CREATION AND VALIDATION OF THE OHIO RISK ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

FINAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the development and validation of the Ohio Risk Assessment System. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections contracted with the University of Cincinnati, Center for Criminal Justice Research to create a risk assessment system that would provide assessments at multiple points in the criminal justice system and that was validated on an Ohio population. A major goal of the project was to develop assessments that abided by the principles of effective classification by constructing assessments that 1) separated Ohio offenders into risk groups based on their likelihood to recidivate, 2) identified dynamic risk factors that can be used to prioritize programmatic needs, and 3) identify potential barriers to treatment.

The Ohio Risk Assessment System was created using a prospective design that involved conducting in-depth structured interviews of over 1,800 offenders at the following stages in Ohio's justice system: pretrial, community supervision, prison intake, and community reentry. After interviews were conducted, offenders were tracked for approximately one year to gather follow-up information on recidivism. Five assessment instruments were created using items that were related to recidivism: The Pretrial Assessment Tool, The Community Supervision Tool, The Community Supervision Screening Tool, The Prison Intake Tool, and the Reentry Tool.

Validation involved examining the predictive power of the assessment instruments. The results reveal that all assessment instruments are able to significantly distinguish between risk levels. Moreover, r values are relatively large and, depending upon the assessment instrument, range from .22 to .44. Concurrent validity also was examined by comparing the predictive power of each assessment tool to the LSI-R and the Wisconsin Risk/Needs instruments. These results revealed that the instruments for the Ohio Risk Assessment System performed as well if not better than both of the other instruments.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) contracted with the University of Cincinnati, Center for Criminal Justice Research to develop a risk and needs assessment system that improved consistency and facilitated communication across criminal justice agencies. The goal was to develop risk/needs assessment tools that were predictive of recidivism at multiple points in the criminal justice system. Specifically, assessment instruments were to be developed at the following stages: 1) pretrial, 2) community supervision, 4) institutional intake, and 4) community reentry.

A major goal of the assessment system was to conform to the principles of effective classification. In doing so, ODRC hoped to efficiently allocate supervision resources and structure decision-making in a manner that reduces the likelihood of recidivism. As a result, the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) was developed to classify the risk level of offenders in the system while also identifying both criminogenic needs and barriers to programming.

The Principles of Effective Classification

The principles of effective classification have been developed to guide criminal justice agencies in the use of risk assessment systems. In short, the principles of effective classification suggest that programs should use actuarial assessment tools to identify dynamic risk factors, especially in high risk offenders, while also identifying potential barriers to treatment. There are four major principles of effective classification are: the risk principle, the needs principle, the responsivity principle, the professional discretion principle (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990).

The risk principle suggests that correctional interventions and programs are most effective when their intensity is matched to the risk level of the clientele (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990; Van Voorhis, 2007). That is, the most intensive programs should be allocated to

moderate and high risk cases, while low risk cases be allocated little if any programming. Practically, the risk principle suggests that the majority of supervision and treatment resources be reserved for the highest risk cases. In fact, some research indicates that when low risk cases are targeted with intensive programs they actually perform worse than those who were left alone. This is because programming can expose offenders to higher risk cases and disrupt prosocial networks (see Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005b).

Several recent studies of correctional programming in Ohio suggest that the effectiveness of both residential and community based programs are mitigated by the risk of level of the clientele that they serve. For example, in 2002, Lowenkamp and Latessa evaluated the effects of Halfway Houses and Community Based Correctional Facilities and found consistently higher effect sizes for offenders who were moderate to high risk. Similar results were found for Community Corrections Act funded programs that suggested that programs that targeted higher risk offenders produced significantly lower rates of recidivism than programs that did not (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005a). These Ohio studies reiterate the notion that it is important to utilize risk assessment instruments in order to efficiently allocate resources in a manner that reduces recidivism.

A consistent finding in correctional programming is that the most effective programs target dynamic risk factors (Andrews et al., 1990, Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Smith, 2005; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004). Dynamic risk factors (also called criminogenic needs) are factors that, when changed, have been shown to result in a reduction in recidivism. Dynamic risk factors can include substance abuse, personality characteristics, antisocial associates, and antisocial attitudes (for a review, see Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996). The needs principle

suggests that effective classification systems should identify dynamic risk factors directly related to recidivism so that they can be used to target programmatic needs.

The responsivity principle focuses on identifying barriers to treatment (Van Voorhis, 2007). Although dynamic risk factors are directly related to recidivism, there are other issues that are likely to keep individuals from engaging in treatment. Some examples of responsivity factors include intelligence, reading ability, language barriers, and cultural barriers. If left unaddressed, it is likely that these influences can interfere with the completion of treatment and, as a result, indirectly prevent a reduction in recidivism from occurring.

Although risk assessment instruments remove a degree of professional discretion from criminal justice actors, it is important to emphasize that the judgment of practitioners should not be overlooked (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990). The principle of professional discretion recognizes that case managers and counselors are responsible for processing the risk, need, and responsivity information and making decisions based on the information provided (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990). Further, actuarial tools are designed to treat offenders in the aggregate and cannot be structured to anticipate every possible case or scenario. As a result, it is important to allow criminal justice personnel the ability to override the assessment instruments in specific circumstances. Nevertheless, it is also important that overrides be used on a limited percentage of cases and that measure be taken to oversee the override process.

The Advantages of a Risk Assessment System

For over a decade, many criminal justice agencies have been implementing standardized risk classification instruments in order to efficiently and effectively manage their target populations. Because assessment instruments are expensive to construct and validate, resource constraints often limit the development of risk assessment instruments for specific jurisdictions

and populations (Jones, 1996). As a result, many criminal justice agencies often use empirically derived tools that have been developed on samples from a different population. Although this is less cost restrictive, it assumes that the instrument is a valid predictor of recidivism for each agency's specific population (Wright, Clear, & Dickerson, 1984; Jones, 1996; Gottfredson & Moriarty, 2006). Also, it is likely that there are different populations of offenders within jurisdictions. For example, the population of defendants on pretrial supervision is likely different that the population of individuals who are released from prison. Given that it is unlikely for a single instrument to have universal applicability across various offending populations, there is a clear necessity to validate risk assessment instruments to each specific target population (Wright, Clear, & Dickerson, 1984). The Ohio Risk Assessment System was thus designed to predict recidivism at different points in the Ohio criminal justice system. In all, five instruments were constructed: The Pretrial Assessment Tool (PAT), the Community Supervision Tool (CST), the Community Supervision Screening Tool (CSST), the Prison Intake Tool (PIT), and the Reentry Tool (RT).

The use of a standardized assessment tool in Ohio allows consistency in the assessment of risk across jurisdictions. Prior to the creation of the ORAS, counties in Ohio were using different methods of assessment, creating a great deal of variation in the practices for assessing the risk and needs of offenders. Therefore, one of the purposes of ORAS was to promote consistent and objective assessment of the risk of recidivism for offenders in Ohio.

Another advantage of using a risk assessment system that follows offenders through the criminal justice systems is that it improves communication and avoids duplication of information. In fact, many of the items in the individual assessments carry over into assessments at later dates. The total number of risk items that are collected from all assessment instruments

is 63. Of these, 24 items are used on at least two, if not more assessment instruments. Further, since ORAS will be automated, items that are assessed at earlier stages have the potential to auto-populate into assessments at future dates.

METHODS

A prospective design was utilized in the creation and validation of ORAS. To accomplish this, offenders across the Ohio criminal justice system were given extensive interviews for potential risk factors and were subsequently followed for one year to gather official measures of recidivism. The creation and validation of ORAS had three phases: planning, data collection, and validation. The planning phase involved planning meetings with research and ODRC staff regarding the logistic obstacles to gaining access to cases and data collection sites. It also involved the creation of the structured tools used in data collection and training of data collectors in the administration of the semi-structured interview. The planning phase occurred throughout the beginning of 2006.

The data collection phase involved site visits to all pilot counties and locations and the extensive interviews of offenders. In all, data for 1,834 cases was gathered from 29 locations. This process occurred from September 2006 to October 2007. Outcome measures were gathered between May 2008 and April 2009, providing an average of a one year follow-up for recidivism.

The validation phase began in winter 2008. The first part of this phase involved data cleaning and analyses to determine which items were predictive of recidivism. After this, the assessment instruments were constructed using factors that were related to recidivism. Once constructed, the instruments were validated by examining the ability of each instrument to predict recidivism.

After construction and validation, interview manuals and scoring guides were constructed for each tool. Both instruments provide detailed instructions regarding the use of each risk assessment tool. Once the interview guides and manuals were completed, the instruments were piloted using a group of personnel at locations in accordance with each risk assessment (i.e., local court officials for the CST, cases managers at ODRC correctional facilities for the PIT, etc.). Piloting the assessment tools involved familiarizing the personnel on the use of the scoring guides and manuals and allowing them to assess offenders for several weeks. Focus groups for each assessment instrument were then conducted with UC research staff and the pilot assessors. The focus groups were asked to comment on the ease of use of the instruments, wording of questions, the time it took to complete assessments, and the reliability of the self-report questionnaire. After the focus groups were conducted, changes were made to specific questions in the manuals, items on the scoring guides, and wording on the self-report questionnaires.

Data Collection

In order to construct a risk assessment instrument, data collection tools were designed that gathered information on potential predictors of recidivism. To create these tools, research staff at the University of Cincinnati reviewed previous scholarly work on the correlates of recidivism. Based on a review of the research, variables that were previously found to be related to recidivism were incorporated into the data collection tools.

The data collection tools were designed to gather information using self-report questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and file reviews. The purpose of the data collection tools was to provide a large number of potential risk factors that could be used to construct each assessment instrument. The interview guide consisted of a 26 page semi-structured interview. The instrument was comprised of 113 questions on a variety of criminogenic risk topics,

including: criminal history, substance use, criminal peers, criminal thinking, employment and education, mental health, emotional control, personality, and residential stability. The self-report instrument was a two-page document that used 96 questions to gather information on: criminal thinking, perspective taking, aggression, coping, empathy, emotionality, problem solving, involvement in pro-social activities, financial stress, and employment. The overall interview and self-report process took approximately 45-90 minutes to complete per offender.

Due to differences in access, interview availability, due process issues, and ethical considerations, pretrial defendants were assessed using different interview protocols and data collection tools. The initial pretrial structured interview tool was a two-page form that gathered information on 35 items. The self-report questionnaire was a four-page document that covered multiple domains, including: criminal thinking, drug use, medical and mental health, pro-criminal peers and family, residential stability, and employment. Completion of both the self-report and the structured interview took approximately 13-20 minutes to complete.

Data collection teams were comprised of trained research assistants from the University of Cincinnati. Depending on the size of the pilot site and the availability of spare rooms, the research staff size varied from three to 13 staff members. Each staff member was trained on the data collection instrument, ethics involved research with human subjects under correctional control, the interview procedure, and interview skills. In addition to training, each interviewer was supervised for the first four interviews, and interviews were randomly observed by team leaders throughout the project.

The pilot sites for the project were selected with the considerations of geographic representation across the state, recommendations from DRC staff, and whether the site was available and willing to participate during the data collection process. To facilitate participation

from the numerous pilot sites, letters were sent that informed the selected sites of the project goals. Potential sites were also asked to both facilitate access to the cases and provide a physical location to conduct the interviews. Although there were some logistical and scheduling issues that arose at several sites, no site declined to participate in the project.

Table 1 presents the counties and institutions where data were collected. Seven Ohio counties provided data for the Pretrial Assessment Tool. Fourteen counties participated in data collection for the Community Supervision Tool, and eight correctional facilities participated in data collection for the Prison Intake Tool and the Reentry Tool. Overall, data collection occurred between September 2006 and April 2009.

Table 1. Pilot Counties/Institutions that Participated in the Development of ORAS

Pretrial	Community Supervision	Prison Intake and Release
Butler	Cleveland	Lorain Correctional Institution
Cuyahoga	Franklin	Correctional Reception Center
Summit	Montgomery	Belmont Correctional Institution
Franklin	Clermont	Pickaway Correctional Institution
Hamilton	Butler	Trumbull Correctional Institution
Richland	Wood	Ross Correctional Institution
Warren	Columbiana	Ohio Reformatory for Women
	Hamilton	Southeastern Correctional Institution
	Warren	
	Summit	
	Hancock	
	Mahoning	
	Columbiana	
	Wood	

Participants

Four independent samples of offenders were gathered at different stages in the criminal justice system: at pretrial, on community supervision, at prison intake, and just prior to community reentry. Table 2 presents the number of cases in each sample. There were a total of 1,837 cases in all four samples, 452 in the pretrial sample, 681 in the community supervision sample, 427 in the prison intake sample, and 279 in the community reentry sample.

Pretrial interviews were conducted during two time periods: September 2006 – June 2007 and October 2008 – March 2009. Assessments for the pretrial sample required two data collection periods because the initial period did not provide enough Ohio cases to construct and validate an assessment instrument. As a result, an eight item draft assessment tool was constructed by combining cases from another state. Once the shortened assessment instrument was constructed, staff from the University of Cincinnati trained personnel from the pilot counties, and data collection resumed with the goal of increasing the pretrial sample size and validating the draft assessment instrument on Ohio offenders. County personnel who conducted the interviews were trained by researchers from the University of Cincinnati to use a draft interview guide as well as administer a self-report survey. In order to be included in either of the data collection samples, individuals had to be an adult charged with a criminal offense that was recently referred to pretrial services during the period of data collection.

Table 2: Number of Cases in Each Sample

Sample	N
Pretrial	452
Community Supervision	681
Prison Intake	427
Community Reentry	279
Total	1837

Community supervision interviews were conducted between September 2006 and February 2007. To be included into the community supervision sample, individuals had to be an adult charged with a criminal offense that was recently referred to probation services during the period of data collection. Possible participants were identified at each site, and these individuals were approached by site staff and asked if they would be willing to meet with the research staff.

Once the individual met with the research staff and the project was explained, individuals were asked to participate in the research process and to sign informed consent documents.

Interviews were conducted for the prison intake sample between June and October 2007. Individuals were selected for the prison intake sample if they: a) were admitted to an intake correctional facility within the last six months, b) were unrestricted by security concerns (e.g., solitary), c) agreed to be interviewed, and d) were within six months of release. The limited sentence length was necessary in order to provide an adequate follow-up time for recidivism in the community. Due to the restrictive nature of a secure correctional facility, individuals were issued movement passes prior to the arrival of the research staff. However, since the research was voluntary, the pass may not have been granted if it interrupted school or job duties, if the inmate declined the pass, or for security reasons. Once the research staff and inmates met, the project was explained, participation was requested, and informed consent obtained.

Interviews were conducted for the community reentry sample between June and October 2007. The community reentry sample consisted of individuals who: a) were within six months of their release/discharge date, b) were unrestricted by security concerns, and c) agreed to participate. Similar to the intake sample, these interviews were conducted within the confines of a secured correctional facility, so individuals were issued movement passes prior to the arrival of the research staff. Once the offenders arrived to the room designated for interviews, the project was explained, participation was requested, and informed consent was obtained.

Recidivism

The primary measure of recidivism for this study was arrest for a new crime. Although data were gathered regarding a variety of other potential outcome measures (e.g., conviction, probation violation, institutional rule infraction), arrest was used for two major reasons. First,

measures that gather information later in the criminal justice process, such as convictions, require a longer follow-up period than twelve months utilized in this study. Second, using arrests in the community as an outcome allows the assessment tools to identify criminogenic needs that are likely to result in danger to the community. Although factors that are predictive of rule violations (e.g., probation violations or institutional violations) are of concern to criminal justice personnel, of most concern is targeting factors that are related to criminal behavior.

Unlike the other assessment tools, the outcome used in the construction of the Pretrial Assessment Tool was either a new arrest or failure-to-appear. Failure-to-appear was included as an outcome because one of the major goals of the pretrial tool was to assist court actors in the decision to release or hold the defendant prior trial. This information was gathered by the counties from public records searches and searches of the cases file. For the community supervision sample, county agencies gathered the arrest data on offenders under their supervision through public records searches and file reviews. This information was verified through the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG). OHLEG is advantageous because the information it provides is not specific to the county of supervision. Because not all inmates who were released from correctional facilities were placed on community supervision, OHLEG was the primary source of information for regarding new arrests for these samples.

Collection of the follow-up data for all samples was completed approximately one year following the conclusion of the structured interviews. Collection of follow-up information for the pretrial cases was completed in April 2008 and May 2009. For the community supervision sample, follow-up was completed in April 2008. The follow-up for the prison intake and reentry samples was completed in December 2008.

Assessment Construction

For each assessment, items gathered from the structured interviews and self-report surveys that were associated with recidivism were used to create each tool. Cases were excluded if they had missing information on four of more items.[1] After the items that were associated with recidivism were identified, these items were scored to create scales that indicated increases in the likelihood of recidivism. A modified Burgess method was used to assign point values to each item. The Burgess method assigns a point (a score of 1) to the presence of the risk factor, and assigns a score of zero when it is false or not present. Some items have multiple increasing values and as a result were scored with increasing values (i.e., 0, 1, 2). The items were then combined to create risk scales for each assessment tool. Once the risk scales were created, cutoffs were created that divided cases into different risk categories.

Priorities in Case Management

To assist Ohio criminal justice agencies with case management, another goal of the development of ORAS was to provide agencies with tools that identify and prioritize specific treatment domains. To do so, each assessment instrument is broken down by domain (e.g., criminal associates, criminal attitudes, substance abuse, etc.) and specific categories were identified that divide offenders into groups based on their likelihood to reoffend. Stated differently, the assessment process not only provides an overall risk level, but also provides risk levels by case management domains. Presenting risk levels by domain provides practitioners specific information regarding the likelihood of recidivism based on individual criminogenic needs in order to encourage a more efficient allocation of treatment resources.

[1] The number of cases excluded for each tool because they have more than four items missing were: pretrial sample = 0, community supervision sample = 3, prison intake sample = 10, reentry sample = 2.

Responsivity Assessments

Keeping with principles of effective classification, a goal in the development of the ORAS was to gather information regarding potential barriers to treatment. As a result, additional case planning items are incorporated into the final assessment. Table 3 provides a list of areas that are gathered for responsivity. As indicated in the table, responsivity items range from factors such as intelligence and literacy to child care and transportation. These items are not directly related to recidivism, but instead have the potential to restrict the efficacy of treatment. Responsivity items are not used in the final calculation of risk, but instead are used as case planning factors that should be addressed to improve likelihood that programming will reduce recidivism.

Table 3: Areas Assessed for Responsivity

Treatment Barriers	
Low intelligence	Physical handicap
Reading and writing limitations	Mental health issues
History of abuse/neglect	Treatment motivation
Transportation	Child care
Language	Ethnicity, and cultural barriers

VALIDATION RESULTS

This section describes the samples and validation results by assessment instrument: the Pretrial Tool, the Community Supervision Tool (and Community Supervision Screening Tool), the Prison Intake Tool, and the Reentry Tool. Also presented for each tool is information regarding priorities in case management by presenting risk levels by domain.

The Pretrial Assessment Tool (PAT)

The PAT is designed to inform court actors of the risk of a defendant to either fail-to-appear at a future court date or be arrested for a new crime. The pretrial sample consisted of

individuals who received pretrial services from participating counties in Ohio. This sample provided data for 452 defendants who were on pretrial supervision during the data collection periods. Table 4 presents descriptive statistics for the PAT. The sample has an average follow-up of 12 months, and 16 percent experienced either an arrest or failure to appear.

The original pretrial data collection instruments provided over 100 potential predictors of recidivism. Of these, seven items from four domains were found to be related to recidivism: three items for criminal history, one item measuring employment, one item measuring residential stability, and two items measuring substance abuse. Table 5 presents the domains included in the PAT.[2]

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for the Pretrial Assessment Sample (n =450)

Variable	N	Percent
Sex		
Male	345	79.3
Female	107	23.7
Race		
White	227	50.2
African American	210	46.5
Other	15	3.3
Arrest or FTA		
Yes	379	83.8
No	73	16.2
	Average	Range
Months at Risk	11.9 (5.6 SD)	4 – 24
Age	32.7 (10.1)	18 – 64

[2] See the pretrial score sheet in Appendix A for a list of all items included in the Pretrial Assessment Tool.

Table 5: Domains of the Pretrial Assessment Tool

Domain	Number of Items
Criminal History	3
Employment	1
Residential Stability	1
Substance Abuse	2
Total	7

The PAT has a potential range from zero to 9. Appendix B presents a graph of the distribution of the pretrial sample on the pretrial assessment score. The graph reveals that there is a slight skew in the distribution with more cases with scores on lower values of the tool.

Table 6 presents the percentage of cases that recidivated for each risk score. The table reveals that as scores on the PAT increase, the percentage of individuals who were arrested increases. Further, the significant r value of .23 indicates that the pretrial assessment score is positively correlated with recidivism.

Table 6: Recidivism by Pretrial Risk Score (n = 450)*

Risk Score	Total Cases	Percent with Violation
0	13	0
1	49	0
2	68	10
3	83	18
4	100	17
5	59	19
6	47	25
7	27	33
8	2	0
9	2	100

* $r = .23$, $p<.00$

Table 7 presents the distribution of the pretrial sample on risk levels of the PAT. Scores of zero to two were categorized as low risk, three to five moderate risk, and six to nine as high

risk. Of the total sample, 29 percent of cases were categorized as low risk, 54 were categorized as moderate risk, and 17 percent as high risk.

Table 7: Distribution of Cases for each Risk Level for the Pretrial Assessment Tool

Level	N	Percent
Low (0-2)	130	29
Moderate (3-5)	248	54
High (6+)	78	17
Total	450	100

Figure 1 presents information regarding the predictive validity of the PAT. The chart illustrates that each risk level is associated progressively higher rates of recidivism. Specifically, five percent of low risk cases were arrested, 18 percent of moderate risk cases were arrested, and 30 percent of high risk cases were arrested. The r value of .22 provides further indication that the assigned levels of risk are able to significantly distinguish between groups that have progressively higher rates of recidivism.

Figure 1: Predictive Validity of the Pretrial Assessment Tool (n = 450)*

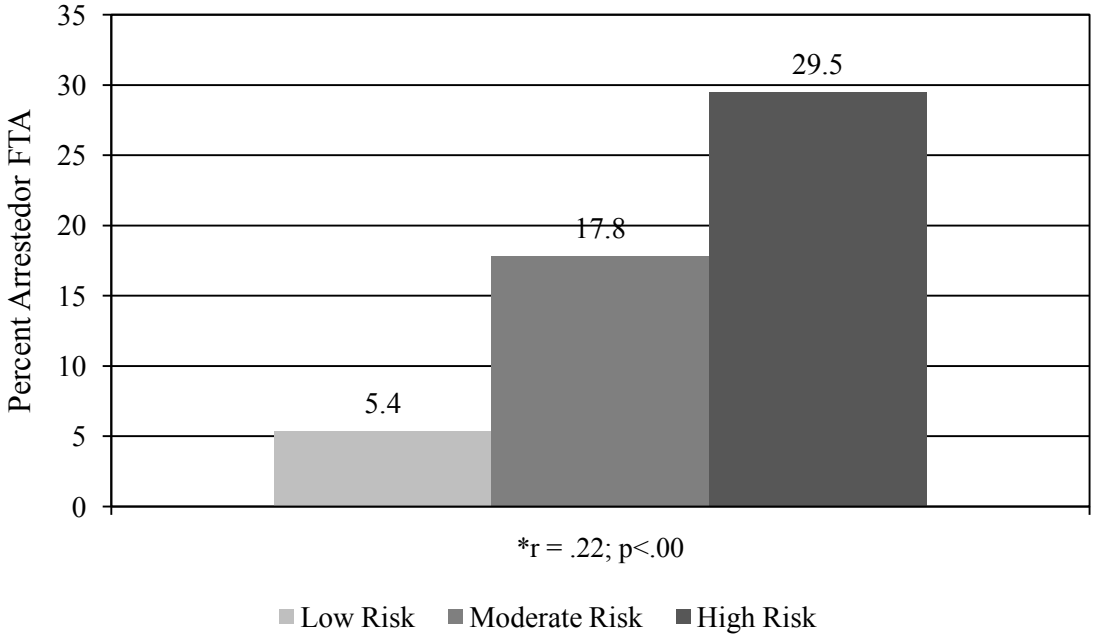


Table 8 presents statistics for each of the case management domains of the PAT. Criminal history and residential mobility provide groups that are associated with increasing higher rates of recidivism. The domains of substance abuse and employment provide groups that have increasing recidivism rates, although the differences between the rates are relatively low. For example, the domain of employment produces low, moderate, and high risk groups that with the following respective recidivism rates: 12 percent, 16 percent, and 20 percent. As a result, the r values for these domains are below .10. On the other hand, within the domain of residential mobility, 25 percent of individuals who were at risk recidivated compared to only 11 percent of those that were not at risk (r = .19). The domain of criminal history also produces increasing rates of recidivism for low (11%), moderate, (24%) and high (29%) risk cases (r = .19).

Table 8. Priorities in Case Management for the Pretrial Assessment Tool

Criminal History		**Employment**		**Residential Mobility**		**Substance Abuse**	
# of Items	3	# of Items	1	# of Items	1	# of Items	2
Range	0 – 4	Range	0 – 2	Range	0 – 1	Range	0 – 2
Risk	**Violation**	**Risk**	**Violation**	**Risk**	**Violation**	**Risk**	**Violation**
Low (0-1)	11%	Low (0)	12%	Low (0)	11%	Low (0)	14%
Mod. (2)	24%	Mod. (1)	16%	High (1)	25%	High. (1-2)	18%
High (3+)	29%	High (2)	20%	r = .19		r = .05	
r = .19		r = .09					

The Community Supervision Tool (CST)

Initial data for the community supervision sample was gathered through site visits to local county probation offices and community based corrections facilities. The CST is designed to assist in both designation of supervision level, as well as to guide case management for offenders in the community. The community supervision sample consisted of 678 individuals

who were on community supervision in Ohio. Table 9 presents descriptive statistics for the community supervision sample. The table indicates that 38 percent were rearrested during an average of 17 months at risk.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics for the Community Supervision Sample (n = 678)

Variable	N	Percent
Sex		
Male	513	75.7
Female	165	24.3
Race		
White	471	70.0
African American	186	27.0
Other	21	3.0
Any New Arrest		
Yes	259	38.2
No	419	61.8
	Average	Range
Months at Risk	16.9	12 – 20
	(1.8 SD)	
Age	32.2	18 – 65
	(12.26)	

The self-report survey and structured interview guide provided a total of 200 potential predictors of recidivism. Table 10 presents the domains assessed using the CST and the number of items from each domain that were included in the CST.[3] In all, the CST consisted of a total of 35 items within 7 domains, and had potential scores that ranged from zero to 49.

Appendix B presents a visual display of the distribution of cases on scores for the CST. The figure reveals that the scores range from one to 43, with the majority falling near the center of the distribution, indicating a normal distribution. Table 11 presents failure rates by CST risk score for the community supervision sample. The table indicates that as scores on the CST

[3] See the CST scoring form in Appendix A for list of all variables included in the ORAS-CST.

increase, the percentage of individuals that were rearrested increases as well. Further, the r value of .37 in Table 11 indicates a relatively strong relationship between risk score and recidivism.

Table 10: Domains for the Community Supervision Tool

Domain	Number of Items
Criminal History	6
Education, Employment, and Finances	6
Family and Social Support	5
Neighborhood Problems	2
Substance Abuse	5
Antisocial Associations	4
Antisocial Attitudes and Behavioral Problems	7
Total	35

Table 11: Percentage of Failure by Risk Score for the Community Supervision Tool (n=678)*

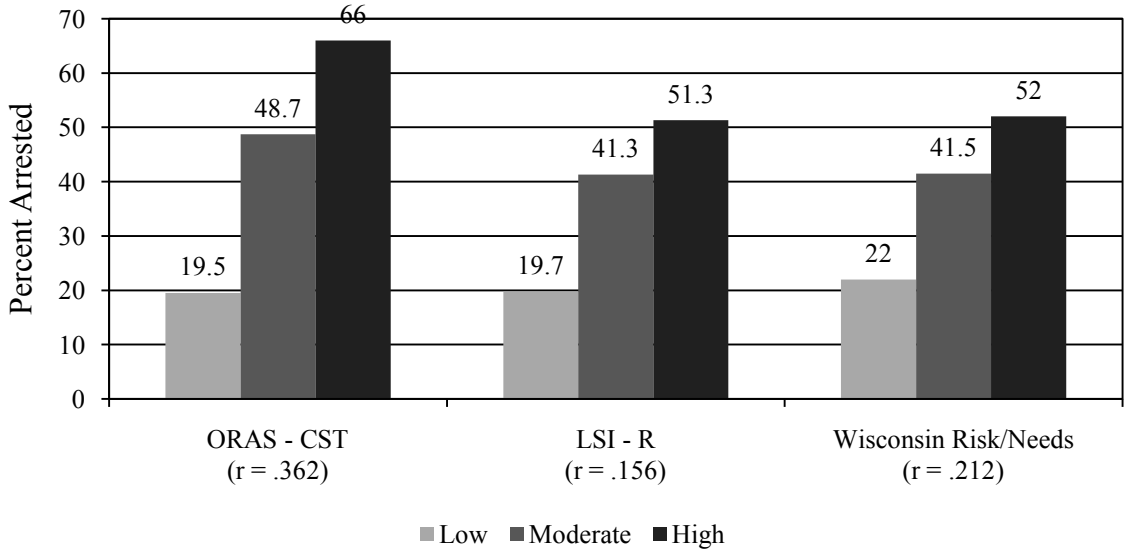
Risk Score	Total Cases	Percent Arrested	Risk Score	Total Cases	Percent Arrested
0	0	–	**26**	23	57
1	1	0	**27**	29	48
2	0	–	**28**	21	71
3	0	–	**29**	26	50
4	2	0	**30**	17	59
5	3	0	**31**	19	58
6	3	0	**32**	20	65
7	6	0	**33**	8	38
8	7	14	**34**	6	100
9	9	11	**35**	14	64
10	14	0	**36**	9	56
11	15	13	**37**	4	75
12	13	15	**38**	3	67
13	21	10	**39**	3	67
14	24	8	**40**	1	100
15	23	44	**41**	2	100
16	25	16	**42**	1	0
17	34	30	**43**	2	100
18	39	26	**44**	0	–
19	36	25	**45**	0	–
20	30	50	**46**	0	–
21	33	33	**47**	0	–
22	38	29	**48**	0	–
23	23	30	**49**	0	–
24	35	63	**48**	0	–
25	36	44	**49**	0	–

* r value = .37, p<.000

In risk/needs assessment, concurrent validity involves comparing the validity of an assessment tool to other known and established instruments. To assess concurrent validity of the ORAS, individuals in each sample were assessed on the Level of Service Inventory – Revised (LSI-R) and the Wisconsin Risk/Needs instrument. For consistency, scores were divided into low, moderate, and high risk groups based on each instruments' specified requirements.

Figure 2 reveals that the CST has relatively strong concurrent validity, which is evidenced from the larger r value and larger differences in recidivism between groups. All three instruments are significantly related to recidivism (CST r = .362, p<.05; LSI-R r = .156, p<.05; Wisconsin Risk/Needs r = .212, p<.05), but the LSI-R and Wisconsin Risk/Needs failed to provide large differences in recidivism between moderate and high risk groups. On the other hand, the CST provides large differences in recidivism between groups, 29 percentage points between low (20%) and moderate (49%) risk groups and 17 percentage points between moderate (49%) and high (66%) risk groups. These results suggest that the CST has strong concurrent validity, performing better than the LSI-R and the Wisconsin Risk/Needs Assessment.

Figure 2: Concurrent Validity of the Community Supervision Tool (n = 672)*



*All r values p <.05

To provide optimal risk levels and cutoff scores, preliminary analyses revealed that males and females should be given different cutoff scores to categorize risk groups. This is primarily because females tended to have lower scores on the assessment instruments. Table 12 provides the final risk levels, cutoffs, and number of cases falling at each level. For males, cutoffs for risk levels are as follows: low risk = zero- 14; moderate risk, 15 - 23; high risk = 24 33; and very high risk, 34 and higher. Table 12 also provides the distribution of risk levels for females. For females the cutoffs are as follows: low risk = zero - 14; moderate risk = 15 - 21; high risk 22 - 28; and very high risk = 29 and higher.

Table 12: Distribution of Cases by Risk Level for the CST

Level	N	Percent
Males (n = 513)		
Low (0-14)	77	15
Moderate (15-23)	207	40
High (24-33)	190	37
Very High (34-49)	39	8
Females (n = 165)		
Low (0-14)	43	25
Moderate (15-21)	65	40
High (22-28)	47	29
Very High (29-49)	10	6

Figure 3 presents the failure rates for each risk level of the CST for male offenders in the community supervision sample. The table clearly illustrates incremental increases in the rates of recidivism for each group. Failure rates are nine percent for low risk males, 34 percent for moderate risk males, 59 percent for high risk males, and 70 percent for very high risk male offenders. The r value of .37 reveals that the relationship between risk level and recidivism is relatively strong.

Figure 3: Predictive Validity of the Community Supervision Tool for Males (n = 513)*

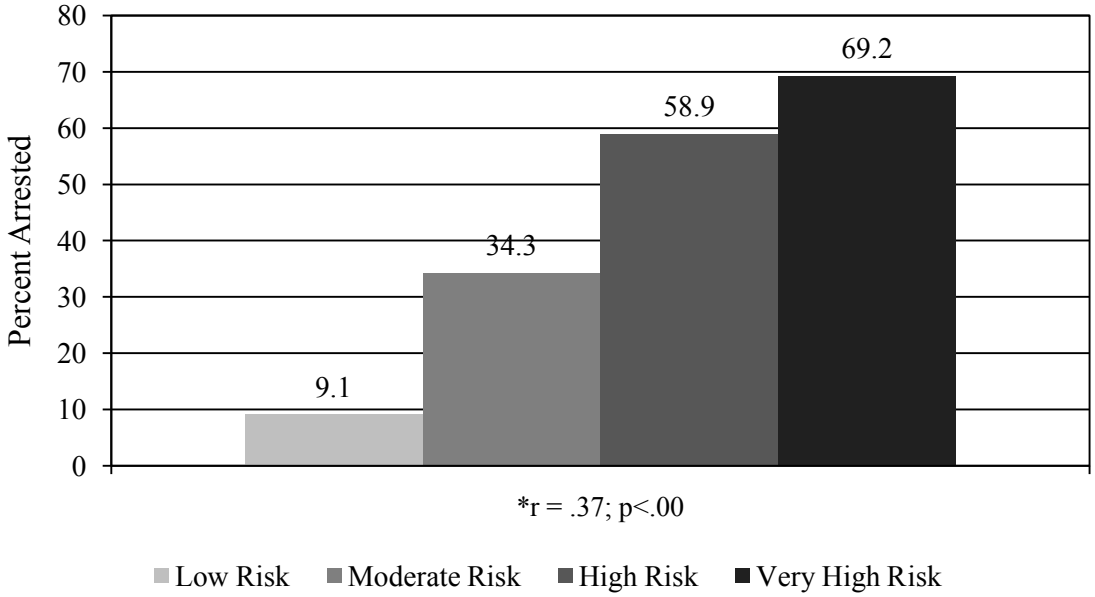
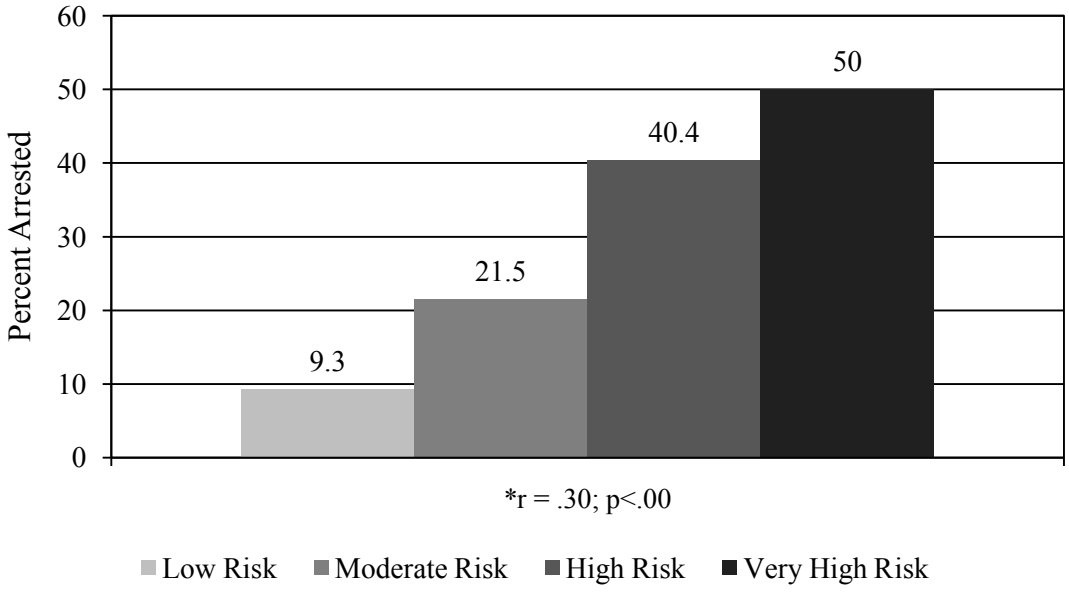


Figure 4 presents the recidivism rates for the CST by risk level for females in the community supervision sample. The figure illustrates that each risk level provides groups with distinctly higher rates of recidivism. The r value of .30 reveals a considerably strong relationship between risk level and recidivism.

Figure 4: Predictive Validity of the Community Supervision Tool for Females (n = 165)*



Another major goal that emerged during the development of ORAS was to provide decision makers with the ability to establish priorities in the management of dynamic risk factors that were based on the likelihood of recidivism. The priorities essentially disaggregate overall risk level into risk levels by domain, placing each offender at low, moderate, or high risk to reoffend for each domain. Table 12 provides statistics for the priorities in case management for the CST. All but two of the domains (social support and substance abuse) have r values above .20, and the domain of antisocial associates exceeds .30.

Although the domains of social support and substance abuse have r values below .20, they still produce groups with increasing higher rates of recidivism. For the domain of social support, 32 percent of low risk cases recidivate, while 41 and 48 percent of moderate and high risk recidivate, respectively. On the other hand, domains with larger r values produce groups with larger differences between groups. For example, the domain of Antisocial Associates

Table 12: Priorities in Case Management for the Community Supervision Tool

Criminal History		**Education and Finances**		**Social Support**		**Neighborhood Problems**	
# of Items	6	# of Items	6	# of Items	5	# of Items	2
Range	0 – 8	Range	0 – 6	Range	0 – 5	Range	0 – 3
Risk	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**
Low (0-3)	27%	Low (0-1)	21%	Low (0-1)	32%	Low (0)	17%
Mod. (4-6)	46%	Mod. (2-4)	37%	Mod. (2-3)	41%	Mod. (1)	35%
High (7-8)	53%	High (5-6)	55%	High (4-5)	48%	High (2-3)	45%
r = .20		r = .22		r = .12		r = .20	

Substance Abuse		**Antisocial Associates**		**Antisocial Attitudes**	
# of Items	5	# of Items	4	# of Items	7
Range	0 – 6	Range	0 – 8	Range	0 – 13
Risk	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**
Low (0-2)	27%	Low (0-1)	21%	Low (0-3)	24%
Mod. (3-4)	40%	Mod. (2-4)	43%	Mod. (4-8)	44%
High (5-6)	45%	High (5-8)	64%	High (9-13)	59%
r = .14		r = .32		r = .24	

produces low moderate and high risk groups that recidivate at 21 percent, 43 percent, and 64 percent respectively.

The Community Supervision Screening Tool (CSST)

Since the CST was designed to be used on a potentially large number of offenders across the state of Ohio, the Community Supervision Screening Tool was developed in order to provide counties the ability to more quickly identify moderate to high risk cases. Once identified as moderate to high risk, counties could provide these cases with the full assessment of criminogenic needs (i.e., administer the CST) while avoiding the extra resources involved with assessing lower risk cases that were not likely to need intensive treatment services.

The four items included in the CSST were chosen because of their individual relationship with recidivism and because they provided information from four different domains. Table 13 presents the items that were included in the CSST. The items gather information on the number of prior felonies, current employment, the availability of drugs, and the number of criminal friends.

Table 13: Items in the Community Supervision Screening Tool

Item	Score
Number of Prior Adult Felony Convictions	0=None 1=One or Two 2=Three or more
Currently Employed Full Time	0=Yes 1=No
Drugs Readily Available in Neighborhood	0=Not available 1= Somewhat available 2=Easily available
Criminal Friends	0=None 1=Some 2=Majority

The CSST has a range of scores from zero to seven. Appendix B presents a bar chart that illustrates the distribution of cases on scores for the CSST from the community supervision sample. The figure indicates that although there is a slight skew to the distribution, the majority of cases fall between three and five, with fewer cases falling at the tails of the distribution. Table 14 presents the percentage of offenders arrested at each risk score for the CSST. The failure rates range from nearly four percent at the lowest score to 80 percent at the highest score. The table indicates that as each score increases, the percentage of offenders that recidivated increases. Further, the r value of .38 indicates a relatively strong relationship between the CSST risk score and recidivism.

Table 14: Percentage of Failures by Risk Score on the Community Supervision Screening Tool (n = 678)*

Risk Score	Total Cases	Percent Arrested
0	26	3.8
1	49	10.2
2	90	17.8
3	115	28.7
4	137	40.1
5	144	49.3
6	92	63.0
7	25	80.0

*r = .28, p<.00

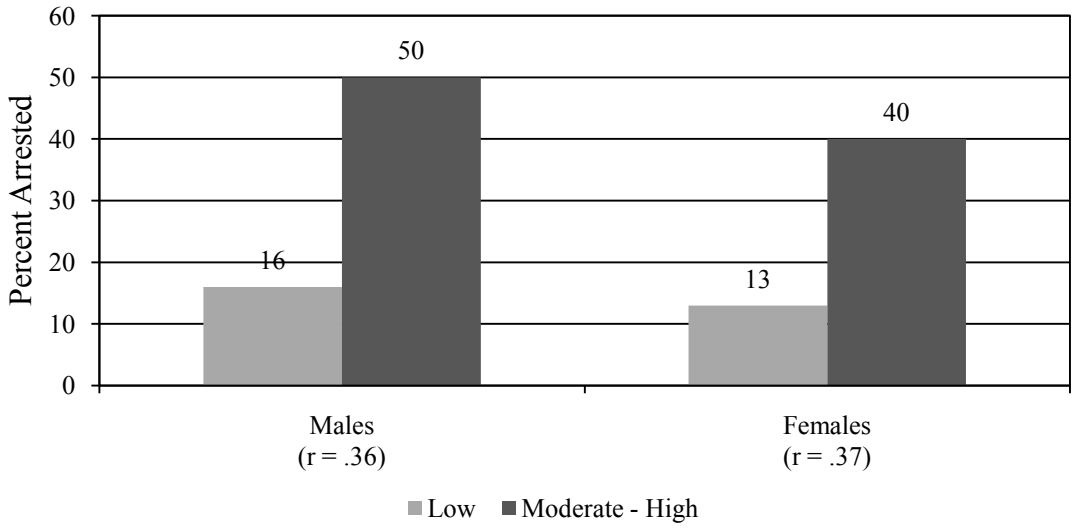
Since the CSST was designed to screen out low risk cases, cutoffs were identified that separated offenders into two groups: low risk or moderate/high risk. Preliminary analyses revealed that optimal cutoff scores for the CSST were different between males and females. Table 15 presents the distribution of cases by risk level for the CSST. As the table indicates, 23 percent of males were identified as low risk cases by the CSST, while over 50 percent of females were identified as low risk.

Table 15: Distribution of Cases by Risk Level for the Community Supervision Screen Tool

Level	N	Percent
Males		
Low (0-2)	119	23.2
Moderate – High (3+)	394	76.8
Total	513	100.0
Females		
Low (0-3)	88	53.3
Moderate – High (4+)	77	46.7
Total	165	100.0

Figure 5 presents the failure rates for risk levels of the CSST by gender. Of males that were identified as low risk, 16 percent were rearrested compared to 50 percent of those identified as moderate/high risk. For females, 13 percent of offenders identified as low risk recidivated, while 40 percent of those identified as moderate/high risk recidivated. The r values of .36 and .37 indicate that the CSST performs well in distinguishing between low and high risk offenders for both males and females.

Figure 5: Predictive Validity of the Community Supervision Screening Tool by Gender



*All r values p <.05

The Prison Intake Tool (PIT)

As mentioned previously, the PIT is designed to provide case managers an assessment instrument that can be used to prioritize prison treatment based on the likelihood of recidivism. Table 16 presents descriptive statistics for the prison intake sample. The sample was 63 percent male, 54 percent white, and had an average age of 33. The average follow-up was 13 months, and 40 percent experienced a new arrest during the follow-up period.

The self-report survey and structured interview guide provided a total of 200 potential predictors of recidivism. Of these, only items that were related to recidivism were included in the final PIT instrument. Table 17 presents the number of items in each of the domains assessed using the PIT[4]. In all, the CST consists of a total of 30 items from 5 domains: age, criminal history, education employment and finances, family and social support, substance abuse, and criminal lifestyle.

Table 16: Descriptive Statistics for the Prison Intake Sample (n = 423)

Variable	N	Percent
Sex		
Male	267	63.1
Female	156	36.9
Race		
White	227	53.7
African American	164	38.8
Other	32	7.6
Any New Arrest		
Yes	169	40.0
No	254	60.0
	Average	Range
Months at Risk	13.3 (2.1 SD)	7 - 18
Age	33.2 (9.3 SD)	19 – 64

[4] See the PIT score sheet in Appendix A for list of all variables included in the ORAS-PIT

Table 17: Domains for the Prison Intake Tool

Domain	Number of Items
Age	1
Criminal History	7
Education, Employment, and Finances	6
Family and Social Support	5
Substance Abuse	5
Criminal Lifestyle	7
Total	31

The distribution of cases on scores for the PIT is presented in Appendix A. The figure reveals that the scores range from three to 29, with the majority falling near the center of the distribution, indicating that the distribution approaches normality. Table 18 presents failure rates by PIT risk score for the prison intake sample. The table reveals that as scores on the PIT increase, the percentage individuals that recidivated also increases (r = .36).

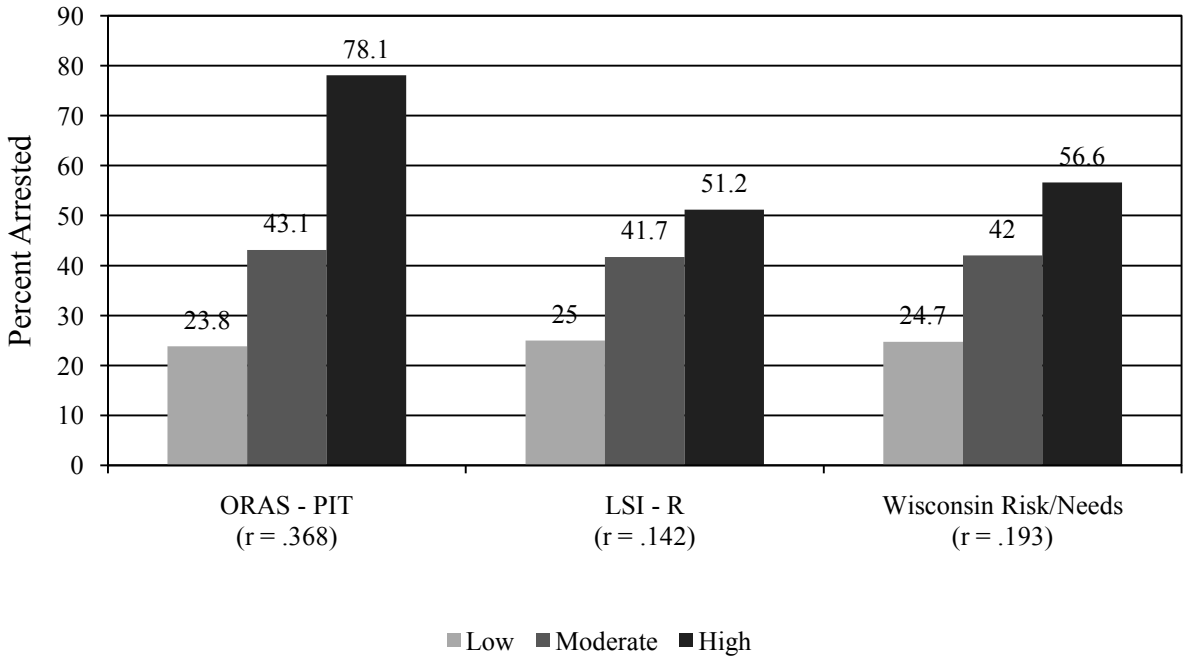
Table 18: Percentage of Failures by Risk Score for the Prison Intake Tool (n=423)*

Risk Score	Total Cases	Percent Arrested	Risk Score	Total Cases	Percent Arrested
0	0	–	**21**	20	40
1	0	–	**22**	19	79
2	0	–	**23**	14	86
3	1	0	**24**	9	89
4	3	0	**25**	7	57
5	7	14	**26**	7	71
6	10	10	**27**	4	50
7	10	10	**28**	1	100
8	15	27	**29**	3	100
9	12	25	**30**	0	–
10	22	23	**31**	0	–
11	28	29	**32**	0	–
12	27	18	**33**	0	–
13	26	39	**34**	0	–
14	24	25	**35**	0	–
15	31	32	**36**	0	–
16	25	40	**37**	0	–
17	25	48	**38**	0	–
18	29	41	**39**	0	–
19	26	58	**40**	0	–
20	18	44			

* r value = .36, p<.000

Similar to the Community Supervision Tool, the concurrent validity of the PIT involved comparing the predictive validity of the PIT to the LSI-R and the Wisconsin Risk/Needs assessments. For consistency, offenders were separated into three risk levels for each instrument, low, moderate, and high. Figure 6 compares the recidivism rates for these groups for each assessment instrument. Although the LSI-R and Wisconsin Instrument do provide substantive differences between low and moderate risk offenders, the difference between moderate and high risk offenders is somewhat small. On the other hand, the PIT provides a 20 percentage point difference between low and moderate risk offenders and a 35 percentage point difference between moderate and high risk offenders. The r value of .37 for the PIT also indicates that it outperforms the LSI-R and Wisconsin Risk/Needs Assessment.

Figure 6: Concurrent Validity of the Prison Intake Tool (n = 423)*



*All r values p <.05

Preliminary analyses indicated that the PIT produced four distinct risk levels for male offenders and only three groups for females. Table 19 presents the distribution of risk levels for the PIT by gender. For males, nine percent of the cases are low risk, 41 percent are moderate risk, 43 percent are high risk, and six percent are very high risk. For females, low risk cases account for 42 percent of the sample, moderate risk cases account for 39 percent of the sample, and high risk cases account for 19 percent of the sample. Taken together, this suggests that females have a higher percentage of low and moderate risk cases than males.

Table 19: Distribution of Cases by Risk Level for the Prison Intake Tool

Level	N	Percent
Males (n = 267)		
Low (0-8)	24	9
Moderate (9-16)	111	41
High (17-24)	115	43
Very High (25+)	17	6
Females (n = 165)		
Low (0-12)	65	42
Moderate (13-18)	61	39
High (19+)	30	19

Figure 7 presents percentage of males that were arrested by risk level on the PIT. The chart illustrates that increases in recidivism are seen with increases in risk level. Further, the r value of .32 indicates a relatively strong relationship between the PIT risk levels and recidivism. Seventeen percent of low risk cases recidivated, 32 percent of moderate risk cases recidivated, 58 percent of high risk cases recidivated, and 71 percent of very high risk cases recidivated.

Figure 7: Predictive Validity of the Prison Intake Tool for Males (n = 267)*

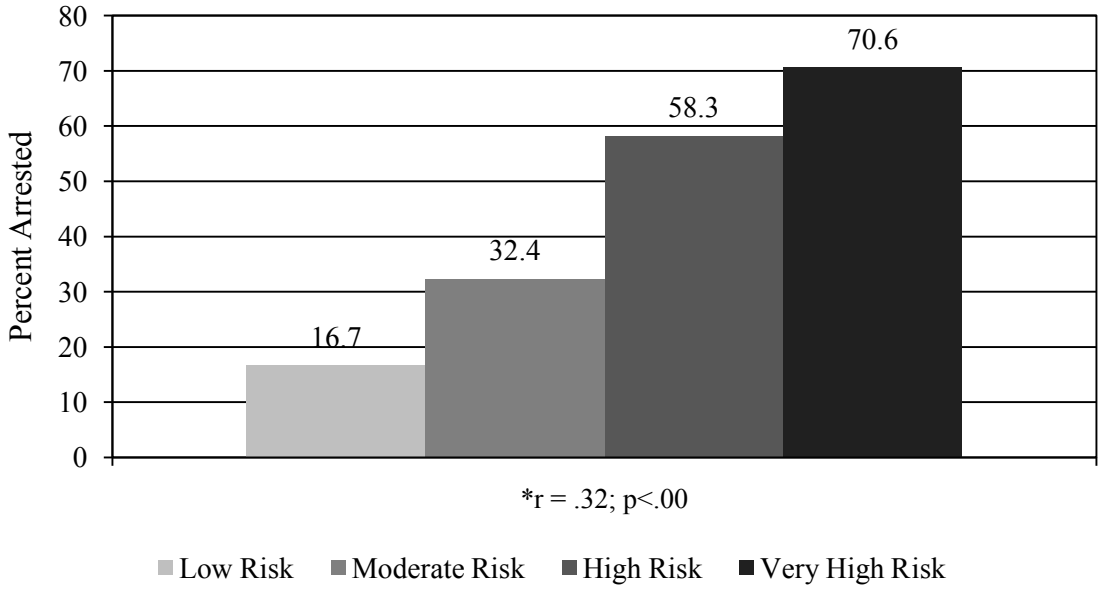
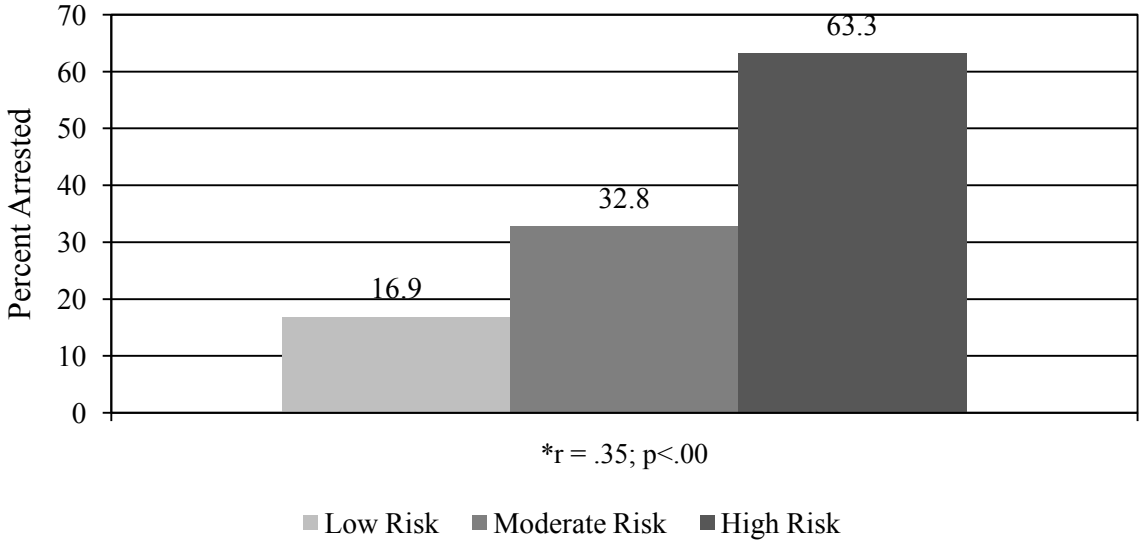


Figure 8 presents the recidivism rates by risk level for females in the prison intake sample. The figure reveals substantial differences in recidivism between risk levels: low risk cases had a recidivism rate of 17 percent, 33 percent of moderate risk cases recidivated, and 63 percent of high risk cases recidivated. These differences were significant and produced a relatively large r value of .35.

Figure 8: Predictive Validity of the Prison Intake Tool for Females (n = 156)*



A major goal that emerged during the development of the PIT was to provide decision makers with the ability to establish priorities in the treatment of offenders that are based on the likelihood of reoffending. Priorities in cases management can be determined by disaggregating risk levels of the PIT by domain. Table 20 presents statistics for each of the case management domains. Although most of the domains reach r values at or near .20, the social support domain has a somewhat low r value of .12. Still, the table indicates that case management domains are individually able to classify offenders into different groups based on the likelihood to recidivate, especially in the domains of criminal history, education and finances, and criminal lifestyle. For example in the education and finances domain, 29 percent of low risk cases were arrested, 44 percent of moderate risk cases were arrested, and 53 percent of high risk cases were rearrested.

Table 20: Priorities in Case Management for the Prison Intake Tool

Criminal History		**Education and Finances**		**Social Support**	
# of Items	6	# of Items	6	# of Items	5
Range	0 – 8	Range	0 – 6	Range	0 – 5
Risk	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**
Low (0-3)	30%	Low (0-3)	29%	Low (0-2)	28%
Mod. (4-6)	47%	Mod. (4-5)	44%	Mod. (3-4)	45%
High (7-10)	57%	High (6-7)	53%	High (5-6)	59%
r = .22		r = .19		r = .12	
Substance Abuse		**Criminal Lifestyle**			
# of Items	5	# of Items	4		
Range	0 – 6	Range	0 – 8		
Risk	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**		
Low (0-1)	33%	Low (0-2)	29%		
Mod. (2-3)	44%	Mod. (3-5)	46%		
High (4-5)	60%	High (6-8)	61%		
r = .17		r = .21			

The Reentry Tool (RT)

The RT was designed to be administered within 6 months of release from prison. The average length of incarceration for the prison release sample ranged from two to 452 months, with an average of 35 months. After release from prison, arrest records were checked approximately one year after the final interview was conducted. Table 21 presents descriptive statistics for the reentry sample. The sample is 23 percent female, 46 percent African American, and has an average age of 32. During the average of 13 months at risk, 43 percent of the sample was rearrested.

Table 21: Descriptive Statistics for the Reentry Sample (n = 277)

Variable	N	Percent
Sex		
Male	212	76.5
Female	65	23.5
Race		
White	135	48.7
African American	127	45.8
Other	15	5.4
Any New Arrest		
Yes	118	42.6
No	159	57.4
	Average	Range
Months at Risk	12.8	8 – 17
	(2.1 SD)	
Age	31.6	18 – 57
	(8.2 SD)	

The self-report survey and structured interview guide provided a total of 200 potential predictors of recidivism. Table 22 presents the number of items in each of the domains assessed using the RT.[5] In all, the RT consisted of a total of 20 items from four domains and had

[5] See the RT scoring for in Appendix A for list of all variables included in the ORAS-RT.

potential scores that ranged from zero to 28. Domains for the RT are: age, criminal history, social bonds, and criminal attitudes. Appendix B presents a bar chart that displays the distribution of cases on the reentry tool. The graph for the RT illustrates that the distribution approaches normality, with most cases falling at the center of the distribution and fewer cases on the tails.

Table 22: Domains for the Reentry Tool

Domain	Number of Items
Age	1
Criminal History	8
Social Bonds	4
Criminal Attitudes	7
Total	20

Table 23 presents the percentage of offenders that recidivated at each risk score for the RT. The table reveals that there is a general upward trend in the percentage of offenders who were arrested that corresponds with increasing scores on the RT. The r value of .36 indicates that the relationship between RT risk scores and recidivism is relatively strong.

Table 23: Percentage of Failures by Risk Score for the Reentry Tool (n=277)*

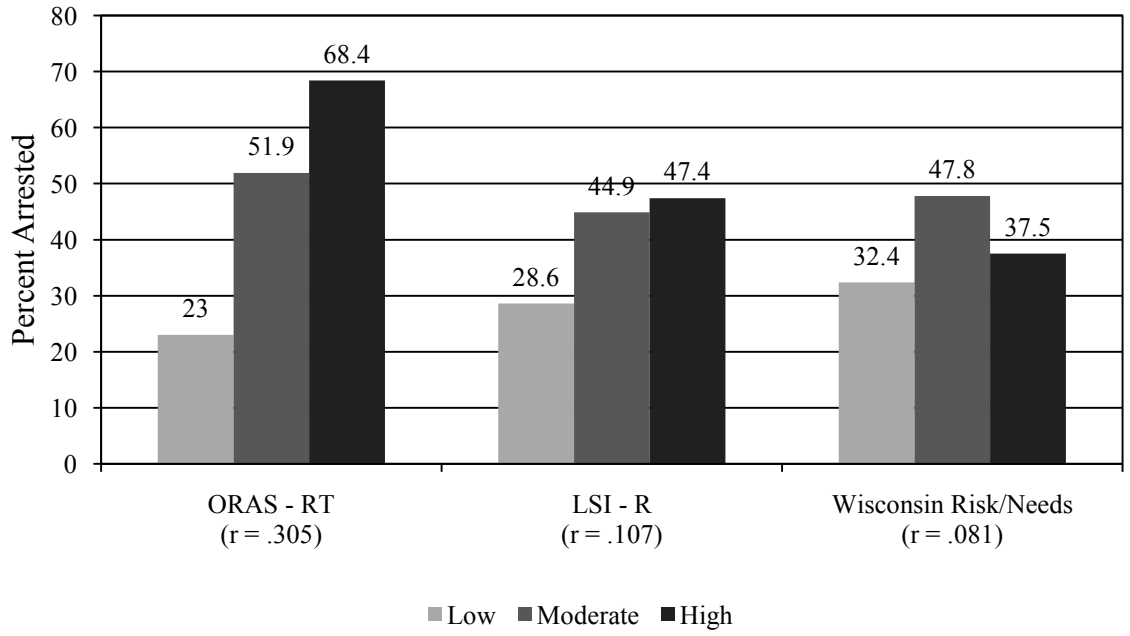
Risk Score	Total Cases	Percent Arrested	Risk Score	Total Cases	Percent Arrested
0	0	–	**15**	22	68
1	0	–	**16**	19	63
2	0	–	**17**	13	62
3	5	0	**18**	10	6
4	5	20	**19**	9	78
5	4	0	**20**	4	100
6	12	0	**21**	2	50
7	11	18	**22**	1	0
8	16	12	**23**	3	33
9	22	32	**24**	0	–
10	25	44	**25**	0	–
11	24	29	**26**	0	–
12	25	48	**27**	0	–

13	21	48	**28**	0	–
14	24	50			

* r value = .36; p<.000

The concurrent validity for the RT was evaluated by comparing the predictive power of the RT to the LSI-R and the Wisconsin Risk/Needs Assessment. Figure 9 presents statistics for the concurrent validity of the RT. The results reveal that although the RT is able to establish significantly different risk groups, the LSI-R and Wisconsin Risk/Need do not. The Wisconsin Instrument in particular struggled, primarily because the small percentage of high risk cases (8% of the sample) recidivated at lower rates than did moderate risk cases. The RT produced a low risk group with a 23 percent recidivism rate, a moderate risk group with a 53 percent recidivism rate, and a high risk group with a 69 percent recidivism rate. The r value of .30 is substantially stronger than those produced by the LSI-R and the Wisconsin Risk/Need Assessment.

Figure 9: Concurrent Validity of the Reentry Tool (n = 423)*



*All r values p <.05

Preliminary analyses revealed that since females were less likely to recidivate, separate cut off scores should be made for males and females. Table 24 presents the distribution of the

reentry sample on risk levels for the RT. For males, the majority of cases are moderate risk, with similar percentages of cases falling at low and high risk levels. On the other hand, low risk is the modal value for females. These findings are similar to the Prison Intake Tool and indicate that females tend to score at lower risk levels than males on the assessment instruments.

Table 24: Distribution of Cases by Risk Level for the Reentry Tool

Level	N	Percent
Males (n = 212)		
Low (0-9)	47	22.2
Moderate (10-15)	109	51.4
High (16+)	56	26.4
Females (n = 65)		
Low (0-10)	31	47.7
Moderate (11-14)	25	38.5
High (15+)	9	13.8

The graph in Figure 10 presents the percentages of male offenders that recidivated for each risk level of the RT. The results indicate increasing rates of recidivism for each risk level. That is, 21 percent of low risk cases were rearrested, 50 percent of moderate risk cases were rearrested, and 64 percent of high risk cases were rearrested. The r value of .29 indicates that the RT does a good job at distinguishing between low, moderate, and high risk cases.

Figure 10: Predictive Validity of the Reentry Tool for Males (n = 212)*

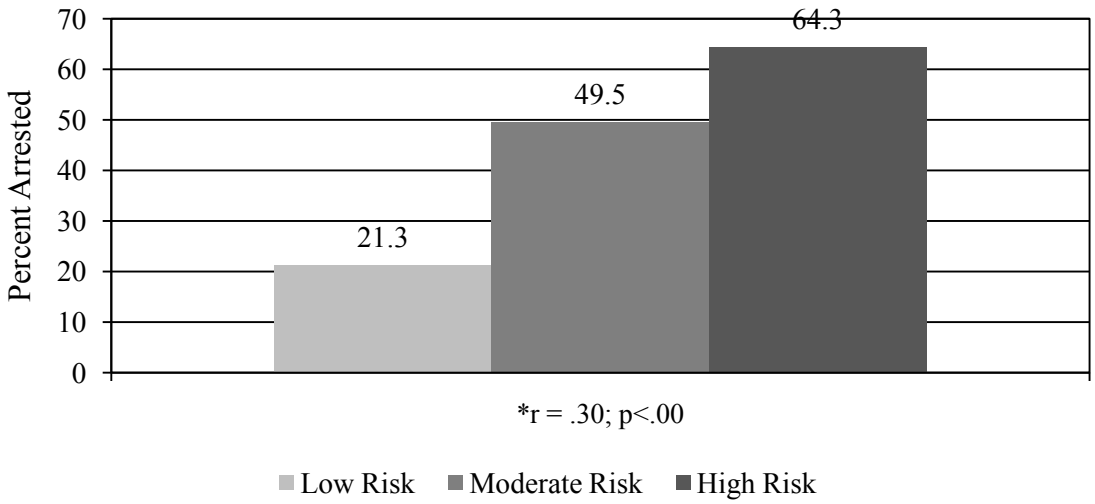


Figure 11 presents the recidivism rates by risk level for females in the reentry sample. The graph reveals that the RT does a very good job of distinguishing between low and moderate risk cases. Only six percent of low risk females were arrested, while 44 percent of moderate risk cases were arrested, and 56 percent of high risk cases were arrested. The large r value of .44 is likely a result of the substantial difference between low and moderate risk females.

Figure 11: Predictive Validity of the Reentry Tool for Females (n = 65)*

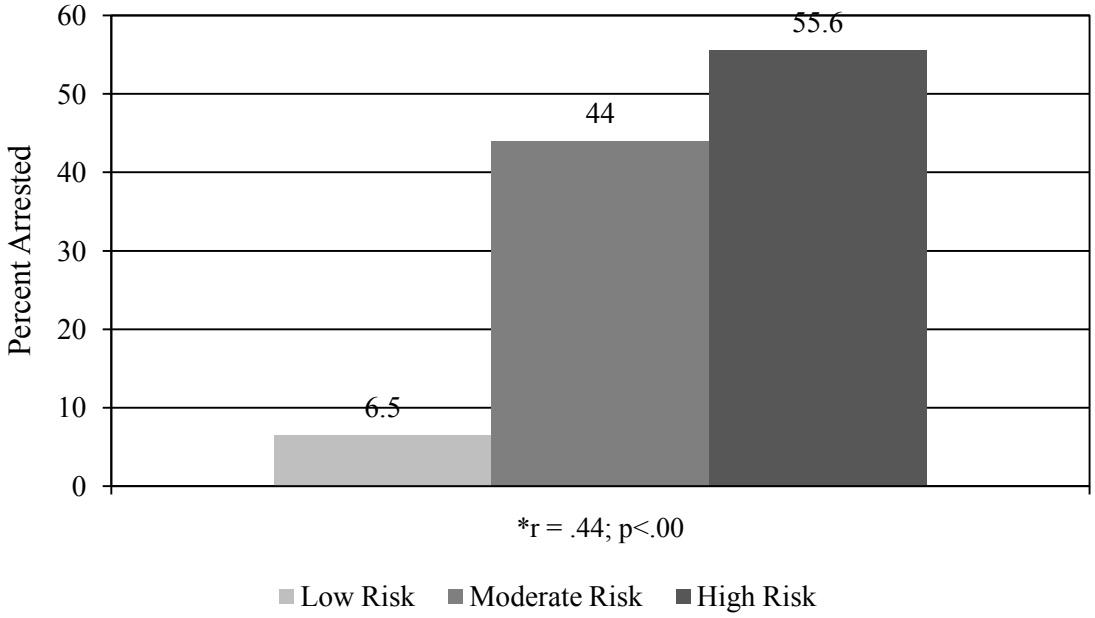


Table 25 presents risk levels for case management domains. These statistics disaggregate the overall risk level by domain so that needs in specific domains can be prioritized. All three domains provide risk levels that are significantly associated with changes in the likelihood of being arrested, although some perform better than others. The domain of social bonds has the lowest r value of .16, although the criminal attitudes domain has an r value of .22 and the criminal history domain has an r value of .28.

Table 25: Priorities in Case Management for the Reentry Tool

Criminal History		**Social Bonds**		**Criminal Attitudes**	
# of Items	8	# of Items	4	# of Items	7
Range	0 – 12	Range	0 – 4	Range	0 – 11
Risk	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**	**Risk**	**Arrested**
Low (0-3)	23%	Low (0-2)	32%	Low (0-3)	30%
Mod. (4-7)	45%	Mod. (3)	45%	Mod. (4-6)	50%
High (8-12)	65%	High (4)	52%	High (7-11)	58%
r = .28		r = .16		r = .22	

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This section of the report provides some conclusions based on the findings of the current study. It begins with a summary of the results for the validation of ORAS. Limitations of the current study are also discussed. The report concludes with some recommendations on the future of the ORAS.

Summary of Findings

The pretrial assessment instrument consists of seven items from four domains: criminal history, employment, substance abuse, and residential stability. The data indicate that the PAT

produces risk levels that significantly differed on the likelihood of either rearrest or failure-to-appear. Further, the pretrial instrument maintained an acceptable relationship with recidivism (r = .22).

The Community Supervision Tool consists of 35 items from seven domains: criminal history, education, employment and finances, family and social support, neighborhood problems, substance abuse, antisocial associations, and antisocial attitudes and behavioral problems. The validation results revealed that the risk levels on the CST displayed increasingly higher rates of recidivism for both male and females. The CST had a correlation of .37 with recidivism for males and .30 for females. The Community Supervision Screening Tool is a four item instrument designed to quickly identify low risk cases that do not need the full assessment. It had a correlation of .36 with recidivism.

The Prison Intake Tool consisted of 31 items from five domains: criminal history, education, employment, and finances, family and social support, substance abuse, and criminal lifestyle. The validation results for the PIT revealed that different cutoff scores and risk levels were optimal for males and females. Although males had four groups and females only had three, the percentages of cases arrested increased as risk level increased for both genders. The correlation between risk level and recidivism was .32 for males and .35 for females.

The Reentry Tool consisted of 20 items from three domains and predicted new arrest. The three domains were criminal history, social bonds, and antisocial attitudes. The validation results revealed that optimal cutoff scores were different for males and females. Still, risk levels are significantly associated with increases in the recidivism rate for both genders. The correlation with recidivism was .30 for males and .44 for females.

Limitations

There were two primary limitations observed in the current study. The first limitation revolves around the generalizability of the sample to all offenders in the Ohio criminal justice system. Although the data collection period gathered information on over 1,800 offenders in Ohio, it would be imprudent to assume that the findings are representative of all offenders in Ohio. First, resource constrains limited the inclusion of cases from all counties and correctional institutions. Second, although the samples were gathered from specific populations, certain types of cases may be underrepresented in the population (e.g., sex offenders, Hispanic offenders, female offenders). The underrepresentation in the population leads to small numbers of these types of offenders in the sample. For example, the findings from the RT were based on a sample size of 65 females. Although the results provide evidence that females have a distribution on the risk levels that is different from men, the findings should be considered preliminary until data can be collected on a larger sample of women who are released from prison.

A second limitation to the current study revolves around measurement error. The major source of data collection for this study was the structured interview, which was undertaken by trained research staff from the University of Cincinnati. Further, the informed consent process identified a sample that offenders who were willing to undergo the interview process. In short, the structured interview process utilized to gather the data will likely be somewhat different than the process used by criminal justice officials to interview cases and assign risk once the ORAS is implemented.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and limitations discussed above, several recommendations can be made. The first major recommendation is that revalidation studies be conducted of ORAS.

Once ORAS becomes automated, the costs and resources involved with data collection should be substantially reduced because assessment scores will be previously recorded by criminal justice personnel. Instead, probability samples can be drawn for each instrument using large data bases that store offender risk scores every time an assessment is entered.

Revalidation studies will provide further evidence that the instruments in ORAS are able to predict recidivism across multiple samples from the same population. Further, the automation and storage of ORAS data will allow researchers to gather stratified probability samples in order to 1) provide a sample that is representative of all counties in Ohio and 2) oversample underrepresented groups. Also, revalidation studies should seek to extend the follow-up time. Although an average of 12 months is adequate, research suggests that 18 to 24 month follow-up times are optimal (Jones, 1996). Finally, revalidation will also address the issues of measurement error. That is, data can be gathered on assessments that are given by personnel within the criminal justice system, examining the predictive validity of ORAS in a real world setting.

Another major recommendation is that ODRC follow the protocol developed by the University of Cincinnati for training personnel on the assessment instruments. Proper training cannot be stressed enough, because the efficacy of every assessment is heavily dependent upon the person who conducts the interview and scores the risk level. This is especially important because, although the interview questions are structured to maximize reliability, scoring some of the items is reliant upon the professional judgment of the interviewer. Training will also help to minimize the differences in measurement between University research staff conducting the interviews and criminal justice personnel. Not only is initial training important, but it is

recommended that a system be developed that lays out the process of training, provides reliability checks for interviewers, and lays out guidelines for retraining.

In sum, the development of ORAS produced five assessment tools designed to predict the likelihood of recidivism at different points in the criminal justice process. These tools not only are used to assign supervision levels, but were also designed to assist case managers in targeting dynamic risk factors and identifying barriers to treatment. Overall, the results from the validation are favorable, indicating that each tool was able to clearly distinguish between groups of offenders with escalating rates of recidivism. Some caution should be taken in generalizing the findings from this sample to all offenders in Ohio, although the automation of ORAS makes future revalidation studies more likely to be generalizable and less expensive to undertake.

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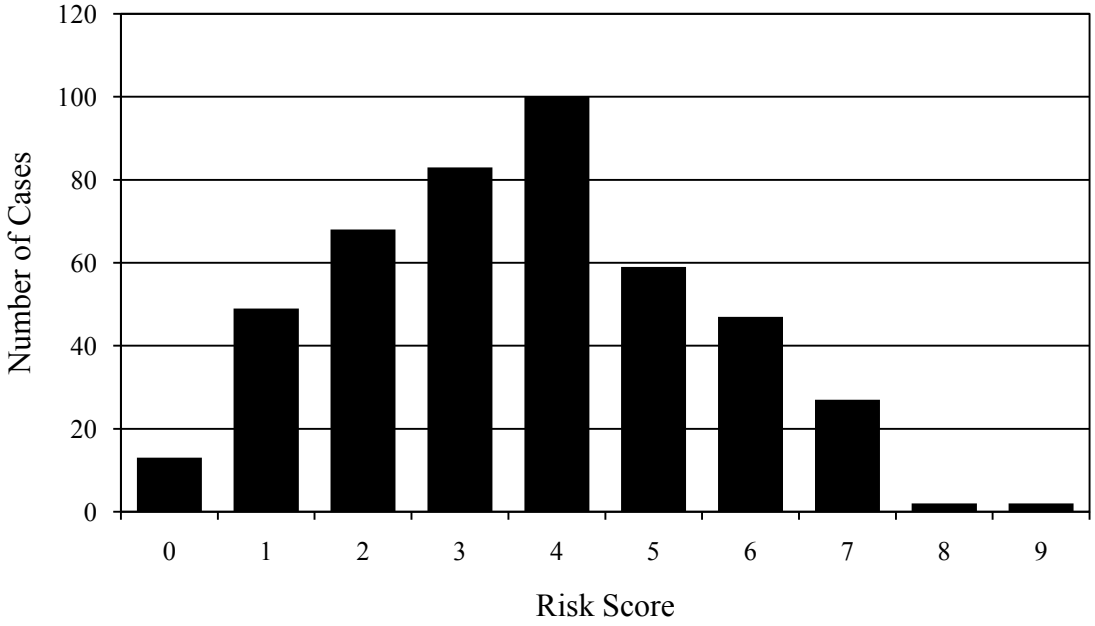
APPENDIX A: SCORING FORMS FOR EACH ASSESSMENT

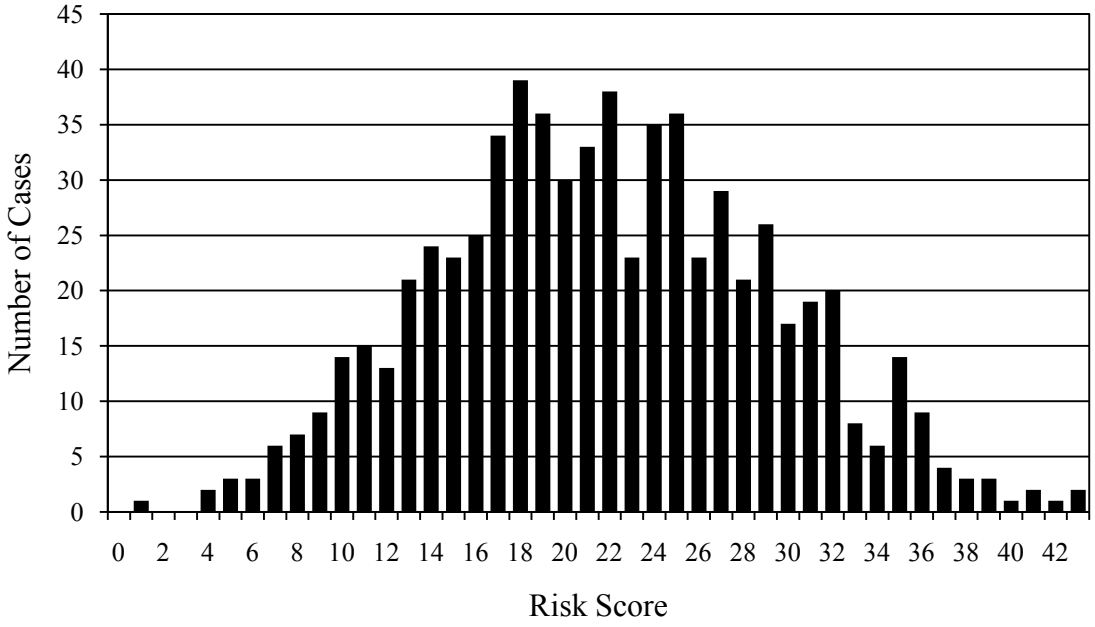
Pages 49 - 62 have been redacted to protect intellectual property copyright

APPENDIX B: THE DISTRIBUTION OF CASES ON EACH ASSESSMENT TOOL

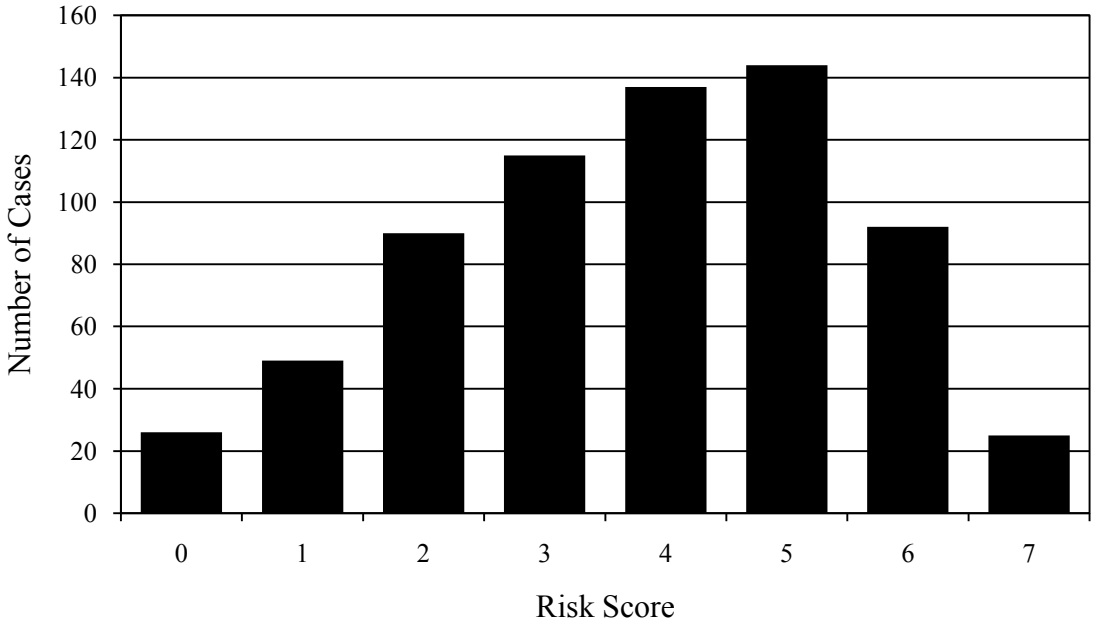
B1: Distribution of Cases on the Pretrial Assessment Tool (n = 450)



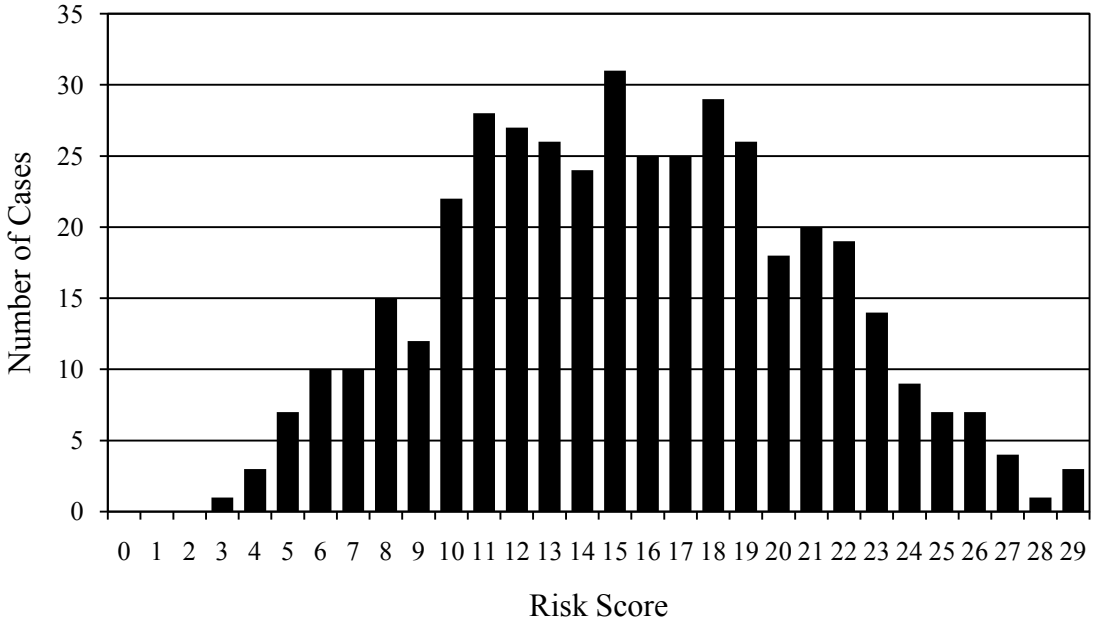
B2: Distribution of Cases on the Community Supervision Tool (n = 678)



B3: Distribution of Case on the Community Supervision Screening Tool (n = 678)



B4: Distribution of Cases on the Prison Intake Tool (n = 423)



B5: Distribution of Cases on the Reentry Tool (N=423)