondents who are uncommitted or not fully decided on an answer (Kulas & Stachowski, 2009). A 4-point scale essentially forces participants to choose a value that indicates positive or negative ideation either side of the median. A more decisive dataset results from this forced choice (Kulas & Stachowski, 2009).

Appropriate amendments were made to the protocols following the first trial. Then the raters employed a second subsample of 40 participant interviews to retest the scale. Rater discrepancies identified in this sample allowed the coding scheme to be adjusted to improve its objectivity and accuracy of definitions. These revisions were followed by a final test subsample of 40 participant interviews; 20 HRSTU treatment graduates and 20 comparison participants (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016).

Discrepancies between the independent raters were usually the product of ambiguities and inconsistencies between parolee self-report information and participant's probation officer-sourced information. This led to more detailed instructions on how to handle

differences between parolee and probation officer responses. Parolee responses were consequently examined first denoting the importance assigned to the individual's personal impressions of their situation and experiences. The participant's responses would determine if his response was either in the low (1-2) or high (3-4) category. The probation officer's information was then assessed to determine exactly which score in either the high or low category would be settled on (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016).

Recidivism

Recidivism data for this thesis was extracted from the Parole Project dataset. Data on four categories of recidivism over the first year post-release were taken from this large dataset: conviction for breach of parole, reconviction (excluding breach), conviction for a violence offence and conviction leading to reimprisonment. The recidivism data originated in Ministry of Justice Case Management System.

To examine reoffending outcomes at different points of the re-entry process, recidivism was measured within the first 100 days of release from prison, and then at one-year post-release. Participants were allocated a dichotomous code (0 = no conviction recorded or 1 = conviction recorded) for each of the four recidivism outcomes, across both time periods (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016).

Procedure. As mentioned above, researchers interviewed participants with a set questionnaire in the six-week period leading up to their release dates. The researchers then conducted follow-up telephone interviews with the participants at 2, and 6, and twelve months' post-release (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016). This PEM questionnaire is attached to this thesis as Appendix C.

Corrections provided the Parole Project with criminal history, recidivism and demographic data on the participants from its Integrated Offender Management System (IOMS) and the national convictions records databases. The participants' probation

supervisors were also interviewed at 2, 6- and 12-months' post-release (Gwynne 2016, Richards 2016).

Research Design

As mentioned above, this thesis is based on data collected for the Parole Project. This longitudinal study collected data on a wide range of issues pertinent to the sample. For the purposes of this thesis we used a significantly reduced subset of the entire Parole Project dataset. Of central interest for this research was the data on recidivism, release plan quality and how the participants experienced and rated their lives on parole.

Chapter 4: Results

The results are presented in four parts. First, we present demographic and criminal history data relevant to the sample. Second, we present descriptive information on the variables used in the analyses. Third, we detail correlations between release plan quality, PEM variables (means of internal wellbeing, external circumstances and total PEM scale) at both two and six-months post-release, and the four 12-month post-release recidivism outcomes (breach, reconviction excluding breach, violence conviction and reimprisonment). In the final part of the results, we present data that explains if PEM experiences at two-months post-release or later experiences (as measured by the PEM at six months after release) are more predictive of the recidivism outcomes in the first 12-months post-release. This section of the results also presents data on the difference in predictive strength (for the four recidivism outcomes) between subjective experiences (internal wellbeing) on parole and more objective external factors (external circumstances) a man faces while on parole. We consider each of these questions in turn, first with the larger dataset of men who had 2-month PEMs, and then with the smaller dataset incorporating all those for whom we had 6 month PEM data. All of the analyses in this thesis employed IBM SPSS Statistics version 25.

Demographics of Sample

About half (49.5%) of the participants were HRSTU treatment completers and the others (50.5%) formed the control group. A total of 64.7% of the participants identified as Māori, 27.4% as New Zealand European, 6.6% as Pacific Islander, and 1.3% identified as other ethnicities. The sample ranged in age from 19 to 60 years old with the average being 32 at the time of release from prison. The mean RoC*RoI score for the sample was .74 (SD = .11), which means a 74% likelihood of reimprisonment within the next five years.

Violent offending was the most common index offence (53.1%). ‘Violent offending’ is a term that covers a range of offences such as aggravated robbery, assault, serious injury or

wounding, kidnapping, death threats, rape, manslaughter and murder. There were a range of other index offences. These included dishonesty offences (31.4%), sexual offences (6.6%), drug and antisocial offences (5.3%) and property offences (2.6%). Thirteen men (4.29%) were serving a life sentence. The other 290 men had received sentences in prison averaging 4.25 years.

Table 2

Demographics and Criminal History Data for Sample

Measure	M	SD	Range
RoC*RoI	0.74	0.11	0.16-0.97
Age at Release	31.87	8.58	19-60
Age at First Conviction	15.96	1.98	11-27
Number of Previous conv	73.17	55.50	3-442
Age at first Violence	18.84	3.68	14-40
Conviction			
Sentence Length (days)	1551.04	1078.04	256-5569
Parole Length	354.58	255.07	178-1799
(% of Sample)			
Completed HRSTU	92 (51.7)		
Ethnicity			
Māori	109 (61.2)		
European	58 (32.6)		
Pacific	9 (5.1)		
Other	2 (1.1)		

More than half of the participants (57%) were released before they had served their entire sentence while the remaining 43% served out their full sentences in prison.

Release Plan Quality Results

Mean scores for release plan quality appear in Table 3. Table 3 shows, *inter alia*, mean scores for each of the five elements that constitute a release plan (accommodation, employment, pro-social support, antisocial associates, risk management) as well as the total release plan quality (RPQT). Higher scores reflect better quality release plans. This chart shows that on average participants planned, at least to some extent, for each of the five components. For RPQT the lowest score achievable was 5 (i.e. a score of one on each element) and the highest was 20 (i.e. a score of four on each element). The more typical release plans would have reasonably stable accommodation confirmed but no employment organised. There would usually be an educational programme in the plan if there was no employment prospect. Prosocial support would figure in the plan, but the offender would usually not have realistic plans to avoid antisocial acquaintances. The parolee would commonly not exhibit meaningful strategies for managing high-risk situations as they arose while on parole. The components of RPQT are detailed in Appendix A and commented on briefly below.

Table 3

Mean and Standard Deviation, Median Scores for Five Elements and Total Release Plan Quality (RPQT)

Item	Mean (SD)	Median
Accommodation	3.16 (0.90)	3
Employment	1.69 (1.10)	1

Prosocial Support	2.61 (0.82)	3
Antisocial Associates	2.25 (0.71)	2
Risk Management	2.28 (0.90)	2
Total Release Plan Quality	11.99 (2.86)	12

Descriptive data for RPQT, PEM, and Recidivism

RPQ Accommodation.

Nearly half (48.5%) of the participants had release plans stipulating independent, prosocial living arrangement. A little more than a quarter more (27.1%), of the plans proposed re-entry to residential support programs or with family or other individuals not believed to be prosocial. Another quarter (23.1%) planned on moving to unstructured, supported accommodation such as Salvation Army hostels. Only 3.3% (ten in total) presented plans that indicated the man in question would be homeless upon release.

RPQ Employment

A full two-thirds of participants (67.3%) completed release plans that did not in any way address employment upon re-entry. Only one-tenth (9.9%) planned upon an actual job or attendance in a training programme at time of release. Another tenth (9.9%) had plans for employment which was considered un motivating and therefore unlikely to be maintained long-term. About one-eighth (13.2%) of participants had plans that detailed confirmed employment likely to be engaging and to which they were committed. The most common source of employment was through family connections and sometimes previous employers who would offer the individual a second chance.

RPQ Prosocial support.

Approximately two-fifths (40.6%) of participants had plans which assumed no prosocial support beyond those provided to parolees by Corrections or NGOs. More than

one-third (37.6%) had limited prosocial support planned. Only 14.9% provided plans describing prosocial relationships with at least 3 people identified by the parolee as a positive influence he would listen to. Less than one-twelfth (6.9%) had plans specifying no prosocial support at all. Participants frequently admitted that they had difficulty in receiving and following advice given by their specified prosocial support people. Some participants nominated known criminals, gangs or otherwise acknowledged antisocial partners and family members as valued prosocial support people.

RPQ Antisocial associates.

Two-thirds of offenders (66%) planned on maintaining interactions with antisocial friends, family and acquaintances. One eighth (12.5%) reported having active gang involvement or membership they would continue post-release. About thirty per cent (30.4%) of participants claimed they intended to avoid former criminal associates. Only 3.6% of these well-intentioned parolees had realistic plans for achieving this goal.

RPQ Idiosyncratic Risk Management.

One-fifth of participants (20.1%) expressed pro-criminal attitudes in their release plans. These participants had little to no insight into high-risk situations and environments. About two-fifths (41.6%) showed some insight into potential high-risk situations and environments and the triggers for the same (e.g. alcohol). This group, however, could not develop strategies to deal with such risks. More than a quarter of participants (27.7%) expressed a reasonable degree of insight and had commensurate plans for dealing with the identified risk situations. Only one-tenth (10.6%) promulgated plans that were both articulate at identifying risk and realistic regarding coping strategies for managing such risk.

Release Plan Quality Total.

The Release Plan Quality Total (RPQT) measures release total plan quality by combining the five component scores. The component scores are for accommodation,

employment, prosocial support, antisocial associates, and idiosyncratic risk. Each component is scored for quality on a 1 to 4 scale. A score of 1 is the lowest an individual can score on any of the components and 4 is the highest. The RPQT is a combination of the component scores meaning the lowest possible score is 5 and the highest is 20. Table 4 shows that the average score for the sample was nearly 12 out of a maximum of 20 which suggests that the average man had a moderately comprehensive plan for his release. Individual scores ranged from a low of 5 (which is the lowest possible score) to a high score of 19 (out of a possible 20).

Recidivism.

At two-months' post-release 12.9 % or 23 of the participants in the study had received convictions for breaching parole conditions, 15.7% (28) had new criminal convictions (excluding breaches), and 12.4% (22) had been convicted and reimprisoned. At one-year post-release 37.6 % or 67 of the participants in the study had received convictions for breaching parole conditions, 54.5% (97) had new criminal convictions (excluding breach convictions), and 34.8% (62) had been convicted and reimprisoned (Gywnne 2016, Richards 2016). The second step in the analysis was to conduct a series of correlational analyses to identify univariate relationships between the key variables and these results appear in Table 4. below.

Running head: LIFE PLAN QUALITY TOTAL	Mean of External Circumstances PEM (2 months)	Mean of Internal Wellbeing PEM (2 months)	Mean of entire PEM scale (2 months)	42
One Year	One Year	One Year	One Year	
Plan	One Year	One Year	One Year	
total	One Year	One Year	One Year	
score	One Year	One Year	One Year	

Table 4

Correlations Between Release Plan Quality Total, PEM Variables at Two-Months and Recidivism Outcomes One-Year Post-Release

Release Plan total score	1.00						
Breach One Year	.01	1.00					
Reconviction excluding breach One year	-.20	.20	1.00				
Violence Conviction One Year	-.08	.19	.45**	1.00			
Reimprisonment One Year	.09	.34**	.42**	.37**	1.00		
Mean of External Circumstances	.36**	-.21*	-.35**	-.05	-.10	1.00	
PEM (2 months)							
Mean of Internal Wellbeing PEM	.16	-.24*	-.14	-.01	.10	.28**	1.00

(2 months

Mean of entire PEM scale (2 months)	.31**	-.29**	-.29**	-.03	-.05	.75**	.85**	1.00
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* $p < .05$, ** $p < .0$

Results for the four recidivism outcomes detailed in Table 4 are commented on below.

Breach — 12 months post-release. Breach in the first 12 months showed weak negative correlations with mean of external circumstances (2 months), mean of internal wellbeing (2 months) and mean of the total PEM (2 months). These weak negative correlations suggest men who score better PEM results at two-months (total PEM, internal wellbeing and external circumstances) are somewhat less likely to breach their parole conditions within their first-year post-release.

Reconviction (excluding breach) — 12 months post-release. Reconviction (excluding breach) demonstrated moderate negative correlations with mean of external circumstances (two-months) and mean of total PEM scale (two-months). Reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12-months post-release returned a weak negative correlation with mean of internal wellbeing (two-months). These negative correlations again suggest that better parole experiences in the early months of parole are somewhat related to lower risk of reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12 months. A weak positive correlation was found for RPQT which stands in contrast to the negative correlations mentioned above. This weak positive indicates that a better-quality release plan might mean a slight increase in risk of reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12 months post-release.

Violence conviction — 12 Months Post-Release. Violent conviction during the first 12 months post-release showed a weak negative correlation with RPQT, mean of external circumstances (2 months), mean of entire scale (2 months) and mean of internal wellbeing (2 months). These weak negative correlations again speak to the lower risk of receiving a violence conviction in the first 12 months post-release if the parolee has better experiences on parole during the first two-months on release.

Reimprisonment — 12 months post-release. Reimprisonment during the first-year post-release correlated moderately and negatively with mean of external circumstances (2 months), and mean of total PEM scale (2 months). Again, these negative correlations suggest that better parole experiences at two-months suggest less risk of reimprisonment during the first 12 months post-release.

The Quality of Experiences on Parole as a Predictor of Re-Entry Success

The two-month PEM results provide a number of mostly weak correlations with breach and reconviction (excluding breach) during the first-year post-release. This means that men who reported better experiences on parole in the first two-months post-release were a little less likely to be convicted of a breach of parole or other crime during the first-year post-release than the men who reported poorer experiences during the same two-month post-parole period.

The findings detailed above are mostly consistent with previous research that has examined similar re-entry factors and their relationship to recidivism (Baldry et al., 2006; Bucklen & Zajac, 2009; La Vigne et al., 2004; Metraux & Culhane, 2004; Visser et al., 2008). In particular, research has shown that better PEM results are predictive of better recidivism outcomes at two-months post-release. In other words, men who enjoyed better experiences during their first several months on parole were less at risk of recidivation during this time back in the community than those with poorer experiences on parole.

Correlations Without the Six-Month PEM Data. The correlations detailed above were repeated with the sole change being that the PEM six-month data were omitted.

Without the six-month PEM data in the calculation, the statistical impact of the two-month predictors on the one-year recidivism outcomes could be seen more clearly. This second set of correlations is remarkably similar to the first in regards the four one-year recidivism results. There is some evidence, however, that with the removal of the six-month data, the

two-month predictors were statistically more relevant to the observed correlations.

Release Plan Quality Total (RPQT) – Less Six-Month Data. RPQT is once again moderately positively correlated with PEM external factors (2 months) and PEM total (2 months). This indicates that parolees who have better release plans are more likely to have better experiences during their first two-months on parole. Without the six-month data in the equation, the two-month PEM internal wellbeing scale returned a weak significant correlation with RPQT. RPQT also shows weak negative correlation with reconviction (excluding breach) during the first year and violence conviction over the same period.

Mean of external circumstances (2 months) - less six-month data. Mean of External circumstances (2 months) demonstrates weak negative correlations with breach over the first 12 months and new violence conviction during the same period. These negative correlations indicate again that men with higher PEM scores were less likely to be breach parole terms or be convicted of a new violent crime in the first year out of prison.

Mean of internal wellbeing (2 months) - less six-month data. Mean of Internal Wellbeing (2 months) correlated weakly and positively with RPQT. Weak negative correlations were found with breach during the first year, reconviction (excluding breach) and reimprisonment over the same period. We can say from this that a high-quality release plan suggests better parole experiences at two-months and that these better experiences indicate less risk of parole breach and reimprisonment during the first-year post-release.

Mean of Standardised PEM Total scale (2months) - Less Six-Month Data

Results also demonstrated a moderate weak negative correlation with reconviction (excluding breach) during the first-year post-release and a weak negative correlation for new violence convictions over the same period. These correlations again suggest that better release plans are related to better parole experiences and that better parole experiences suggest lower risk for recidivism

Results Indicating Differences in Predictive Validity Between Subjective Experiences on Parole and More Objective External Factors and the Relative Contributions to Prediction of Recidivism of Release Planning and Release Experiences

Prediction using Release Plan Quality Total (RPQT) and 2-month PEM totals of the likelihood of breach of parole in the first 12 months. Binary logistic regression was used to evaluate whether RPQT and 2-month PEM totals predicted breach in the first 12 months post-release. The model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, n=167) = 12.45, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who had breached during the first 12 months post-release and those who had not. The model altogether was estimated to explain between 7.2% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 9.8% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in breach in the first year, and correctly classified 64.1% of cases. As shown in Table 5 only 2-month PEM totals made a statistically significant contribution to the model, with an odds ratio of .34. This indicates that a 1-point increase in PEM scores is associated with a reduction of 66% in the likelihood of being convicted for a breach in the first year.

Table 5

Prediction Using Total Release Plan Quality (RPQT) and 2-month PEM Totals on the Likelihood of Conviction for Breach in the first 12 months

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Release Plan Total	0.14	.07	0.05	1.00	0.83	1.01	0.89	1.15
Mean 2moPEM total	-1.07	.33	10.36	1.00	0.00	0.34	0.18	0.66

Prediction using RPQT and 2-month PEM totals of the likelihood of reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12 months. Binary logistic regression was used to evaluate whether RPQT and 2-month PEM totals predicted reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12 months post-release . The model was statistically significant, $\chi^2 (2, n=167) = 26.18, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who were reconvicted (excluding breach) during the first 12 months post-release and those who had not. The model altogether was estimated to explain between 14.5% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 19.3% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12 months , and correctly classified 65.3% of cases. As shown in Table 6 only 2-month PEM totals made a statistically significant contribution to the model, with an odds ratio of .24. This indicates that a 1-point increase in PEM score is associated with a reduction of 76% in the likelihood of being convicted for a crime (excluding breach) in the first year after being released from prison.

Table 6

*Prediction using RPQT and 2-month PEM Totals on the Likelihood of Reconviction**(Excluding Breach) in the first 12 months*

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Release Plan Total	-0.09	0.07	1.78	1.00	0.18	0.92	0.81	1.04
Mean 2moPEM total	-1.42	0.37	14.83	1.00	0.00	0.24	0.12	0.50

Prediction using RPQT and 2-month PEM totals on the likelihood of receiving a violence conviction in the first 12 months post-release. Binary logistic regression was used to evaluate whether RPQT and 2-month PEM totals predicted a violence conviction in the first 12 months post-release. Neither predictor was statistically significant. See Table 7 below.

Table 7

Prediction using RPQT and 2-month PEM Totals on the Likelihood of a Violence Conviction in the first 12 months

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Release Plan Total	-0.12	0.10	1.38	1.00	0.24	0.89	0.73	1.08
Mean 2moPEM total	-0.79	0.44	3.29	1.00	0.07	0.45	0.19	1.07

Prediction using RPQT and 2-month PEM totals on the likelihood of reimprisonment in the first 12 months. Binary logistic regression was used to evaluate whether RPQT and 2-month PEM totals predicted reimprisonment in the first 12-months post-release. The model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, n=167) = 17.43, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who were re-imprisoned during the first 12 months post-release and those who were not. The model altogether was estimated to explain between 9.9% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 14.1% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in reimprisonment during the first 12 months post-release, and correctly classified 73.7% of cases. As shown in table 8 only 2-month PEM totals made a

statistically significant contribution to the model, with an odds ratio of .28. This indicates that a 1-point increase in PEM score is associated with a reduction of 72% in the likelihood of being reimprisoned in the first year.

Table 8

Prediction using RPQT and 2-month PEM Totals on the Likelihood of Reimprisonment in the first 12 months

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Release Plan Total	-0.02	0.07	0.11	1.00	0.74	0.98	0.85	1.12
Mean 2moPEM total	-1.26	0.35	12.76	1.00	0.00	0.28	0.14	0.57

Prediction using RPQT, 2-month PEM internal and 2-month PEM external subscale totals on the likelihood of conviction for breach in the first 12 months. Binary logistic regression was used to evaluate whether RPQT, 2-month PEM internal and 2-month PEM external subscale predicted breach in the first 12-months post-release. The model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, n=167) = 12.46, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who breached parole in the first 12-months post-release and those who had not. The model altogether was estimated to explain between 7.2% (Cox and Snell pseudo-R²) and 9.8% (Nagelkerke pseudo-R²) of the variance in breach during the first 12-months post-release, and correctly classified 64.1% of cases. As shown in Table 9 only the 2-month PEM internal subscale made a statistically significant contribution to the model, with an odds ratio of .56. This indicates that a 1-point increase in PEM score is associated

with a reduction of 44% in the likelihood of being convicted for breach of parole in the first year post-release.

Table 9

Prediction using RPQT and 2-month PEM External and Internal Subscale on the likelihood of Conviction for Breach at One Year

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Release Plan Total	0.10	0.07	0.02	1.00	0.88	1.01	0.89	1.15
2moPEM external	-0.48	0.31	2.50	1.00	0.11	0.62	0.34	1.12
2moPEM internal	-0.57	0.24	5.50	1.00	0.02	0.56	0.35	0.91

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .0$

Prediction using RPQT, 2-month PEM internal and 2-month PEM external subscale totals on the likelihood of reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12 months. Binary logistic regression was used to evaluate whether RPQT, 2-month PEM internal and 2-month PEM external subscale totals predicted reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12-months post-release. The model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, n=167) = 29.55, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who were reconvicted (excluding breach) during the first 12-months post-release and those who were not. The model altogether was estimated to explain between 16.2% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 21.6% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in reimprisonment during the first 12-months post-release, and correctly classified 64.1% of cases. As shown in Table 10 only the 2-month PEM external subscale made a statistically significant contribution to the model

with an odds ratio of .3. This indicates that a 1-point increase in PEM score is associated with a reduction of 70% in the likelihood of being convicted for a crime (excluding breach) in the first year post-release.

Table 10

Prediction using RPQT and 2-month PEM External Subscale Totals on the Likelihood of Reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12 months

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Release Plan Total	-0.05	0.07	0.56	1.00	0.45	0.95	0.83	1.09
2moPEM external	-1.21	0.34	12.56	1.00	0.00	0.30	0.15	0.58
2moPEM internal	-0.37	0.26	2.04	1.00	0.15	0.69	0.42	1.15

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Prediction using RPQT, 2-month PEM internal and 2-month PEM external subscale totals on the likelihood of conviction for violence in the first 12 months. Binary logistic regression was used to evaluate whether RPQT, 2-month PEM internal and 2-month PEM external subscale totals predicted conviction for violence in the first 12-months post-release. The model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, n=167) = 10.95, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who were convicted for violence in the first 12-months and those who were not. The model altogether was estimated to explain between 6.4% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 12.2% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in conviction for violence in the first 12-months post-release, and correctly classified 88.0% of cases. As shown in Table 11 only the 2-month PEM external subscale made a statistically

significant contribution to the model with an odds ratio of .35. This indicates that a 1-point increase in PEM score is associated with a reduction of 65% in the likelihood of being convicted for a violence crime in the first year post-release.

Table 11

Prediction using RPQT and 2-month PEM External Subscale Totals on the Likelihood of Conviction for Violence in the first 12 months

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Release Plan Total	-0.06	0.43	0.34	1.00	0.56	0.94	0.76	1.16
2moPEM external	-1.05	0.34	6.02	1.00	0.01	0.35	0.15	0.81
2moPEM internal	-0.03	0.34	0.01	1.00	0.92	1.04	0.54	1.99

Prediction using RPQT, 2-month PEM internal and 2-month PEM external subscale totals on the likelihood of reimprisonment in the first 12 months. Binary logistic

regression was used to evaluate whether RPQT, 2-month PEM internal and 2-month PEM external subscale totals predicted of reimprisonment in the first 12-months post-release. The model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, n=167) = 22.647, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who were imprisoned in the first 12-months post-release and those who were not. The model altogether was estimated to explain between 12.7% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 18.1% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in reimprisonment in the first 12-months post-release, and correctly classified 76.6% of cases. As shown in Table 12 only the 2-month PEM external subscale made a statistically significant contribution to the model, with an odds ratio of .28. This indicates that a 1-point

increase in PEM score is associated with a reduction of 72% in the likelihood of being reimprisoned in the first year post-release.

Table 12

Prediction using RPQT, 2-month PEM Internal and 2-month PEM External Subscale Totals on the Likelihood of Reimprisonment in the first 12 months

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Release Plan Total	-0.03	0.07	0.15	1.00	0.70	1.03	0.89	1.19
2moPEM external	-1.28	0.34	13.75	1.00	0.00	0.28	0.14	0.55
2moPEM internal	-0.22	0.25	0.75	1.00	0.39	0.80	0.49	1.32

Prediction using total PEM scores at 2 and 6 months, total release plan score on the Likelihood of Breach in the first 12 months.

Binary logistic regressions were performed to evaluate whether total PEM scores at 2 and 6 months and total release plan score predicted breach in the first 12-months post-release. In this regression the predictors were release plan quality total and the PEM 2-month total together in the first block and the PEM 6-month total in the second block predicting breach in the first 12 months. This method was chosen in order to determine whether an individual subscale predicted breach at one year when the variance explained by the other subscale was statistically controlled for. Block 1 was statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, n=93) = 8.61, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who breached parole at

one year and those who had not. The block altogether was estimated to explain between 8.8% (Cox and Snell pseudo-R²) and 12.3% (Nagelkerke pseudo-R²) of the variance in breach in the first 12-months post-release, and correctly classified 69.9% of cases. As shown in Table 13 only the 2-month PEM total scale made a statistically significant contribution to the model, with an odds ratio of .22. This indicates that a 1-point increase in PEM score is associated with a reduction of 78% in the likelihood of a breach in the first 12-months post-release. In block 2, neither predictor proved to be significant.

Table 13

Prediction using total PEM Scores at 2 and 6 Months, Total Release Plan Score on the Likelihood of Breach in the first 12 months

Scale	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Block 1 Release Plan Total	0.10	0.10	1.06	1.00	0.30	1.10	0.92	1.33
2moPEM total	-1.52	0.55	7.58	1.00	0 .01	0.22	0.07	0.65
Block 2 Release Plan total	-0.11	0.10	1.26	1.00	0.26	1.12	0.92	1.35
2moPEM total	-1.01	0.60	2.79	1.00	0.10	0.36	0.11	1.19
6moPEM total	-0.89	0.47	3.60	1.00	0.06	0.41	0.16	1.03

Prediction using total PEM scores at 2 and 6 months, total release plan score on the Likelihood of reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12 months. A series of binary logistic regressions were performed to evaluate whether total PEM scores at 2 and 6 months and total release plan score predicted reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12-months post-release. In this regression, the predictors were release plan quality total and the PEM 2-month total together in the first block and the PEM 6-month total in the second block predicting breach in the first 12 months. This method was chosen in order to determine whether an individual subscale predicted breach in the first 12-months post-release when the variance explained by the other subscale was statistically controlled for. Block 1 was statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, n=93) = 0.8, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who were convicted (excluding breach) in the first 12-months post-release and those who were not. The block altogether was estimated to explain between 9.3% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 12.9% (Nagelkerke R pseudo- R^2) of the variance in conviction (excluding breach) during the first 12-months post-release, and correctly classified 71.0% of cases. As shown in Table 14 only the 2-month PEM total scale made a statistically significant contribution to the model with an odds ratio of .31. This indicates that a 1-point increase in PEM score is associated with a reduction of 69% in the likelihood of reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12-months post-release.

Block 2 was statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, n=93) = 9.03, p < .001$, indicating that this analysis could differentiate between participants who were reconvicted (excluding breach) in the first year and those who were not. The block altogether was estimated to explain between 14.4% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 20.2% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in reconviction (excluding breach) in the first year, and correctly classified 73.1% of cases. As shown in Table 13 only the 6-month PEM total scale made a statistically significant contribution to the model with an odds ratio of .59. This indicates that a 1-point increase in

PEM score is associated with a reduction of 41% in the likelihood of reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12-months post-release.

Table 14

Prediction using total PEM Scores at 2 and 6 Months, Total Release Plan Score on the Likelihood of Reconviction (Excluding Breach) in the first 12 months

Scale	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Block 1 Release Plan Total	0.11	0.10	1.26	1.00	0.26	0.89	0.73	1.09
2moPEM total	-1.16	0.53	4.75	1.00	0.03	0.31	0.11	0.89
Block 2 Release Plan total	-.110	0.10	1.10	1.00	0.30	1.90	0.74	1.10
2moPEM total	-0.53	0.59	0.80	1.00	0.37	0.59	0.18	1.88
6moPEM total	-1.11	0.50	4.98	1.00	0.03	0.33	0.13	0.87

Prediction using total PEM scores at 2 and 6 months, total release plan score on the Likelihood of reconviction for a violence offence in the first 12 months. A series of binary logistic regressions were performed to evaluate whether total PEM scores at 2 and 6 months and total release plan score predicted a violence conviction in the first 12-months post-release. In this regression, the predictors were release plan quality total and the PEM 2-month total together in the first block and the PEM 6-month total in the second block

predicting violence convictions in the first 12-months. This method was chosen in order to determine whether an individual subscale predicted a violence conviction in the first year when the variance explained by the other subscale was statistically controlled for. In both Block 1 and Block 2 results, neither predictor proved to statistically significant.

Table 15

Prediction using total PEM Scores at 2 and 6 Months, Total Release Plan Score on the Likelihood of a Violence Conviction Reconviction in the first 12 months

Scale	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Block 1								
Release Plan Total	0.13	0.15	0.78	1.00	0.38	1.14	0.85	1.52
2moPEM total	-0.46	0.83	0.31	1.00	0.58	0.63	0.12	3.21
Block 2								
Release Plan total	0.13	0.15	0.78	1.00	0.38	1.14	0.85	1.52
2moPEM total	-0.42	0.96	0.19	1.00	0.66	0.66	0.10	4.33
6moPEM total	-.07	0.74	3.60	1.00	0.93	0.94	0.22	4.00

Prediction using total PEM scores at 2 and 6 months, total release plan score on the likelihood of reconviction leading to reimprisonment in the first 12 months. A series of binary logistic regressions were performed to evaluate whether total PEM scores at

2 and 6 months and total release plan score predicted reimprisonment in the first- year post-release. In this regression, the predictors were release plan quality total and the PEM 2-month total together in the first block and the PEM 6-month total in the second block predicting reimprisonment during the first-year post-release. This method was chosen in order to determine whether an individual subscale predicted reimprisonment in the first year when the variance explained by the other subscale was statistically controlled for. Neither block 1 nor block 2 results proved to be statistically significant.

Table 16

Prediction using total PEM Scores at 2 and 6 Months, Total Release Plan Score on the Likelihood of Reconviction Leading to Reimprisonment in the first 12 months

Scale	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Block 1								
Release Plan Total	0.12	0.11	1.18	1.00	0.28	1.13	0.91	1.41
2moPEM total	-0.49	0.62	0.61	1.00	0.43	0.62	0.18	2.07
Block 2								
Release Plan total	0.14	0.11	1.53	1.00	0.22	1.15	0.92	1.44
2moPEM total	0.50	0.85	0.34	1.00	0.56	1.64	0.31	8.74
6moPEM total	-1.30	0.58	5.11	1.00	0.02	0.27	0.09	0.84

Prediction using PEM Internal wellbeing and PEM external circumstances at 2 months, total release plan score on the likelihood of breach in the first 12 months. A series of binary logistic regressions were performed to evaluate whether RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months) predict breach during the first year. In this regression, the predictors were RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months) together in the first block and the RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months and 6 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months and 6 months) in the second block. This method was chosen in order to determine whether an individual subscale predicted breach in the first year when the variance explained by the other subscale was statistically controlled for. Neither block 1 nor block 2 results proved to be statistically significant.

Table 17

Prediction using PEM Internal Wellbeing and PEM External Circumstances at 2 months, Total Release Plan Score on the Likelihood of Breach in the first 12 months

Scale	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Block 1								
Release Plan Total	0.10	0.10	1.12	1.00	0.29	1.11	0.92	1.35
PEM external 2 months	-0.86	0.50	2.97	1.00	0.09	.43	0.16	1.13
PEM internal 2 months	-0.70	0.37	3.54	1.00	0.06	.50	0.24	1.03
Block 2								
Release Plan total	0.09	0.10	0.83	1.00	0.36	1.10	0.90	1.34

PEM external 2 months	-0.44	0.60	0.52	1.00	0.47	0.65	0.20	2.11
PEM internal 2 months	-0.56	0.38	2.22	1.00	0.14	0.57	0.27	1.19
PEM external 6 months	-0.13	0.58	0.05	1.00	0.82	0.88	0.28	2.76
PEM internal 6 months	-0.65	0.37	3.11	1.00	0.08	0.52	0.26	1.08

Prediction using PEM Internal wellbeing and PEM external circumstances at 2 months, total release plan score on the likelihood of reconviction (excluding breach) in the first 12 months. A series of binary logistic regressions were performed to evaluate whether RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months) predict reconviction (excluding breach) during the first year. In this regression, the predictors were RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months) together in the first block and the RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months and 6 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months and 6 months) in the second block. This method was chosen in order to determine whether an individual subscale predicted reconviction (excluding breach) at one year when the variance explained by the other subscale was statistically controlled for. Neither block 1 nor block 2 results proved to be statistically significant.

Table 18

Prediction using PEM Internal Wellbeing and PEM External Circumstances at 2 months, Total Release Plan Score on the Likelihood of Reconviction (Excluding Breach) in the first 12 months

Scale	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Block 1								
Release Plan	-0.07	0.10	0.50	1.00	0.48	0.99	0.76	1.14
Total								
PEM external 2 months	-1.31	0.52	6.41	1.00	0.01	0.27	0.10	0.74
PEM internal 2 months	-0.14	0.37	0.15	1.00	0.70	0.87	0.42	1.79
Block 2								
Release Plan total	0.10	0.11	0.85	1.00	0.36	0.91	0.74	1.12
PEM external 2 months	-0.96	0.61	2.43	1.00	0.12	0.38	0.12	1.27
PEM internal 2 months	0.32	0.39	0.01	1.00	0.93	1.03	0.48	2.21
PEM external 6 months	-0.04	0.59	0.00	1.00	0.95	0.96	0.30	3.04
PEM internal 6 months	-0.72	0.38	3.50	1.00	0.06	0.49	0.23	1.04

Prediction using PEM Internal wellbeing and PEM external circumstances at 2 months, total release plan on the likelihood of a violence offence in the first 12 months.

A series of binary logistic regressions were performed to evaluate whether RPQT, PEM

internal wellbeing (2 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months) predict violence conviction during the first year. In this regression, the predictors were RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months) together in the first block and the RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months and 6 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months and 6 months) in the second block. This method was chosen in order to determine whether an individual subscale predicted violence conviction during the first year when the variance explained by the other subscale was statistically controlled for. Neither block 1 nor block 2 results proved to be statistically significant.

Table 19

Prediction using PEM Internal Wellbeing and PEM External Circumstances at 2 Months, Total Release Plan Score on the Likelihood of a Violence Offence in the first 12 months

Scale	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds ratio	95.0% C.I. Lower	Odds ratio Upper
Block 1 Release Plan Total	0.15	0.15	0.95	1.00	0.33	1.16	0.86	1.56
PEM external 2 months	-0.59	0.79	0.55	1.00	0.46	0.56	0.12	2.63
PEM internal 2 months	-0.02	0.60	0.00	1.00	0.98	0.98	0.30	3.20
Block 2 Release Plan total	0.09	0.15	0.35	1.00	0.55	1.09	0.81	1.47
PEM external	-1.11	0.93	1.41	1.00	0.24	0.33	0.05	2.06

2 months								
PEM	0.12	0.67	0.03	1.00	0.86	1.13	0.30	4.22
internal								
2 months								
PEM	1.63	1.02	2.56	1.00	0.11	5.10	0.69	37.71
external								
6 months								
PEM	-0.83	0.56	2.19	1.00	0.14	0.44	0.15	1.31
internal								
6 months								

Prediction using PEM Internal wellbeing and PEM external circumstances at 2 months, total release plan score on the likelihood of a conviction leading to reimprisonment in the first 12 months.

A series of binary logistic regressions were performed to evaluate whether RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months) predict reimprisonment during the first year. In this regression, the predictors were RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months) together in the first block and the RPQT, PEM internal wellbeing (2 months and 6 months) and PEM external circumstances (2 months and 6 months) in the second block. This method was chosen in order to determine whether an individual subscale predicted reimprisonment during the first year when the variance explained by the other subscale was statistically controlled for. Neither block 1 nor block 2 results proved to be statistically significant.

Table 20

Prediction using PEM Internal Wellbeing and PEM External Circumstances at 2 months, Total Release Plan Score on the Likelihood of a Conviction Leading to Reimprisonment in the first 12 months

Scale	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Odds	95.0%	Odds
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						ratio	C.I. Lower	ratio Upper
Block 1								
Release Plan Total	0.16	0.12	1.78	1.00	0.18	1.17	0.93	1.47
PEM external 2 months	-0.87	0.59	2.12	1.00	0.15	0.42	0.13	1.35
PEM internal 2 months	0.15	0.46	0.10	1.00	0.75	1.16	0.47	2.86
Block 2								
Release Plan total	0.18	0.12	2.22	1.00	0.14	1.20	0.94	1.53
PEM external 2 months	0.32	0.81	0.15	1.00	0.70	1.37	0.28	6.70
PEM internal 2 months	0.25	0.52	0.23	1.00	0.63	1.28	0.46	3.56
PEM external 6 months	-1.62	0.73	4.95	1.00	0.03	0.20	0.05	0.82
PEM internal 6 months	-0.00	0.46	0.00	1.00	0.99	1.00	0.40	2.47

Research question: Does the PEM measure (two and six months) predict who

will recidivate in the first 12 months?

The series of binary logistic regressions reported above was designed to evaluate whether total PEM scores, external circumstances subscale scores, and subjective wellbeing subscale scores and total release plan quality predicted recidivism at one-year post-release. These regressions were then subjected to controls for the influence of known potential confounding variables. Four recidivism outcomes: conviction for breach of parole conditions, new conviction (excluding breach), new conviction for violence offending and new conviction resulting in reimprisonment were considered for this study. In the first four regressions, RPQT was entered with two-month total PEM as predictors in the first block and one of the four recidivism outcomes was entered as the dependant variable. In the second series of four regressions, RPQT was entered with two-month PEM internal wellbeing and external experiences scores as predictors in the first block, and one of the four recidivism outcomes was entered as the dependant variable. In the third series of four regressions, RPQT was entered in the first block with two-month total PEM, PEM six-month total was entered into the second block and one of the four recidivism outcomes was entered as the dependant variable. In the final four regressions, RPQT was entered in the first block with two-month PEM internal wellbeing. Two-month PEM external factors and PEM six month internal and PEM six-month external total were entered into the second block. One of the four recidivism outcomes was entered as the dependant variable in each of the analyses in the series.

When assessing whether the PEM subscale scores uniquely predicted recidivism during the first-year post-release, the external circumstances subscale score and the subjective wellbeing subscale score were entered into the second block together because of their strong correlations. Binary logistic regressions were performed to evaluate whether total PEM score, external circumstances subscale score and the subjective wellbeing subscale score predicted convictions for breach of parole during that first-year post-release.

Release Plan Quality Total. First considered was RPQT. RPQT featured as a predictor variable in each of the 16 binary regressions but did not return a statistically significant contribution to predicting any of the recidivism outcomes. In this study, therefore, RPQT did not predict recidivism during the first-year post-release for any of the recidivism outcomes.

PEM total (Two-Months). PEM total two-months consistently showed statistically significant contributions to three of the four recidivism outcomes. Predicting conviction of breach at one year, the model explained between 7.2% (Cox and Snell pseudo-R₂) and 9.8% (Nagelkerke pseudo-R₂) of the variance in recidivism for this measure during the first year, and correctly classified 64.1% of cases. Predicting new convictions at over the first year (excluding convictions for breach) PEM total two-months explained between 14.5% (Cox and Snell pseudo-R₂) and 19.3% (Nagelkerke pseudo-R₂) of the variance in recidivism for this measure during the first-year post-release, and correctly classified 65.3% of cases. For convictions leading to reimprisonment at one-year post-release, PEM total (two-months) explained between 9.9% (Cox and Snell pseudo-R₂) and 14.1% (Nagelkerke pseudo-R₂) of the variance in recidivism for this measure over the first year, and correctly classified 73.7% of cases. PEM total two-months did not return a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of a new violence conviction during the first-year post-release.

PEM External Factors (Two-Months). PEM external circumstances two-months showed significant statistical contribution to prediction of three of the four recidivism outcomes. For reconviction (excluding convictions for breach) over the first year the model explained between 16.2% (Cox and Snell pseudo-R₂) and 21.6% (Nagelkerke pseudo-R₂) of the variance in recidivism for this measure at during the first year, and correctly classified 64.1% of cases. For convictions leading to reimprisonment at one-year post-release PEM external factors (two-months) explained between 12.7% (Cox and Snell pseudo-R₂) and

18.1% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in recidivism for this measure during the first year, and correctly classified 76.6% of cases. PEM external circumstances (two-months) did not return a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of a conviction for breach of parole conditions over the first-year post-release.

PEM Internal Wellbeing Two-Months. PEM internal wellbeing (two-months) showed significant statistical contribution to prediction of three of the four recidivism outcomes. Predicting conviction for breach at one year the model for internal wellbeing (two-months) explained between 7.2% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 9.8% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in recidivism for this measure at one year, and correctly classified 64.1% of cases. For reconviction (excluding convictions for breach) at one year the model explained between 16.2% (Cox and Snell pseudo- R^2) and 21.6% (Nagelkerke pseudo- R^2) of the variance in recidivism for this measure at one year, and correctly classified 64.1% of cases. PEM external wellbeing two-months did not return a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of new violence conviction and conviction leading to reimprisonment over the first-year post-release.

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis

Regressions nine to 16 are hierarchical multiple regressions. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed to control for known variables. These regressions have two independent blocks to separate predictor variables. The first block (block one) will contain those predictor variables identified as potentially explaining the recidivism outcomes. The second block (block two) contains those predictor variables that must be controlled for.

Regression 9 (Table 13). In regression nine, RPQT and PEM total (two-months) were put in block one with breach over the first year inserted as the dependant variable. PEM total (six-months) was added to block 2. The block chi-square for block one was 8.61 and the block chi-square for block 2 was 3.78. As block 2 chi-square is lower than that for block

1, we can conclude that adding PEM total (six months) does not add anything statistically significant to the model's ability to predict for convictions for breach of parole during that first-year post-release.

Regression 10 (Table 14). In regression 10, RPQT and PEM total (two-months) were put in block one with reconviction (excluding breach) over the first-year post-release as the dependant variable. PEM total (six-months) was added to block 2. The block chi-square for block one was 9.03 and the block chi-square for block 2 was 5.45. As the block 2 chi-square was lower than that for block 1, we can conclude that adding PEM total (six-months) to the regression does not add anything statistically significant to the model's ability to predict reconviction (excluding breach) during the first year.

Regression 11 (Table 15). In regression 11, RPQT and PEM total (two-months) were put in block one with new violence conviction over the first year as the dependant variable. PEM total six months was added to block 2. These regressions did not return any significant statistics.

Regression 12 (Table 16). In regression 12 RPQT and PEM total (two-months) were put in block one with conviction leading to reimprisonment at one year as the dependant variable. PEM total (six-months) was added to block 2. The block chi-square for block one was 1.38 and the block chi-square for block 2 was 5.56. Although block 2 chi-square was significantly larger than that for block 1 neither of the block 1 variables returned significant results.

Regression 13 (Table 17). In regression 13, RPQT and PEM total (two-months), external factors (two-months) and internal wellbeing (two-months) were put in block one and breach over the first year was inserted as the dependant variable. PEM external factors (six-months) and internal wellbeing (six-months) were added to block 2. These regressions did not return any significant statistics.

Regression 14 (Table 18). In regression 14 RPQT and PEM total (two-months), external factors (two-months) and internal wellbeing subscale (two-months) were put in block one and conviction (excluding breach) over the first 12-months was inserted as the dependant variable. PEM external subscale (six- months) and internal wellbeing (six-months) were added to block 2. None of the block 2 variables returned statistically significant results.

Regression 15 (Table 19). In regression 15 RPQT and PEM total two-months, external subscale two-months and internal wellbeing subscale 2 months were put in block one and new violence conviction at one year was the dependant variable. PEM external subscale six months and internal wellbeing subscale at six months were added to block 2. These regressions did not return any significant statistics.

Regression 16 (Table 20). In regression 14, RPQT and PEM total (two-months), external factors subscale (two-months) and internal wellbeing subscale (2 months) were put in block one and reconviction leading to reimprisonment during the first year was the dependant variable. PEM external (six months) and internal wellbeing (six months) were added to block 2. None of the block 1 variables returned statistically significant results.

Discussion

This thesis began with a description of the common thread: the one near universally agreed upon goal for a custodial correctional system. This goal, of course, is to reduce recidivism. This thesis is meant, in part, to address this goal by providing research that examines some of the variables that may be influential in the processes that lead to success or failure for men going through the transition process. Is it possible to take a cohort of parolees considered to be high-risk contenders for reoffending and predict whom among them is either less or more likely to actually offend within a year of release? At its core, this is the aim of this thesis.

There is some depth of research that examines the various challenges parolees face when transitioning from prison to their communities. Within this body of work, however, there is a relative paucity of research that specifically addresses both the re-entry experiences of parolees who are considered to be at high-risk of reoffending and how these experiences relate to the likelihood of a successful transition. This thesis adds to the literature by addressing these under-researched aspects of the transition and re-entry process.

The parolees who participated in this research partook in several discrete metrics that provided the data that eventually informed the predictor variables for this thesis. The first of these measures is the Release Plan Quality (RPQ) coding protocol, which rated prisoners' release plans for accommodation, employment, prosocial support, antisocial associates and idiosyncratic risk management. The RPQ also generated a total release plan score that was an amalgam of the five component scores. This total release plan quality score (RPQT) formed the basis of one of the predictor variables in this research. We tested these release plan scores to see if they predicted any of our 12-month recidivism outcomes.

The second metric that provided data for the predictor variables in this research was

the Parole Experience Measure (PEM). These data, like the RPQT data, were extracted from the Parole Project dataset. Like the RPQ, the PEM provided data on a wide range of experiences parolees encounter on parole. These various experiences were collected into two PEM subscales. The first of these was the internal wellbeing subscale that dealt with a parolee's subjective more personal interpretations of experiences on parole. The second was the external circumstances subscale that covered those more objective experiences stemming from external factors. We used the internal wellbeing scale, the external experiences measure and the total PEM scores in this research.

The four recidivism outcomes we were hoping to predict, namely; conviction for breach of parole terms in the first 12-months post-release, reconviction (excluding conviction for breach of parole) in the first 12-months; conviction for a violence offence in the first 12-months and conviction leading to reimprisonment in the first 12-months post-release were also comprised from data extracted for the Parole Project dataset. This recidivism data originated with the national convictions records database.

Our typical parolee was nearly 33 years old and identified as Maori. This typical parolee would have been imprisoned for an act of violence and would be completing a prison sentence of about four and one-quarter years. Overall, parolees' release plans were moderately comprehensive. Our typical participant would have reasonably stable accommodation planned but no employment organised. Prosocial support would figure to a moderate degree but the plan would be weak in regards ongoing contact with antisocial acquaintances and strategies for dealing with high-risk situations. When total release plan quality is considered, the average score was 11.99 out of 20 or about 60% comprehensive. These moderate scores are consistent with both international and domestic research into the subject of release plan quality (Gwynne 2016; Visser et al., 2006). Our goal was to see if we could use this data on parole experiences and release plan quality to accurately predict our

four one-year recidivism outcomes.

Relevance of Previous Research

Gwynne's 2016 research looked at similar questions to those examined in this thesis. Gwynne (2016) asked if a man's parole experiences during the first two-months after release from prison predicted whether he would fail in the first two-months on parole. Gwynne also used the Parole Project dataset to inform her research. Her research employed three of the four recidivism outcomes examined in this thesis. The sole differences were that Gwynne did not include the violence conviction outcome and her focus was on early recidivism outcomes rather than the one-year outcomes covered by this thesis. As with this thesis, Gwynne conducted a series of binary logistic regression analyses to evaluate whether PEM scores predicted early failure across her three recidivism outcomes. Gwynne's results showed that across these three recidivism outcomes, total PEM scores (two-months) significantly predicted who would fail shortly after release (i.e. who would reoffend and be convicted in the first two-months post-release). These results remained stable even after controlling for influences such as treatment status, readiness for release and level of criminal risk. As predicted, men who had better PEM measured parole experiences were less likely to fall foul of the law soon after release than those men who reported poorer experiences on parole (Gwynne, 2016).

The present thesis, of course, has a focus on recidivism outcomes measured at one year from release date. Despite the focus on longer term recidivism outcomes, short term experiences remain important predictors. As pointed out already, the series of binary logistic regressions performed for this study produced a number of statistically significant predictions regarding our recidivism outcomes. A total of six moderately strong predictions were produced by our analyses. Two of these were produced by the PEM external factors (two-month) subscale. PEM external circumstances (two-months) returned both the most and the

strongest predictions from all the predictor variables. Not only was the PEM external factors (2 months) subscale the only variable to predict each of the four recidivism outcomes it was the sole predictor that correlated moderately with both conviction (excluding breach) and conviction leading to reimprisonment at one year.

The results showed that when both subscales were included in regression analyses together, external circumstances proved to be the reliable predictor. There are some hypotheses that address this difference in the predictive value of the two PEM subscales. Maslow's theories of need, for example, may go some way to explain why external factors emerge as the better predictors of recidivism. According to Maslow, a person is driven to satisfy the essential needs of life before higher-level emotional needs are addressed (Maslow & Lewis, 1987). The essential needs of life are, more or less, comprised in the external circumstances PEM subscale. Access to food, clothing, friendship and money fall under this subscale. While it is possible to assume that nearly all parolees will be struggling, at some level, with meeting their basic needs, there is no way to hypothesise (without further research) how many parolees sort these needs out to a point they can happily move onto the kinds of needs covered by the subjective wellbeing subscale that include such things as good mental health and positive emotions. Another suggestion by Gwynne (2016) is that the internal wellbeing subscale was perhaps too limited in scope to be as effective as the external circumstances subscale. She says: "If we included a wider range of internal factors in the present study, we may have seen a different pattern of results with regard to the relative contribution of external circumstances and subjective wellbeing to the prediction of recidivism (Gwynne, 2016, p. 103)".

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Previous research has also established that there is a link between release plan quality and recidivism (Gwynne, 2016; Richards, 2016). As with Gwynne's research, the focus has

usually been on short term recidivism outcomes in this previous work. Richard's (2016) research, for example, found that RPQ could effectively differentiate between those who reoffended and those who did not in the first two to three months post-release. Richard's research went on to show, however, that the RPQ did not differentiate between recidivists and non-recidivists one year from release. The present thesis confirms Richard's findings regarding RPQ and its ability to predict recidivism a full year on from release. None of the regressions conducted with Release Plan Quality Total (RPQT) data produced significant results. It is of interest, however, that the RPQT did show a correlative relationship with PEM (two-month) results. As noted above parole experiences in the first two-months – most notably the external circumstances subscale – was the best predictor of our recidivism results one year post-release.

There are a number of reasons hypothesised for why release plans did not predict the one-year recidivism outcomes. For example, the fact that the typical release plan was not very comprehensive meant that even prisoners with *prima facie* comparatively good quality plans were in fact being released with low-level planning that would soon not reflect their reality on parole. Dynamic risk factors are subject to high degrees of fluctuation meaning that even a reasonably well prepared release plan might soon after release not reflect the reality on the ground (Gwynne, 2016; Richards, 2016). The influence of pre-release plans, says Richards (2016,) may diminish over time as other factors, such as changing accommodation and social realities come into play.

The Recidivism Outcomes

As noted above Release Plan quality did not predict any of our four recidivism outcomes at the one year post-release point and we have also pointed out that only the PEM two-month external circumstances scale provided a statistically significant prediction for the new violence conviction recidivism outcome. Of the three other recidivism outcomes, which

is the most consistently and reliably predicted? Breach of parole was predicted by each of PEM measures we used (both PEM subscales two-months and PEM total two-months, both PEM subscales six-months and PEM total six-months). Reconviction (excluding breach) was predicted by all of the PEM predictors except PEM external six-months. Reimprisonment was predicted by four of our PEM measures.

The new violence conviction stands out as the one recidivism outcome not consistently predicted. There was substantially less data available for analysis on this outcome. Only 19 cases of parolees committing a new violence offence were included in the dataset used in this thesis. A small sample size can reduce the reliability of research results due to the increase in variability, which can also lead to bias. Similarly, a sample size that is too small reduces the power of the study and increases the margin of error (Hackshaw, 2008).

The sample size for the reimprisonment recidivism outcome had 49 participants which, while still small compared to the breach of parole and reconviction excluding breach samples, is high enough to ensure reasonably accurate results (Hackshaw, 2008).

Importance of Findings

The findings of the current study provide some insight into both the release process faced by high-risk prisoners in New Zealand and also how these people fare in relation to the justice system over their first year back in society. In particular, this thesis contributes to our understanding of the relationship between pre-release plans, post-release parole experiences and the likelihood that parolees will recidivate in their first year post-release. There is a pool of research that focuses on prisoner re-entry and provides evidence that suggests that reoffending is linked to the environment a person is released into and the experiences that person has in that environment (Karin & Stewart, 2006; Gwynne, 2016; Richards, 2016). NZA, however, is not served well by the quantity of research that has been carried out with NZA prisoners and their experiences of transitioning back into their non-prison communities

(Opie, 2012; Richards, 2016). Understanding the mechanisms by which one parolee successfully transitions to a crime-free life, and another does not, is important for a range of reasons. Imprisonment affects not just the man imprisoned (Tchaikovsky, 1997). Whanau, children and communities as a whole will suffer negative consequence when one of their own is imprisoned (Arditti, 2012). Knowing what works to keep people out of prison means actions can be taken to increase the probability that more parolees will transition successfully. As noted above, the benefits of this kind of success touches the parolee, his family and the community. The nation as a whole benefits as well. It is costly to imprison a person. It is far costlier to build new prisons as the nation's prison muster swells and the existing facilities become inadequate for purpose. The hope of course is that parolees will at some point enter the workforce and become taxpaying, contributing members of society (James, 2010).

The results of this research project have added to research which suggests that the experiences a man has in the first eight to twelve weeks on parole are crucial to increasing the odds of a successful transition (Gwynne, 2016). In particular, this research has shown that external factors, such as employment and accommodation, are important. How these early good experiences work as protective factors for reoffending is not fully understood. The parolee, in the first weeks of re-entry, looks principally to secure and stabilise the essentials for survival (Göbbels, Ward & Willis, 2012). Attending to these unmet needs may improve a parolee's ability to refrain from offending (Taxman, 2004). When this early survival phase has passed, the parolee then can look at making positive advancements in his quality of life (Göbbels, Ward & Willis, 2012). It is thought that positive experiences during this essential early part of transition may be the fillip that allows these advancements to be secured. Good experiences encourage the man to maintain his efforts to address fundamental needs and then move on to a better crime-free life. Good experiences may also

alleviate strains and stressors that are the precursors to a decision to reoffend (Gwynne, 2016).

As detailed above previous research has shown that release plan quality reliably predicts early recidivism and this thesis has found that it is not a significant predictor of longer-term recidivism. Hypotheses have been put forward to explain this difference. One is that release plans are most relevant and accurate to the parolee's situation in the early days of parole. The longer the man spends on parole the more his circumstances will change, the more people he will interact with and the more the plan will cease to be accurate to his situation (Garland, Wodahl & Mayfield, 2011). Another explanation is based on the idea that release plans are viewed by many parolees as merely survival plans (Polaschek, 2015). Others view them simply as a requirement of release. These more mercenary views of release plans may go some way to explaining why they fail to be reliably predictive of events more than a year after their creation.

Methodology Considerations

To this point, this thesis has focused on identifying and examining factors relating to release plans and parole experiences that have been found through research to impact on recidivism outcomes. The methodology of this research, and limitations therein, need to be addressed. Much of the research central to this thesis was conducted in North America. Both Canada and the United States of America are overrepresented in terms of where the utilised research came from. Both these countries, and the USA in particular, have populations and judicial and corrections systems that differ significantly from NZA (Mears, Cochran & Cullen, 2015). The samples used in these North American studies will differ significantly from the sample relied upon in this study (Taxman, 2014). There is also very little research in toto from NZA, or abroad, that directly considers the relationship between release preparation, parole experiences and recidivism outcomes (Mears & Cochran, 2015; Monahan

& Seem, 2016).

Many of the previous studies referred to herein did not statistically control for a variety of confounding factors that may be important when studying recidivism. As an example, consider a parolee who, with a long record of criminal convictions and prison sentences is first, highly unlikely to find work and second is very likely to reoffend post-release. Is the driving force behind in this person's recidivism the fact that he couldn't get a job or is it that he has a long record of offending? Is it possible that there is another factor at work that we have not considered or are perhaps unaware of?

This study attempts to control for those factors known to predict recidivism in order to better understand the relationship between the variable in question and recidivism outcome under examination. This study is also based on longitudinal data in order to better understand the causality of a man's recidivism over time. A non-longitudinal study, by comparison, gives researchers a snapshot of variables at one point in time and removes any ability to follow the man as he either succeeds or begins to fail at the complex process of re-entry. The longitudinal approach recognises that an individual on parole is not in a static state and that the positive and negative influences that bear upon him change over time (Gwynne, 2016). The turbulent nature of a parolee's risk factors may change on a daily, possibly even hourly, timeframe. A longitudinal study is perhaps the only way to develop any kind of insight into how these factors develop, interrelate and change over time (Deane, Skogstad & Williams, 1999).

The fact that many past research projects rely predominantly on self-report data is another element that needs consideration. A parolee's unique subjective perspective on the process of his reintegration into a community is a source of data that is perhaps richer in context than third-party observational data (Johnson & Waterfield, 2004). This type of data, however, has issues with factual content. Memory is notoriously unreliable and inaccurate.

Participants also tend to over-report some areas of interest and underreport others (La Vigne et al., 2004). Consequently, a research design that is dependent on this type of first-person data may benefit from corroborating data obtained from third party sources and even official records (Gwynne, 2016). In the present study, participant's self-report interview information was checked against records where possible, and vetted against his parole officer's understanding and observations of the individual (Gwynne, 2016).

Much of the earlier research of interest to this thesis is predominantly descriptive in nature. A descriptive, mostly qualitative dataset, however, does not usually lend itself well as a tool for examining the mechanisms underpinning the relationships being examined (Johnson, & Waterfield, 2004). The importance of accommodation and employment, for example, have been highlighted in various research projects as central to successful re-entry. It may be tempting to say that it is obvious why these factors are important to successful re-entry, but such an approach will not help us to understand the exact mechanisms and complex interplays that underpin these obviously important factors and make them so important reducing recidivism (Richards, 2016).

Similarly, the majority of studies conducted into recidivism do not establish causality between the predictive variables and the aspects of recidivism being studied. It is one thing to identify variables that may be linked to each other but more difficult to point to a single factor and declare that it causes a recidivism result at a later date. The various factors that have been identified as influential during the process of re-entry interact in complex ways and they influence each other in ways that are not fully understood. (Bucklen & Zajac, 2009; Shinkfield & Graffam, 2009). A simple example might be to look at accommodation, anti-social acquaintances and employment. Stable accommodation and reliable employment are considered valuable to successful re-entry while constant exposure to anti-social acquaintances is considered a risk factor. What happens then if anti-social acquaintances are

welcomed in by a flatmate sharing the hitherto stable home and these guests become regular fixtures? The parolee might be tempted to use drugs and alcohol as these substances become readily available in the flat. If he does and then commits a crime is it because of substance abuse, associating with the wrong people or because his accommodation has moved from being stable to unstable. Is there something else at play that we have not identified? Most likely it is a combination of all these factors (Bucklen & Zajac, 2009).

These conceptual and methodological issues prevent outright conclusions as to the exact impact release planning and parole experiences have on the recidivism outcomes looked at in this thesis. Further research in this area is necessary. Robust methodology in the design and planning of proposed new research is an equal imperative (Bucklen & Zajac, 2009; Shinkfield & Graffam, 2009).

Conclusions

The transition from prison to home poses difficulties for all prisoners. Those men who are at the highest risk of reoffending typically face the greater challenges. Certainly the high rates of recidivism from this group suggest that there are mechanisms at play that are not fully understood. This thesis was designed to add incrementally to what is known about the transition process. It investigated how the quality of individuals' experiences on parole and the quality of preparation for parole related to success or failure after release. The focus was on a full year after release, meaning we wanted to see if better experiences and better planning reflected in lower recidivism rates at 12-months post-release. Results showed that parolees who had better experiences in prison, especially during the first two-months on parole, were somewhat more likely to survive in their communities to the first anniversary of their release. When it came to what kind of good experiences were most likely to contribute to this better performance on parole the results showed that external circumstances were more predictive of success. This result shows that success with

life essentials early in the transition process is an essential to parole success.

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Appendices

Appendix A Release Plan Quality coding protocol

Offenders are assigned one score for each of the following domains.

Sometimes an offender may fit the criteria for more than scoring category; in this instance, you should assign a score that best reflects the offender's plans for life after release from prison in that domain.

ACCOMMODATION	
1 =	Homeless; banned from shelters/ supported livings; has no plans in place; has no options
2 =	Living in unstructured, supported accommodation (e.g. shelter, hostel); has plans that are unconfirmed or plans have been vetoed by Corrections
3 =	Living in structured supported accommodation (e.g. Salvation Army Bridge Programme) or rehabilitation programme; living with family/ individuals who are not identified as prosocial supports; accommodation is stable but temporary (e.g. offender plans to move on soon)
4 =	Living with family/ individuals identified as prosocial supports; accommodation is likely stable and/ or long-term

EMPLOYMENT	
1 =	Not working/ unemployed upon release (regardless of reason, e.g. parole commitments)
2 =	Employment is unconfirmed, or has confirmed plans to study upon release (may be more than one option, but <i>must</i> be immediately following release)
3 =	Has confirmed employment but is not going to enjoy the job, is unmotivated, or believes the job will not provide sufficient income
4 =	Confirmed employment upon release; job will displace offender's time, provide sufficient income, and offender is motivated to undertake the work

PROSOCIAL SUPPORT	
1	Has no prosocial support people (may have some estranged family)
2	Prosocial support is available, but is limited in range <i>and</i> influence; support is available but not necessarily anti-criminal (e.g. spouse or family member with criminal history)
3	Prosocial support is available, but is limited in range <i>or</i> influence (i.e. unable to list at 3 support people, <i>or</i> offender does not take notice of their support people)
4	Has a number of sources of prosocial support from those with a good relationship with offender, and evidence of ability to influence offender

ANTISOCIAL ASSOCIATES	
1	Active gang involvement; no plans to leave gang; no plans to manage contact with antisocial/ gang-affiliated associates
2	Has ceased gang involvement but will likely still have contact (e.g. with friends/ family still in gang); minimal plans to manage contact with antisocial associates; vague on subject but is likely to maintain some contact with former antisocial associates
3	Explicit intention to not socialise with former gang affiliates or co-offenders, but likely to still socialise with antisocial individuals in general; minimal or weak plans to manage contact with associates
4	Explicit intention to not socialise with antisocial associates; can generalise 'antisocial associates' beyond current peer group; has plans to avoid antisocial individuals in general and/ or to seek new prosocial peer group

IDIOSYNCRATIC RISK MANAGEMENT	
1	Has no plans to manage particular criminogenic risks/ needs. Nothing in offender's current situation has changed; no evidence of release plan/ relapse prevention strategies in place
2	Has some idea of plans/ strategies to manage criminogenic risks/ needs; plans are mostly weak and/ or superficial
3	Has some strong plans to manage some criminogenic risks/ needs, but weak or non-existent in other areas; can demonstrate some awareness of his triggers or high-risk situations
4	Has rehabilitation/ maintenance programmes in place, or already completed; demonstrates acknowledgment/ insight regarding his triggers or high-risk situations and has connected these with viable plans for community re-entry

(Gwynne, 2016; Richards, 2016)

Appendix B: Parole Experiences Measure

External Circumstances Subscale

1. Accommodation
2. Personal Support
3. Antisocial Associates
4. Finances
5. Alcohol Use
6. Drug Use

Subjective Wellbeing Subscale

1. Physical Health
2. Mental Health
3. Positive Emotions
4. Feeling Today
5. Feeling Over Last Month
6. Negative Emotions

(Gwynne, 2016; Richards, 2016)

Appendix C Parole Experiences Measure Coding Protocol

Accommodation

1 = Homeless, no fixed address, shelter

2 = Temporary accommodation such as unstructured supported accommodation (e.g. Prison Care Ministries, Salvation Army) or boarding house/hostel OR Temporary accommodation (less than 6 months) but Probation Officer (PO) rates less than 4

3 = Residential rehabilitation programme (e.g. Odyssey) or structured supported accommodation (e.g. Pathways) OR Temporary accommodation (less than 6 months) and PO rates 4 or above OR Permanent accommodation (6-months or more) but PO rates less than 4

4 = Permanent accommodation (i.e. no specific moving date or moving date is 6 months or more in the future) and PO rates 4 or above

Personal support

1= No personal support or relationship OR Support is solely from antisocial people (note: if it is unclear whether supports are antisocial then rate 1 if PO only says negative things about the person/things that indicate antisocial behaviour) 2= Personal support that is limited in range OR number (e.g. 1 person who provides a wide range of support or more than 1 person who provide only one type of support) and PO rates less than 4 3= Personal support that is limited in range OR number (e.g. 1 person who provides a wide range of support or more than 1 person who provide only one type of support) but PO rates 4 or above OR Personal

support not limited in range or number but PO rates below 4 4= Personal support that is wide ranging from more than 1 person and PO rates 4 or above

Community support

1= No community support 2= Some limited community support i.e. 1 type of support from 1 organisation OR PO is only community support identified OR PO and other treatment related support (e.g. alcohol and drug counsellor) but PO rates below 4 3= Community support that is wide ranging (i.e. more than 1 type of support from at least 1 organisation) but PO rates below 4 OR PO and other treatment related support (e.g. alcohol and drug counsellor) and PO rates above 4 4= Community support that is wide ranging (i.e. more than 1 type of support from at least 1 organisation) and PO rates 4 or above

Employment

1= No employment and no study/training 2= Casual work or volunteer work OR Study (any kind) or work training OR Same employment conditions as those needed for a score of 4 except minus two of the criteria (e.g. temporary, part-time work that they enjoy) 3= Same employment conditions as those needed for a score of 4 except minus one of the criteria (e.g. permanent, part-time work that they enjoy) 4= Permanent, full-time employment that they enjoy (note: full-time = 30+ hours)

Antisocial associates

1= Parolee reports actively in gang or frequent contact with antisocial associates OR PO or parolee says that the parolee is not trying to avoid contact 2= Parolee reports some contact with antisocial associates and PO rates below 4 OR Parolee reports that they are having contact with antisocial associates more than once a week (excluding unavoidable contact e.g. living in supported accommodation) 3= Parolee reports some contact with antisocial associates either by choice or because it is unavoidable but PO rates 4 or above (note: if PO says parolee has told them of contact but parolee has said no contact in our interview then rate 2 or 3 depending on PO rating) OR Parolee reports no contact with antisocial associates but PO rates below 4 4= No contact with antisocial associates reported by parolee and PO rates 4 or above

Finances

1= Not managing financially, no source of income or sole source of income is through illegal activity OR Some source of income but parolee reports that they are struggling to get by (note: look at both parolee and PO interviews to determine if they are struggling) 2= Enough income to live on but relying solely on benefit or family, or supplementing income through illegitimate source and PO rates less than 4 3= Enough income to live on but relying solely on benefit or family, or supplementing income through illegitimate source and PO rates 4 or above OR Enough income to live on, not relying solely on benefit or family but PO rates less than 4 4= Enough income to live on, legitimate source of income, not relying solely on benefit or family and PO rates 4 or above

Alcohol

1= Frequent alcohol use – 3 or more times a week, or 5 times in last fortnight 2= Some alcohol use – twice a week or 3 times in the last fortnight 3= Small amount of alcohol use – once a week or less 4= No alcohol use in last fortnight

Drugs

1= Frequent drug use – 3 or more times a week or 5 times in last fortnight OR Has used a Class A drug in the last fortnight (regardless of frequency) 2= Some drug use – twice a week or 3 times in the last fortnight 3= Small amount of drug use – once a week or less 4= No drug use in last fortnight

Thoughts about Crime

1 = Frequent thoughts about crime and parolee rates below 4 OR Frequent thoughts about crime and parolee rates above 4 because of ambivalence about crime (e.g. “I acted on them”, “It’s who I am”) 2 = Occasional thoughts about crime and parolee rates less than 4 OR Frequent thoughts about crime but parolee rates 4 or above because they are managing the thoughts/are confident that they won’t act on thoughts 3 = Occasional thoughts about crime and parolee rates 4 or above 4 = No thoughts about crime