

Reducing recidivism by creating and measuring fair chances



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Justice Policy Journal, Volume 19, Number 1 (Fall 2022)

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Abstract

The US has the highest rate of incarceration in the world and has seen a 500 percent increase in the number of individuals imprisoned over the past three decades. A key driver of this massive expansion where one in three individuals has a criminal record is the US's extremely high recidivism rate. Employment and education opportunities for previously incarcerated individuals have been shown to reduce recidivism and we seek to optimize the creation of such opportunities. A method of creating and measuring employment and education fair chances that result from initiatives which leverage the areas of engagement marketing and social marketing is introduced. To illustrate the method and its implementation flexibility, specific cases from the Center for Justice at Columbia University are presented that use data from a self-conducted survey. The results of these cases highlight the potential positive impact of utilizing a method of measurement such as this for operational and strategic planning purposes can have on this serious challenge. This paper makes tangible the way that employment and educational opportunities lead to reduced recidivism and

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provides a quantitative measure to enhance strategic planning, resource allocation, and operational assessment.

Introduction

The United States currently leads the world in its incarceration rate, with more than 2.2 million individuals incarcerated. This figure, which marks a 500 percent increase over the past three decades, means that while the United States only represents approximately five percent of the world's population, it has more than a quarter of the world's prisoners (Blow, 2016). On a per capita perceptible, the US also has the highest rate of incarceration in the world (Prison Studies, 2014). Economically, the US spends approximately \$80 billion annually to support the corrections system with the bulk of the spending incurred at the state level (Kearney, 2014). This amount has grown by over 350 percent over the past three decades and is currently greater than the GDP of 133 countries (National Institute of Justice, 2014; Kincade, 2018).

Of the 2.2 million individuals imprisoned in the US annually, 600,000 are released each year and 76.6 percent of these individuals are re-arrested within 5 years of their release (Kaeble and Glaze, 2016; Carson and Anderson, 2016; Durose et al., 2014). A person's relapse into criminal behavior is known as recidivism and the US's recidivism rate is the highest in the world (Sterbenz, 2014). Given the significance of the challenge and impact on US society where one in three individuals have criminal records, a portion of the population equal to the number of people with college degrees (Friedman, 2015), the issue of recidivism has been studied extensively to better understand why previously incarcerated individuals relapse into criminal behavior and what can be done to reduce recidivism (e.g., Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2011; Ward, Yates, & Willis, 2012; Lockwood et al., 2015; Visher & Travis, 2011; Duwe & Clark, 2013; Craig et al., 2020). Key findings across the literature point to changing the current system to focus instead on reintegration – treatment, restoration, rehabilitation, and transition of individuals who are incarcerated and/or previously incarcerated – versus the current punitive and alienating approach that does not seem to work (Cullen et al., 2011; Burchfield & Mingus, 2012).

Addressing recidivism by focusing efforts on reintegration and supporting individuals returning from prison has worked in many other countries around the world. For example, the country of Norway is widely-regarded as a leader in addressing recidivism risk factors through the reintegration of previously incarcerated individuals back into society (Lieberman & Morales, 2018; Sterbenz,

2014; James, 2013; Dreisinger, 2016). The result of this approach has yielded considerable impact in the form of much smaller rates of incarceration per capita (e.g., 75 individuals incarcerated for every 100,000 citizens versus the US rate of 707 for every 100,000) and much lower recidivism rates (e.g., 20.0 percent versus 76.6 percent in the US) according to Sterbenz (2014).

In 2016 the Obama administration established an initiative with the goal of “reducing barriers facing people who have been in contact with the criminal justice system and are trying to put their lives back on track” called the Fair Chance Pledge (White House, 2016). Leveraging substantive research showing the positive impact that employment and education has on the reintegration of individuals who are incarcerated and/or previously incarcerated to reduce recidivism (Council of Economic Advisors, 2016), the Fair Chance initiative partnered with businesses and education providers to create ‘fair chance’ employment and education opportunities for previously incarcerated individuals. Employment and educational fair chances have the potential to play a critical role in creating an ‘opportunity to craft new identities’ (McAdams, 2001; Fine, 2019), developing a new personal or professional background, new social networks, community, and connections with companies, organizations, and/or institutions, and ultimately credibility and references for previously incarcerated individuals. Ward, Yates, and Willis (2012) refer to these benefits as ‘instrumental or secondary goods’, providing a mechanism for realizing what Ward & Maruna (2007) call ‘good lives’ – those lives that are “characterized as ones which enable individuals to have a sense of purpose, achieve higher levels of well-being, and allow them to adhere to socially prescribed norms” (Fortune, Ward, and Willis, 2012; Ward & Maruna, 2007). Previously incarcerated individuals who have good lives that were created in part through employment and educational fair chances they were provided have a greater feeling of self-efficacy and are less likely to go back to prison.

While the Obama Administration’s Fair Chance initiative was successful in creating awareness of the issue and garnering support from businesses and education providers, methods to measure the number of fair chances created were not established. Setting quantifiable and measurable targets has been shown in research and in practice to be important to the achievement of mission and objectives (Burgher & Hamers, 2020; Latham & Yukl, 1975; Locke & Latham, 2002; Sawhill & Williamson, 2001; White et al., 2005; McKinsey & Company, 2014; Ernst & Young, 2015).

Measuring the number of fair chances created is important for use in decision making and assessing the return on investment and efforts to reduce recidivism.

Given the significant amount of effort and resources utilized by organizations to reduce recidivism, measuring the number of fair chances created by a specific initiative or set of initiatives is important for organizations as they seek to effectively and efficiently establish targets, align efforts to achieve targets, determine the effectiveness of fair chances created, and ultimately achieve the objective of reduced recidivism. The focus of this paper is on developing a model for measuring employment and educational fair chances and not to establish a conclusive definition of fair chances, however, the methods presented in this paper could be leveraged to quantify additional types of fair chances as well.

This paper adds to current theory and practice by introducing a method of measuring employment and educational fair chances created that leverages the areas of engagement marketing and social marketing to ultimately to reduce recidivism. Through engagement marketing, individuals are engaged in efforts to create employment and educational fair chances and then utilizing social marketing, organizations enliven these engaged individuals to become even more active in the creation of fair chances. These employment and educational fair chances created by engaged and enlivened individuals enable previously incarcerated individuals to reintegrate into society and reduce recidivism. While a robust literature exists linking the positive effects of employment and education on addressing the risk factors of recidivism, how these types of opportunities are created is not present in current literature. Providing insights into how employment and educational fair chances are created allows for measurement of the number of fair chances created, addressing a considerable gap in the literature and practice.

To illustrate the method of measurement and its flexibility to be leveraged in a wide variety of initiative types focused on creating employment and educational fair chances, specific cases from the Center for Justice at Columbia University are presented. Through these cases and robust data collected from past participants of Center for Justice initiatives, this paper provides a concrete example of how government, nonprofit, and religious organizations focused on reducing recidivism can align efforts to create employment and educational fair chances for strategic and operational efforts in a variety of initiative types. As a result of aligning resources to create employment and educational fair chances to address recidivism, using Center for Justice and US correction system cost data, a reduction of the annual cost of the US correction system of 16-18% can be estimated.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 describes how fair chances can be created and measured both directly and indirectly. In some cases, initiatives create fair chances directly for previously incarcerated individuals (i.e., an

employment or educational opportunity provided to a previously incarcerated individual directly by the initiative). In other cases, fair chances are created indirectly by individuals who participate in initiatives and are enlivened to create direct fair chances through their own efforts. Section 3 illustrates the measurement of fair chances through two cases at Columbia University. Section 4 concludes.

Creating fair chances

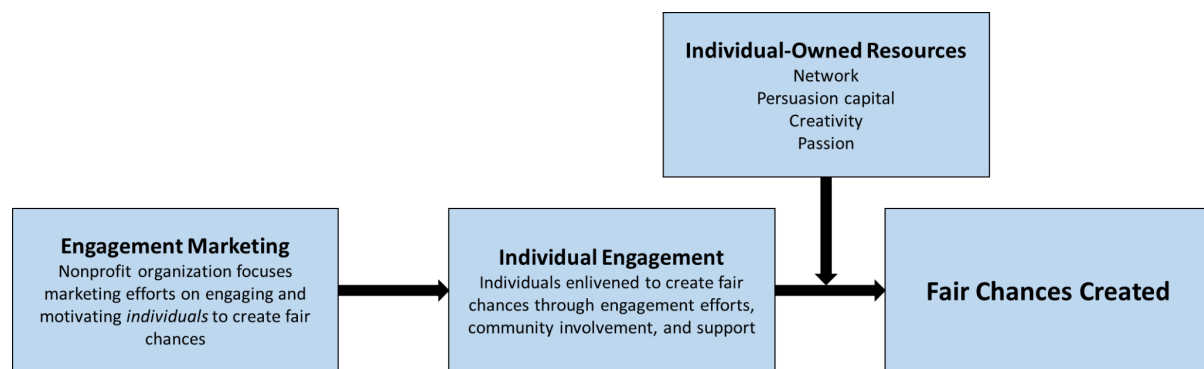
As previously stated, setting quantifiable and measurable targets has been shown in research and in practice to be important to the achievement of mission and objectives (Burgher & Hamers, 2020; Latham & Yukl, 1975; Locke & Latham, 2002; Sawhill & Williamson, 2001; McKinsey & Company, 2014; Ernst & Young, 2015). In order to set quantifiable and measurable targets, we now propose a method of measuring the number of fair chances created by initiatives for use in strategic and operational activities to reduce recidivism. Fair chances can be created in two ways, directly by an initiative (i.e., a previously incarcerated individual completes an educational program) or indirectly by someone who is engaged and moved to create additional direct fair chances (i.e., an individual who attends a conference takes action on behalf of the cause and as a result, creates direct fair chances through their own efforts). While we will focus on employment and education fair chances in this section, other types of fair chances could leverage this method as well.

Employment and education fair chances that are created directly by an initiative are straightforward to quantify given their nature. For example, an organization could offer 10 previously incarcerated individuals full scholarships for college. In this case, 10 fair chances would be created directly. Indirect fair chances are more complex to define and involve engaging and moving individuals to create direct fair chances (Sniehotta et al., 2005; Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Recent advances in the areas of engagement marketing and social marketing inform and support the potential for indirect fair chances to be created through the engagement and enlivening of individuals who become aware and/or motivated to contribute to the creation of fair chances.

Engagement marketing or customer engagement marketing is defined by Harmeling et al. (2017) as an organization's "deliberate effort to motivate, empower, and measure an [individual's] voluntary contribution of their resources" (e.g., time, ideas, brand, etc.) to an organization's mission achievement and marketing function, going beyond financial patronage. Organizations who

effectively engage individuals into their marketing and mission achievement significantly increase both the resources from a workforce perspective (e.g., additional individuals working to achieve the organization’s mission) and the assets those individuals bring to the cause. In this case, organizations focused on creating fair chances engage individuals in the mission (e.g., create fair chances) and as a result, create additional direct fair chances indirectly through these efforts and specifically, the efforts of the individuals who voluntarily contribute their resources to creating additional fair chances. Figure 1 provides an illustration of how engagement marketing creates direct fair chances indirectly.

Figure 1. Engagement marketing creating *direct fair chances indirectly* (Adapted from Harmeling et al., 2017)



While there are many organizations who leverage engagement marketing to motivate individuals to participate in the realization of the organization’s social impact mission (i.e., Disney and Make-A-Wish, Warby Parker Buy One Give One, New York Times The Truth is Hard to Find, Patagonia’s The President Stole Your Land), one specific nonprofit organization example is Susan G. Komen, the world’s largest nonprofit source of funding for the fight against breast cancer (Susan G. Komen, 2021). Susan G. Komen has an Advocates program that engages and coordinates individuals who are motivated to contribute their resources to help the fight against breast cancer. Specifically, they have created roles such as Policy Advocate, Research Advocate, and Advocates in Science. Policy Advocates ensure that the fight against breast cancer remains a priority among state and national policymakers by offering their time and efforts to help legislate change. Research Advocates and Advocates in Science make certain that the perspectives of survivors and cosurvivors are considered in the decisions that impact progress toward the organization’s objectives. Susan G. Komen has also created tools, resources, and a robust community for Advocates to amplify their impact. The Advocates program at

Susan G. Komen has enabled the organization to access significant resources, passion, and diverse abilities to drive forward towards the objectives of the organization (Susan G. Komen, 2021). Organizations focused on creating fair chances have the opportunity to leverage engagement marketing efforts to create individuals who seek active contribution – specifically creating fair chances for previously incarcerated individuals.

In addition to engagement marketing, social marketing supports the creation of direct fair chances indirectly by more effectively moving individuals from a state of awareness to one of action (Gordon et al., 2018). Social marketing “seeks to develop and integrate marketing concepts with other approaches to influence behaviors that benefit individuals and communities for the greater social good” (iSMA, ESMA, & AASM, 2013). In the context of reducing recidivism through the creation of fair chances, social marketing efforts would seek to emphasize the value-in-behavior people would perceive (e.g., the value an individual perceives from turning off a light when leaving a room, filling a dishwasher completely before running) by helping someone who has been previously incarcerated get a fair chance to put their lives back on track. Value is realized by an individual as a result of performing pro-social behaviors (Gordon et al., 2018) and when social marketing is engaged, significant potential exists to multiply the impact of engagement marketing by successfully engaging more individuals to create fair chances.

For fair chances created indirectly, there are several additional considerations. First, it is likely that individuals who are made aware of the efforts to reduce reliance on incarceration and advance alternative approaches to safety and justice through initiatives are in different groups (e.g., previously incarcerated, members of the community, influencer). Each of these groups has different assumptions for their reach (e.g., number of fair chances they are able to create) and timing (e.g., how fast they create the fair chances). Second, while some individuals will create all assumed fair chances immediately, many individuals will take months and years to move from awareness to action and/or not have immediate opportunities to create fair chances. While complexity exists initially, as fair chances created are tracked, assumptions for models will improve. That said, given the variety of organizations, types of initiatives, target populations, and ability to influence, assumptions utilized by this method are case specific and will vary considerably. In the following section, we will illustrate how fair chances can be created and quantified in real-world cases.

Case Studies: Measuring fair chances created at Columbia University

To illustrate the measurement method for determining the estimated number of direct and indirect fair chances created through specific initiatives, we present two cases from Columbia University. The Center for Justice (“Center”), as a catalyst and partner at Columbia University, is currently engaged in and supporting many initiatives focused on reducing reliance on incarceration and advancing alternative approaches to safety and justice and specifically, creating fair chances for individuals who are incarcerated and/or previously incarcerated. These initiatives vary from educational programs, to conferences and executive panels, to supporting research efforts of faculty and students. Each of these initiatives creates fair chances in similar and different ways. In addition to working to creating fair chances, the Center is also keenly focused on working to remove barriers that inhibit previously incarcerated individuals from accessing these fair chance opportunities through efforts to address prejudice, reduce systematic hurdles, and create network connections for previously incarcerated individuals.

Self-conducted survey of past participants

To inform assumptions on the number of employment and educational fair chances individuals intend to create for use in estimating the impact of specific types of initiatives, an operational survey was developed with the Center and conducted with previous participants of Center events/initiatives to better understand the impact initiatives have had in the past on the creation of employment and educational (direct and indirect) fair chances (Columbia University Institutional Research Board Protocol Number IRB-AAAR7695). Participants were asked to input the number of employment and educational fair chances they intended to create over a period of five years and also the types of resources they had contributed to organizations focused on social justice. Additionally, participants were asked to provide demographic information in-line with prior Center surveys including whether or not they had been previously incarcerated as well as information leveraged to assess the individual’s amount of influence in their jobs, volunteer work, and in their community.

The survey was distributed to 17,747 individuals who had previously participated in one or more initiatives offered by the Center. Examples of initiatives include conferences, scholar programs, training programs, research, community support groups, and talks/seminars offered by and/or supported by the Center. Of the 17,749 individuals who were invited to complete the survey, 230 individuals completed at least a portion of the survey (1.30% completion rate). To address

potential non-response bias as a result of the relatively low completion rate, following Wellman et al. (1980), we analyzed early and late survey respondents and found they exhibited similar characteristics (i.e., gender, affiliation, knowledge of mass incarceration). Though non-response individual characteristics were unknown, as the characteristics of early and late respondents were similar, we are able to justify generalization of the survey respondents to nonrespondents (e.g., Dalecki, Whitehead, & Blomquist, 1993).

Based on the collected data, the participants of the survey were first classified into three categories. The first category, *previously incarcerated*, are individuals who explicitly selecting the previously incarcerated flag while completing the survey (n=49). The second category, *community members*, are individuals who completed the survey who are not previously incarcerated and are not policy makers (n=106). These individuals come from a variety of sources both locally and internationally and while not previously incarcerated, are interested in the issue of mass incarceration and while not a policy maker currently, have the potential to be active in the topic and in efforts to address the challenge. Students are also considered in this population. The third category, *policy makers*, are defined by a combination of factors including the type of organization they work with, their assessment of their degree of influence, the size of the team they lead at their employer, the size of the team they lead as a volunteer, and/or if they are a government official (n=75). As defined by the Center, policy makers must exhibit 2 of the 5 factors to be considered a policy maker for the purpose of this data set. It is possible for individuals who have been previously incarcerated to be policy makers as well and in these cases, individuals have been coded as policy makers.

Individuals were asked to provide information on the impact of the most recent initiative they attended with regard to how much the initiative moved them to a state of action to create employment and educational fair chances. For each group classification, *awareness to action rate*, *number and type of fair chances created*, and *timing of fair chances created* were calculated. *Awareness to action rate* is the percentage of individuals who are moved from awareness to a state where they desire to take action to create one or more education, employment, or volunteer opportunities for a previously incarcerated individual. Individuals who rate themselves 'strongly agree' or 'agree' on a 7-point Likert scale to the survey question "The [initiative/event] moved me from a state of awareness to a state where I desire to take action to create one or more education, employment, or volunteer opportunities for a previously incarcerated individual" are considered moved from an awareness to action. Individuals who rate themselves as 'somewhat

agree', 'neither agree or disagree', 'somewhat disagree', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' are considered not moved from an awareness to action state. *Type of fair chances created* by individuals can be of type education, employment, and/or volunteer as individuals, in some cases, intend to create fair chances of one or more type.

For each type of fair chance, individuals provided annual estimates of the number of fair chances they intend to create. Individuals move from awareness to action over different periods of time, the veracity of the action potentially fades (or grows) from the initial feelings, and/or opportunities for individuals to create fair chances vary and present themselves at different points. In order to accurately project when the fair chance created would occur (specific for each group), a value for when each fair chance is created is also required. These annual estimates were summed to create the *number of fair chances created* measure and extrapolated to calculate the *timing of fair chances created* measure. For example, if an individual input they intended to create 1, 2, 2, 5, and 0 employment fair chances in years 1-5 respectively, the *number of fair chances created* measure value would be 10 and the *timing of fair chances created* measure would be 10%, 20%, 20%, 50%, and 0% of total employment fair chances created by this individual would be realized in years 1-5 respectively.

Finally, as discussed in Section 2, engagement marketing creating *direct* fair chances *indirectly* (Harmeling et al., 2017; Figure 2) relies heavily on the inclusion of 'individual-owned' resources being combined with 'individual engagement'. The *resources contributed to the Center* measure quantifies the amount of resources contributed to create awareness for and engagement with an organization focused on social justice and is the sum total of all of the types of resources individuals indicated they contributed (e.g., money, time, network connections, etc.) to create awareness for and engagement with an organization focused on social justice. Though each of the resources likely would have a varying degree of impact on the realization of objectives, for the scope of this case, all resources are assumed to be equal. For example, if a survey participant contributes money and time, then their resources contributed measure equals 2.

As previously discussed, given the roles and backgrounds of individuals' rates of awareness to action as well as ability to create fair chances can also vary. For example, previously incarcerated individuals rate of awareness to action could be assumed to be greater than those of the community and/or policy makers given their firsthand experiences with the criminal justice system. Similarly, given that policy makers likely have more influence/control over resources required to create fair chances, individuals in this group that move into an action state are assumed

to have the ability to create more fair chances than those who were previously incarcerated and/or individuals in the community.

Extracting initiative-specific data from the overall survey data set, detailed findings for each initiative/event are used in the following case summaries. Initiative specific response details are presented in further detail in the following cases.

Case 1: Beyond the Bars Conference (Indirect Fair Chance Creation)

Beyond the Bars is an annual student-driven interdisciplinary conference on mass incarceration held at Columbia University. Each year the conference brings together students, faculty, activists, advocates, practitioners, those who have experienced incarceration, community members and more to connect, galvanize and deepen the work to end mass incarceration, and to build justice and equity (Columbia Center for Justice, 2021). For 2019, the Beyond the Bars Conference focused on the incarceration and criminalization of women and girls, as well as their families and communities. There were 150 speakers and over 1850 people who attended the four-day event.

The goal of the conference is to create awareness and drive individuals towards action in addressing the issues of mass incarceration. The three main target populations of the conference are (1) individuals who were previously incarcerated, (2) individuals in the community (including students and other members of the Columbia community), and (3) policy makers or influencers. As no direct fair chances are created by the conference, we will quantify the number of fair chances for this initiative using the indirect approach.

To calculate the number of educational and employment fair chances desired to be created by each type (in total), two key values are required for each group – (1) the estimated number of individuals of each type (e.g., previously incarcerated, community, policy maker/influencer) attending the Beyond the Bars conference and for these individuals and (2) the number of fair chances they desire to create.

Table 1 provides both a summary of survey responses from previous Beyond the Bars attendees (n=125) at the top of the table and calculations that leverage these survey findings for assumptions at the bottom of the table. Specifically, to project the number of employment and educational fair chances estimated, applying survey findings for percentage of attendees in each individual population type from past Beyond the Bars conferences and using the actual attendance of

the 2019 Beyond the Bars conference (e.g., 1850 attendees and 150 presenters = 2000 total attendees), attendees of each individual type is first calculated. Multiplying the number of individuals in each type by the average number of fair chances created per individual survey finding from past participants, the total number of estimated fair chances estimated to be created by the 2019 Beyond the Bars can be calculated. As summarized in Table 1, the creation of 6,734 fair chances by the 2019 conference can conservatively be estimated utilizing the lower bound of the 90% confidence interval for total fair chances created. Similarly, resources contributed to create awareness for and engagement with an organization focused on social justice by attendees of the 2019 Beyond the Bars conference can be estimated using past participate survey findings attendance. As shown at the bottom of Table 1, multiplying the number of attendees in each type by the number of resources contributed by past participants, an estimate of 5,733 resources contributed by attendees of the 2019 conference can be estimated by utilizing the lower bound of the 90% confidence interval for total resources contributed.

When the total cost of the conference is analyzed against the number of fair chances created by the conference, a standard cost metric that can be used across initiatives is created. This metric, cost per fair chance, can be used by senior leadership at the Center as one data point in the decision-making process to determine initiatives the Center will undertake. In this case, the total cost of the 2019 Beyond the Bars Conference including direct conference expenses and allocated expenses from the Center (e.g., salary of Center staff working on the initiative) was approximately \$350,000. Using the lower bound of the 90% confidence interval for total fair chances created by the 2019 Beyond the Bars conference in Table 1, the total cost per fair chance created by the initiative is estimated to be \$79.22 (e.g., \$350,000/4,418). Additionally, using the lower bound for the 90% confidence interval for total number of resources contributed, it can be estimated that 5,923 resources (e.g., money, time, network connections, etc.) would be contributed to the cause of social justice for attendees of one Beyond the Bars conference. Engaging these individuals to target the significant resources they wish to contribute to creating fair chances and more generally to the cause of social justice holds considerable power and potential.

Table 1: Projected number of fair chances created as a result of one Beyond the Bars conference

| | <u>Previously Incarcerated</u> | <u>Community, Students, Others</u> | <u>Policy Makers/Influencers</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|--|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| Survey data (n=125) | | | | |
| responses received | n=18 (14%) | n=72 (57%) | n=36 (29%) | n=125 |
| responses where individuals moved from awareness to action | n=9 (50% of individual type responses) | n=38 (53% of individual type responses) | n=17 (47% of individual type responses) | n=64 (51% of all responses) |
| responses where individuals moved to create fair chances as a result of the initiative | n=10 (56% of individual type responses) | n=35 (49% of individual type responses) | n=13 (36% of individual type responses) | n=58 (46% of all responses) |
| average number of fair chances created per individual (90% CI) | 12.29 (3.82-20.76) | 2.89 (1.85-3.92) | 5.97 (2.11-9.83) | |
| average number of resources provided by each individual (90% CI) | 3.83 (3.23-4.43) | 3.00 (2.68-3.32) | 3.83 (3.39-4.28) | |
| Calculation of impact | | | | |
| # of total attendees | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| % of attendees of each type | 14% | 57% | 29% | 100% |
| calculated # of attendees of individual type | 286 | 1,143 | 571 | 2,000 |
| Fair Chances created: | | | | |
| calculated # of attendees of individual type | 286 | 1,143 | 571 | 2,000 |
| average number of fair chances created per individual (90% CI) | 12.29 (3.82-20.76) | 2.89 (1.85-3.92) | 5.97 (2.11-9.83) | |
| Total number of fair chances estimated to be created (90% CI) | 3,513 (1,093-5,933) | 3,298 (2,119-4,477) | 3,412 (1,207-5,618) | 10,223 (4,418-16,027) |
| Resources contributed: | | | | |
| calculated # of attendees of individual type | 286 | 1,143 | 571 | 2,000 |
| average number of resources provided by each individual (90% CI) | 3.83 (3.23-4.43) | 3.00 (2.68-3.32) | 3.83 (3.39-4.28) | |
| Total number of resources estimated to be created (90% CI) | 1,104 (895-1,313) | 3,444 (3,003-3,885) | 2,208 (1,901-2,515) | 6,714 (5,923-7,506) |

Utilizing fair chances as a quantitative measure for the impact in this case allows the Center to understand the return on the significant effort and resources invested to execute the Beyond the Bars conference. The conference has many value propositions to the Center, however, reducing recidivism through the creation of fair chances is a quantifiable objective of the conference. At an estimated cost per fair chance of \$79.22, the Beyond the Bars conference is a very low cost way to create fair chances. Research shows that fair chances on average reduce recidivism 10% of the time (Heroux, 2011), therefore it could be assumed that by creating 10 fair chances at \$79.22 per fair chance, the Center could prevent the recidivism of one individual. For \$792.20 (i.e., 10 * \$79.22), a total estimated prison term cost of \$51,990 could be avoided. Additionally, by tracking to a metric

such as a fair chance, the overall conference design could be adjusted to attract additional individuals from higher fair chance impact groups and/or provide content that will adjust the assumptions for the variables. For example, if there were breakout groups discussing the ways that attendees could create fair chances, increasing the ability of attendees in an action state to create fair chances, the estimated number of fair chances created by each individual could potentially increase. Investments in these program elements could be analyzed for potential positive impact to the cost per fair chance created.

Case 2: Justice in Education Scholars Program (Direct and Indirect Fair Chance Creation)

The Justice in Education initiative, in partnership with the Heyman Center for the Humanities at Columbia University, includes courses, taught by Columbia faculty and graduate students, on campus, in local prisons, and the Rikers Island jail complex. The initiative has been successfully realizing its goals since 2015 and annually, there are approximately 120 incarcerated students who participate in the Justice in Education initiative. The Justice in Education initiative includes several programs including the Justice in Education Scholars (“JIE Scholars”) program where formally incarcerated individuals take courses at Columbia University. JIE Scholars receive full support for tuition, local travel to class, books, and other costs as they work to initially complete a skills-intensive JIE gateway course. Students who successfully complete the JIE gateway course are in some cases, able to continue their studies free of charge at Columbia. More than 40 previously incarcerated individuals have received Columbia University credit for the JIE gateway course and many have gone on to also take additional courses and several JIE Scholars have fully matriculated into degree programs at the university.

Annually, the JIE Scholars program enrolls a cohort of approximately 20 JIE Scholars. To estimate the number of fair chances projected for each year of the program, we can sum the direct and indirect fair chances created. Specifically, each of these 20 previously incarcerated students is provided a direct (education) fair chance. Given JIE Scholars could become an advocate for the program and/or fair chance opportunities in general, additional indirect fair chances could also be created as a result of their participation in the JIE Scholars program. These JIE Scholars who have moved from a state of awareness to a state of action could work to create additional fair chances for others who are incarcerated and/or previously incarcerated. Based on the afore mentioned survey of past JIE Scholars, Table 2 summarizes the values obtained from past participants of the JIE Scholars program that are used in the calculation of fair chances created.

Given the estimated number of JIE Scholars in the program in one year and values from previous JIE Scholars on the rate of fair chance creation, number of fair chances these individuals desire to create, and the timing of when the fair chances are intended to be created, the total impact of a cohort of JIE Scholars – measured by the number of fair chances projected to be created through the initiative – can be calculated. Assuming 20 JIE Scholars in the program and utilizing the values from the survey of past JIE Scholars, a conservative estimate of 318 total fair chances can be estimated to be created by one cohort of JIE Scholars, the lower bound of the 90% confidence interval in Table 2. Additionally, using the lower bound for the 90% confidence interval for total number of resources contributed, it can be estimated that 58 resources would be contributed by each JIE Scholar cohort to the cause of social justice.

Table 2: Projected number of fair chances created as a result of one JIE Scholar cohort

| | <u>Previously Incarcerated</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|--|---|---|
| Survey data (n=13) | | |
| responses received | n=13 (100%) | n=13 |
| responses where individuals moved from awareness to action | n=12 (92% of individual type responses) | n=12 (92% of individual type responses) |
| responses where individuals moved to create fair chances as a result of the initiative | n=12 (92% of individual type responses) | n=12 (92% of individual type responses) |
| average number of fair chances created per individual (90% CI) | 32.83 (12.18-53.48) | |
| average number of resources provided by each individual (90% CI) | 3.46 (2.79-4.14) | |
| Calculation of impact | | |
| # of total attendees | 20 | 20 |
| <u>% of attendees of each type</u> | <u>100%</u> | <u>100%</u> |
| <i>calculated # of attendees of individual type</i> | 20 | 20 |
| Fair Chances created: | | |
| <i>calculated # of attendees of individual type</i> | 20 | 20 |
| average number of fair chances created per individual (90% CI) | 32.83 (12.18-53.48) | |
| Total number of fair chances estimated to be created (90% CI) | 657 (244-1,070) | 657 (244-1,070) |
| Resources contributed: | | |
| <i>calculated # of attendees of individual type</i> | 20 | 20 |
| average number of resources provided by each individual (90% CI) | 3.46 (2.79-4.14) | |
| Total number of resources estimated to be created (90% CI) | 69 (56-83) | 69 (56-83) |

The total cost of the JIE Scholars program includes not only the direct program expenses (e.g., dedicated staff) and allocated expenses (e.g., salary of Center staff working on the initiative), it also includes the support for tuition, local travel to class, books, and other costs as well. The total cost of the 2018-2019 JIE Scholars cohort is estimated to be \$225,000. Using the lower bound of the 90% confidence interval for total fair chances created by the 2018-2019 JIE Scholars cohort in Table 2, the total cost per fair chance created by the initiative is estimated to be \$923.48

(e.g., \$225,000/244). Assuming fair chances on average reduce recidivism 10% of the time (Heroux, 2011), by creating 10 fair chances, the recidivism of one individual could be avoided. In this case, an investment of \$9,235 (e.g., 10 * \$923.48) would eliminate a prison term estimated to cost \$51,990 – a return of over 560 percent.

Optimizing investment to maximize fair chances created

The survey results, at an overall level (e.g., independent of initiative/event and individual category), provide significant support for the impact of Center in terms of creating employment and education fair chances. Table 3 provides a detailed summary of all data obtained by the survey (for all initiatives) measures described above broken out by individual type. For example, of the total number of individuals completing the survey, 21% were previously incarcerated and on average had the desire to create 94 employment or education fair chances over the next five years (5% of the 94 fair chances in year 1, 8% in year 2, 15% in year 3, 22% in year 4, and 49% in year 5 = 100% of the 94 fair chances).

Table 3: Consolidated summary by individual type for all survey responses

| | Previously Incarcerated | Community, Students, Others | Policy Makers/ Influencers | ALL INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| % of total attendance | 21% | 52% | 27% | 100% |
| rate of awareness to action | 67% | 54% | 54% | 56% |
| rate of fair chance creation | 71% | 47% | 39% | 50% |
| average number of fair chances created per individual who desires to create fair chances | 94 | 20 | 53 | 44 |
| total fair chances created by all respondents | 2,825 | 1,013 | 1,121 | 4,959 |
| | | | | |
| % of total fair chances created in Year 1 | 5% | 25% | 7% | 16% |
| % of total fair chances created in Year 2 | 8% | 26% | 16% | 20% |
| % of total fair chances created in Year 3 | 15% | 8% | 21% | 13% |
| % of total fair chances created in Year 4 | 22% | 5% | 27% | 15% |
| % of total fair chances created in Year 5 | 49% | 36% | 29% | 37% |
| | | | | |
| average number of resources provided by each individual | 3.6 | 3.2 | 3.9 | 3.4 |

The survey found at a consolidated level, an incredible 50% of respondents indicated they desired to create over 4,959 fair chances over the next 5 years as a result of attending/participating in Center events. Further, 91% of individuals said that they have contributed resources to help create awareness for and engagement with an organization focused on social justice with an average of 3.4

resources contributed by each individual respondent for social justice causes (Table 3).

The results of the survey clearly show the potential impact of Center initiatives on the creation of fair chances and enlivening of individuals to contribute their resources to create awareness for and engagement with an organization focused on social justice. What is also clear from the previously described cases that leverage initiative-specific data extracted from the survey is that investments in different types of initiatives yield different results in terms of fair chances created.

Given these two initiatives to select from, if the Center desired to solely maximize the number of fair chances they create, leadership would invest all funds into developing Beyond the Bars conferences where they are able to create fair chances at a cost of \$79.22 per fair chance versus the JIE Scholars program cost of \$923.48 per fair chance. Conversely, if the Center was only focused on creating fair chances through academic pathways, they would invest all funds into the JIE Scholars program where participants are provided direct educational fair chances. Similarly, if the Center were solely interested in research or advocacy, initiatives of these types would be selected. Given an objective without other factors to consider, selecting initiatives to maximize that one objective is relatively simple. In reality, at the Center and in other organizations focused on addressing recidivism, many factors must be considered when working to achieve the organization's mission.

For example, an organization could be interested in balancing the types of initiatives leveraged to create fair chances. A blend of academic, conference, research, and advocacy initiatives would be selected and invested in to create fair chances. Similarly, certain initiatives have the potential to target specific individual categories (e.g., previously incarcerated) and an organization may be focused on balancing the fair chances for individuals categories. When considering the many initiatives that could be executed by an organization coupled with the organization's desired blend of initiative types, target individual categories, and limited funding, in order to maximize the number of fair chances created subject to all of these considerations, the selection decision is complex.

Burgher and Hamers (2020) introduced a model to optimize the selection of academic programs to achieve mission objectives subject to other factors such as financial objectives. This decision model leveraged linear programming techniques to code an organization's objectives and desired considerations and ultimately provide leaders an initiative selection plan. Utilizing this model, organizations focused on creating fair chances could maximize the number of fair chances they create while addressing the significant complexity introduced as a result of their desire to

balance other important considerations such as how these fair chances are created and for whom.

Conclusion

This paper first presents a method of measuring the number of fair chances that are created by specific initiatives, both directly and indirectly, and illustrate this measurement of fair chances through two cases at Columbia University's Center for Justice. Utilizing a quantitative metric such as the number of fair chances created has the potential to enhance the efforts of organizations focused on reducing recidivism, measure the impact of their initiatives, and ultimately increase their impact.

This paper adds to current theory and practice by developing and testing a method of measuring qualitative data (e.g., direct and indirect fair chances) and illustrating how data such as this can be captured through the cases, this paper provides a clear quantitative measure for organizations focused on reducing recidivism. A measure such as this is not only important for strategic planning, resource allocation, and operational assessment to name a few, it is also important to demonstrate effectiveness to boards, donors, and potential donors. Quantitative measures directly tied to reducing recidivism such as fair chances hold the potential to make organizations more effective in achieving their objectives and more attractive to donors who desire clear quantitative proof of impact.

While this paper has focused on how organizations can increase the supply of employment and educational fair chances and the impact these opportunities have to address the risk factors of recidivism, what has not been addressed substantively are the significant challenges that exist for previously incarcerated individuals to access these fair chance opportunities. Organizations like the Center for Justice at Columbia University are focused on addressing prejudice, reducing systematic hurdles, and creating network connections for previously incarcerated individuals so that they are able to access and take advantage of fair chance opportunities. In addition to the programs highlighted in the cases in this paper, several additional programs offered by the Center are especially focused on creating access and network connections for previously incarcerated individuals. First, Justice Through Code (JTC), started by an alumnus of the Justice in Education Scholars Program (i.e., Case 2), offers access to education and post-program employment opportunities for previously incarcerated individuals in the technology

industry and includes networking opportunities as part of the core of the program (Center for Justice, 2021). Second, Inside Criminal Justice (ICJ) brings together incarcerated individuals with prosecutors to collaborate, discuss, and learn alongside one another in an effort to encourage in-depth and respectful conversation about a justice system that emphasizes public safety, while supporting healthy development from birth to old age and making engaged citizenship possible for everyone (Center for Justice, 2021; Delgadillo, 2020). Finally, the Justice Ambassadors Youth Council (JAYC) is a platform for 18 to 24 year old youth who have been previously justice-involved and city officials to hold conversations about challenging community issues and co-develop policy proposals to reshape the systems that often fail them and their communities (Center for Justice, 2021; Cole, Rincón, and Downey, 2021). In order for employment and educational fair chances to address the risk factors of recidivism, they must be available to and accessed by previously incarcerated individuals. Programs such as these at the Center for Justice are working to remove barriers that exist between the fair chances created and those made available and utilized to address the risk factors for recidivism.

In addition to future research related to accessing employment and educational fair chances, additional research in this area could include leveraging mathematical techniques, as indicated at the end of Section 3, for strategic planning efforts associated with determining the types of initiatives included in an organization's portfolio of efforts. Additionally, further research on how to maximize the creation of indirect fair chances (e.g., which types of initiatives enliven individuals to create fair chances), the impact of networks of organizations on creating fair chances, and the importance of developing a new personal or professional background, connections with companies, organizations, and/or institutions, and ultimately credibility for previously incarcerated individuals.

Reducing recidivism through fair chances holds significant potential for previously incarcerated individuals to return to society and for society to realize significant economic value in terms of costs saved from eliminated prison terms as a result of the reduced recidivism rate and increased labor capacity for the economy. As illustrated in the cases, relatively small investments in the creation of fair chances has the potential to reduce recidivism and the costs associated with prison terms for individuals who avoid re-arrest. Expanding to a national level, a rough estimate of the total direct cost of prison terms for individuals who return to prison within a 5-year period can be estimated to be \$12-14 billion annually utilizing individual direct cost estimates for prison from the Vera Institute of Justice (Mai & Subramanian, 2017), average prison term data from the Pew Charitable

Trusts (2015), and release and recidivism data (Kaeble and Glaze, 2016). Using the case data for cost per fair chance and conservatively assuming an average cost per fair chance between \$100 and \$1000 and a conversion rate for each fair chance reducing recidivism 10 percent of time (Heroux, 2011), the approximate cost of fair chance investment to reduce a prison term for an individual is \$1,000-\$10,000. To theoretically fully eliminate recidivism through the use of fair chances, it would cost approximately \$0.3-\$2.8 billion annually. Instead of spending \$80 billion annually, investing in employment and education fair chances to reintegrate previously incarcerated back into non-criminal lives has the potential to reduce the cost of the correction system by 15-18% or \$12.14 billion annually. Reinvesting a portion of these savings into expanding and enhancing these programs holds even more potential for individuals at risk of committing crimes and for society as a whole.

Increasing fair chances for incarcerated and previously incarcerated individuals decreases recidivism and is part of an overall shift of focus from one of punishment to one of reintegration. Defining explicitly and measuring fair chances enables governments, nonprofit, and religious organizations to focus efforts and optimize resources to achieve their desired impact: a criminal justice system in the US with fewer prisoners per capita and pathways for previously incarcerated individuals to craft new identities, develop new networks, and enhance their self-efficacy through employment and education.

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