

Caitlin Alongi, M.S.

2013

Factors that Influence the Attitudes of Cheektowaga Police Officers Toward the Mentally Ill

There has been an increase in the number of people who are being diagnosed with a mental illness. For those who interact with the general public on a daily basis, such as police officers, this could make their day more challenging. This article examines how personal experience, education/training, and job experience influence a police officer's attitude toward the mentally ill. The current study utilizes survey data drawn from a random sample of 68 police officers. Bivariate correlations between the three individual factors and the attitudes of the respondents were utilized for testing the hypothesis, which did not prove to be significant. Additional post-hoc analyses were also utilized.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Ron Eskew and Dr. Martin Floss

Nicole Brancato, M.S.

2013

Graduation Factors Related to Federal Re-Entry Court—Western District of New York

According to the United States Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), on an annual basis, there are over 2 million individuals incarcerated in the United States. During the 1980s and 1990s, national prison population estimates increased nearly 600%. As a result, more than 650,000 prisoners are released from state and federal prisons each year in the United States. Because such a large number of offenders are released each year it is important to look at Re-Entry Courts as a means of lowering these recidivism rates. Research from OJP's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) indicates that two thirds of those released are likely to recidivate. This data shows that offenders who are released pose a significant threat to public safety. The offender returning to the community faces a great deal of obstacles as they transition back into becoming a member of society. Re-Entry courts can aid offenders in this process, making the transition easier. The purpose of this evaluation is to study factors that are associated with graduating from the Federal Re-Entry Court in the Western District of New York which includes Re-Entry Courts located in Buffalo and Rochester, New York.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Martin Floss and Professor John Babi

Erin M. Carmina, MPA

2013

Perceptions of Improvements Following the Village of Hamburg Main Street Program

The New York Main Street Program, which is based on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program, began in 2004 and has awarded over sixty-four million dollars of funding to more than one hundred and forty-five communities across the state. The principle objectives behind these grants are to help businesses become more productive and competitive, revitalize properties, keep property values respectable, encourage enhancement and development of certain areas, and create an awareness of the needs of current taxpayers and homeowners.

The Village of Hamburg, NY, is one of many local municipalities that had been experiencing severe disinvestment within the central business district. This research project surveyed residents and businesses, within the village, to gauge their perceptions regarding the implementation of and completion of the Main Street Program. Based on a review of literature surrounding these types of community improvements and revitalization projects indicates an increase in economic prosperity and quality of life within the affected towns and villages. There does not, however, appear to be any type of evaluation survey completed with regards to approval or disapproval among the affected businesses and residents within these communities.

The renovations and rehabilitation to this distressed community have been found to positively add and improve to the livelihood of those that live and work there. The data gathered will further the Village of Hamburg's insight into what their constituents perceive to have been accomplished and it's level of importance. The results of this study will assist the VOH in assessing future program planning within the community.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Walter Iwanenko and Dr. Carol Nowak

Tracy Cooley, MPA

2013

An Administrative Approach To The Study Of State Mandated Special Education In Federally Funded Head Start Programs

This study explored special education teachers' and general education teachers' perceptions of teamwork, and levels of importance of teamwork, in an inclusion classroom. The sample included in this study was comprised of staff employed in 9 Head Start classrooms located in 5 facilities across Western New York. The instrument used in this study was a 32 question instrument distributed both online and hard copy. The results of the study suggest that although there were no significant statistical differences in either perceptions of teamwork, or the level of importance of teamwork, there was a significant statistical difference between the importance of teamwork among teachers. The results of this study can be used to assist in identifying areas of improvement which will aide teachers in becoming more successful in this collaborative, inclusive environment.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Walter Iwanenko and Dr. Carol Nowak

Kasey G. Duffy, M.S.

2013

The Relationship Between Support, Positive Identity, and Adolescent Substance Use

Assets are crucial for the healthy development of all youth, specifically the assets surrounding support and positive identity. In the town of Amherst during 2010, only 29% of youth reported positive communication with their families, and only 31% of males in high school reported parental involvement in their education. In addition to this, only 53% of adolescent boys reported a sense of personal power, which is lower than that of females. This low incidence of support and positive identity in adolescent males is partially

responsible for Western New York's high rate of substance use among adolescent males. This study examines the effect of the assets support and positive identity on substance use.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Carol Nowak and Dr. Martin Floss

Michael C. Gabor, M.S.

2013

Exploration of the Losses Associated With Card Fraud: Empirical

The purpose of this study is to measure the losses associated with the different classifications of payment card fraud in the United States and establish best practice for investigations. Although there is an abundance of literature on payment card fraud, there appears to be insufficient research on the potential and actual loss amounts associated with specific classifications of payment card fraud.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Martin Floss and Professor John Culhane, J.D.

Robert W. Gardner, M.S.

2013

New York State Sexual Offender Recidivism

The purpose of this study was to examine the rate of recidivism for New York State sexual offenders and to identify the rate for three types of offenders (i.e., sex offenders on the registry, sex offenders not on the registry, and non-sex offenders). The research was conducted by analyzing data from New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. The current study used a sample of 500 New York State sexual offenders and 500 non-sexual offenders. The study focused on overall recidivism and sexual offense recidivism as identified through the New York State Penal Law. The recidivism period encompassed an 8 year period from 2004-2011. The sexual offenders were compared to the non-sexual offenders and a rate of recidivism was determined.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Kathy Pierino, Dr. Martin Floss and Dr. Lisamarie Bensman

Benjamin Goldberg, MPA

2013

The Center for Third Sector Research at Hilbert College: Community Needs Assessment

Hilbert College is in the process of establishing an administration development program called the Center for Third Sector Research. The Center for Third Sector Research will form partnerships between Hilbert College students and community service agencies in Western New York. Agencies will apply for student research teams to complete short-term projects with specific and measureable outcomes. A thorough community needs assessment is

integral to the proper development of the program. The purpose of this research is to conduct this community needs assessment with the Hilbert College student body, administration, faculty and staff as well as the surrounding community service agencies.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Walter Iwanenko and Professor Mary-Diana Pouli, MPA

Tiffany Harvey, M.S.

2013

Crime Mapping Within a Suburban Community

The mapping of specific locations, better known as “hot spots” within a community is a difficult task for police agencies and their officers to use effectively to control crime. This difficulty is mainly due to the beliefs officers hold regarding crime and the areas in which such crimes occur, due to their personal experiences.

The significance of implementing a crime mapping program (DDACTS) within the Orchard Park Police Department to help officers to adequately locate the areas of high crime “hot spots” within Orchard Park, New York, in order to adequately distribute resources to the areas of high need.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Martin Floss, Prof. Mary Ann Hobar, Dr. Kathy Pierino and John Culhane, J.D.

Suzanne McKinney, M.S.

2013

Wrongful Convictions and the Causes: Does Race Have A Role?

Over 2000 exonerations due to wrongful convictions have occurred in the United States. This number shows that this is a problem that needs to be rectified. This article is a look at the different causes of wrongful convictions, such as false confessions, eyewitness misidentification, faulty forensics, official misconduct, and perjury, and what could influence those causes to occur. One potential cause that is not examined very often is race. The question of “does race have a role?” will be studied. The study is to find if race has a significant effect on wrongful convictions. Data is taken from records from a national exoneration registry to compare against other national statistics. The conclusions will show us if the criminal justice system needs to make changes to procedural guidelines to stop wrongful convictions from occurring.

Faculty Committee: Prof. Carraugh Reilly-Nowak, Prof. Patrick Heraty, and Dr. Martin Floss

William Pelow, M.S.

2013

Assessing Officer Attitudes: Implementing an Employee Physical Fitness/Wellness Program

The research study is designed to assess the attitudes of police officers in the West Seneca Police Department in regards to the implementation of an employee physical

fitness/wellness program. Research findings will aid agency administrators in determining if an employee physical fitness/wellness program will be accepted by the members of the department, and will provide reference for future program and policy decisions.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Kathy Pierino and Dr. Martin Floss

Brian Poliner, M.S., MPA

2013

Exploring the Effect of Organizational Change on Person-Organization Fit

The impact of the sanctuary model in creating fit and satisfaction

It is important to study how organizational changes at a non-profit organization impacted its employees' commitment to the organization. The purpose of this quasi-experimental study is to uncover evidence regarding the employee-organizational relationship, explore the relationship and to understand how the congruence of this relationship impacts overall job satisfaction and employee commitment to the organization. Using the Herzberg Two-Factor Theory this study investigated two existing data sets available, pre and post organizational change, to understand the impact of the Sanctuary Organizational Model implementation on employee satisfaction within the workplace. Findings indicate that worker satisfaction generally improved post implementation and that the Sanctuary Model had a positive impact on improving the person-organization fit.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Walter Iwanenko, Professor Patrick Heraty and Dr. Lisamarie Bensman

Tina L. Rimbeck, MPA

2013

Can an increase in knowledge lead to a change in opinion? A study of undergraduate students' evolving opinions of hydraulic fracturing.

This project seeks to analyze the link between the opinions and knowledge of 100 Hilbert College undergraduate students on the subject of hydraulic fracturing.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Yvonne Downes and Dr. Gordon Snow

Jason Sardo, M.S.

2013

Ethics training within Police Agencies

Three hundred and seventy-five police officers in the northeastern region received an ethics training course which was designed and implemented by Dr. Martin Floss, Dr. Gordon Snow, and Dr. Kathy Pierino to assess the impact on police officers' perceptions regarding ethical dilemmas. Each session of ethics training, which is also, referred to as

the *intervention*, lasted approximately six hours and was conducted during different times throughout the day due to the variety of work shifts. Every session was taught by the same three instructors.

Methodology consisted of a student-t test comparing the mean scores from officers who received the intervention compared to those who did not receive the intervention.

Findings display that police officers who received the intervention scored *lower* on the ethical index scale compared to those who did not receive the intervention.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Martin Floss, John Culhane J.D., Dr. Gordon Snow

Krista Schwartzott, MPA

2013

How do Human Resource Functions Facilitate the Transition to a Federally Qualified Health Center?

This descriptive study examined the process of creating the Human Resource Manager position to assist in the transition to become a Federally Qualified Community Health Center (FQHC). The Jericho Road Family Practice (for profit Family Practice) merged with Jericho Road Ministries (a nonprofit organization) will become a Community Health Center for underserved populations. The position of a Human Resource Manager was created in the organization for the purpose of complying with the requirements for both an Article 28 (New York State Certificate of Operation) and Health Resources and Service Administration HRSA, to become a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). The framework that was utilized for creating a personnel manual and emergency preparedness plan was included in this study.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Walter Iwanenko, Dr. Carol A. Nowak and Professor Patrick Heraty

Renee L. Siepinski, MPA

2013

For-Profit to Non-Profit Merger: A Study in Employee Satisfaction

Given the recession and lack of program funding available in recent years, it is becoming vital for all agencies, non-profit and for-profit, to work together to complete agencies' missions and goals. Employee satisfaction is often an issue in structural transformation of agencies whether internal restructuring, mergers with similar agencies, or mergers with different kinds of agencies.

The purpose of this study is to explore employee job satisfaction before and after the merger of a for-profit and non-profit organization. This research will help determine any significant changes in job satisfaction for the employees from the for-profit prior to the merger and one year post-merger. This study will contribute to the literature by identifying factors to be considered during the merger process in order to maintain employee job satisfaction.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Walter Iwanenko and Professor Patrick Heraty

Angelika Summerton, MPA
2013

Acceptance and Barriers of HPV Vaccination in a National, International, and Cultural Context

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the differences in acceptance and barriers of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination between the United States and several European Nations. Since the marketing of Gardasil and Cervarix, knowledge about HPV infections and cervical cancer has increased. Yet, vaccination rates are lower than expected despite funded programs in both geographical areas. A systematic review of empirical studies, governmental and health organizations' data provided primary sources on the subject of acceptance and barriers of HPV vaccination. Acceptance of HPV vaccination is relatively high in all countries. This does not indicate that women act upon the availability of HPV vaccination. Barriers are difficult to assess due to intangible perceptions and vague assumptions. Cost of the HPV vaccination, safety, efficacy, concern over side-effects, the three doses requirement, lack of information, and distrust presented the greatest barriers. Mandatory HPV vaccination and a comprehensive, standardized, and consistent reporting system on HPV vaccination rates may promote the uptake of HPV vaccination.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Walter Iwanenko and Dr. Brian Reed

Cori A. Thurman, M.S.
2013

Lackawanna Drug Treatment Court & Transportation Assistance

Lackawanna's Drug Treatment Court (LDTC) has identified a high-risk group of participants who do not have regular transportation to required court activities. To help combat this reality and to reduce recidivism, the court has ascertained resources to provide assistance with this dilemma to eligible drug court participants. The average length of participation for graduation is 18 months. For those who have transportation issues, the average length is 28 months. Currently, there are 105 participants in the LDTC. There is little research conducted on the correlation between transportation and drug court graduation. Data indicates that those who have transportation barriers are more likely to be involuntarily terminated from the treatment court or voluntarily withdrawn, and are less likely to successfully complete the program. Once the study is complete, data will be analyzed to see if transportation assistance helps increase graduation rates.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Martin Floss and Professor Patrick Heraty

Randy S. Zimpfer, M.S.
2013

Gang Labeling and Prison Misconduct: A Comparison of Behavior-Based and Validation Models

Growth in the American prison system has outpaced increases in the general population. Incarceration rates have increased so dramatically that state prison populations have grown by more than 700 percent since the 1970s. This burden on the system has been compounded by the added concern of prison gangs. Gangs present a management problem that involves additional prison misconduct and violence. States prescribe to either a validation or behavior-based model as a tool to manage their offender populations. The

validation model dictates that offenders reporting gang affiliation upon reception into the prison system receive a “gang” label and are segregated from the general population. The behavior-based model allows all offenders to reside in the general population until such time as their behavior necessitates segregation. The premise of this research is to determine if the effect of labeling on offenders in states that validate will lead to more violations of gang related prison rules than those states that prescribe to a behavior-based model that do not label.

Faculty Committee: Dr. Martin Floss and Mr. John Babi