A Comparison of Offender Classification Systems and the Incidence of Offender Misconduct in a Mid-West County Jail

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the difference between the method of offender classification and offender misconduct. Using data retrieved for the years 2007 and 2008 from a Mid-Western jail facility, the research project investigated three specific questions: (1) To what extent does the use of an objective jail classification impact incidence of offender misconduct? (2) How does the use of an objective jail classification reduce the incidence of major offenders' misconduct within the three primary classification categories? (3) How does the use of an objective jail classification system impact the number of offenders held in custody; thus is there a correlation in the reduction of offender misconduct? After careful review of all data collected, a definitive correlation between the use of objective jail classification and incident of offender misconduct could not be validated for the particular subject jail utilized in this study.

Chapter I: Introduction

Background of the Study

Throughout much of modern history, little public attention (Kerle, 1998) has been placed on the conditions existing within the American penal system, specifically jail facilities. Early American jails, modeled after jails in England, were used to house individuals awaiting sentence. The conditions for offenders within the early jails closely aligned with the prevailing punishment philosophy of the time in the American criminal justice system. However, the conditions of those confined did not receive noticeable attention until the later half century (Austin, 1998). Prior to 1870, the conditions and treatment of offenders held in American jails was viewed as the "appropriate punishment" (National Institute of Corrections [NIC], 1992) for their crime. Thus, men, women, and children were often housed together (Foster, 2006). By the beginning of the 20th Century, rehabilitation and reform were the prevailing philosophies of the criminal justice system. As a result, in addition to the nature of the crime, the personal characteristics and needs of the offenders influenced classification decisions (NIC). Regardless of the prevailing punishment philosophy, the condition of the jails or those confined went relatively unnoticed by society until the second half of the 20th Century. The result: jails have historically experienced poor sanitation, overcrowding, and improper classification of offenders (Kerle, 1998).

Early attempts to draw attention to the conditions of jails, including the potential benefit of proper inmate classification, was first introduced by John Howard's Penitentiary Act in 1773, and later by the founding members of the National Prison Association (now known as the American Correctional Association). In 1931, The National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement (known as the Wickersham Commission) referenced jails

as, "dirty, unhealthy, unsanitary-and ill-fitted to produce either a stabilizing or beneficial effect on inmates" (Foster, 2006, p. 97). Yet, these early attempts at intervention failed to bring about any long-lasting change. As history reveals, conditions within the prison system gained the attention of politicians, the media, society, and Academia; yet the plight of the American jail received less attention (Kerle, 1998). As late as 1980, most of the 4000 jails across the United States lacked a "formal written policy to guide inmate handling and correctional procedures" (Austin & Litsky, 1982, p. 60); including a formalized method for offender classification. Recognizing the need for reform, the executive director for the National Sheriffs' Association in 1988 stated, "Classification and discipline are major components of the corrections process, affecting inmate control and supervision, and the jails overall orderly operation" (Ayers, 1988, *p. v*). While progress has been made over the past two decades, it is likely that issues associated with the incarceration of more violent offenders, the limitations of physical design, fewer rehabilitative programs, overcrowding, and decreasing agency budgets continues to be cause to address the needs of the American jail; including the classification of offenders.

As a result of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, the deteriorating conditions of penal facilities, an increase in lawyers interested in the rights of the less fortunate, and inmate grievances gained the attention of the American people, and the court system. This interest in inmate rights became known as the "hands on" (Collins, 2004, p. 7) era of correctional law. One category of inmate lawsuits focused on the conditions caused by the improper classification of inmates, specifically through the use of subjective criteria. Not only did the higher court agree to hear condition of confinement lawsuits, the findings of the courts would significantly change the manner in which jails determined proper placement of inmates. In

Kelley v. Brewer, 525 F.2d 394 (8th Circuit), the appellate court ruled that criteria used to classify inmates must be "rational and reasonable rather than arbitrary and capricious" (Miller, Walter, & Kelley, 2000, p. 8.3). Further, subsequent cases have resulted in sheriffs being held liable for improper classification of inmates (Miller, et al. 2000). Statistically, the most common form of lawsuit filed by inmates related to improper classification is civil rights actions, in violation of 42 United States Code Section 1983 (Collins, 2004). Marty Ordinans, a Wisconsin Department of Corrections Office of Detention Facility Specialist supervisor attributes the current interest to improve the classification of offenders within the Wisconsin Jail system to the relatively recent involvement of the court in correctional matters and the 2008 change in Wisconsin State law governing offender classification (personal communication, September 24, 2008).

Since the 1970s, subsequent inmate litigation, facility overcrowding, and departmental budgetary constraints have resulted in more narrowly defined classification procedures, including the use of objective jail classification. As compared to the past classification decisions, objective classification relies upon a standardized set of criteria in determining the classification of offenders for housing assignments (Wells & Brennen, 1995). Unlike subjective classification, which relies upon a staff member's opinion and informal criteria in determining offender classification, objective classification utilizes a "narrow set of well-defined legal factors (e.g., severity of offense, prior convictions, and prior incarcerations) and personal characteristics (e.g., residence, employment) to guide in the decision making process" (Austin, Baird, Bakke, McCarthy, & Steele, 1989, p. 2). The intended outcome of an objective classification system is a safer correctional setting for both the inmate and staff (Austin, 1998; Serin, 2005). The process of performing an objective

classification occurs upon the offender's admittance into the jail facility in order to determine initial placement in the facility. Re-classification will then occur at a minimum of every six months, or upon change in the offender's status, whichever occurs first (Austin, et al). While a primary goal of both stages in the classification process is the safety of those involved, errors still may occur which result in the improper classification of offenders (Austin & McGinnis, 2004). However, past research suggests that the use of an objective jail classification instrument results in fewer improper classification decisions than the subjective classification process common throughout much of the United States penal history (Van Voorhis & Brown, 1996; Bonta & Andrews, 2007).

Beginning January 1, 2008, Wisconsin State Statutes governing the placement of individuals in custody required all Wisconsin jails to implement an objective classification process (Wisconsin State Statutes, 302.36, 2008). Previously, Wisconsin State Statute 302.26 governing placement of individuals in custody required separation of inmates by specified categories, including male / female, adult / child, felon / misdemeanant, and sentenced / un-sentenced (Wisconsin State Statutes). In an earlier study, Malouff (1984) examined published court cases occurring between 1968 and 1984 which were related to inmate classification. The results of Malouff's (1984) study found the improper classification of inmates resulted in a national average award of $93,000 (as cited in Ayers, 1988, p. 7). Beyond improper classification, the overcrowding of jail facilities further reduces the ability to consider housing assignments based upon identifiable risk factors; including but not limited to gang affiliation, age, size, and intelligence (NIC, 1992). According to Marty Ordinans, improper classification can be connected to incidents of offender misconduct; however, the specific number of incidents connected to improper classification within a jail setting remains

unknown (personal communication, September 15, 2008). Thus, it is likely that the improper classification of incarcerated individuals places additional pressure on restricted correctional budgets and overcrowding results.

To date, little empirical data exists in relation to the study of jail operations and offender classification (Senese & Kalinch, 1993; Bonta, 2002). Beyond those in academia, jail personnel have found limited literature related to the benefits of objective classification within a jail setting (Demory, 2001). Although Demory first studied the impact of an objective jail classification system on the incident of offender behavior in the early Twenty-first Century, he contends this is an area that could benefit from further study (Demory, personal communication, November 7, 2008). A review of the literature finds that much of past studies focusing on offender classification were based within the prison setting; including studies reviewing any correlation between manner of classification and incident of offender misconduct (Flanagan, 1983; Harer & Langan, 2001) or the use of a classification instrument in relationship to gender in predicting incident of offender misconduct (Wright, Salisbury, & Van Voorhis, 2007). Early jail studies focused upon the impact of an objective classification system within the jail have focused their attention on the correlation of objective classification to the facility overcrowding (Wells & Brennen, 1995) or the impact of new generation jail design in relationship to incident of offender misconduct (Bayens, Williams, & Smykla, 1997). While there have been several attempts to evaluate the correlation between an objective classification system and incident of offender misconduct (Senese & Kalinich, 1993), few studies in recent history have been found in academia (Demory, 2008; Bayens, et al.). Current literature appears to focus upon the correlation of classification system to recidivism and gender equity in the instrument validity (Wright, et

al). Perroncello suggests that the tracking of incidents of offender misconduct can be used to validate the effectiveness of offender classification (2001). Secondary benefits of tracking of incidents of offender misconduct may be cost savings in both staffing and jail litigation.

Statement of the Problem

There seems to be limited data on the tracking of offender misconduct and the effectiveness of offender classification. Current literature suggests that the use of an objective classification can be a successful indicator of reducing the incident of offender misconduct in a prison setting; however, there remains limited attention by academia as to the benefit of objective classification in reducing incidents of offender misconduct in a jail setting.

Purpose of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the difference between the use of two distinctly different classification systems and the occurrence of offender misconduct in a county jail setting.

Research Questions

This study will examine the correlation between the method of offender classification and offender misconduct. The study will focus upon the data of one small jail's data. Specific research questions include:

1. To what extent does the use of an objective jail classification impact the incidence of offender misconduct?

2. How does the use of an objective jail classification reduce the incidence of major offenders' misconduct within the three primary classification categories?
3. How does the use of an objective jail classification system impact the number of offenders held in custody; what is the correlation between the reduction of offender misconduct and the method of classification?

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

The assumptions of this study are:

1. The data was retrieved from the County Jail internal database without error. Data is compiled from one source. The source of data collection will be from the agency computer database.
2. The classification officers participated in a 6-hour formal training on Objective Jail Classification sponsored jointly by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections and the Wisconsin Department of Justice.
3. The classification officers consistently applied the classification instrument when determining initial classifications for all incoming male offenders. Even if the classification instrument is applied correctly, there remains room for statistical error.
4. Line staff did not use subjective criteria to change offender classifications after the objective classification process was completed by the classification officer. This assumption further relies on the approval of the jail administrator to not arbitrarily alter the classification decisions made by the classification officer.

5. Correctional staff submitted all major conduct reports as required by policy and procedures. The jail site selected for this field study does have a standard set of rules provided to all inmates upon admission to the jail facility.

Limitations of this study are:

1. The data sample was drawn from incarcerated male inmates over a span of two years; therefore, as individual population varies, the results of this study would vary. According to O'Toole (2002), unlike prisons where the population cycles approximately every two years, a jail is believed to cycle their population on average 20-25 times during the same time period (as cited in Christensen, 2008, p.12). Thus, a limitation of this study is the inability to maintain a static population census.
2. The data sample was drawn from incarcerated male inmates who remained confined at the County Jail; therefore, excluding inmates who were transferred to neighboring counties facilities due to overcrowding. Overcrowding within the County Jail results on average approximately 72 inmates are housed 'out of county' on a daily basis (A. Malooly, personal communication, April 9, 2009). Due to contractual language with receiving counties the inmates who are eligible for out of county placement must be free of major incidents of misconduct, free of both major physical illness and/or major mental illness, and not identified as a known gang member. Therefore, as a result of the need to meet the mandates of receiving county, the remaining inmates within the mid-west jail facility does not reflect a cross-section of the inmate population.

3. The inability to control history; including policy change which may alter the definition of acceptable / unacceptable behavior; thereby skewing the number of incident reports submitted by staff. Specifically, while inmate classification is now completed according to an objective database, previously tested for reliability / validity, the decision for identifying incident of offender misconduct remains subjective. Staff members are encouraged to use discretion in the disciplining of inmates. The result of discretion is inconsistent application of policy and procedures.
4. Sample data will lack consistency due to change in both inmate and staff turnover within the two year sample. Over the span of the two years of this study, change in jail leadership, line staff, and first-level supervisor positions results in the inability to maintain consistency in application of jail policy and procedure. Given the authority of the jail administrator in both classification overrides and in determination of guilt in major incidents of misconduct, the change in administration results in a limitation of the consistent application of jail rules.
5. Jail data lacks consistency in the notation, or lack thereof, of classification of said offender in conduct reports. In order to maintain the privacy rights of the research subjects the ability to review the offender's classification level was limited to maximum, medium, minimum or Huber/EMP rather than the numerical category of the jail objective classification document.
6. The sample is from one specific jail. Thus, the results must be reviewed in the context of the jail in which participated in the research study.

Significance of the Study

This research is significant for the following reasons:

1. As jail administrators from the State of Wisconsin are faced with restricted budgets the results of this study may provide evidence that the use of objective criteria to classify inmates has the potential to reduce the number of inmate misconducts within a correctional facility; therefore, provide factual data to support fiscal support for jail resources (including staff and programming support) by the county board.
2. This study will present an analysis of offender misconduct across three different, distinct classifications of jail inmates. As a result, jail administrators will be able to utilize this data for staffing decisions, offender housing placements, and future facility expansions.
3. A potential outcome from the use of objective jail classification may indicate a decreased need in the level of custody assigned to inmates upon entrance to the facility. As a result, the jail administrator may free valuable bed space at a time when overcrowding is a concern for many small jails.
4. Similar to past research (Malouff, 1983; Sabbatine & Leach, 1999; Demory, 2001), the use of certain objective classification systems may reduce inmate violence and thus result in decreased litigation, lower security and maintenance costs, reduced inmate overcrowding, and provide greater flexibility in the placement of staff.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used throughout this research study:

1. *Jail*: A facility used for detention of persons awaiting trial or convicted of minor offenses. Locally operated and funded (Seiter, 2008).
2. *Classification*: "the systematic arrangement, usually by prescribed written policy, of persons or things into similar groups, based on specific criteria" (Cripe & Pearlman, 2005, p. 500).
3. *Objective Jail Classification*: A categorization separation of inmates based upon risk and need (Austin, 1998).
4. *Misconduct*: inmates who commit behavior in violation of jail rules or state statute while in custody (Berk, Kriegler, & Jong-Ho Beck, 2006).
5. *Average Daily Population* (ADP): the average number of inmates held in custody within the jail each day of the month at midnight, and dividing the sum by the number of days in the month (National Institute of Corrections library research specialist personal communication September 15, 2008).
6. *Maximum Supervision*: classification designated for inmates considered "hard core, violent, very institutionalized, dangerous and potential escape risks" (Cornelius, 2001, p. 185).
7. *Medium Supervision*: classification for inmates "usually nonviolent, are charged with a lesser offenses, and are not viewed as a serious escape risk" (Cornelius, 2001, p. 186).

8. *Minimum Supervision*: classification for inmates "not viewed as security risks, and may have nonviolent misdemeanor offenses and are sentenced to short terms" (Cornelius, 2001, p. 186).
9. *Risk*: "refers to the degree to which an offender poses a threat to himself or herself, other offenders, prison workers, or the secure management of a correctional facility" (Wright, Salisbury, & Van Voorhis, 2007, p. 318).
10. *Need*: "a measurement of the inmate's physiological and psychological requirements for well-being" (Martin & Rosazza, p. 139).

Chapter II: Review of Literature

The purpose of this research was to investigate the difference between the use of two distinctly different classification systems and the occurrence of offender misconduct within a specific Mid-West jail. Historically, two classification systems are common within the correctional system. Subjective classification is the oldest and most common form of offender classification (ACA, 1993). The second method of classification is based upon a select set of objective criteria. In this chapter, literature relating to classification will be reviewed in relationship to offender management.

Evolution of Jail Classification in Modern Society

The oldest component to the American correctional system is the jail, formed well before the development of either the prison system or community corrections (Mayes & Winfree, 2002). The jail is defined as a local correctional facility operated by either the city or county government (Seiter, 2008). Those held in jail include three primary groups of offenders: "those awaiting trial, those convicted but awaiting sentencing and those sentenced to serve jail time" (Mayes & Winfree, 2002, p. 89). Statistics reveal that there are few offenders "who wouldn't pass through a jail as they enter the correctional system." (Seiter, 1999, p. *iv*). While statistics do vary, it is estimated that between nine million and eleven million admissions occur annually across the jails in the United States (Seiter, 2008). Yet, as a result of the diverse population being held and a number of other factors (which will be identified later) offender classification within a county jail is characterized as "at the same stage as prison classification 100 years ago." (Brennan, 1999, p. 14). Early use of an

objective classification system began in the California Department of Corrections and the Federal Bureau of Prisons in the 1970's with the primary goal of improving prison security (Austin & Litsky, 1982). What initially began as a method to improve prison security, the use of objective classification has evolved to include determination of offender treatment needs, reintegration planning, and impacting risk of offender recidivism (Van Voorhis, n.d.). While there are a number of studies exploring the benefit of an objective classification system within the prison system, there exist limited studies in academia which explore the correlation between objective classification and jail management.

While classification of newly confined inmates within a correctional setting has historically been completed either subjectively or objectively, the procedure known as classification refers to the "the systematic arrangement, usually by prescribed written policy, of persons or things into similar groups, based on specific criteria" (Cripe & Pearlman, 2005, p. 500). Early attempts at classifying jail inmates relied primarily on the separation of offenders based upon both arbitrary and subjective criteria. Often, the placement of offenders was dependent upon the prevailing philosophy (from punitive to rehabilitative) of the criminal justice system. Both the nature of the committing offense and the subjective opinion of facility staff influenced classification and placement of the offender (Van Voorhis & Brown, 1996). Subsequent methods of classification relied upon the results of clinical assessment and/or separation based upon demographic criteria including male/female, adult/child, misdemeanor/felony, and sentenced/pre-trial (NIC, 1992). Significant changes in offender management did not occur until the involvement of the court in inmate civil rights (Collins, 2004).

As courts became active in reviewing prisoner litigation, the review of offender classification practices became more common. Litigation by prisoners has generally focused upon the "weaknesses, inconsistency, or unfairness of current classification methods" (Brennan, 1999, p. 11). In *Morris v. Travisono,* 310 F. Supp.857 [1970], the appellate court held that classification "contributes to a smooth, efficiently operated correctional system" (Carlson & Garrett, 1999, p. 263). In *Palmigiano v. Garrahy,* 443 F. Supp.956 (Dist. R.I., 1977), the district court held that the existence of an objective classification is essential to the safe, orderly operation of a correctional facility (Ayres, 1988). While the above cases applied specifically to prison inmates, in Ryan v. Burlington County (708) F. Supp.623 [D. N.J. 1989], the court required the separation of pre-trial detainees from convicted offenders (Belbot & del Carman, 1993). Accordingly, classification involves the determining of an offenders' proper custody level, treatment plan, and the separation of violent from non-violent offenders (Ayres, 1988). In response to both increased offender litigation and the successful efforts of classification within prisons, jail facilities across the United States began the search for a reliable, consistent, and court defensible method to classify inmates. With the assistance of the National Institute of Corrections, a nation-wide effort to change offender classification within the jail industry gained momentum.

In an attempt to provide technical assistance to jails in the development of facility policy and procedures specific to classification of offenders, the NIC funded a study completed by Solomon (1980) in which he outlined the following 14 specific principles of classification:

1. There must be a clear definition of goals and objectives of the total correctional system.

2. There must be detailed written procedures and policies governing the classification process.
3. The classification process must provide for the collection of complete, high- quality, verified, standardized data.
4. Measurement and testing instruments used in the classification decision-making process must be valid, reliable, and objective.
5. There must be explicit policy statements structuring and checking the discretionary decision-making powers of classification team staff.
6. There must be provision for screening and further evaluating prisoners who are management problems and those who have special needs.
7. There must be provisions to match offenders with programs; these provisions must be consistent with custody classification.
8. There must be provisions to classify prisoners at the least restrictive custody level.
9. There must be provisions to involve prisoners in the classification process.
10. There must be provisions for systematic, periodic reclassification hearings.
11. The classification process must be efficient and economically sound.
12. There must be provisions to continuously evaluate and improve the classification process.
13. Classification procedures must be consistent with constitutional requisites.
14. There must be an opportunity to gain input from administration and line staff when undertaking development of a classification system. (as cited in Ayers, 1988, p.4)

These principles, many of which focused upon the procedure to be followed when classifying offenders became the foundation as jail administrators wrote policy & procedures with regard to offender classification (Austin, 1998).

Initial Efforts to Change Jail Classification

In an effort to understand the current state of classification within American jails,the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in 1979 conducted a survey of such correctional-based facilities. The results of this survey found "a lack of formal, pre-trial procedures in most facilities" (Ayres, 1989, p. 5). In 1985, the NIC conducted a follow-up random survey of jails with populations of less than 250 inmates and found that over 65% of the facilities that responded utilized objective classification as part of the initial intake process; however, many respondents continued to lack an objective classification model for inmate management. Subsequent to these surveys, the NIC initiated a long-term commitment to assist jail management personnel across the country to improve the inmate classification process in American jails. This continued commitment by the NIC to improved offender classification within American jails is evident through their commitment to the training of jail staff, the provision of technical support, and on-site consulting of individual jails (Mark Martins, personal communication, November 7, 2008).

As part of this commitment to improve offender classification, the NIC funded a three-phase project in 1986 to encourage jails to develop and implement a consistent, legally defensible objective classification. Phase I of this project required jails to "define the functions of a jail classification system" (NIC, 1992, p. *ii*) by both completing a literature review and by analyzing the results of a national survey on jail classification. At the

conclusion of Phase I, specific objective criteria to be used in determining offender needs/risks were identified. Phase II involved the development of a classification instrument specific to the jail involved in the project. Additionally, this phase required participating jail facilities to identify an implementation strategy. A point-additive scale for classification was developed as a result of the work of this project. The final phase involved field-testing the newly developed point additive classification instrument at three specific jails. The results were then analyzed to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the classification process being developed in order to create a classification instrument that could be widely used (Austin, et al. 1989).

A second study on jail classification was being completed in conjunction with the three phase NIC project. This project partially funded by the NIC was a joint effort by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency and the Correctional Services Group, Inc. The focus of this project was to evaluate the state of classifications within select jails throughout the United States. Of particular focus in this study was to gather data on classification policy and procedures, identification of classification variables, and facility design in relationship to the method of classification being utilized (Austin, et al. 1998). The outcome of this second study was the early development of the decision tree classification instrument.

At the conclusion of the two jail classification projects, the NIC research committee agreed that due in part to the unique needs of individual jails, no "universal classification system has been established" (Austin, et al. 1989, p. 4). While there remained some variance as to the specific criteria utilized in the classification process, there existed consensus that any system by design place "great emphasis on fairness, consistency, and openness in the decision-making process" (Brennan, 1999, p. 13).

Following in the footsteps of the federal prison system which began utilizing an objective classification system in the late 1970's (Austin & Hardyman, 2004), it is likely that the jails across the United States, with the assistance of the National Institute of Corrections, devoted considerable time, funding, and technical assistance training management personnel throughout the country in the use of an objective jail classification system. According to the National Institute of Corrections, by the end of 2008, approximately 210 jails around the country received direct training or technical assistance in classification training or inmate behavioral management training (which combines classification and supervision) in an effort to implement an effective objective classification system (F. Zandi, personal communication, January 15, 2009). Researchers attribute the increased interest in an objective classification system to heightened offender litigation, facility overcrowding, the presence of more violent offenders within jail facilities, and the apparent success of objective classification within the prison system (Brennan, 1999). Today, objective classification is observed by many in the corrections industry as an effective way to enhance institution security (Christiansen, 2008), "provide protection against liability and promote equity, consistency, and fairness" (Wells & Brennan, 1985, p. 2). A reduction of facility overcrowding and tension (among both staff and inmates), and assistance in future facility planning have been attributed to the use of objective jail classification (Austin & Hardyman, 1994).

Although jail facilities in the United States do vary with regard to the type of objective classification system-based document that is used, the first of two primary models developed are in a decision tree format (see Appendix A) and are based upon eight criteria as follows:

- Current type of conviction- felony or misdemeanor and assaultive behavior.

- Prior assaultive convictions.
- Escape history.
- Prior adjustment to institutional confinement.
- Prior criminal history within the last five years of street time. Pending security-risk warrants.
- Sentencing status- pre or post.
- Family ties. (NIC, 1992)

Each component utilized in the classification instrument is considered by many in the criminal justice field predictive of future misbehavior (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Harer & Langan, 2001). A second commonly utilized model includes the additive point format, which assigns a point value to both personal factors and current offenses from which a custody level is assigned. Unlike the decision tree model which focuses primarily on the offender's history of violent behavior, the point additive model utilizes the combined point value of criteria to all to assess the propensity of future misconduct. While both methods are considered to be valid predictors (NIC, 1992) of future misconduct, the decision tree is the preferred method for objective classification within Wisconsin Jails (Ordinans, personal communication, Sept. 15, 2008).

Research Efforts

While there has been significant focus at the national level toward the implementation of objective classification in jails, there is very little scholarly work completed which evaluates the success of an objective classification system on jail operations. Various researchers have identified several issues impeding the gathering of quantitative, accurate

data (Brennan & Austin, 1989). Specifically, the diversity of the inmate population, short-term confinement, high volume of admissions, the design variance of facilities, and change in staffing are regarded as key impediments to the creation of valid studies on jail operations (Ayers, 1988). Further, researchers suggest that due to political pressure, few jails are able or willing to cooperate with a long-term research study (Brennan, personal communication, October, 14, 2002). According to Malouff (1983), even prior to the commitment from the National Institute of Corrections to focus on the inclusion of objective classification in a jail, it was concluded that prison "classification followed by appropriate placement significantly reduced the rate of violent acts, which, in turn, lowered security and maintenance expenses" (as cited in NIC, 1992, p. 13), thus suggesting that the utilization of objective criteria could be of similar benefit to jail facilities.

While few empirical studies on the effect of an objective classification and incidents of misconduct exist, there are several earlier studies on this subject utilizing the prison system instead of the county jail (Berk, Kriegler, & Beck, 2006). While the exact reasons for the focus on prison-based studies remains undefined, Bayens, Williams, & Symkla (1997) suggest the inability to control both offender population and staffing as two significant limitations with jail-based research studies. Regardless, a review of this early research can provide a foundation for this study.

In order to determine if an objective classification procedure reduces incidents of misconduct, it is necessary to establish that the risk criterion selected has the ability to be used as a valid predictor of misconduct. Harer & Langan (2001) attempted to establish predictive validity in a study conducted from 1991-1998. In their study, Harer & Langan (2001) utilized a database analysis to compare the incidence of misconduct rates of newly

admitted male and female inmates between 1991 and 1998. Three data sets were reviewed: demographics and incident of misconduct; demographics, criminal history, and current offense; and data set for the federal prison system and the United States Sentencing Commission. While their study focused on whether the same risk factors could be indicative of misconduct for both male and female offenders, the results of the study (which utilized statistical analysis) found that predictive power was very similar (however, finding that women tend to commit less serious violent misconduct than men) (Harer & Langan, 2001). While this study compared incident of misconduct to gender variance the researchers did identify limitations of their study to include the difference between data sets (24,765 females to 177,767 male), variance in treatment opportunities within the facility, and "potentially different pathways of which men and women enter into crime and prison" (Harer & Langan, 2001, p.531).

Although early research focused on the benefit of a formal classification system in the determination of inmate placement, Flanagan (1983) attempted to connect institutional misconduct within a prison setting to specific pre-situational offender characteristics (e.g., age, offense type, drug history, marital status, and employment). In his study, an attempt was made to overcome two factors which he believed may have significantly reduced the reliability of previous studies. Flanagan's study considered the rate of disciplinary infraction throughout the offender's entire incarceration. Specifically, he delineated high-rate from low-rate infraction groups based upon the distribution of misconducts in his sample. In his study, he utilized a "Predictive Attribute Analysis" (Flanagan, 1983, p. 35) to further delineate his test sample. From this assessment tool, he concluded that the use of pre-situational characteristics (as defined above) "alone for classification or prediction purposes within a

correctional system should not be advised" (Flanagan, 1983, p. 36). Flanagan's study concurred with previous research, which found that the offender's age at time of admission was a significant factor in the prediction of institution behavior. Flanagan acknowledged that his study did not take into consideration the specific characteristics of the staff attitudes, inmate population characteristics, or the facility procedure in the handling of inmate misconduct. Therefore, he suggested future studies into the analysis of inmate misconduct attempt to include staff attitude and facility disciplinary practice in any comparison analysis of classification procedure (Flanagan, 1993). Flanagan's research provides support for the need to include the dynamics of individual offender characteristics in classification instruments.

As discussed previously, early studies addressed gender, individual characteristics, facility design, etc in relation to the incident of offender misconduct. Yet, at issue in many correctional facilities across the nation is overcrowding. In a nationally representative study of jail overcrowding, it was found that 84.8% of the sheriffs responding to the survey identified increased offender violence to overcrowding in the facility (Kinkade, Leone, & Semond, 1995). Additionally, facility overcrowding is observed as a barrier to the effective implementation of an objective classification system (Klofas, Stojkovic, & Kalinich, 1992). While one group of researchers suggests a facility operating above 90% of its rated capacity (defined as the number of inmates who can safely be housed in a facility) all but loses the ability to classify inmates objectively (Kinkade, et al.), a group of jail administrators contend that facilities should be considered overcrowded once population exceeds 80% of the rated capacity (Klofas, et al.). Brennan (1999) suggests that without adequate bed space staff become disillusioned; therefore, reducing the overall effectiveness of an objective

classification system. With the exception of housing offenders in out of county facilities, jails must develop strategies to overcome the ongoing issue of overcrowding. One such opportunity is the use of objective classification; a system that allows jail administrators to consider alternatives to custody for non-violent offenders.

An identified problem with evaluating the effects of utilizing an objective classification system on incidents of misconduct is in the understanding of the specific processing of inmate misconduct. Similar to other jail operation topics, little research has been completed on this topic. However, in 1993, a study was completed to explore the various methods by which rule violations within a county jail are processed by correctional staff. Through an exploratory study of a single jail facility, 350 official rule violation reports were analyzed for disposition. Five potential dispositions to conduct reports included "warning, privilege withdrawal, security, movement / reclassification, and other" (Senese & Kalinich, 1993, p. 138). The results showed that there was no significant variance as to how line staff responded to major or minor rule violations (appearing to utilize warning for both); however, the study found that "supervisors were four times as likely to warn major rule violators than they are to warn minor rule violators" (Senese & Kalinich, 1993, p. 138). While the results of this study are limited, through analysis, the researchers did conclude that younger offenders were disproportionately represented in the data. Further, they suggest that because inmates tend to be in a jail setting for a shorter period of time (as compared to prison inmates) the ability to utilize formal disciplinary procedures is limited. As a result, inmate discipline involves greater use of staff discretion (Senese & Kalinich, 1993).

A review of multiple studies encompassing both prison and jail research (Harer & Langan, 2001; Senese & Kalinch, 1993; Berke, 1999; & Forcier, 1992; Berk, Kriegler, Beck,

2006) found nearly as many definitions for what defines offender misconduct. While most researchers did agree that misconduct is officially generated once a staff member completes the filing of some type of disciplinary form (Forcier, 1992), consistency was lacking in the determination of what level of misconduct occurred (Berk, Kriegler, Baek, 2006). Therefore, it is difficult to compare the research results.

Forcier (1992) completed a study on the effect of an objective classification system on institution adjustment within a county jail. For his research, he utilized a systematic random sample of 506 inmates who were committed between January 1985 and October 1986. Similar to previous studies (Harer & Langan, 2001; Woolredge, Griffin, & Pratt, 2001; & Berke, 1999), Forcier (1992) found a strong correlation between the rate of misconduct and offender age. In addition, based upon review of the data, Forcier (1992) found a high incidence of over-classification of inmates, resulting in misuse of valuable resources. Forcier (1992) concluded that although offender age was not one of the original eight variables identified in standard decision tree classification instrument, the outcome of his research and that of others (Austin, 1998; Harer & Langan, 2001; Serin, 2005) suggests that age is a factor in the prediction of offender misconduct; therefore, concluding that age should be a variable considered in classification decisions. While academia has explored the connection between the method of classification and incident of offender misconduct, each study concludes suggesting future research is needed given the limitations of the study (Forcier, 1992; Christensen, 2008; Berk, Kriegler, & Baek, 2006).

Although not supported through academic studies, several jail facilities have conducted their own research analysis on the impact of objective jail classification in the reduction of offender misconducts. Lexington-Fayette, Kentucky, found that upon the

completion of one-year of objective classification in the placement of inmates, they noted both a reduction in inmate litigation and incidents of inmate violence (Sabbatine & Leach, 1999). A second facility in Ocean City, New Jersey conducted a similar analysis over a two-year period of time and documented a 30 % reduction in disciplinary reports (Brennan, 1999). Considered unusual for research in a jail setting, Brennen's study identified that staffing levels, average daily populations, jail disciplinary policies, and jail architecture went largely unchanged during the evaluation period (personal communication, October 14, 2002). Kent County, Michigan utilized a before and after design to compile data on the effect of objective jail classification on incidents of offender misconducts. After reviewing six years of data the classification specialist, Demory, concluded that the rate of violence per 100 inmates validated the effectiveness of their classification system in that they were accurately identifying inmates who are prone to violence. Facility research documents reveal that over a 5 year span (1996-2001) there was a 56% reduction in unwanted inmate behavior (Demory, 2001). Prior to the implementation of an objective jail classification system, Kent County incurred 1382 incidents of violence compared to 609 incidents in the year of 2001 (Demory, 2001). Although not based in academia, the studies completed by Kent County, Michigan, Ocean City, New Jersey, and Lexington-Fayetteville, Kentucky all suggest a system of objective classification has the ability to impact the incident of offender misconduct.

An essential component to the success of objective classification within a jail setting is the training received by classification staff. On a national level, over 210 jails, including several in Wisconsin, received training through the National Institute of Corrections on either Inmate Behavioral Management or Objective Jail Classification (F. Zandi, personal communication, January 15, 2009). In July, 2006, with the anticipated passage of WI

§302.36 (Wisconsin State Statutes 2008), the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (WI-DOC) sent out a non-validated survey to all 72 counties which solicited input as to current inmate classification practices. While the survey remains non-validated, the 98% return rate does allow for several generalizations to be made. Of the respondents, 51% utilized some form of classification instrument in determining offender housing assignments. Common criteria included: escape/walk away history, past institutional behavior, protective custody considerations, medical or mental health concerns, current or past assaultive felony, and gang affiliation. One area of significant variance between respondents involved the level of training for classification staff. While the most common training lasted between 4-6 hours, the least amount of training received was 30 minutes and the longest 8 hours (WI DOC Survey results, July 2006). Based upon the results of this survey, the WI-DOC convened a classification committee in September 2006, of which this author served to develop a standard for classification training program in an effort to assist county sheriff departments to meet the requirements of WI §302.36.

As a result of the work of the WI – Department of Corrections Classification committee, a standardized six-hour curriculum was developed as one method to provide consistent state-wide training for all classification officers within the 72 Wisconsin jails. Initially, a pool of trainers was created from the members of the classification committee to train classification officers throughout the state. In addition, training specific to objective classification was then incorporated into the state 160 hour jail officer training course to meet the needs of future classification officers. Although a state curriculum for classification officers has been in place for approximately one year facility,ov ercrowding remains a

concern for many jails with regard to the proper housing assignment of offenders (M. Ordinans, personal communication, September 15, 2008).

As the United States jail facilities have seen increasing inmate populations, the ability to assign inmates to appropriate housing units has become more difficult. Although objective classification of inmates began within both the California Department of Corrections and the Federal Bureau of Prisons in the 1970's, and in several state prisons systems in subsequent years, jail facilities have been slow in implementing a classification system based upon objective risk criteria. While the reasons for the delay vary, Wisconsin law has only recently changed to allow the use an objective classification system to determine the placement of those incarcerated within the state jail system (Wisconsin State Statutes, 2008).

A review of the literature suggests that there has been limited research on the impact an objective classification system has on jail management issues. Past research efforts have concentrated on reducing overcrowding (Brennan & Wells, 1995). More recent studies have focused upon gender differential in classification instrument validity (Harer & Langan, 2001) and misconduct (Wright, Salisbury, & Van Voorhis, 2007), correlation of risk factor to misconduct (Woodredge, Griffin, Pratt, 2001); validity of risk factor identification in the classification instrument (Christiansen, 2008); and correlation to recidivism (Serin, 2005). However, few studies (Demory, 2001; Brennan, 1999; Sabbatine & Leach, 1999) have been performed on the correlation between the utilization of an objective classification system and incident of offender misconduct within a jail setting.

Chapter III: Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to investigate the difference between the use of two distinctly different classification systems and the occurrence of offender misconduct within a specific Mid-West jail. In this chapter, the research setting, selection of research subjects, instrument utilized, procedure followed and method of analysis will be explored.

Research Setting and Selection Process

This research project occurred within a county correctional facility located in the Mid-Western, United States, referred to in this study as the County Jail. The rated capacity for this facility is 131, with a functional capacity of approximately 110 inmates. The current jail facility was completed in 1989, reflects indirect supervision: the prevailing supervision philosophy of the time. Unlike the newer direct supervision philosophy, indirect supervision does not allow for constant supervision by facility staff (A. Netz, personal communication, July 30, 2008). In conjunction with the revision of the Wisconsin State Law governing inmate classification within a jail setting (Wisconsin State Statute: §302.36), the County Jail Administration authorized the designation of two classification specialists for the purpose of improving the custody and housing assignment of inmates. Both classification officers who work at The Jail completed the 6-hour block of state sponsored training. A primary goal for the classification officers was to implement a classification system based upon objective criteria. Prior to having designated classification specialists, inmate classification was performed by any member of the jail staff, often resulting in an arbitrary and subjective custody assignment (A. Netz, personal communication, July 31, 2008).

According to the policy and procedures at the County Jail, each newly admitted inmate (defined as one who remains in custody for a period of 72 hours or longer) is to be assigned a custody level based upon objective criteria. This change to objective classification was implemented January 1, 2008, coinciding with the change in state law. Since that time, inmates are screened utilizing a decision tree classification instrument (see Appendix A). In conjunction with the personal background information acquired during booking, and any additional information gained though a personal interview with the inmate, the objective classification document is completed and a custody decision is assigned. While this custody determination serves as the initial classification for the inmate, reclassification may occur if a significant change occurs with any of the criteria identified on the original classification form (Wood County Classification Policy, 2008).

With ongoing overcrowding within the jail setting, the County Jail administration authorized a study to determine what effect, if any, the use of objective classification had on reducing incidents of inmate misconducts. This study was completed through analysis of existing facility data.

The mid-west jail where the study was performed is located in a county with a population of approximately 75,000 residents. The county has two urban communities which have a combined population of approximately 40,000 residents. Within the county, approximately 990 offenders are on community corrections supervision (D. Kalata, personal communication, February 10, 2009). The jail, built to its current state in 1989, has a rated capacity of 131. However, due to overcrowding an average of 77.38 offenders were housed out of county at any given time in 2007, compared to 65.35 offenders per day in 2008. Contract restrictions prohibits inmates to be housed out of county unless they are in "good

health, suffer from no major physical or mental illness, have no gang affiliations, and be free of major incident of misconduct" (M. Malooly, personal communication, February 10, 2009). In 2007, The County Jail held 2765 male offenders in comparison to 678 females, and the average length of stay was 20.96 days for any given inmate. In 2008, the number of males increased to 2896 males and 759 females. However, the average length of stay decreased to 18.57 days. It should be noted that inmates may be simply 'booked and released' or held from the time of arrest through conviction, a process that may take up to several years. The current jail computer management system does not allow for data collection based upon race, age, educational level (Malooly, personal communication, April 9, 2009).

Instrumentation (Source of Research, Data, and Methodology)

This data-base study utilized a before and after design to analyze existing facility data. Similar to Senese & Kalinich (1993); Bayens, Williams, & Smykla (1997) this method of research design appears most appropriate given both the limitations of the study (see page 7) and the research questions at issue (see page 6). A before/after study determined the total number of inmates admitted into custody between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2007 (the later date representing the final date of jail policy utilizing a classification system other than objective criteria). The same methodology was then used to determine the total number of inmates admitted into custody from January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008 (representing one year of implementation of an objective jail classification system). This data was then analyzed to determine the facility population, including classification designation of inmates for each month included in the study.

A second set of data was collected utilizing a descriptive study focusing upon two years data. Data was collected for the same time periods as identified above; however, this time the data collected focused upon the total number of inmate misconduct records. This data was then categorized first by months, and then by inmate custody level at the time of occurrence. Following the research example of Senese & Kalinich (1993) the data collected was then evaluated utilizing a Chi-square test to determine if there was significant difference in the rate of offender misconduct following implementation of objective classification.

Independent / Dependent Variables

For the purpose of this descriptive study, the dependent variable is inmate conduct. The working definition of inmate conduct for this experiment is any incident involving an inmate which is subsequently reported by staff via a comprehensive narrative on an official report. For this study, offense categorization will be consistent with the category of rule violation assigned within the jail setting; utilizing four specific categories of inmate misconduct (See Appendix B).

Independent variables that will affect the outcome of this study include method of classification procedure utilized by staff upon inmate admission, the classification designation assigned to the inmate, and fluctuating jail population. The first independent variable includes the type of classification procedure utilized when determining placement of the offender. In this study, the objective classification process utilizes a decision-tree scale in order to determine primary security level classification. Security levels include maximum, medium, and minimum, with the option of a staff override as deemed appropriate (See Appendix C). At the time of this study, the jail population was considered to be beyond rated

functional capacity, thus resulting in the shipment of inmates to neighboring counties for housing (M. Malooly, Personal Communication, February 10, 2009).

Pilot Study

Although several jails were contacted to serve in the pilot study due to a variety of reasons (budget constants, lack of staff availability to assist in the collection of inmate information, failure to respond to request, and lack of data availability) this author was unable to secure a jail to participate in a pilot study specific to the question of classification methodology. However, one area that could be piloted was the impact of an objective jail classification system instrument on the security classification of an inmate in custody.

Pilot Study Results

In an effort to evaluate the difference in classification decision based upon an objective classification instrument as compared to the traditional subjective system common in many jails across the United States, data collected within the academic classroom was utilized to determine the effectiveness of objective classification in accomplishing consistency in classification placement (a necessary component in order to minimize the limitation of classification errors). This data was collected by the researcher over the past four years while teaching a unit on Objective Jail Classification. Class size varied from 10 to 15 students; all were enrolled in the second semester of a criminal justice associate degree program. For this pilot, five male hypothetical subjects were selected varying in age from 23 to 67 years old. While their criminal and personal backgrounds varied, all were in custody for felony offenses. A pre-test format was utilized whereby the students were instructed to read

the scenario and select a custody classification for each offender based upon their knowledge and experience (subjective criteria). Options included: maximum custody, medium custody, minimum custody, or no custody (home detention). As the pre-test data reveals (Table 1), the

Table 1: Pre-Test Data

	2005	**2006**	**2007**
Case # 1:	Max = 0 Med = 60% Min = 10% n/c = 30%	Max = 15% Med = 77% Min = 8% n/c = 0	Max = 42% Med = 50% Min = 0 n/c = 8%
Case # 2:	Max = 0 Med = 70% Min = 30% n/c = 0	Max = 31% Med = 31% Min = 38% n/c = 0	Max = 8% Med = 58% Min = 34% n/c = 0
Case # 3:	Max = 30% Med = 40% Min = 20% n/c = 10%	Max = 15% Med = 62% Min = 23% n/c = 0	Max = 17% Med = 66% Min = 17% n/c = 0
Case # 4:	Max = 20% Med = 0 Min = 50% n/c = 30%	Max = 7% Med = 62% Min = 31% n/c = 0	Max = 17% Med = 8% Min = 75% n/c = 0
Case # 5:	Max = 0 Med = 10% Min = 90% n/c = 0	Max = 15% Med = 46% Min = 39% n/c = 0	Max = 0 Med = 50% Min = 50% n/c = 0

use of subjective criteria in the classification of offenders produces widely diverse results; thus, the ability to evaluate incidents of misconduct based upon subjective classification of an

offender was diminished. This finding is consistent with the finding of studies related to the effectiveness of objective classification (Bonta, 2002). Evaluation of the data collected was reviewed by simple percentage comparison. As Table 1 illustrates, the finding for each case history demonstrates the inconsistency in classification assignments when a subjective classification methodology is utilized.

The second component of this in-class learning activity (post-test) occurred after the students received approximately five hours of instruction on objective classification of offenders. Utilizing a decision-tree classification instrument (See Appendix A) the students are asked to classify the same individuals (Table 2). Unlike the results of the pre-test, the results of the post-test provided consistent results for each offender over a three-year test period. As compared to the pre-test in which significant variance in classification occurred, when presented with an objective classification instrument (see appendix A) there was 100% consensus by the students in the determination of offender classification. However, it should be noted that this in-class finding of no errors contradicts available research on the success rate of an objective classification instrument which suggests an error rate of 13% when a trained individual classifies individuals with an objective classification instrument (Bonta, 2002).

The next step of this field study was to collect data from one mid-west jail. The survey (Appendix B) was utilized to acquire the necessary data for this field study. The field study focused upon facility records related to inmate admission, classification decisions, and incidents of major misconduct for the months of January, April, July, and October for the years 2007 and 2008.

Table 2: Post-Test Data

	2005	2006	2007
Case # 1:	Max = 100% Med = 0 Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 100% Med = 0 Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 100% Med = 0 Min = 0 n/c = 0
Case # 2:	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0
Case # 3:	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0
Case # 4:	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0
Case # 5:	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0	Max = 0 Med = 100% Min = 0 n/c = 0

Assumptions of the Study

The assumptions of this study are:

1. The data was retrieved from the County Jail internal database without error. Data is compiled from one source.

2. The classification officers received formal training on Objective Jail Classification and have participated in formal periodic updates.
3. The classification officers consistently applied the classification instrument when determining initial classifications for all incoming male offenders.
4. Line staff did not use subjective criteria to change offender classifications after objective jail classification was completed by the classification officer.
5. Correctional staff submits all major conduct reports as required by policy and procedures.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study are:

1. The sample was drawn from incarcerated male inmates over a span of two years; therefore, as individual population varies, the results of this study would vary. According to O'Toole (1999), unlike prisons where the population cycles approximately every two years, a jail is believed to cycle their population on average 20-25 times during the same time period (cited in Christensen, 2008). Thus, a limitation of this study is the inability to maintain a static population census.
2. The sample was drawn from incarcerated male inmates who remained confined at the County Jail; therefore excluding inmates who were transferred to neighboring county's facilities due to overcrowding. Overcrowding within the County Jail results, on average, approximately 71.66 inmates housed 'out of county' on a daily basis throughout the data collection period. Due to contractual language

with receiving counties, the inmates who are eligible for out-of-county placement must be free of major incidents of misconduct, free of both major physical illness and/or major mental illness, and not identified as a known gang member. Therefore, the inmates remaining within the research setting do not reflect a cross-section of the inmate population had overcrowding not forced a separation by the above categories of the inmate population.

3. The inability to control history; including policy change which may alter the definition of acceptable / unacceptable behavior; thereby skewing the number of incident reports submitted by staff. Specifically, while inmate classification is now completed according to an objective database, previously tested for reliability / validity, the decision for identifying incident of offender misconduct remains subjective. Staff members are encouraged to use discretion in the disciplining of inmates. The result of discretion is inconsistent application of policy and procedures.
4. The sample data will lack consistency due to change in both inmate and staff turnover within the two year sample. Over the span of the two years of this study, change in jail leadership, line staff, and first-level supervisor positions results in the inability to maintain consistency in application of jail policy and procedure. Given the fact that the jail administrator has authority for both classification overrides and in determination of guilt in major incidents of misconduct, the change in administration results in a limitation of the consistent application of jail rules.

5. Jail data lacks consistency in the notation, or lack thereof, of classification of said offender in conduct reports. In order to maintain the privacy rights of the research subjects the ability to review the offender's classification level was limited to maximum, medium, minimum or Huber/EMP rather than the numerical category of the jail objective classification document.
6. The sample is from one specific jail. Thus, the results must be reviewed in the context of the jail which participated in the research study.

Analysis of Data

In an attempt to most effectively reflect difference between an objective classification system and incidents of inmate misconduct, this study reviewed all male inmate new admissions within the time period of the study. Exceptions from review included female offenders, those juvenile offenders age 16 or younger placed in the adult section of the jail facility, those inmates held out of county, and those inmates who were booked and released (thereby not being assigned to a housing unit). Incidents of misconduct reports generated from 'excluded' categories of offenders were removed from the final tabulation of documented inmate misconduct.

Research data was collected and reviewed from existing records in the mid-west jail. Although this mid-west jail does utilize a computerized jail management system for data entry of all new admissions, incident of misconduct remain hand-written by the reporting correctional officer. Offender population for the period of the study was retrieved from computer generated reports. For the purposes of analyzing the data of this study, a combination of simple math calculations, percentage comparison, Chi-Square analysis and

Excel correlation software were utilized. All records were reviewed with sensitivity to the human-subjects in research.

Unknowns

The plan for the field study was to utilize the same data collection instrument to gather data from the County Jail. An initial meeting was held on August 4th, 2008 with the local jail administrator in an attempt to gain facility commitment. At this meeting facility staff authorized the researcher access to the requested records. Should it become necessary, assistance of the facility classification specialists would be requested to assist in the data collection. The tentative timetable for data collection would include gathering 2007 data immediately upon authorization with 2008 data to follow. All data collection as completed by March 30, 2009.

Given the interest of the facility administrator, it was agreed to allow access to inmate admission data for the year prior to the implementation of objective classification (specifically 2007) and for the year after implementation (2008). However, given that inmate admission forms include inmate medical data, two options exist in order to meet the requirements of the UW Stout Institutional Review Board for the protection of Human Subjects in Research (UW-Stout IRB). The first options would involve a staff member manually deleting any confidential portions of the inmate's admission records prior to the researcher gaining access to the admission forms. While this would avoid the requirement of securing written permission from each inmate prior to having access to booking data, the method would require significant time from jail staff. A second method, whereby the computer screen would have paper covering the area where confidential material would be

concealed from view is considered the best method for data collection while still satisfying the requirements of UW-Stout IRB. Thus, the second option was utilized during data collection.

Chapter IV: Results and Discussion

Introduction

This study focused upon the total incident of misconduct for male offenders over the age of 16 held within one mid-west county jail facility. Facility staff provided the statistics on inmate population for each year. This researcher's task involved reviewing facility records for the number of incidents of misconduct. Although the initial intent was to limit the review of incidents of misconduct to four months in each year; due to the limited number of incidents of recorded misconduct the study was expanded to include the entire 24 months.

Data was gathered from a mid-west jail facility. Although the initial research questions focused upon facility data for four specific months in the year 2007 and 2008, for better data analysis jail records were reviewed for both years in their entirety with regard to admissions/discharges, classifications, and incident of misconduct. An objective jail classification research instrument was developed for use to gather partial data for this study. Initially, the data collection instrument was created with the intent of extracting data specific to the demographics of each offender. However, due to significant limitations with the jail management computer system in use at this jail facility, the data collection instrument was significantly altered, focusing instead upon facility-wide data. Initially, records were reviewed from the jail management system. A secondary manual retrieval was utilized by both the researcher and facility staff to gather general jail statistics.

Results

Data Retrieved from the Research Instrument as it pertains to both 2007 & 2008

Research Question 1-2: Month of admission into custody and date of inmate admission to facility being reported. The purpose of questions 1 & 2 was to establish the month and year of data being collected. Two calendar years were selected for this study; 2007 represented the 'before' implementation of an objective classification system and 2008 represented the 'after' implementation (See Table 3 & Table 4).

Research Question 3-6: Average daily population (ADP) for month identified in question #1, Number of New Admissions for month identified in question #1, Number of Releases for month identified in #1, Number of inmates held out of county for month identified in question #1: The focus for questions 3-6 was to establish a data base of offender population for each of the months selected as the focus of this research study. As data was being collected, the researcher determined that by limiting the data collection to the four months initially identified, there would not be enough incidents of misconduct to formulate conclusions. As a result, the decision was made to establish a 'year-end' total for each year (see Table 3 & Table 4).

Table 3: 2007 Facility offender population statistics:

	Admissions	Releases	ADP	ADP on EMP
January 2007	304	284	193.48	0.00
April 2007	238	258	217.07	2.25
July 2007	307	303	209.06	15.38
October 2007	283	268	201.16	12.50
Total 2007	3290	3275	203.16	11.52

**Average out of county daily population for 2007: 77.38.*

(M. Malooly, personal communication March 31, 2009 and April 9, 2009).

Table 4: 2008 Facility offender population statistics:

	Admissions	Releases	ADP	ADP on EMP
January 2008	288	278	196.35	19.80
April 2008	315	338	190.77	19.60
July 2008	303	300	195.90	15.70
October 2008	294	298	191.03	15.00
Total 2008	3495	3494	188.06	16.76

**Average out of county daily population for 2008: 18.57.*
(M. Malooly, personal communication March 31, 2009 and April 9, 2009).

As indicated in Table 3, the jail population for 2007 included 3,290 admissions in comparison to 3,275 releases. The average daily population for the year was 203.16 inmates. In comparison, the jail population for 2008 in Table 4 included 3,495 admissions in comparison to 3,494 releases. The average daily population for 2008 was 188.06; noting an 8.02% decrease from the year previous.

Correlation is concerned with describing the relationship between variables. Of interest was the correlation coefficient between the average daily population (ADP) between 2007 and 2008 for the four months of January, April, July, and October (see Table 5 below). The reason this was of interest was because they represent a random set of data from the selected mid-west jail facility. To calculate the correlation coefficient the standard Pearson Product-Moment formula (Ferguson, 1976) was used. Y would be for the ADP of 2008 and X would be the ADP for 2007. Because the ADP was higher in three of the four months in 2007 it was expected that the correlation would be low or negative. The mean and standard deviation figures were calculated utilizing the statistical package available in Microsoft Excel

(see Table 5). To Determine the correlation coefficient (r) the following formula $r = \sum ZxZy \div$ N-1 was used (see Table 6). The final correlation coefficient suggests a value of .06444

Table 5: Correlation Coefficient Calculations

	ADP 2007 (x)	x mean	x-x mean	ADP 2008 (y)	y mean	y-y mean
January	193.48	205.19	-12	196.35	193.51	2.84
April	217.07	205.19	11.88	190.77	193.51	-2.74
July	209.06	205.19	3.87	195.90	193.51	2.39
October	201.16	205.19	-4.03	191.03	193.51	-2.48

Source: Microsoft Excel, 2007

Table 6: Correlation Coefficient Calculations Standard-Score

			Standard Scores				
Z/x Numerator	Z/y Numerator	Std Dev x	Std Dev y	Z/x/std	Z/y/std	Product	N-1
12	2.84	8.795	5.236	1.364412	0.542399	0.740055	7
11.88	-2.74	8.795	5.236	1.350767	-0.5233	-0.70686	
3.87	2.39	8.795	5.236	0.440023	0.456455	0.200851	
-4.03	-2.48	8.795	5.236	-0.45821	-0.47364	0.217031	
					Sum is =>	0.45108	
					R is =>	.06444	

in inmate population between 2007 and 2008 (see Table 6); thus indicating a slightly positive correlation between the classification instrument utilized within the jail and the incident of misconduct (Slavin, 1998). Two factors may attribute to the variance in the offender population for each year. First, in April, 2007, the jail implemented a jail diversion program whereby low-risk offenders could be released from the confines of the jail via the Electronic Monitoring Program (EMP) with supervision performed primarily by a Global Positioning

System in conjunction with an electronic bracelet worn by the offender (Netz, personal communication, March 31, 2009). The second difference between the two years was the need to house female offenders out of county for the several months of 2007 due to facility overcrowding; thus allowing more fluid use of all housing units for male offenders during those months. Female offenders were housed within the jail for all of 2008; thus, reducing the ability of jail staff to distribute male offenders throughout all housing units. Each of the above mentioned factors removes two specific populations from the jail affecting the jail overall population statistics (M. Malooly, personal communication, March 31, 2009 & April 9, 2009).

Question #7: Classification procedure used during admission procedure. Prior to 2008, the County Jail utilized a subjective classification system. Prior to January 1, 2008, the law did not require the use of specific objective criteria in the housing placement of offenders. Instead, the law required offenders to be separated by gender, felon/misdemeanant, child/adult, and sentenced / un-sentenced (WI § 302.26). The result for many offenders was housing placements of offenders with very different risk and/or needs. For many facilities, the lack of consistent housing assignments led to inmate misconduct, assaults, and subsequent inmate lawsuits. Effective January 1, 2008, the jail switched to an objective classification system in order to comply with a change in Wisconsin state law which requires the use of an objective classification system in all Wisconsin jails effective January 1, 2008. Therefore, given the clear distinction between WI §302.26 and WI §302.36 there is a distinction between the method of classification and resulting data for each year with regard to offender classification.

Question #8: Maximum sanction of each misconduct category. According to data collection instrument created for this research project, incidents of misconduct are frequently categorized in four unique clusters based upon the seriousness of each type of behavior (See Appendix A). However, in gathering data for this project, this researcher learned that the County Jail selected for this study utilizes a 'major versus minor' violation categorization with specific consequences for each category (See Appendix C). Therefore, the manner in which the jail processed major incidents of inmate misconduct in comparison to minor incidents of misconduct (Appendix C) may vary somewhat from the intent of the misconduct categories identified in Appendix A.

Question 9: Identify any significant changes to jail policy, procedure, staffing, community, or inmate population that may have an impact upon the information provided for the month identified in question #1. According to the Lt. Netz, Jail Administrator, three significant changes occurred within the County Jail during the two years identified in this study. First, state law changed effective January 1, 2009 requiring all Wisconsin jails to implement an objective classification system within their county jail. As a result of this change, two members of the jail staff participated in a formal training session on objective classification. The intended outcome of this training session was to implement a standardized method of classification throughout the 72 jails in Wisconsin. Within this particular jail, two changes based upon the training included designated classification staff and a waiting period of 72-hours between point of arrival at the jail and point of time when the classification officer assigns the inmate a designated objective classification to be subsequently used for housing assignment (prior to this time, the inmate is housed in holding unless the jail capacity prevents such assignment) (A. Netz, personal communication, March 31, 2009).

In addition to the above objective classification change practice, the County Jail administrator changed effective December 17, 2007. The new administrator brought new ideas, philosophies, and policy changes to the daily operation of the county jail. In addition to changing several policies and procedures, this individual implemented a number of initiatives focusing on the rehabilitative needs of offenders. Further, he created both a Jail Mission Statement and formalized a set of Jail Goals to help guide the new initiatives (A. Netz, personal communication, March 30, 2009).

The third change which occurred during the research period involved the county sheriff implementing the use of an Electronic Monitoring Program. While it could be argued this change only affected minimum security offenders, the removal of as many as 19.80 inmates per month (January 2008) has the potential to utilize the housing units more effectively for those inmates remaining within the jail setting.

The fourth known change within the jail during the research study was associated with the actual staff. During the research period, there was staff turn-over within the jail; thus, the uniqueness of individual staff changed over the period covered by the study affected both the relationship between offenders and staff, and the manner in which incident of offender misconduct was handled by staff (M. Malooly, personal communication, March, 31, 2009).

Research Questions 10-12 (Classification): Number of assigned beds available for month identified in question #1, Assigned Classification for offenders for month identified in question #1, Housing unit populations for month identified in question #1: According to jail staff, this county jail facility does not have designated cells or cell blocks for the different classification levels. According to Malooly, "The jail needs to be more fluid so a certain

block/bed could be used for all the different classifications depending on need. Currently, this is what we have in the jail as I see its potential use" (personal conversation, March 26, 2009). In addition, due to the free text screen field within the jail management system, facility staff is unable to create a database to respond to question 11 or 12. Therefore, the availability to evaluate this group of questions proved unsuccessful in this study.

Questions 13 (Offender Misconduct): Number of incidents of offender misconducts offering within classifications for month identified in question #1: As illustrated in Tables 7 and 8 (see page 50) there is a disparity between the incidence of offender misconduct and the level of classification between the two years of the study.

As reflected within Table 7 and Table 8, there is a difference in the incidence of misconduct between identified months for both 2007 and 2008. Because there is a variance in average daily population (ADP) between the two years encompassed by this study, the data was compared by the percentage increase and/or the percentage decrease between the values of the year end incident of misconduct. Utilizing this method of review, the incidence of misconduct was reduced in both medium and minimum-Huber classification categories. Specifically, in 2008 there is a reduction of 67% with regard to incidents of misconduct in medium custody inmates. Within the minimum-Huber classification category, a reduction of 13.84% incident of offender misconduct is noted for 2008 (however, when one considers the number of incidents of misconduct in minimum-EMP classification there is no recorded difference for incidents of misconduct within the minimum security offender population). In 2008, there was an increase of 8.12% as it relates to incidents of misconduct within maximum custody inmates.

Table 7: 2007: Incident of Offender Misconduct based upon ADP for specific month

	January ADP:193.48	April ADP:211.07	July ADP:209.06	October ADP:201.16	2007 ADP:203.16
Maximum	0	0	.48% (1)	0	4.43% (9)
Medium	0	.47% (1)	0	.49% (1)	4.43%(9)
Minimum Huber	1.55% (3)	1.38% (3)	3.34% (7)	1.49% (3)	23.6% (48)
Minimum EMP	0	.47% (1)	.48% (1)	0	0
Unknown classification	0	0	0	0	.98% (2)

Note: Parenthesis is number of offender misconduct

*Table 8:*2008 Incident of Offender Misconduct based upon ADP for specific months

	January ADP: 196.35	April ADP: 190.77	July ADP: 195.90	October ADP: 191.03	2008: ADP: 188.06
Maximum	0	0	0	.52% (1)	4.79% (9)
Medium	0	0	0	0	2.65% (5)
Minimum: Huber	0	.52% (1)	1.02% (2)	1.57% (3)	20.73%(39)
Minimum EMP	0	.52% (1)	.51% (1)	0	4.78% (9)
Unknown Classification	0	0	0	0	0

Note: Parenthesis is number of offender misconduct

In order to compare the results of what was expected compared to what was observed Chi Square statistical analysis was selected to determine goodness of fit (Slavin, 1988). Utilizing Chi Square analysis data collected in both Table 7 and Table 8 (see Table 9) finds that the number of incidents of offender misconduct within one mid-west jail did decrease ($x2$ = 1.777 + 1.6875 = *3.4555)* following the implementation of objective classification. Utilizing a Chi-square formula and degrees of freedom table (Stephens, 1998, p.395), the results

suggest a goodness of fit value of .025, suggesting the findings of this data should be viewed with caution based upon the higher propensity for error given the distance from a value of 1.

Table 9: Chi Square Analysis

	Maximum	Medium	Minimum-Huber	Minimum – EMP	Total Misconduct
Actual (Fo) (2008)	9	5	39	9	62
Expected (Fe) (2007)	9	9	48	0	68
(Fo – Fe)	0	5-9 = -4	39-48= -9	9-0 = 9	
$(Fo-Fe)^2$	0	16	81	81	
$\frac{(Fo-Fe)^2}{Fe}$	$\frac{0}{9}$	$\frac{16}{9}$	$\frac{81}{48}$	$\frac{81}{0}$	

Final Calculation: $x^2 = 0 + 1.777 + 1.6875 + 0 = 3.4555$

Question 14: For the month identified in this survey, identify the most serious incident resulting in a disciplinary report for each of the four categories and the sanction imposed: Due to the disparity between the Mid-West County Jail disciplinary system and the Objective Classification disciplinary classifications outlined within Appendix A, the result to question 14 must be viewed with caution. In addition, based upon the lack of ranking in severity within a category, a definitive answer cannot be written. However, a review of all disciplinary records for the two years of this study finds that inmates within each of the three primary classifications engaged in misbehavior in direct violation of the categories 1-3 of misconduct (See Table 10). Offenses involving the physical assault to staff or inmates (category 1 offense) occurred in both maximum and minimum-Huber classified inmates.

Common offender behavior within all classification levels involved actions in direct violation of staff orders or else engaged in behavior that threatened the security or order of the facility (Category 2 offenses). With the exception of minimum security Huber and/or EMP offenders, who frequently had unexcused absences from work or assignment, there were no reported category 3 offenses for maximum or medium security offenders. Further, there were no recorded incidences of Category 4 offenses for any classification in 2007 or 2008. Disciplinary sanctions appeared to follow the jail disciplinary records (see Appendix C), which coincided with the level of severity of the offense, the classification for which the offender was in at time of incident, and number of prior incidences of misconduct.

Table 10: Incidence of Misconduct by Classification, Year, and Category of Misconduct

Offender Classification Year	Category 1 2007/2008	Category 2 2007/2008	Category 3 2007/2008	Category 4 2007/2008
Maximum	3 / 3	6 / 6	0 / 0	0 / 0
Medium	0 / 0	9 / 4	0 / 1	0 / 0
Minimum	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0
Minimum Huber	6 / 10	21 / 17	21 / 12	0 / 0
Minimum EMP	0 / 0	0 / 3	0 / 6	0 / 0
Unknown Classification	0 / 0	2 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0

Question #15: Identify any significant changes to jail policy, procedure, staffing, community, or inmate population that may have an impact upon the information provided for the month identified in question #1 regarding inmate misconduct: In speaking with both the jail administrator and jail sergeant, there appears to be no significant changes over the span

of two years outside of the information provided in response to question 8 that would impact incidence of offender misconduct.

Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

Throughout much of recent history, academic research within the criminal justice field has focused upon the prison system, including research focused upon offender classification. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the use of two distinctly different classification systems and the occurrence of offender misconduct in a county jail setting. This study explored the impact of an objective classification system on the overall incident of misconduct within one Mid-West county jail facility. This study utilized a before and after design; central to this study was the change in Wisconsin law requiring all county jails to begin the use of an objective classification system effective January 1, 2008. With the change in Wisconsin law, the Wisconsin Department of Corrections Office of Detention Specialists expressed an interest in learning whether the use of objective classification within a Wisconsin jail would impact incident of offender misconduct. As a result, a Central Wisconsin jail agreed to participate in this study.

A review of literature focused on the effect of an objective classification system in relation to the incidence of offender misconduct within a correctional setting. Of the studies reviewed, Flanagan (1983), Senese & Kalinich (1993), and Forcier (1992) were able to attribute classification methodology as a contributing factor in reducing offender misconduct. Studies completed within specific jail systems included Ocean City, New Jersey (Brennen, 1999), Lexington-Fayette, Kentucky (Sabbatine & Leach, 1999), and Kent County, Michigan (Demory, 2001).

This study focused upon the data from one mid-west county jail facility. This particular jail was selected based upon the administrator's willingness to participate in an academic research study and the close proximity to the researcher. A vital piece to the study was the timing of the change in classification methodology used within the jail. Therefore a significant factor in the selection process of the mid-west jail used in this study is the fact that the chosen jail waited until January 1, 2008, to implement objective classification. A research instrument developed by this writer was utilized to gather partial data (See Appendix C). The study was limited to male offenders over the age of 17 who were admitted into custody and detained in the selected county jail between the dates of January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2008. This potential participant pool was further narrowed to the months of January, April, July, and October for each year. The two calendar years were intentionally selected because they represented the year before and immediately after the implementation of WI § 302.36 requiring the use of an objective classification of inmates in all Wisconsin jail facilities.

Additional limitations of this study included the lack of data, the inability to control history of how staff perceived and responded to incidents of offender misconduct, the turnover in both jail staff and inmate population, the limitations of the jail management system, and the lack of detail recorded in offender misconduct reports.

In the end, all recorded incidents of offender misconduct occurring over a span of two years were reviewed. In addition, admission and release data was reviewed. This material was then utilized in an attempt to respond to each research question.

Conclusions

In this section, each research question will be restated and answered.

Research Question 1

The first research question was to investigate to what extent does the use of an objective jail classification impact incidence of offender misconduct? Given the limited incident of misconduct occurring (and recorded) within each of the four identified months in the study, it was decided to expand the collection of data to include both complete years (see Table 11). Although the number of admissions increased during 2008, the ADP decreased by an average of 15.1 inmates per day (See Table 7 and Table 8). Even with the decrease in the number of inmates in custody, records reviewed from the mid-west jail facility for the time span of this study do reflect a decrease in the total number of incidents of misconduct from 68 recorded misconduct incidents in 2007 to 62 recorded misconduct incidents in 2008. Utilizing a Chi Square analysis to review the data found that the number of incidents of offender misconduct within one mid-west county jail did decrease *(x2 = 3.4555)* following the implementation of objective classification.

Table 11: Incident of Misconduct by Year & Classification

	Total Admissions	Maximum	Medium	Minimum-Huber	Minimum – EMP	Total Misconduct
2007	3290	9	9	48	0	68
2008	3495	9	5	39	9	62

Note: EMP was implemented in April 2007. In addition, in 2007 there were two incidents of misconduct for which the offender's classification was unknown at the time of incidence.

Research Question 2

The second research question focused upon the effect of an objective jail classification system in the reduction of offender misconduct within the three primary

classification categories. While facility staff had previously assigned each offender into Maximum, Medium, Minimum, and Minimum-Huber or Minimum-EMP classifications, there was no method available to further delineate this group into the eight classification categories identified in the mid-west jail facilities classification document due to limitations with the jail management (computer) system. The current document utilized to record incident of offender misconduct does not require the reporting officer to document the classification of the offender. In addition, while several conduct reports did reflect the housing unit at the time of incident (allowing the researcher to utilize a housing unit chart to determine the housing unit classification); the form itself lacks a space for either assigned housing unit or offender classification. At the present time, there is no requirement for jail staff to include housing unit or classification designation on conduct reports.

A review of facility data does suggest a reduction of offender misconducts in the year following the implementation of objective jail classification (See Table 7 and Table 8). This conclusion must be reviewed with caution given the limitations of the study. As previously mentioned in this study, the average length of stay for an inmate during the time of the study was 19.76 days. In addition, O'Toole (2002) found that the offender population within a jail setting changes 20-25 times over a span of two years (as cited in Christianson, 2008, p. 12). Thus, it is unlikely that the inmates held in custody remained exact for the two time periods used for this study resulting in two different inmate populations being studied.

Due to the use of another county jail to handle overcrowding, the removal of women from the facility for a prolonged period in 2007 and the implementation of EMP in April 2007 resulted in a change to the cross section used for this study. Further, the change in both line staff and jail administrator during the period of the study limits the likelihood that inmate

misconduct was handled similarly throughout both years. Finally, jail management admitted that they learned in the process of participating in this study that they have lacked consistency in the documentation of both inmate characteristics at both time of intake and at the time of incident of misconduct, thereby limiting the data available for retrieval for this study. Even withstanding these limitations, when the data was analyzed utilizing statistical methodology, the results were unable to prove a specific connection between incident of misconduct and method of classification. Therefore, the findings for research question two must be viewed with caution.

Research Question 3

The final research question focused upon what effect, if any, the use of an objective jail classification system has on the number of offenders held in custody; what is the correlation in the reduction of offender misconduct?

In order to answer research question three, several variables must be taken into consideration. First, the average daily population (ADP) must be reviewed for each year. In 2007, the ADP for the four months of the review was 205.19; in comparison in 2008 the ADP was 193.51 (a reduction of 11.68 offenders). The correlation coefficient (found utilizing Microsoft Excel) suggests a .06444 variance for the ADP. This figure reflects a weak positive correlation due to the small amount of data available from this particular jail facility. On the surface, this reduction of inmates in custody correlates to the time period for implementation of an objective classification system; however, outside variables not considered as part of this research project may impact the overall jail population including: incidents of arrests, incidents of probation/parole holds, economic conditions impacting the

ability of offenders to post bond, philosophy of both law enforcement officials and criminal court judges, among others. Therefore, to limit the review of research question three to only the impact of an objective classification system on the number of offenders in custody would be inappropriate given the number of external variables not part of this study.

The results of this study must be reviewed with caution. Even though the data collected found fewer than anticipated incidents of misconduct in both the 'before' sample and the 'after' sample, it does appear that the use of an objective classification system within one mid-west county jail did reduce the overall number of incidents of offender misconduct. However, because of uncontrollable variables, there are clear limitations in the ability to correlate the findings to the actual objective classification assigned to the offender; instead the broad categories of maximum, medium, and minimum security had to be utilized. In addition, due to the lack of specifically designated classification housing units, this researcher was unable to correlate incident of misconduct to housing unit assignment with the exception of Huber/EMP or High Maximum (as delineated by holding cell notation on a conduct report).

The results of this study were unexpected. Going into this research study, it was believed that there would be sufficient data available for review, including but not limited to age, educational level, housing unit assignment, etc. all of which have been found to correlate to incidents of offender misconduct. In addition, going into this study this researcher anticipated higher incidents of misconduct occurring within this particular jail. In previous research on classification within the jail setting, three uniquely different facilities saw a reduction of inmate misconduct following the implementation of an objective classification system. However, within this research study, there was limited data recorded by jail staff at

both intake and at the time of incident of misconduct. Available documentation appeared to fall far short of what was hoped at the onset of this research study. The result of limited documentation within the jail management system and on inmate disciplinary reports made conclusive findings extremely difficult. However, readers of this study may conclude that the use of objective classification within in county jail setting holds promise in the ability to reduce incident of offender misconduct.

Recommendations

A reflection of the study finds a number of lessons to be learned. First, any individual planning to complete a research study should be reminded of the importance of completing a pilot study in either a location similar to the actual site or as an alternative at the actual research site. This lesson cannot be overstated. A complete pilot study in this study would have saved valuable time, would have allowed for an accountability check in the accuracy of the data instrument (a second needed to be created once the study was underway in order to take into account the limitations of data available), and modifications could have been made earlier in the study with regard to the focus of data collection. In addition, a meeting with the administrator to review facility protocol for data collection would have been helpful as the study progressed. Further, all calculations for this study were completed manually. The use of an electronic statistical package would have saved significant time even given the size of this study. Finally, a valuable lesson for any researcher is to avoid personal assumptions throughout the study. Often a research area is selected based upon the interest or knowledge of the researcher. In this case, some of the limitations encountered as the study progressed were the result of the bias and assumptions of the researcher.

As agreed upon at the outset of this research project, the results of this study will be shared with the mid-western jail utilized within this study. In addition, a copy of this study will be forwarded to the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Office of Detention Specialists to be shared as deemed appropriate with Wisconsin jail personnel.

Recommendations Related to Study

It is recommended that the management of the selected mid-western jail take steps to incorporate the classification designation into the Jail Management System (JMS) in a manner that allows for easier retrieval for statistical analysis. Once incorporated into the JMS, facility staff will be more likely to utilize the classification designation in housing unit assignment.

1. It is recommended that the management of the selected mid-western jail utilize the results of this study to evaluate the placement of offenders in minimum security (specifically, in both minimum-Huber and minimum EMP) given the minimal difference in incidents of misconduct following the implementation of objective classification.
2. It is recommended that the documentation utilized by this mid-west county jail to report incidents of misconduct be reviewed and revamped to include consideration for the recording of housing assignments and inmate classification at the time of misconduct.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. It is recommended that further studies similar to this one be completed within other similar-sized jail settings. As indicated in the Chapter 2 literature review, much of the existing research focuses upon the effect of classification within a prison setting.
2. It is recommended that further studies similar to this one be completed within a larger jail setting. This research study was completed within a jail with an ADP of 188 offenders (2008 statistic). After accounting for those individuals held out of county or on the Electronic Monitoring Program the ADP within the facility proper (the focus of this research project), the number of research subjects was too small in size to draw conclusions.
3. It is recommended that further studies be completed which incorporate multiple facilities data into one research project. Two options are available for this recommendation. One alternative for future study would be the selection of multiple similar size facilities for use in a comparison study. It is hoped that by utilizing multiple facilities,a lar ger amount of data would be available for analysis. Or, as an alternative, a study comparing data from various size facilities (small, medium, and large jail) with the intent of comparing the success of objective classification between various size jail facilities. A comparison study may assist jail administers from various size jails as they evaluate the viability of an objective classification system. Second, a comparison study may help address several of the limitations identified in this study.

In the end, the use of Chi Square statistical analysis was unable to conclude with any level of certainty a reduction in the incidents of offender misconduct and classification methodology.

Unfortunately, limiting the research study to one jail limited the amount of data available for analysis. Thus, it is recommended that continued academic studies be completed which attempt to connect incidents of offender misconduct and offender classification methodology.

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Appendix A:

Decision Tree Classification Instrument

Source: Wood County Sheriff Department

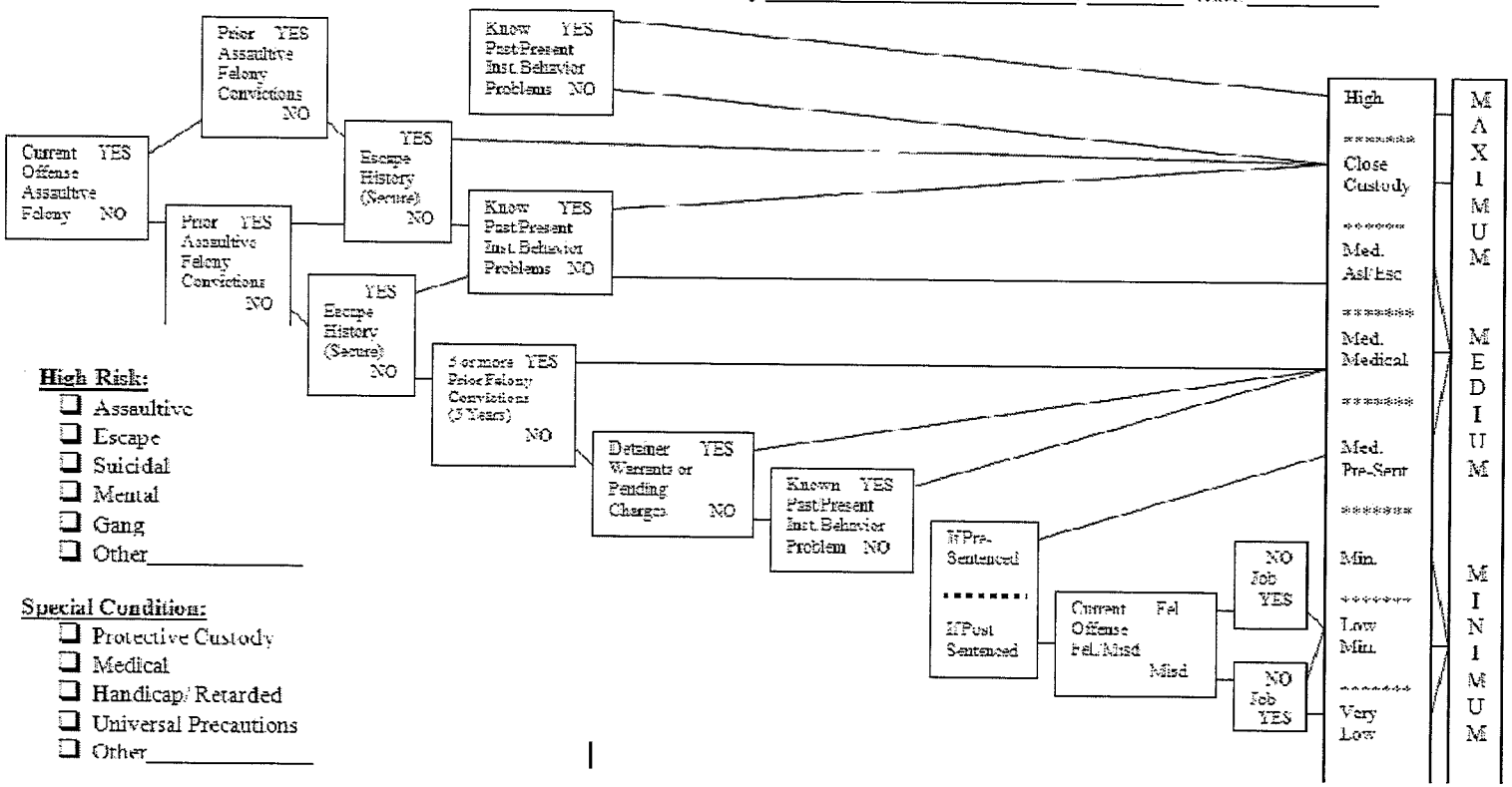
Wood County Jail Primary Classification

Name:_____ File#_____ DOB:__/__/__ Race:_____ Sex:_____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Charges: 1)_____ 2)_____ 3)_____ Age:_____

WI ID#_____ Override/Reason_____

Classified by:_____ #_____ Date:_____



High Risk:

- ☐ Assaultive
- ☐ Escape
- ☐ Suicidal
- ☐ Mental
- ☐ Gang
- ☐ Other_____

Special Condition:

- ☐ Protective Custody
- ☐ Medical
- ☐ Handicap/ Retarded
- ☐ Universal Precautions
- ☐ Other_____

Appendix B

Research Instrument
Facility-Wide Offender Data

Objective Jail Classification Instrument

Title: *Objective Jail Classification: The Impact of Reducing Offender Misconduct in a Mid-Western County Jail Facility.*

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Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in a research study on the effectiveness of objective jail classification in reducing incidents of offender misconduct within a jail facility. This research instrument has received the authorization and support of the XXXXX County Jail Administrator.

To ensure consistency of responses, the intent is for each research instrument to be completed by the facility classification specialist or designee.

Given the volume of inmates being admitted into jail custody, this research project will focus on the incident of offender misconduct within the jail facility during four specific months in each of the two identified years. Information will be gathered through a research instrument on four selected months during the calendar year *prior* and *following* the implementation of objective jail classification. Data will be gathered on the classification, placement, and incident of misconduct on male offenders housed within the County Jail during the months of January, April, July, and October for the calendar year 2007 and 2008.

The results of this research instrument will be utilized to determine the effect of an objective jail classification system on incidents of offender misconduct. A secondary focus of this research will be the identification of classification designation when offender misconduct occurs.

Time Commitment: Approximately 30 minutes per month. *Note: exception will be if the specific month had an unusual number of admissions or incidents of misconduct.*

Confidentiality: Your name is not collected on this research document and no participant names will be seen by the investigator at any point in this study. To avoid duplication, the inmate booking number will be used as the identifying designation; the research investigator does not have access to the actual inmate name.

Right to Withdraw: While participation in this research study is voluntary, if your facility has made the decision to no longer participate in this research project I would appreciate being informed of that decision.

IRB Approval: This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin – Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined this study meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and university policies. If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the investigator or advisor.

Statement of Consent: By completing the following survey found in this booklet, you agree to participate in a study entitled, *Objective Jail Classification: The Impact of Reducing Offender Misconduct in a Mid-Western County Jail Facility.*

Objective Jail Classification Instrument

Jail Demographics:

1. Month of admission into custody:
    a. January.
    b. April.
    c. July.
    d. October.
    e. Other (if other, discontinue survey).

2. Date of inmate admission to facility being reported:
    a. Between January 1, 2007 - December 31, 2007.
    b. Between January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008
    c. Other (If other is selected, discontinue survey).

3. Average Daily population for month identified in question 1:

    _____

4. Number of New Admissions for month identified in question 1:

    _____

5. Number of Releases for month identified in question 1:

    _____

6. Number of inmates held *out of county* for month identified in question 1:

    _____

7. Classification procedure utilized during admission procedure:
    a. Objective classification (continue with question 8).
    b. Other (if other, respond to question 7a).

    7a. If objective classification was *not utilized*, the primary reason for variance was:
        a. Lack of an available classification officer.
        b. WI State Statute did not require the use of Objective Classification.
        c. Other: _____

8. Maximum sanction of each misconduct category (see supplemental document):
    a. Category 1: _____
    b. Category 2: _____
    c. Category 3: _____
    d. Category 4: _____

9. Identify any significant changes to jail policy, procedure, staffing, community, or inmate population that may have an impact upon the information provided for the month identified in question 1:

_____

_____

_____

Classification:

For each of the following questions you are asked to provide the necessary data in the appropriate columns:

10. Number of assigned beds available for month identified in question 1:

Objective Jail Classification	Number of Beds
High 1	
Close Custody 2	
Medium: assault/escape 3	
Medium 4	
Medium: Presentence 5	
Minimum 6	
Low Minimum 7	
Very Low 8	

11. Assigned classification of offenders for month identified in Question 1:

Objective Jail Classification	Number of Inmates
High 1	
Close custody 2	
Medium: assault/escape 3	
Medium 4	
Medium: Presentence 5	
Minimum 6	
Low Minimum 7	
Very Low 8	

12. Housing Unit Populations for month identified in Question 1:

Housing Unit Population	Number of Inmates
Maximum	
Medium	
Minimum	
Minimum - Home Detention	
Minimum – EMP	

Offender Misconduct:

For the following question you are asked to provide the necessary data in the appropriate columns:

13. Number of incidents of offender misconducts occurring within classifications for month identified in question 1 (page 5 and 6 for disciplinary scale):

Objective Jail Classification	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
High 1				
Close Custody 2				
Medium: assault/escape 3				
Medium 4				
Medium: Presentence 5				
Minimum 6				
Low Minimum 7				
Very Low 8				

14. For the month identified in this survey, identify the most serious incident resulting in a disciplinary report for each of the four categories of misconduct and the sanction imposed (refer to the disciplinary scale found within supplemental handout):

Category of Misconduct	Classification of Inmate Involved in Incident	Location of Incident of Misconduct	Sanction Imposed	Most Serious Misconduct
Category 1				
Category 2				
Category 3				
Category 4				

15. Identify any significant changes to jail policy, procedure, staffing, community, or inmate population that may have an impact upon the information provided for the month identified in question 1 regarding inmate misconduct:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Disciplinary Severity Scale:

Category 1:

a. Assaulting any person.
b. Fighting with another person.
c. Threatening another with bodily harm, or any other offense against his person or property.
d. Extortion, blackmail, protection, demanding or receiving money or anything of value in return for protection.
e. Engaging in sexual acts with others.
f. Making sexual propositions or threats to another.
g. Escape.
h. Attempting or planning escape.
i. Setting a fire.
j. Tampering with or blocking any locking device.
k. Adulteration of any food or drink.
l. Possession or introduction of any explosive or ammunition.
m. Possession of contraband or weapon.
n. Rioting.
o. Encouraging others to riot.
p. Engaging in, or encouraging, a group demonstration.
q. Giving or offering any official or staff member a bribe or anything of value.
r. Giving of money, or anything of value to, or accepting money or anything of value from, a prisoner, a member of his family, or friend.

Category 2:

a. Destroying, altering, or damaging government property or the property of another.
b. Stealing.
c. Misuse of authorized medication.
d. Loaning of property or anything of value for profit or increased return.
e. Possession of anything not authorized for retention or receipt through regular institutional channels.
f. Encouraging others to refuse to work or to participate in work stoppage.
g. Refusing to obey an order of any staff member.
h. Insolence towards a staff member.
i. Lying or providing false statement to a staff member.
j. Conduct that disrupts or interferes with the security or orderly running of the institution.
k. Counterfeiting, Forging, or unauthorized reproduction of any document, article, identification, money, security, or official paper.
l. Participating in unauthorized meeting or gathering.
m. Failure to stand for count.
n. Interfering with the taking of count.
o. Making intoxicants or being intoxicated.
p. Tattooing or self-mutilation.

Category 3:

a. Indecent exposure.
b. Mutilating or altering issued clothes.
c. Refusing to work.
d. Unexcused absence from work or any assignment.
e. Malingering or feigning illness.
f. Failure to perform work as instructed by supervisor.
g. Being in unauthorized area.
h. Using abusive or obscene language.
i. Unauthorized use of mail or telephone.
j. Unauthorized contacts with the public.
k. Correspondence or conduct with a visitor in violation of posted regulation.

Category 4:

a. Wearing a disguise or mask.
b. Failure to follow safety or sanitation guidelines.
c. Using any equipment or machinery contrary to instructions or posted safety standards.
d. Smoking.
e. Gambling, preparing, or conducting a gambling pool, possession of gambling paraphernalia.
f. Being unsanitary or untidy, failure to keep one's person and quarters in accordance with posted standards.

Appendix C:
Mid-West County Jail Rules as they Pertain to Disciplinary Procedures

Type of Punishment:

Minor violations:

1. Verbal Reprimand
2. Written Reprimand
3. Restriction of privilege for 24 hours or less
4. Placement in punitive segregation for 24 hours or less.

Major violation:

1. Lock down not to exceed 10 days per rule violation.
2. Restriction of commissary.
3. Restriction of television.
4. Loss of good time (not to exceed 2 days per violation)
5. Loss of Huber / work release if violation occurred while exercising this privilege (not to exceed 5 days per violation, unless a court hearing is set for total revocation of this privilege).
6. Loss of trustee status if violation occurred while on trustee status
7. Restriction of visitation (other than clergy and attorney).

Rules and Disciplinary Action (categories):

A. Offenses Against Person:
   1. Offenses with punishment up to 10 days lock down (major violation)
      a. Assaults
      b. Fighting
      c. Sexual acts with others
      d. Threatening anyone including extortion, blackmail and protection)

   2. Offenses with punishments up to five days lock down
      a. Threatening conduct.
      b. Excessive and/or obscene verbal behavior.

B. Offenses Against Property:
   1. Offenses with up to 10 days lock down
      a. Theft
      b. Damage or destruction of property (by fire or other means)
      c. Rioting
      d. Possession of Money
      e. Possession of another person's property
      f. Writing on walls or furniture, attaching pictures to walls or furniture, covering lights, knocking lights out, covering windows, covering or limiting jail staff observation of cell areas or otherwise defacing any county owned property.

C. Offenses Impeding the Administration of Justice within the Wood County Jail:
   1. Offenses with punishment up to 10 days lock down.
      a. Lying or making false statements.
      b. Offering a bribe or anything of value to any official or staff member.

D. Offenses Posing a Threat to the Security and Order of the Wood County Jail:
   1. Offenses with punishment up to 10 days lock down.
      a. Creating a disturbance.
      b. Willful disobedience of a valid order and/or the rules.
      c. False alarm
      d. Escape, attempted escape, or planning an escape.
      e. Interfering with the court
      f. Possession or introduction of weapons, explosives, or unauthorized tools
      g. Setting fires
      h. Tampering with locking devices
      i. Wearing or making a disguise or mask
      j. Being in an unauthorized area
      k. Possession or making forged documents
      l. Failure to cooperate with a search of your person or property at any time
      m. Making annoying, threatening, or obscene phone calls
      n. Being on a bed or in a cell other than your own
      o. Failure to cooperate with the inmate counts or attempting to create false count
      p. Use of profanity toward the jail staff or official
      q. Making threats to the jail staff

E. Offenses against Health, Safety, and Miscellaneous
   1. Offenses with punishment up to 10 days lock down:
      a. Creating a health, safety, or fire hazard
      b. Being out of an assigned place
      c. Possession of or introduction of contraband
      d. Possession of narcotics, drug paraphernalia or alcohol
      e. Misuse of medication
      f. Being intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol or unauthorized drugs
      g. Violating a condition of the Huber/work release program
      h. Failure to follow orders/directions of staff member

   2. Offenses with punishment up to 5 days lock down:
      a. Refusing to maintain and clean your cell
      b. Adulteration of food or drink / making of intoxicants
      c. Follow safety or sanitation regulations
      d. Unauthorized contacts with the public (in courts or in transport)
      e. Malingering or feigning an illness
      f. Abuse of privileges
      g. Gambling

3. Offenses that lead to the removal of inmate worker status:
   a. Failure to report to work
   b. Failure to do work in an acceptable way
   c. Inappropriate attitude and/or behavior toward work and/or jail staff
   d. Violations of other jail rules or regulations

F. Other Circumstances for Lockdown:
   1. By request of the inmate
   2. Investigation of criminal activity
   3. Shakedown of units and sections of the Wood County jail
   4. Upon order of the sheriff or jail administrator when a security factor is present

Any rule infraction may be considered by the jail staff to be a MINOR violation if no actual physical encounter occurred, no actual damage occurred, it was the first violation of the rules and the staff feels that a minor punishment would not unduly lesson the seriousness of the violation.

Any rule violation not listed under the discipline section will be considered a MINOR violation. Any repeated violation of those activities will then be considered a MAJOR violation and be subject to the 5 day lock down.

Source: Wood County Policy and Procedures: Jail Rules – 215, series 200 (June 23, 2005), 14-18.

Appendix D:

Comparison of Research Question to Survey Questions

Research Question	Appendix B Corresponding Survey Question
1. To what extend does the use of objective jail classification impact incidence of offender misconduct	13, 14, 15
2. How does the use of objective jail classification impact the incident of major offender's misconduct within the three primary classification categories?	13, 14, 15
3. How does the use of an objective jail classification impact the number of offenders held in custody; thus, is there a correlation in the reduction of offender misconduct?	7, 10, 11,12