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Trends In The Community Supervision Population Of The United States: An Analysis Of Race, Gender, And Region's Effect On Probation And Parole

Patricia Bynum
Wayne State University,

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**TRENDS IN THE COMMUNITY SUPERVISION POPULATION OF THE
UNITED STATES: AN ANALYSIS OF RACE, GENDER, AND REGION'S
EFFECT ON PROBATION AND PAROLE**

by

PATRICIA BYNUM

THESIS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	ii
List of Figures.....	v
List of Tables.....	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	4
<i>History and politics</i>	4
<i>Race</i>	6
<i>Gender</i>	8
<i>Region</i>	9
<i>Hypotheses</i>	10
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	11
<i>Data sources</i>	11
<i>Data processing & calculation</i>	12
<i>Dependent variable</i>	13
<i>Independent variables</i>	13
<i>Descriptive/analytic methods</i>	15
Chapter 4: Results.....	16
<i>Trend</i>	16
<i>Regression analysis</i>	18
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion.....	22
<i>Limitations</i>	23
<i>Conclusion</i>	26

References.....	27
Abstract.....	31
Autobiographical Statement.....	32

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Bar of the United States correctional populations 1990-2010.....17

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Summary of regression analysis for race.....	20
Table 2: Summary of regression analysis for gender.....	20
Table 3: Summary of regression analysis for region.....	20
Table 4: Summary of multiple regression analysis for race, gender, and region.....	21

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

The growth of the community supervision population in the United States has mirrored the expansion of the incarcerated population. Community supervision has traditionally referred to probation or parole as the foundations of community-based alternatives to incarceration (Wodahl & Garland, 2009). Probation was defined as the community-based supervision of a convicted individual under specific conditions for a given time period; the courts hold the authority to modify the guidelines or resentence the offender for any violations of the conditions imposed (Alarid, 2015). Probation as a community-based sanction has seen use as an alternative sentence in lieu of jail or prison; the primary motive of probation was originally rehabilitation and reintegration into society (Alarid, 2015). Parole was the early release of an offender from a correctional facility based on particular conditions met; the individual still followed conditions post-release while under supervision in the community (Alarid, 2015). Other intermediate sanctions of community corrections, such as halfway houses and house arrest, were routinely relegated under probation and parole as ‘umbrella’ terms (U.S. Department of Justice, 1989). In the last two decades, community supervision—probation and parole in particular—has been the focus for a small number of studies interested in the growth of the United States corrections population(s).

This study sought to answer two questions: 1) How can the trend of growth for the United States community supervision population from 1990–2010 be examined and described? 2) What potential does race, gender, and region have in predicting the likelihood of a higher ratio of individuals entering community supervision over incarceration by state? Studying this topic was important because of the lack of existing

literature focusing on the potential that race, gender, and region have as predictors in determining the ratio of individuals entering community supervision compared to incarceration, and examining how the community supervision population was affected—if at all—by legal developments and time.

The majority of previous studies focused on the various short- and long-term effects of incarceration, with very little mention of the community supervision populations (DeMichele, 2014). Also, in most studies, race and gender were only used as demographic factors to categorize samples, which ignored the potential of these characteristics as predictors. By studying the community supervision population and these less common predictors, future research could allow for other rarely examined variables to be examined. For example, observing the significance of region on the community supervision population could allow for further research into how policies/location-based practices may affect corrections.

Determining if race or gender has a significant impact on the ratio of individuals under community supervision could reinforce any current or future findings that an individuals' demographics do impact corrections population growth. The significance of presenting the trend of growth for community supervision was that proper documentation of the number of individuals admitted into probation and/or parole could help with future projections for financial and spatial reasons. Also, examining the trend of growth could aid in the reevaluation of corrections practices to determine what areas need the restructuring of facilities and guidelines.

The current study had two goals. The first goal was to display and describe the trend of growth in the community supervision populations from 1990 and 2010. Past

figures and tables provided by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) hinted at a positive trend of growth for the United States' community supervision population, particularly in the 2000s; this study wanted to examine and verify this increase in population over the span of two decades. The second goal was to test the potential significance of race, gender, and region in determining the likelihood of individuals entering the community supervision population over the incarcerated population by state. It was hypothesized that particular subcategories of the three predictors—particularly African Americans, females, and the Western region—would have the most influence on the likelihood of individuals gaining admittance into community supervision compared to incarceration by state. Previous literature has offered qualitative (and very little quantitative) evidence that supported these predictions, but this study tested the hypotheses qualitatively/quantitatively to gain a better understanding of the likelihood(s). The use of a multiple regression analysis was vital in establishing whether or not the predictors were significant.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

Previous literature described the evolution of community corrections as a vital component of the criminal justice system. Probation and parole as ‘go-to alternatives’ for incarceration was the primary focus of several studies, especially those interested in the dilemma of mass incarceration/prison overcrowding. The current study focused on determining the statistical significance of three predictors—race, gender, and region—based on the likelihood of an individual’s admittance into community supervision over incarceration. The ratios used in this study were calculated by state, which included the District of Columbia. A handful of studies reported direct or indirect evidence regarding the potential relationships that race, gender, and region had with community supervision; the background of community supervision—parole and probation—and the evidence mentioned are discussed below.

History and Politics

The historical purpose of probation and parole was to establish the supervision and rehabilitation of inmates within the community instead of short- or long-term imprisonment within correctional facilities (Wodahl & Garland, 2009). Parole saw greater use with indeterminate sentencing. Indeterminate sentencing was established initially to allow the tailoring of sentences to meet offenders’ needs; parole worked well with this type of sentencing because it encouraged the hope of early release and allowed continued supervision/treatment of offenders within in the community (Wodahl & Garland, 2009). Probation, as a practice, benefitted from acting as an alternative sentencing option to incarceration; this allowed for further refinement in the individualized treatment of offenders (Wodahl & Garland, 2009). In addition, both forms

of community supervision practices benefitted other individuals—judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys—within the criminal justice system, as it expedited the process of offenders pleading guilty in order to obtain plea bargains and helped to keep offenders out of prison (Wodahl & Garland, 2009).

Models that focused on the individualized supervision and treatment of offenders in the community were favored during the 1950s and 1960s. These models included the clinical and rehabilitative models, which also coincided with the development of a variety of intermediate sanctions—such halfway houses and electronic monitoring—that were now considered staples in community correction practices (Wodahl & Garland, 2009). In the 1970s and 1980s, probation and parole were criticized for the amount of discretion and lack of effectiveness following the rehabilitative ideal (Wodahl & Garland, 2009).

As a new penal ideology arose in the late 1970s, retribution and the incapacitation of offenders became the primary focus in the corrections system instead of the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders (Wodahl & Garland, 2009). This new ideology coincided with the establishment of new legislation that promoted harsher punishments for offenders. This included the abandonment of indeterminate sentencing [in most states], mandatory prison laws/policies for most property-, drug, or firearm-related offenses, and three-strike laws/policies (Austin, 2016). Probation and parole were considered lenient alternatives to incarceration that favored the offender over victims, which reduced public support for community corrections during the 1970s and 1980s (Wodahl & Garland, 2009).

In the 1990s and 2000s, community supervision experienced renewed interest from politicians and the criminal justice system. The shift to mass incarceration caused

major issues within the criminal justice system; one of the most notable was prison overcrowding. With record growth in the population of offenders housed in correctional facilities due to the new legislation, many states were eventually pressured to reduce their correctional populations due to conflicts with the Eighth Amendment; also, even when new facilities opened, institutions were quickly overwhelmed by the sheer number of offenders (Wodahl & Garland, 2009).

One study examined the recent legal developments focused on the reduction of prison populations in the United States. States such as California passed legislation to divert inmates who had no violent criminal history and/or weapon-related offenses into community supervision (Austin, 2016). The selected individuals were also no longer eligible to serve their sentences within state correctional facilities (Austin, 2016). Examples of the legislation included California's Proposition 36 and Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement Program, which focused on diverting and aiding drug offenders with nonviolent criminal history (King, 2009). Roughly five million adults were reported to be under community supervision in the United States, exceeding the current incarcerated population of the United States (DeMichele, 2014; Wodahl & Garland, 2009).

Race

Upon review, previous literature displayed evidence of a potential relationship between race and the likelihood of an individual entering community supervision rather than incarceration. Race was defined as any category that a person or persons could be ethnically identified as (Fearn et al., 2016). Race/ethnicity could consist of several subcategories, including Caucasian, African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian

(Fearn et al., 2016). African Americans were the primary group of interest in previous studies because of their overrepresentation in the corrections system; 41% of all reported offenders were African American (Lee, Bank, McBeath, & Newell, 2015).

The ‘war on drugs’ during the 1980s was considered a significant event that shifted the racial makeup of the corrections population. For instance, African Americans were more likely to be charged with drug sales or possession than non-African Americans—27% compared to 4%—even when taking into account other sociodemographic factors, such as education and employment (Rosenberg, Groves, & Blankenship, 2017). The implications of the findings from previous literature—including the current shift in political policies for correctional practices and the impact of race on arrest/sentencing (p. 5)—were that more African American offenders would be considered eligible for probation/parole compared to other ethnic groups.

Regarding non-African Americans, previous studies reported little evidence that supported a potential relationship. One study noted that Asian Americans, Hispanic/Latino, and Native Americans in particular were an oddity due to the lack of scholarly research on their presence in the criminal justice system (Lee et al., 2015). Lee et al. (2015) did report that those groups had a lower likelihood of correctional involvement than African Americans. Caucasians were also studied, but like Asian Americans, Hispanic/Latino, and Native Americans, their involvement in community supervision was not considered significant when compared to African Americans (Lee et al., 2015).

Gender

Evidence from past research also hinted at a possible relationship between an individual's gender and admission into community supervision. Gender in previous literature was defined with the binary male-female system, and a number of studies focused on female offenders because of their growing presence in the corrections population. The number of women involved in the criminal justice system has increased at a higher rate—approximately double—compared to males (Lee et al., 2015). 61% of female offenders were arrested due to drug- and property-related offenses; male offenders were more likely to be arrested for violent crimes, with a 45% v. 28% difference when compared to females (Lee et al., 2015). Male offenders were also more likely to have a violent criminal history and/or commit a new violent crime while under community supervision, which could affect their probation/parole status (Lee et al., 2015; Stalans, Yarnold, Seng, Olson, & Repp, 2004). Average prison sentence was reported to be shorter for female offenders, even when compared with male offenders who committed similar offenses (Greenfeld & Snell, 1999). In addition, female offenders that committed violent offenses were usually not confined in prison/jail; over 65,000 women convicted of violence offenses were placed into community supervision instead of local jails or state prisons (Greenfeld & Snell, 1999).

Based on the evidence regarding past and current legislation enacted by multiple states, female offenders may have a higher likelihood of admittance into community supervision over incarceration compared to male offenders, especially with most states diverting individuals who committed nonviolent drug-related offenses into community supervision. The findings from previous studies also implied that many male offenders

had reduced eligibility for community supervision opportunities compared to their female counterparts based on criminal history.

Region

Region was traditionally defined as the four distinct jurisdictions recognized by the United States Census Bureau: Northeast, Midwest¹, South, and West (Glaze & Bonczar, 2011). Since the enactment of legal developments regarding community supervision and the reduction of prison/jail populations, there was potential for a relationship between region and the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration (i.e., one region has a significantly larger population than the others). The Western region of the United States had the most potential for a larger community supervision population (by state) based on previous findings. One study focused on how California had successfully reduced its incarcerated population through legislation that emphasized the diversion of individuals into probation and parole (Austin, 2016). The legislation passed in California that reformed the state's community supervision system included the Assembly Bill 109 and Senate Bill 678 (Austin, 2016). In Arizona, similar legislation was passed that required the diversion of drug offenders into probation with the mandatory condition of an appropriate drug treatment program (Kimora, 2008).

Compared to the West, the non-Western regions of the United States had very little evidence supporting the likelihood of higher community supervision populations relative to the incarcerated population. A number of southern states were noted for recent legislation that restricted probation and parole opportunities for offenders. For example, Alabama passed legislature that reduced inmate access to parole hearings, effectively

¹ Was initially coded as North Central, but later renamed by the United States Census Bureau

lengthening the time spent incarcerated for particular inmates (Ramamurthy, 2013). The Northeast and Midwest regions were not mentioned in any current study, which leaves much unanswered for the potential influence of region on the community supervision population.

Hypotheses

Based on the findings discussed in the literature review, three hypotheses were prepared to test the significance of race, gender, and region as predictors for the likelihood of admittance into community supervision compared to incarceration:

Hypothesis 1: The African American/non-African American (AfAm/NAA) ratio is positively related to the community supervision/incarceration (CS/I) ratio by state.

Hypothesis 2: The Female/Male (F/M) ratio is positively related to the community supervision/incarceration (CS/I) ratio by state.

Hypothesis 3: Region is positively related to the community supervision/incarceration ratio by state.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

Data Sources

Data for this study came from multiple surveys maintained by the Bureau of Justice Statistics. The BJS database's purpose was to collect census data at the state, federal, and national level to document the growth of the United State's correctional populations biannually; the first round of population data was obtained on January 1st and December 31st of a particular year (Glaze & Bonczar, 2011). The survey documents used by the BJS were provided to all participating census agencies in the United States, including the District of Columbia (Glaze & Bonczar, 2011). The agencies were requested to provide information for several inquiries, which included the number of adults—individuals over the age of 18 and juveniles tried as adults in criminal court—on probation and/or parole at the beginning and end of a reporting year; population number entering or existing supervision; particular characteristics (i.e., gender, race) for the population (Glaze & Bonczar, 2011). The data was also reported in several publication series, which included the *Correctional Populations in the United States, Prisoners, Probation and Parole in the United States, and Women Offenders*.

The BJS also used the services of a partner program, the National Prisoners Statistics (NPS) to collect prison data for the *Prisoners* publication. The NPS program distinguished between two categories of prisoners: those in custody and under jurisdiction (Carson & Anderson, 2016). Custody of prisoners was determined by whether the state in question held the individuals within a correctional facility; jurisdiction referred to the legal authority that a state had over a prisoner regardless of where the individual was detained (Carson & Anderson, 2016). Another important detail

was that all intermediate sanctions—halfway houses, electronic monitoring, etc.—were included in the counts for probation and parole populations, and not reported as separate terms.

Data Processing & Calculation

Data retrieved from the BJS database were organized into a number of excel documents for cleaning and calculation. The first stage of the cleaning process involved combing through the 1990-2010 *Probation and Parole in the United States* and *Correctional Populations in the United States* documents to obtain data for each state's community corrections and incarcerated populations. Every state had an individual workbook with the probation, parole, and community corrections population data labeled by year. Missing data was treated as a zero in the workbooks. The workbooks also included the states' incarcerated population(s) as a reference group.

The second stage of the procedure was the compilation of community supervision and incarceration data to calculate the ratios necessary for the dependent and independent variables. The incarceration data for the 2015 census year was used to supplement the 2010 data because the BJS's reporting method did not include complete incarceration data for racial groups for the 2010 census. Data was arranged initially by state, with incarceration, probation, parole, and community corrections population totals reported. The data was then sorted by gender and race; all subcategories—male, female, African American, and non-African American—had input for community supervision and incarceration population data. The community corrections data were denoted by 'CS' and incarceration data with 'I'.

The third phase was the ratio calculations. The first set of ratios was obtained through dividing the community corrections population by the incarcerated population for the subcategories mentioned. The ratios were then divided by the opposing subcategory's ratio—for instance, the female ratio divided by the male ratio—to obtain the second set of ratios used in the analysis. Region did not require a second ratio calculation.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable was the ratio of individuals in community supervision population over the incarcerated population by state. The ratio was a calculation based on the total populations for incarceration, parole, and probation of each state; probation and parole were combined into a single population—community supervision—as many states had a very small parole population, which would have affected the ratios produced. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to combine the probation and parole populations and create a sum population that could produce sufficient ratios. The dependent variable was computed through two steps: 1) probation population + parole population = community supervision population 2) community supervision (CS) population ÷ incarceration (I) population = CS/I.

Independent Variables

The three independent variables were race (African Americans v. non-African Americans), gender (Female v. Male), and region (Western v. non-Western). Along with the traditional definitions, this study established alternative definitions and abbreviations for the variables.

Race was defined as the ratio of African American offenders under community supervision over incarceration divided by the ratio of non-African American offenders

under community supervision over incarceration. The calculations for the race ratio were: 1) African American (AfAm) community supervision (CS) \div African American incarceration (I) = AfAm CS/I. 2) non-African American (NAA) community supervision \div non-African American incarceration = NAA CS/I. 3) AfAm ratio \div NAA ratio = AfAm/NAA. The third ratio was used for the regression analysis. This study combined the populations for non-African American races into one statistic because many of the racial categories—such as Native Americans, Hawaiians, Asian, and Pacific Islanders—lacked sufficient data for a thorough analysis. Also, previous literature placed a greater significance on African American offenders compared to non-African Americans.

Gender utilized a similar definition to race. For this variable, the ratio was the number of female offenders under community supervision over incarceration divided by the number of male offenders under community supervision over incarceration. The ratios were calculated following the same procedure above where female = F CS/I, male = M CS/I, and the final ratio was F/M.

Region was coded (1 = Western region and 0 = non-Western region) to create as a dichotomous dummy variable for calculation, instead of a ratio similar to race and gender. This decision was based on the information from previous studies that emphasized the recent political and population shifts for states—such as California and Arizona—in the Western region of the United States.

Descriptive/Analytic Method(s)

The current study used graphs created from the 1990-2010 United States correctional populations data to describe the trend of growth in the populations. The populations displayed on the graph were: probation, parole, (total) community

supervision, and incarceration. The probation, parole, and incarceration populations were used as reference groups in the graph; probation and parole were used to help pinpoint which population was the significant contributor (if possible) for the community supervision population growth trend, while incarceration was deemed an important corrections population for the comparison. Significant increases, decreases, and plateaus in state correctional populations were of particular interest in the study. A multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether race, gender, and region had any influence on the ratio of individuals admitted to community corrections over incarceration in the United States. SPSS (Version 24, IBM) was used for the analyses.

CHAPTER 4: Results

Following the analyses of the data through SPSS, the results were closely examined and interpreted. The trend of growth for the community supervision population varied widely at the state-level, but remained uniform in terms of the rate of increase at the national-level. The multiple regression analysis yielded results that did not coincide with the hypotheses made in this study, which is explained below.

Trend Examination

As seen in Figure 1, the total community supervision population of the United States experienced a modest, gradual increase in population for the 1990s but eventually tapered off with a miniscule decline in the late 2000s. An examination of the national-level probation and parole populations in Figure 1 showed that the probation population was the primary cause of the positive trend in growth; the parole population was relatively constant except for a slight increase from 1990 to 1992.

At the state-level, the trend of growth for the community supervision populations varied; particular states even exhibited wildly fluctuating increases and decreases in their community supervision population within specific periods of time. For instance, the state of Massachusetts experienced a plateau for all of the corrections populations during 1992-2002 after a slight decrease to its probation and (total) community supervision population. However, in the span of six years—2003 to 2009—Massachusetts' community supervision and probation populations skyrocketed; increasing from 50,000 to approximately 175,000 individuals. In the year 2010, the probation and community supervision populations of Massachusetts rapidly decreased to 75,000-80,000 individuals.

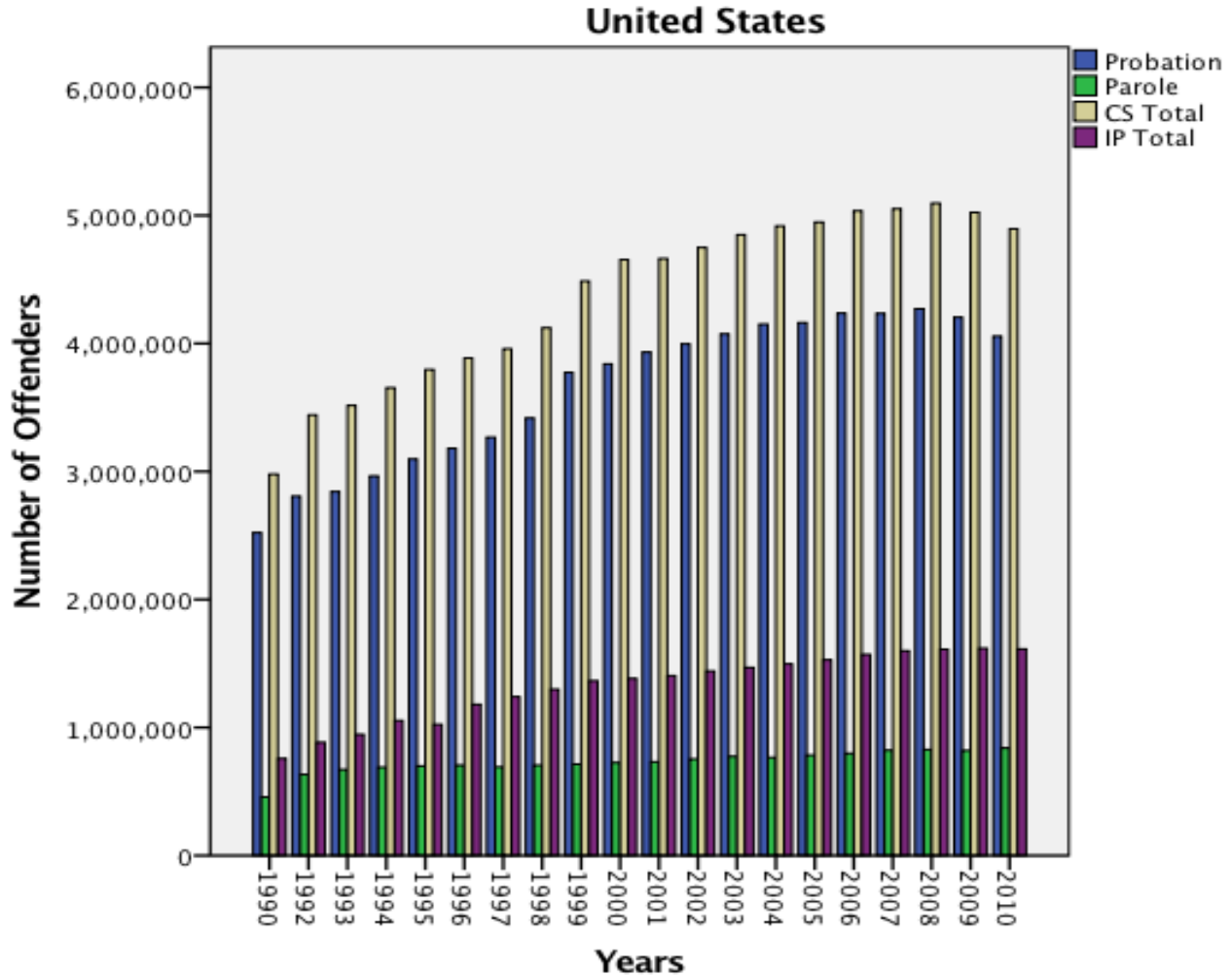


Figure 1. Bar of the United States correctional populations, 1990-2010. This figure illustrates correctional population(s) increase/decrease over a twenty-year period.

Other states that displayed a similar pattern to Massachusetts included Idaho, Kentucky, and New Mexico. One state that showed an inverse pattern of growth—rapid increase of the correctional populations in the 1990s and then sharp decrease in the 2000s—was New York. New York’s community supervision population at its peak was roughly 230,000 individuals in 2002. For the years 2003-2010, all of New York’s correctional populations displayed a sharp decrease and eventual plateau. This decrease in population for New York appeared to coincide with the political developments

mentioned in previous literature about the state's efforts to reduce their correctional population numbers. The state that displayed a surprisingly uniform pattern of growth despite the extensive mention in literature regarding its reduction efforts was California. Although California's political endeavors to reduce its correctional populations during 2007-2010, the numbers remained relatively consistent with a small decrease around the time mentioned.

One detail that most of the states shared in the graphed data was the relatively low parole populations. The majority of the states—with the exceptions of Arkansas, District of Columbia, Louisiana, and South Dakota—displayed little to no change in their parole populations, even when compared to incarceration. The incarceration populations of the states were also still consistent, despite findings from previous literature that mentioned particular states working to reduce their incarceration populations (Austin, 2016).

Regression Analysis

Bivariate and multiple (linear) regressions were used to test the hypotheses for this study. The final sample size was 47, with the regression(s) excluding missing variables listwise; this accounted for the values input as zero into the databooks. Displayed in Table 1, the race ratio AfAm/NAA was statistically significant with a p-value of .024 ($\alpha = .05$). Based on the unstandardized b-coefficient ($b = -6.842$), the ratio for race was negatively related to the likelihood of individuals entering community supervision over incarcerated by state. African American offenders were less likely to be admitted to community supervision over incarceration by state than non-African American offenders; these results did not confirm the hypothesis made.

Table 2 showed a p-value of .392 for the gender ratio. The ratio for gender was not related to the likelihood of individuals being admitted to community supervision over incarceration by state based on the analysis results. This did not confirm the hypothesis that female offenders would be more likely to enter community supervision compared to their male counterparts based on the evidence from previous literature. Region also displayed a high p-value in the analysis—shown in Table 3—which also did not confirm the hypothesis that the Western region had a greater likelihood of having individuals admitted to community supervision over incarceration than the non-Western regions of the United States. This was interesting as the results from the trend description and (limited) findings from previous literature potentially suggested otherwise. In addition, even if the ratio for region proved to be ‘statistically significant,’ it would have been negatively related ($b = -.978$) to the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state.

In a final regression analysis with all three independent variables included, the same results were noted as shown in Table 4. Region and the ratio for gender did not display any sort of relationship—positive or negative—with the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state. The ratio for race still displayed a negative relationship with the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state ($p = .019$, $b = -7.212$). The multiple regression analysis confirmed the results obtained in the bivariate regressions completed for each variable/ratio.

Table 1. Summary of regression analysis for race

Variable	B	SE (B)	β	<i>t</i>	Sig. (<i>p</i>)
(Constant)	7.710	1.604		4.807	.000
AfAm ^a /NAA ^b	-6.842	2.922	-.326	-2.341	.024

Notes. $R^2 = .106$ ($p < .05$)

^a AfAm represents African American community supervision-incarceration ratio

^b NAA represents non-African American community supervision-incarceration ratio

Table 2. Summary of regression analysis for gender

Variable	B	SE (B)	β	<i>t</i>	Sig. (<i>p</i>)
(Constant)	2.340	2.346		.997	.324
F ^c /M ^d	.618	.715	.126	.863	.392

Notes. $R^2 = .016$ ($p < .05$)

^c F represents Female community supervision-incarceration ratio

^d M represents Male community supervision-incarceration ratio

Table 3. Summary of regression analysis for region

Variable	B	SE (B)	β	<i>t</i>	Sig. (<i>p</i>)
(Constant)	4.502	.782		5.761	.000
W ^e /NW ^f	-.978	1.633	-.088	-.599	.552

Notes. $R^2 = .008$ ($p < .05$)

^e W represents Western region

^f NW represents non-Western region

Table 4. Summary of multiple regression analysis for race, gender, and region

Variable(s)	B	SE (B)	β	<i>t</i>	Sig. (<i>p</i>)
(Constant)	5.535	2.748		2.014	.050
AfAm/NAA	-7.212	2.969	-.344	-2.429	.019
F/M	.774	.728	.158	1.063	.293
W/NW	-.302	1.644	-.027	-.183	.855

Notes. $R^2 = .135$ ($p < .05$)

CHAPTER 5: Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to describe the trend of growth for the community supervision population of the United States at the state- & national-level, and to determine if race, gender, or region influenced the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state.

The trend of growth for the community supervision population at the national level was uniform and displayed a modest increase in population size during the last two decades. This was consistent with findings in previous literature that suggested the community supervision population grew at a rate that exceeded the incarceration population (DeMichele, 2014). It was surprising that the particular states studied in the literature did not display results consistent with past findings. For example, despite the findings mentioned by Austin (2016) regarding California's efforts to reduce its corrections populations due to issues with overcrowding, there were no significant (or sharp) reductions in its incarcerated population based on the graphical information. New York, however, did reduce all of its corrections populations at a modest rate, which was consistent with the findings reported (Austin, 2016).

The ratio of African American offenders under community supervision over incarceration was negatively related to the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state. This was contrary to the hypothesis presented in the study, but it was not particularly surprising. The lack of research on how racial bias could impact policies, particularly those related to drug-related offenses, was cited as a major issue regarding court decisions and sentencing for minority offenders.

The findings of this study also suggested that gender and region did not have any significant influence on the ratio of individuals admitted to community supervision over incarceration by state. The lack of a positive (or negative) relationship between the ratio of female offenders under community supervision and the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state may have a few reasons. One was that although females were reported to have a rapidly increasing presence in the criminal justice system, males still constituted roughly 60-83% of the population (Lee et al., 2015).

The lack of a significant relationship between region and the ratio of individuals under community supervision by state was also interesting. Although the Western region was hypothesized to have a higher likelihood of individuals being admitted to community supervision over incarceration, the findings supported otherwise. This also contradicted the (limited) findings from previous literature that discussed the efforts made by states in the Western region—such as California and Nevada—to reduce their corrections populations.

Limitations

The findings of this study should be considered with a degree of caution due to three reasons. First, the method of data collection was limited. Although the data were obtained from a large census/government database, particular key documents had missing information. Changes in procedure and the shifting of corrections system were cited as major causes in the publications for missing data; particularly the District of Columbia had no incarceration data as their prisoners were transferred to the federal prison system as of the year 2001 (Harrison & Beck, 2003). Also, the regression analyses were

completed with the assumption that the prisoner data from the 2015 census year was similar or parallel to the 2010 census year; this may have caused an underestimation of the values and skewed the results obtained from the regression.

Second, the sample size of the study was based on state, which led to a small sample size. A small *N* can cause issues with the distribution of values, which could skew the results as well. Finally, there were additional variables not present in this study that could potentially influence the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration. For example, age was cited in previous findings as an important demographic when studying corrections populations. Although one study found probationers were more likely to be young, African American males, another reported that 37% of the male prison population was African American (De Giorgi, 2016; Fearn et al., 2016). In addition, it was noted that young African American males had a greater likelihood to be incarcerated in a state or federal correctional facility compared to Caucasians (De Giorgi, 2016).

Revocation was another outcome/variable cited as an important factor in determining an individual's likelihood of community supervision compared to incarceration. Revocations were cited as not only a threat to community supervision practices (and their success), but also as a contributor to the stable numbers seen in the incarcerated population of the United States (Wodahl, Ogle, & Heck, 2011). Probationers and parolees who violated the conditions of their supervision actually constituted one-third of all new prison admissions, although this number varies based on jurisdiction and state (Klinge, 2013). This high frequency of revocation was caused by several factors, including the overuse of sanctions on individuals not fit for community supervision, and

the issue of continual violation by offenders of conflicting conditions while under supervision (Klinge, 2013).

The increasing privatization of corrections could have potentially affected the results observed in this study as well. Private probation agencies have grown increasingly common in the United States to provide supervision and/or treatment services for offenders (Alarid, 2015). Currently, 18 states rely on these private agencies to perform community-related supervision services/practices for particular groups of offenders; however, the dominantly financial interest of these agencies regarding community supervision has led to debate and controversy (Alarid, 2015). Prisons were also subjected to the rise of privatization as the costs of incarceration rapidly increased since the 1980s; these private agencies fielded various services including prisoner health care, transportation, communication, etc. (De Giorgi, 2016). The shift towards shifting certain fees onto probationers/parolees/prisoners to cover the costs of their detention and/or supervision tipped the balance in the corrections system as well; many offenders end up reincarcerated due to their inability to pay off their debts due to imprisonment (De Giorgi, 2016). This turn of events was suggested to make it even more difficult to reduce incarcerated numbers, as the divide between government- and private-run facilities continued to grow (De Giorgi, 2016).

Other factors with potential for further analysis included: offense type and differences in state laws/policies. Regarding offense type, one study found that offense type could predispose offenders towards being granted particular sentences, especially when coupled with previous criminal history and offense severity (Byrne & Taxman, 1994). In 49 states, mandatory sentencing guidelines were found to exist for specific

offenses; these guidelines tended to reduce the amount of discretion judges had in granting parole release and/or granting probationary sentences for offenders (Byrne & Taxman, 1994). Differences in state laws/policies could also impact the results seen. For example, Arkansas was found to underuse probation and parole as practices, but maximized the sentence lengths for incarcerated offenders, especially for nonviolent offense (James, Eisen, & Subramanian, 2012). Alabama actually instated legislation that increased the denial rate for parole by excluding inmates from their own parole hearings, despite the concerns regarding prison overcrowding and individual rights (Ramamurthy, 2013). The time restraint for this study did not allow for more in-depth research for these variables, but their potential significance was worth noting.

Conclusion

The expansion of the community supervision population in the United States has mirrored the incarcerated population. The trend of growth for community supervision at the national level was marked with a modest but gradual increase that supported the findings that community supervision has become more frequently used practice in the corrections system.

This study did not report that the gender and region ratios were related to the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state. The ratio for race was significant but negatively related to the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state. The results ultimately did not confirm the hypotheses made in this study. Based on these findings, future research could examine the variables mentioned but not studied (p. 23-25) to determine what factors influence the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration in the United States.

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ABSTRACT**TRENDS IN THE COMMUNITY SUPERVISION POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES: AN ANALYSIS OF RACE, GENDER, AND REGION'S EFFECT ON PROBATION AND PAROLE**

by

PATRICIA BYNUM**August 2017****Advisor:** Dr. Shanhe Jiang**Major:** Criminal Justice**Degree:** Master of Science

Past research noted that the community supervision population of the United States has grown at a rate comparable to the incarcerated population. The two-fold purpose of this study was to describe the trend of growth for the community supervision population of the United States at the state- and national-level from 1990-2010, and to quantitatively examine whether race, gender, or region influenced the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state. Data were collected from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) database from four different publications for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Data were prepared in excel, spv, and sav documents for examination and analysis. The results indicated that gender and region had no influence on the ratio of individuals admitted to community supervision over incarceration. Race was negatively related to the ratio of individuals under community supervision over incarceration by state. Regarding the trend of growth, the community supervision population at the national-level displayed a slow but modest increase; at the state-level, particular locations varied widely in terms of growth.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

After graduating from Wayne State University in August of 2017, I will start gathering the resources necessary to apply for Ph.D. programs at various universities. The programs I am currently interested in are for Forensic Science, Anthropology, and Forensic Anthropology. Also, I plan on starting a search for employment to obtain more experience socially and mentally. If and when I am accepted to a Ph.D. program, I will hopefully complete the program and then continue on to become a field specialist in Forensics.