NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND PRINCIPLES AS PREDICTORS OF CORRECTIONAL YOUTHS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE SCORES

by

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Abstract

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND PRINCIPLES AS PREDICTORS OF CORRECTIONAL YOUTHS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE SCORES

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Juvenile offenders detained by the Juvenile Justice System are legally guaranteed the right to a free education. *No Child Left Behind* entitles these confined youths to the same educational standards and entitlements as their non-delinquent peers. Statewide assessment tests are administered to empirically measure the quality of the educational programs and student academic achievements. Previous performance results indicate that correctional schools provide the lowest scores. No experiential data exists on this low score phenomena, therefore the following research is a novel attempt to establish a richer understanding as to why correctional students score significantly lower than their non-delinquent counterparts. This information can provide youth correctional facilities with the necessary knowledge needed to bring forth positive educational amendments.

Although juvenile correctional schools are specifically identified as academic settings required to adhere to the mandates imposed by the *No Child Left Behind* law, little data currently exists regarding their performance in meeting these standards. A minimal number of states currently have documented reports indicating a variety of academic changes made within their correctional school systems implemented as a result of *No Child Left Behind*. Many other states are in the preliminary stages of this process. This study is an attempt to examine *NCLB* principles as predictors of correctional youths academic performance scores in New York City. The proposed study is simply exploring a methodology as a preliminary study in one jurisdiction – NYC – which may potentially – at a future time – be duplicated in another. Note, based on the small sample under examination, the ability to generalize findings beyond the specific correctional sites is not possible. The small sample size limits the researcher's ability to generalize findings beyond the scope of the research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"He who opens a school door closes a prison."

- Victor Hugo 1802-1885, French poet, novelist

The *No Child Left Behind Act* was signed into law on January 8, 2002 by President George Bush. The Act protects the educational right of American elementary and secondary students to successfully maintain a quality education in an academic environment geared toward pedagogic learning and success.

Part D Section 1401 of the *No Child Left Behind Act* addresses the educational standards of delinquent youth. Those students who are currently completing their academic requirements while detained by a juvenile correctional facility are subject to the same educational standards and entitlements as their non-delinquent peers.

School systems – public and correctional – have begun implementing new strategies to satisfy the mandates imposed by *NCLB*. As the implementation of these interventions occur, educational school systems enrolling delinquent youth continue to produce the lowest performance scores on the statewide, standardized assessment tests. Based on the above information, the research question posed is which variables have a greater impact in predicting detained youths academic performance levels. Variables examined will include those consistent with *No*

Child Left Behind principles – identified as the deprivation variables – as well as those imported into the detention site by each individual youth (the importation variables).

The following research is an empirical study based on the hypothesis: *measures of school quality consistent with No Child Left Behind principles will explain New York City's correctional youths academic performance scores better than measures consistent with an importation explanation.*

The research hypothesis suggests that *No Child Left Behind* variables, such as teacher quality and the availability of specialized and general educational services, directly affect a detained youth's performance ability on the New York State English assessment test. The subsequent research is essential in protecting the educational rights of detained youth. It is important to recognize where the flaws of correctional education exist so that the necessary alterations can begin. The reality in juvenile corrections is that these kids will return to society; society can only benefit if they return with the skills necessary to succeed (Kollhoff, 2002).

A quality education is one of the most important tools toward the future success of any youth. According to the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, "The majority of delinquents, even those who have committed serious crimes, will be released back into their communities while they are still in their teens and twenties…Without an education, without practical skills, without transition steps back into their communities, without programs that have turned their antisocial

activity into meaningful life lessons, what chance do they have of becoming productive, law abiding citizens? What chance does our society have of being safe? (2003)."

A quality education can be financially prudent for the juvenile justice system as a whole. According to the Mayor's Management Report for fiscal year 2005, (p.187), the average annual detention cost for one youth in a NYC secure detention facility was $149,650.00. The average annual cost per pupil in a New York City public high school was $10,733.00 (The Correctional Association of New York, p.26). "Corrections education pays for itself many times over not only in a financial sense but also in terms of reducing crime and returning productive citizens back to society. We simply can not afford to leave these students out" (Kolhoff, 2002).

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

"The highest result of education is tolerance."
- Helen Keller

According to the *National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice*, more than 125,000 youths are confined in public and private juvenile correctional facilities throughout the United States (2004). Approximately 3,500 facilities house these neglected youth. In 2004, New York City's Department of Juvenile Justice had 5,046 admissions to its three secure youth jails – Facility 1, Facility 2 and Facility 3 (Mayor's Management Report, Fiscal 2004,p.191). The vast majority of young people locked up in these secure youth facilities are under the age of 16, charged with non-violent offenses, are African American and Latino, and come from the city's poorest neighborhoods (NY Department of Juvenile Justice, 2001). This city's youth jails are characterized as having high recidivism rates. According to the Mayor's Management Report Fiscal Year 2004 (p.192), 46% of the youth released from these DJJ facilities were readmitted to detention in the same year.

Confinement does not negate the fact that detained youths are entitled to a free, American education. "Education is mandatory for all juvenile offenders and educational programs in juvenile correctional facilities are required to follow the same laws and practices as their public school counterparts" (Corwin, Feb. 2005).

Education is viewed as paramount in rehabilitating delinquent youths and in easing the transition process from the correctional to the conventional school setting. Aiding incarcerated youths toward the acquisition of educational skills is one of the most effective approaches toward the prevention of delinquency and the reduction of recidivism (EDJJ, 2004).

One notable study reaffirming the assertion that correctional education reduces recidivism levels is the OCE/CEA *"Three State Recidivism Study*" (September, 2001). Conducted by the Correctional Education Association, this study compared the re-arrest, re-conviction and re-incarceration rates of correctional education participants to non-participants in Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio three years after their release. The study confirmed that correctional education "significantly reduced long-term recidivism for inmates released in late 1997 and early 1998 and investments in correctional education programs provide a real payoff to the public in terms of crime reduction and improved employment for ex-offenders."

Although *NCLB* has been the subject of both nationwide criticism and support, its impact on correctional schools could possibly be one of the greatest to date. A highly neglected, forgotten youth population is now receiving forced recognition by all governmental levels and academically being treated as students entitled to a free, quality education. "The results of this neglect have surfaced during recent decades, as evidenced by the number of state class action lawsuits for deficiencies in the educational services in juvenile justice schools throughout

the country – 22 states have been subject to class action lawsuits"(Bloomberg & others, April 2006).

A: No Child Left Behind Principles

The *No Child Left Behind Act* refurbished the way in which American primary and secondary school systems were to educate their youth based on the initiative and support of the federal government. Youth correctional school systems are subject to the mandates imposed by *NCLB*. A paucity of research exists regarding *NCLB* and correctional settings. No research exists regarding *NCLB* interventions and the continued low academic performance scores in correctional school systems.

As stated above, Part D Section 1401 of the *No Child Left Behind Act* addresses the educational standards of delinquent youths. Students who are currently completing their academic requirements while detained by the Juvenile Justice System are subject to the same educational standards and entitlements as their non-delinquent counterparts. According to *NCLB*, state educational agencies are required to recognize the academic deficits faced by juvenile correctional facilities and institute changes necessary to improve the overall quality of academic services.

State initiatives aim at closing the achievement gap for disadvantaged students. One way to close the achievement gap is to make students returning from correctional facilities a priority. *NCLB* is based on the contention that delinquent youths who are challenged by the high standards of a quality education

will experience greater ease and higher success during the transition into conventional schools. When academic standards within correctional facilities parallel those of traditional schools, the transitional phase for delinquent youths will ultimately produce the greatest benefits for both the youth and the system as a whole.

B: Literature Review

NCLB emphasizes the importance of quality instruction. Qualified teachers are essential toward the success of any educational program. The US Department of Education (May 2004) states that teacher quality is a direct school-related factor affecting student achievement. Section 120.6 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education (January, 2005) defines a qualified instructor as one who holds at least a bachelor's degree; has passed the state teacher licensing examination; and has obtained full state certification as a teacher. Prior to being deemed a highly qualified instructor, teachers must also demonstrate competency in each subject they teach.

Recruiting and retaining highly qualified instructors is an important concern for schools throughout the United States. Correctional school systems are facing accelerated problems in the recruitment and retention of competent instructors especially as they must continually compete with the public school systems. "Low pay, lack of staff development, and real and perceived security concerns act as disincentives to prospective teachers " (Leone & Cutting, May 2004). Highly qualified instructors are dissuaded by the inauspicious

environmental conditions, student characteristics and job challenges characteristic of correctional school settings. "Juvenile detention and correctional centers must constantly battle the perception that teaching 'inside the walls' is less than desirable" (White, April 2002).

Teacher migration is a real concern for Juvenile Justice school systems. Qualified instructors are more likely to remain at schools where student achievement is high and racial minority and low-income student enrollment is low (Florida 2005 Education Department Annual Report, p.84). "Recent studies conducted in California, Texas, Philadelphia and New York show that teachers in urban, low-income, and high minority population schools tend to transfer quickly as they systematically migrate to more desirable schools" (Prince, 2002). Jonathan Kozol, in his 2005 book, The Shame of The Nation, points out that in New York City, "teachers with the least seniority and least experience are commonly assigned to schools in the most deeply segregated neighborhoods"(p.47) – juvenile correctional schools fall within this realm of teacher assignment. Consequently, youth correctional schools experience high teacher/staff turnover rates.

Student populations characterized as deviant act as a deterrent for perspective instructors, particularly those with greater experience and academic credentials. Teachers who serve in juvenile correctional institutions may experience high levels of work-related stress as a result of working with many students who have a wide range of academic, emotional and behavioral needs. According to Billingsley (2005), "Instructors must assume various roles when

dealing with youths suffering from multiple disadvantages, which may result in role conflicts, stress, and eventual burnout." In summary, Leone and Cutting (May 2004) state that too many "correctional educational programs have unqualified and underpaid teachers who are isolated from the public schools and who do not have access to adequate staff development and advancement opportunities."

Detained youths often fail to receive adequate educational and vocational services. This failure widens the learning gap between incarcerated youths and their non-delinquent counterparts. Educators in juvenile correctional settings are often unaware of academic strategies that have evolved from various educational movements and by effective program research (Meisel et. al, 2003). "Correctional teachers and administrators often continue to use strategies that have been demonstrated to be the least effective for students in need of intensive remedial education" (2003).

Tom O'Rourke, *Improving the Odds For Incarcerated Youths* (Feb. 2003), indicates that prior to the State of Georgia's adoption of a new educational curriculum for detained youths, "most sites had outdated textbooks, supplies, materials and other resources necessary to adequately support an educational program." The lack of available funding limits correctional school systems from providing the best academic materials for their students. Many of the educational resources utilized by these facilities are more than 10 years old and tattered. Meisel and others (2003) summarize that youth in correctional environments

"may receive substandard educational services that deviate from currently accepted instructional practices."

The scarcity of available educational materials is further complicated by a lack of library resources. Most youth correctional centers fail to have a functioning school library. A library would provide both recreational and informational materials for inmates and staff. Libraries teeming with both age-appropriate informational and recreational materials can provide incarcerated youths with a positive outlet/activity while enhancing their reading skills. According to the Committee of the Association for Library Service to Children (1995) an efficient library – geared toward middle school-aged readers (5th through 8th grade) should contain – to name a few – such narratives as *Great Expectations* (Charles Dickens), *The Outsiders* (S.E. Hinton), and *The Hobbit (J.R.R. Tolkien)*. Distinguished books/authors identified by the above Library Commission are rarely visible at juvenile justice school systems.

Puffer and Burton, *"Correctional Education Reform"* (2002), contend that the relationship between correctional educators and librarians is either nonexistent because there is no library, or is based on peripheral contact through a recreational reading program usually supported by public library outreach services in the community." As John Stewart, *"A Special Edition on Education Programs in Juvenile Correctional Facilities"*(2002), points out "School library media services need to be a part of the services in juvenile correctional schools in order to continue equivalent educational services while students are incarcerated."

Mike Kollhoff, *"Juvenile Correctional Education in the 21st Century: Leave No Child Out"* (2002), reminds society that confined youth will one day return to society. He stresses the importance of having them return with the necessary skills to succeed in the 21st century, skills necessary to survive in a world where technological advancements are continually growing. Kollhoff discusses the need for incarcerated youths to develop computer skills in an attempt to master information retrieval. "Our students must learn to use all of the resources of the workplace to be employable. It is our responsibility to do all we can to make these tools accessible" (2002).

SAFETY-NET (Systems Applications for Educating Troubled Youths) has been developed to bring high quality computer and inter-net educational resources to incarcerated youths (Amall, July 2002). SAFETY-NET has been made available nationwide and enables correctional instructors a diversion from traditional learning methods toward ones that are more fun and challenging (2002).

A quality correctional education is further challenged by the diversity of the student population. Although the vast majority of confined youths physically resemble one another, their individual learning and behavioral levels vary significantly. The majority of youths detained in either public or private correctional facilities can be identified as males from ethnic, minority backgrounds ranging from 13 to 17 years of age (Gallagher, 1999).

A common feature characterizing most incarcerated youths is their poor academic performance in school prior to their admission to the juvenile justice

system. These academic deficiencies can be observed by low grades and low rates of advancement –lagging behind the average grade level for a given age. Fox and Lyons, *Juvenile Confinement Conditions and Services* (Jan. 2003), indicate that the average confined ninth grader can read at only a fourth grade level. A great percentage of correctional students were public school dropouts at early ages thus lagging three or more years behind their non-delinquent counterparts (Moody, Sept. 2003). Leone and Cutting, "*Appropriate Education, Juvenile Corrections, and No Child Left Behind"*(May 2004), highlight correctional student diversities by pointing out that "large numbers of juveniles in the justice system are marginally literate or illiterate and have experienced school failure and retention. Many of these youth have significant learning and/or behavioral problems that entitle them to special education and related services."

Meeting the significant needs of detained youths has become increasingly complex based on the reality that juvenile detention centers are filled beyond capacity. A minimal number of educators and staff must struggle to provide adequate educational and social services to a maximum number of confined youths (Fox & Lyons, Jan. 2003). Classrooms comprised of delinquent youths sitting elbow-to-elbow can easily produce individual outbursts and classroom disruptions. Brendtro and Shahbazian (2004) point out that "it is difficult for teachers and custody staff to manage classroom behavior without resorting to punitive or coercive measures." Overcrowded facilities suffer higher rates of violence and abuse against both staff and other youths. Overcrowded facilities inhibit the production of quality educational standards.

The availability of educational resources for confined youths with disabilities is an issue demanding critical attention. "The most common disabling conditions among incarcerated youths are mild to moderate retardation, learning disabilities, and behavior disorders." (Leone et al, 1992). Rutherford, Bullis, Anderson and Griller have identified that the most common learning disabilities found among incarcerated youths include emotional or behavioral disorders (EBD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disabilities (LD) and mild mental retardation (MR) (2000). In Florida's juvenile justice institutions – for example – youths are most commonly diagnosed as "emotionally handicapped or severely emotionally disturbed, followed by specific learning disabilities, mentally handicapped and, lastly, some other type of disability" (JJEEP, 2005). "The prevalence of youths identified as eligible for special education prior to their incarceration generally is accepted to be at least three to five times the percentage of the public school population classified as disabled" (Leone & Meisel, 1997).

Federal and State laws require disabled youths in correctional settings to receive the special services for which they are entitled. The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, passed in 1975, guarantees a "free appropriate public education for all eligible children and youths with disabilities through age 21." (Meisel et al, 2003). The mandates imposed by *IDEA* apply to all state-operated schools including juvenile correctional facilities (2003). "Despite the plain language of the *IDEA* and compulsory school legislation in all states, 33 class action lawsuits have been filed since 1977 alleging failure of state and local

agencies to provide appropriate special education services and, in some cases, general education services to incarcerated youths" (Meisel & Leone, 1997). Meisel and others stress that "special education programs for incarcerated youths often fail to meet legal requirements and currently accepted professional standards. As a result, youths with disabilities in correctional settings do not participate in education programs to which they are entitled, and which can prepare them to reenter their schools and communities."(2003).

Hiring and attaining highly qualified special education instructors is a difficult task for correctional administrators. Barbara Moody, *"Juvenile corrections educators: Their knowledge and understanding of special education"* (2003), contends that educators working in juvenile corrections seldom have a background or training in specialized education. "Corrections educators are unfamiliar with special education law, their required role in the student IEP (Individualized Education Plan), or how these components should influence their classroom instruction." (2003).

A survey conducted by the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice, in conjunction with the National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice, found variance in the credentials of instructors serving incarcerated youths with disabilities (Quinn, Rutherford & Leone, Dec. 2001). "Facilities reported that only 17% of their teachers were fully certified to teach special education."(2001). Carter White, *"Reclaiming incarcerated youths through education"* (Apr. 2002), asserts that teacher shortages are severe throughout the entire nation, particularly in the field of special education.

Juvenile correctional facilities are "hard-pressed to compete with public schools to attract and retain qualified special education teachers." (2002).

No Child Left Behind has been - and will continue to be - instrumental in the restructuring of deficient juvenile justice educational systems throughout this country. In 2003, Florida conducted an evaluation to determine the status of juvenile correctional educational standards and programs operating throughout the state. Research indicated that Florida was not in compliance with *NCLB* regarding delinquent youths. For example, it was noted that a good percentage of the correctional faculty were not state certified or were teaching without area-specific certification. This led to Florida's 2004 issuance of the "Educational Quality Assurance Standards for Juvenile Detention Centers". Florida has made a commitment to accountability and the implementation of a "research-driven approach to the identification and validation of best practices in juvenile justice education"(Bloomberg et al, April 2006). Most important, "Florida has conclusively documented that the use of best education practices as envisioned in *NCLB* has benefited numerous juvenile justice youths as they exited juvenile justice institutions and reentered their communities."(2006).

The State of Georgia has made terrific strides in improving the quality of education provided by youth correctional schools. Tom O'Rourke, *"Improving the odds for incarcerated youths"* (Feb. 2003), discusses the positive changes which have recently been implemented throughout Georgia's juvenile justice educational system. Georgia developed a staffing plan designed to ascertain the quality of all instructors. The Georgia Department of Education recently

determined that the Department of Juvenile Justice was in compliance with all federal and state regulations regarding special education in youth correctional settings.

New York City correctional schools have attempted to make various academic amendments in accordance with the mandates imposed by *No Child Left Behind*. These facilities have sought to cleanse their schools of unqualified instructors and outdated learning materials. Efforts are being made to incorporate computer resources into the daily curriculum as a supplementary learning aid and special educational services are a priority for all eligible youths.

C: Criminological Theory

The *deprivation* and *importation* models are the criminological theoretical foundations for this study. Although these two theoretical explanations were derived in an attempt to understand the evolution of the prison subculture, when examined through a much broader scope, they neatly apply to the understanding of confined delinquent youth behaviors – educational as well as others.

The deprivation model is illustrated by Gresham M. Sykes in his text The Society of Captives (1958). Sykes discusses the difficulties male inmates are forced to cope with as a result of their punishment – as a result of their loss of liberty. He contends that the inmate subculture emerges from an inmate's attempt to adapt to deprivations imposed by incarceration. Sykes delineates five deprivations: the loss of deprivation of liberty, the loss or deprivation of goods

and services, the loss or deprivation of heterosexual relationships, the loss or deprivation of autonomy, and the loss or deprivation of security.

The importation model is illustrated by the work of John Irwin and Donald Cressey, *"Thieves, Convicts and the Inmate Culture"* (1962). Irwin and Cressey reckon that too much emphasis has been placed on the impact of prison on inmates. They contend that the prison subculture evolves from various subcultures imported into the institution by the inmates themselves. Irwin and Cressey (1962) developed a typology of conflicting inmate subcultures. These inmate groups were denoted as the thief subculture, convict subculture, and straight subculture. The importation model assumes that the prison subculture develops not only from internal prison experiences but also from the external behavioral patterns inmates import into the correctional facility.

As indicated above, neither theoretical criminological model directly links itself to the understanding of juvenile detainees and yet they are the best theoretical foundations for this research project. In an attempt to better understand why correctional youths perform poorly on statewide – particularly NYC - assessment tests, it would be both commonsensical and advantageous to examine variables inherent within each youth's current living environment (deprivation model) and those independently possessed by the youths themselves (importation model).

D: Conclusion

Education within juvenile correctional facilities is paramount in developing more disciplined, responsible young people. Mike Kollhoff, *"Juvenile Correctional Education in the 21st Century: Leave No Child Out"* (Jan. 2002), indicates that confined youth will return to society. He states, "it should be much more palatable to society to have them return with the skills necessary to succeed." (2002). John Stewart supports Kollhoff's argument suggesting that "Education programs in juvenile correctional facilities are the key factor in assuring that students have the tools needed for the successful transition back into the community." (Jan. 2002). The American Youth Policy Forum (1994) concludes that, "Since confined youth will return to their communities, it is important to re-mediate their educational and social deficiencies and prepare them to successfully function in society with the necessary self-esteem and social skills."

No Child Left Behind could potentially be one of the most influential tools toward the future success of juvenile justice educational systems throughout the United States. *No Child Left Behind* has brought attention to a neglected youth population by specifically identifying their existence and protecting their entitlement to a free, quality education. Nevertheless, academic assessments continue to indicate poor performance levels/scores produced by juvenile justice students. This study is a novel attempt toward the identification of specific variables affecting a confined youth's academic abilities. Identifying those variables which may potentially impact a detained youth's academic performance

level can lead to the installation of educational amendments necessary for improved learning and success.

CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

"A child miss-educated is a child lost."
- John F. Kennedy

A: Overview of No Child Left Behind

The *No Child Left Behind* Act was signed into law on January 8, 2002 by President George Bush. As stated earlier, this law refurbished the way in which the American primary and secondary school systems were to educate their youth based on the initiative and support of the federal government. Financial funding will be the ultimate reward for schools who successfully meet their state defined academic standards, holding educators and students accountable for these achievements - or failures. Under *NCLB*, state educational agencies are now required to recognize the academic deficits faced by juvenile correctional facilities and institute changes necessary to improve the overall quality of academic services.

State initiatives aim at closing the achievement gap for disadvantaged students. *No Child Left Behind* is based on the contention that delinquent youths who are challenged by the high standards of a quality education will experience greater ease and higher success during the transitional phase into conventional school systems. When academic standards within correctional facilities parallel those of traditional schools, the transitional phase for a delinquent youth will ultimately produce the greatest benefits for both the youth and the system as a

whole. The Act protects the educational right of American elementary and secondary students to successfully maintain a quality education in an academic environment geared toward pedagogic learning and success.

Part D, Section 1401 of the *No Child Left Behind Act* addresses the educational standards of delinquent youths. Those students who are currently completing their academic requirements while detained by the Juvenile Justice System are subject to the same educational standards and entitlements as their non-delinquent counterparts.

Part D, Section 1402 provides state educational agencies with federal grants to be allocated to state-operated correctional facilities providing free academic programs to delinquent youths. Eligibility for this funding requires the delinquent youth to be 21 years of age or younger, entitled to a free education, not above the 12th grade and is enrolled in a regular educational program of at least 20 hours per week. These sub-grants are viewed as payment for educational modifications designed to improve or recreate the academic programs of delinquent youth. The amount of funding will be based on the percentage of youths residing in the locally operated correctional facility.

According to *NCLB*, in order to receive federal aid the state agencies - in conjunction with the correctional facilities - must meet three key requirements:

- Meet the educational needs of delinquent youths and assist in the transition of these students from correctional facilities to locally operated programs.

- Ensure that these students have the same opportunities to achieve as if they were in local schools in the state

- Evaluate the program and disaggregate the data on participation by gender, race, ethnicity and age, not less than once every three years.

NCLB evaluates success through empirical means. For delinquent youths, quality is to be measured on how educational programs impact the youth's ability to:

- Maintain and improve educational achievement.
- Accrue school credits that meet state requirements for grade promotion and secondary school graduation.
- Make the transition to a regular program or other education program operated by a school district.
- Complete secondary school and obtain employment after leaving the correctional facility for delinquent youths.
- Participate in post-secondary education and job-training programs.

B: Problem Description

Correctional schools must adhere to the statewide mandates imposed by the Federal *NCLB* law. Students detained by New York City's Department of Juvenile Justice partake in statewide, standardized Math and English tests. These tests assess the academic performance of each individual youth as well as the academic achievement of the educational facility. The New York City Board of Education operates an educational institution for incarcerated youths under the age of 16. This institution provides educational programs within the city's three secure juvenile detention facilities as well as providing educational services for detained youths living in non-secure housing locations. Under Title I Part D Subpart 2, the above mentioned educational provider has generated 536,129

dollars in allocations for the year 2004-05, basing this sum on a count of 320 eligible youths.

An assessment of the NY State 2006 performance scores for English language arts indicates that the above mentioned educational institution is one of the poorest ranked schools in the State – within the bottom 10 of over 315 schools. The results are not shocking or unexpected and logically produce one question - as *NCLB* interventions are currently being implemented, why do correctional schools continue to produce the lowest scores?

The following study attempts to provide some explanation for the low-score phenomena found within juvenile detention facilities located throughout the New York City area. The research question – which variables – import or deprivation – will have a greater impact in predicting academic performance levels is based on the hypothesis: *measures of school quality consistent with No Child Left Behind principles will explain New York City's correctional youths academic performance scores better than measures consistent with an importation explanation.*

The following research identifies two independent variables as predictors of correctional youths performance scores: 1) school quality consistent with *NCLB* principles (deprivation model) and 2) social/behavioral history (importation model).

1. School Quality Consistent With NCLB Variables (IV #1):

The first independent variable – school quality consistent with *NCLB* principles – examines the academic mandates imposed by the law. *NCLB* specifically highlights teacher quality as a critical determinant toward effective learning. *No Child Left Behind* emphasizes the importance of highly qualified instruction requiring each teacher to minimally retain a bachelor's degree and state certification and competency in each subject they teach. This imposes a terrific challenge on youth correctional facilities. In New York City, academic representatives for the correctional schools attend educational forums whereby potential instructors seek out teaching positions. According to one NYC correctional school representative, "it is rather unlikely for any qualified instructor to express an interest in our schools…we often attract no interest what so ever" (anonymous). In summary, "Low pay, lack of staff development and real and perceived security concerns in correctional facilities act as disincentives to prospective teachers" (Leone & Cutting, May 2004).

As previously noted, correctional student populations are neglected youth populations. Public attitudes toward delinquent youths such as "get tough" and "zero tolerance" only insulate these young people further from the reaches of a quality education. Public funds are directed toward the erection of additional detention centers as opposed to the implementation of improved academic services. This provides some explanation for the outdated and limited number of teaching materials often used in correctional school systems.

A quality education is dependent upon the quality of the learning materials and educational resources. *NCLB* requires educational tools utilized within correctional sites to parallel those employed by conventional, public school systems. As stated earlier, Tom O'Rourke, while examining Georgia's juvenile justice system, indicated that prior to the support of newly adopted curricula, "most correctional sites had outdated textbooks, supplies, materials and other resources necessary to adequately support an educational program" (Feb. 2003).

Providing quality "specialized" educational services to eligible youths is a critical concern for all public school systems – conventional and correctional. The availability of specialized educational programs within youth correctional facilities is of particular interest since it has been estimated that 30 to 70 percent of correctional youth populations are learning disabled (Leone et al, 1994). Federal and State laws protect the right of youths in correctional facilities to receive the educational services they need. Unfortunately, those students eligible for specialized services often fail to have their individual needs met. Allowing any student in need of specialized educational services to go without increases his/her frustrations towards the educational system and may potentially lead to individual feelings of self-inability and poor self-worth.

2. Importation (IV #2):

The subsequent research provides an examination of personal characteristics possessed by each individual youth. Academic records, criminal histories and personal learning disabilities distinguishably typify each youth and

are naturally imported into that individual's current living environment (importation model).

Demonstrating a history of truant behavior prior to one's admission to the correctional site provides one example of an importation variable. Detained youths frequently possess academic histories characterized by truant behavior. New York City defines truancy as a student's failure to attend school with no lawful justification. Any student enrolled in the New York City public school system who misses school with no legal excuse is defined as truant (New York City's Board of Education – Department of Attendance).

Academic mobility – attending multiple school systems prior to one's admission into the correctional facility - is another importation variable personally characterizing confined youths. Many delinquent individuals bounce from school system to school system leading to poor overall academic performance and testing skills. "Youths who move among facilities face changes in curriculum, instructional techniques, and educational expectations, thus disrupting the continuity of their education" (U.S. Department of Education, 1999). Delinquent youths are often shifted from guardian to guardian (whomever that guardian may be) resulting not only in a new residency but the enrollment into a new school district. *No Child Left Behind* addresses this challenge by focusing on youth "transitional services" and the critical need for a collaboration of all school systems – both correctional and community-based.

Multiple studies indicate that incarcerated youths – on average – lag two or more years behind their age peers in most basic academic skills. It is not

uncommon to witness detained 6th graders reading at 3rd and 4th grade reading levels. Studies also indicate that confined youths have high rates of grade retention, absenteeism, and academic suspension and/or expulsion (EDJJ, 2004). Academic deficiencies inhibit the youth's ability to successfully comprehend basic, fundamental concepts creating further obstacles in the deliverance of quality instruction.

As indicated above, 30 to 70 percent of correctional youth populations are learning disabled (Leone & Meisel, 1997). Although the facility is responsible for providing the required specialized services, the youths are responsible for importing these challenges into the correctional environment. Each individual youth enters the facility with his/her own special educational, medical, behavioral and social needs. These needs may require services beyond the scope of the educational system within juvenile justice facilities.

C: Criminological Theoretical Foundation

This research – considering the implementation of *No Child Left Behind* interventions – attempts to provide an understanding as to what conditions impact correctional youth assessment score outcomes. Based on *NCLB* interventions, standardized measures of academic performance indicate that delinquent youths score significantly lower than their non-delinquent counterparts. Internal conditions attribute low testing scores to the inherent complexities characterizing the youth correctional living environment. External circumstances place greater

impact on those physical and psychological complexities defining each individual youth.

As previously indicated, the most fitting criminological theoretical foundation for the following research is the *deprivation vs. importation* model. *Deprivation vs. importation* is most characteristically used in an effort to understand the emergence of the prison subculture. The two criminological models examine which variables have the greatest influence on the growth of a distinct prison culture – those imported into the facility by the inmates themselves or those innate within a restricted/deprived correctional living environment.

The deprivation model is illustrated by Gresham M. Sykes in his text The Society of Captives (1958). Sykes discusses the compulsory challenges male inmates must contend with as a result of their criminal punishment – a result of their loss of liberty. He suggests that the inmate subculture emerges from an inmate's attempt to adapt to those deprivations naturally imposed by incarceration. Deprivations facing inmates include everything from physical amenities to social status and personal self-esteem. Sykes delineates five deprivations: the loss or deprivation of liberty, the loss or deprivation of goods and services, the loss or deprivation of heterosexual relationships, the loss or deprivation of autonomy, and the loss or deprivation of security.

Accentuated by the deprivation model is the concept that inmates cannot escape the psychological and physical pains of incarceration. Sykes has alleged that inmates may often unite with others in an attempt to minimize the pains of confinement through cooperation.

The importation model is illustrated by the work of John Irwin and Donald Cressey, *"Thieves, Convicts and the Inmate Culture"* (1962). Irwin and Cressey believe that too much emphasis has been placed on the impact of prison on inmates. They allege that the prison subculture evolves from various subcultures, each imported into the institution by the inmates themselves.

The importation model maintains that the prison subculture develops not only from internal prison experiences but also from the external behavioral patterns inmates bring into the correctional facility. Irwin and Cressey propose that Sykes missed a key element in the presentation of his deprivation model: inmates bring their own values and identities into a prison facility. Irwin and Cressey (1962) developed a typology of conflicting inmate subcultures. These inmate groups were denoted as the thief subculture, convict subculture, and straight subculture.

The importation and deprivation models closely parallel the fundamental premise of this research project. Is a detained youth's testing performance affected by inherent deficiencies characterizing the correctional school system (deprivation model) – poorly qualified instructors, outdated learning materials - or by individual characteristics naturally imported by each youth into the correctional academic site (importation model) – poor performance skills, high levels of truancy, high levels of academic mobility?

CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY

"There is nothing training cannot do. Nothing is above its reach. It can turn bad morals to good; it can destroy bad principles and recreate good ones; it can lift men to angelship."

- Marc Twain

A: Research Design

1. Research Hypothesis:

Measures of school quality consistent with No Child Left Behind principles will account for New York City's correctional youths academic performance scores better than measures consistent with an importation explanation.

The following research is a quantitative, cross-sectional study based on three juvenile detention facilities each located in the New York City area – two secure sites, one non-secure. Each facility received its educational services from the same academic institution. Limiting this research to merely three correctional educational sites was based on two criteria. First, the sample size produced by these facilities was sufficient for the intended use of this research and secondly, New York State is one of many states which has not yet documented any strategic plans to improve the status of its correctional schools - in regards to *No Child Left Behind.* Therefore these sites provide a suitable foundation for future research.

2. Dependent Variable:

New York State administers statewide age-appropriate assessment exams to all New York State youths - enrolled in a NY State public school system - from the 1st to the 8th grade. These examinations are administered twice a year in the areas of English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. This research has placed sole emphasis on those scores produced by correctional youths on the 6th grade English language arts state assessment test administered in January of 2006. Math scores were omitted from the study due to the school's failure to receive those scores during the data collection phase of this research project.

Every juvenile delinquent who is processed into the New York City Juvenile Justice System must take the STAR reading test. Results of this test allow educational administrators to evaluate the current reading level of the incoming youth and therefore design the most appropriate academic plan for that student. The results of the STAR reading test are documented in every student's academic file. Given access to these files, the researcher easily recorded these scores for the sample population (note, these raw scores were already transcribed into a reading level and documented as such in each student's file).

The dependent variable – current academic performance – had been derived from calculating an English gain score for each participating youth. These gain scores were derived by deducting the youth's incoming reading level - based on the STAR reading test - from the reading level determined by the January 2006 6th grade ELA exam. Use of gain scores provided the researcher

with a greater understanding of academic performance demonstrated by each sample youth - *i.e.* how many detained students within the research sample demonstrated an improvement in reading level after 3 months (or more) of receiving educational services at the correctional site?

Test results of the January 2006 6th grade ELA exam were provided in raw score form. With the assistance of the school Superintendent, the researcher transcribed the raw test scores in to reading performance levels. Once again, the gain scores for every sample youth were derived from subtracting the STAR test score from the ELA test score.

3. Independent Variables:

Two sets of independent variables are identified for each youth. The first set of variables is consistent with the deprivation model – inherent conditions associated with confinement influence a youth's academic performance. The second independent variable is consistent with the importation explanation – individual attributes defining each youth – and naturally imported into the detention facility - impact academic performance.

B: Sample and Data Collection

1. Sample:

Juveniles detained by the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice were the identified units of analysis for this research project. The sample studied represented both male and female individuals ranging from 13 to 16 years. Each

participant had been confined in one of three NYC youth correctional facilities – Facility A (secure), Facility B (secure) or Facility C (non-secure) – for a minimum of three months prior to the administration of the January 2006 NY State 6th grade ELA exam. The test results were collected in late September 2006 whereby the majority of participating juveniles remained in detention. Absolutely no contact – physical or verbal - was ever made between the researcher and the sample participants.

Facility A and Facility B have been defined as secure juvenile justice sites. *Secure* indicates that the youths placed in these facilities live, sleep and engage in all daily activities – including academic services – within the confines of the institution. A secure facility is characterized by strict supervision within a physically restrictive environment.

Many juveniles who are remanded to the Department of Juvenile Justice's custody are placed in *non-secure* locations. Non-secure sites are group homes providing structured residential care in a less restrictive environment. Non-secure sites maintain no physically restrictive hardware. Juveniles residing in one of many NYC group homes are bused to Facility C to receive their educational requirements. Facility C closely resembles – physically - a non-correctional, New York City public school.

The sample size for this study consisted of 78 juvenile detainees. Seventy-eight is the exact number of NYC confined youths – either from secure or non-secure sites - who qualified for and partook in the 6th grade January 2006

ELA examination. The researcher was provided a list identifying all 78 students along with their resulting test scores.

Due to the fact that the research sample was comprised of the entire population, issues regarding randomness and researcher bias selection are of no concern.

2. Data Collection:

The data collection phase for this study began by requesting research approvals by both the New York City Board of Education and the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Both institutions received copies of the research proposal including the data collection instruments, lists of facilities of interest, and the overall intentions of the research/researcher. Challenges surfaced due to the juvenile status (16 years or younger) and delinquent classification of the intended sample. After one year of continual written amendments and verbal discussions, the researcher received written research approvals from both the NYC Department of Education and the NYC Department of Juvenile Justice. With the approval documents in hand, roadblocks continued to delay the data collection process due to the persistent reluctance of the school Principal – outside visitors, even those with legal documentation for their presence, are not overly welcome in juvenile correctional academic settings.

Data was obtained by a three-technique approach. First, a data collection instrument was devised as a means of obtaining previously documented information directly relevant to the study objective. As indicated above, the

researcher was provided a list identifying 78 students along with their ELA test scores. The researcher was then granted permission to locate and examine the personal, academic files for each of the 78 youths. These files were all located at the same juvenile correctional site often identified as the administrative location (note, each file examined was active at the time of data collection indicating that these same students were still in DJJ's custody). Information specifically sought by the collection instrument - regarding the 78 participants' delinquent, academic and behavioral histories – was recorded. One instrument was completed for each of the 78 detained students. Each of the participants took the January 2006 ELA exam at one of three sites – Facility A (secure), Facility B (secure) or Facility C (non-secure).

As specifically stated on the DJJ and Board of Education research approval documents, individual youth names, social security numbers, and varying other personal identification information was never recorded for the purposes of youth security and anonymity.

The second phase of the data collection process required the participation of the school administrators. Information was requested regarding the academic credentials of those instructors – from Facility A, Facility B, and Facility C - who taught 6th grade English to those students who participated in the taking of the statewide ELA examination. Teacher identities remained anonymous. The administrators identified each instructor as teacher A, teacher B, etc along with the requested data and the school in which they provided 6th grade English instruction.

The final stage of data collection provided this research with a qualitative element. The researcher had previously designed an informal survey – to be completed by the researcher herself – based on specific – relevant - facility observations. Visitation to two of the academic correctional sites – Facility A and Facility B (note, the principal of the educational institution refused to permit researcher visitation to Facility C) – allowed the researcher to conduct brief, informal interviews with willing staff members as well as personally record critical observations. Data regarding computer availability, library resources and classroom quality were documented as a result of this technique.

C: Measurement Issues

1. Measuring the Dependent Variable:

Academic performance has been identified as the dependent variable (y) for this research. Academic performance has been defined as the English gain score for each participating youth in the sample. It has been recognized that English gain scores may not fully define a youth's academic ability thus raising concerns regarding construct validity but due to limits in data collection, for the purposes of this research, academic performance will be defined as such.

2. Measuring the Independent Variables:

Two independent variables (x's) have been measured as predictors of the dependent variable for each confined youth: 1) school quality consistent with *No*

Child Left Behind principles (deprivation measures) and 2) deviant/behavioral history (importation measures). The two independent variables have been defined as:

1. Measures of school quality consistent with NCLB quality concepts.
    a) Teacher qualifications.
    b) Quality and availability of learning materials.
    c) Availability and quality of special education services.

Part D, Section 1401 of the *No Child Left Behind Act* addresses the educational standards of delinquent youth. Students who are currently completing their academic requirements while detained by a juvenile correctional facility are subject to the same educational standards and entitlements as those who participate in conventional school systems.

According to *NCLB* and the US Department of Education (May 2004), teacher quality is a direct school-related factor affecting student achievement. Section 120.6 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education (January, 2005) defines a qualified instructor as one who holds at least a bachelor's degree; has passed the state teacher licensing examination; and has obtained full state certification as a teacher. Youths in correctional facilities often do not receive adequate educational and vocational services. Tom O'Rourke, *Improving the Odds For Incarcerated Youth* (Feb. 2003), notes that prior to the state of Georgia's adoption of a new educational curriculum for detained youth, "most sites had outdated textbooks, supplies, materials and other resources necessary to adequately support an educational program."

A good percentage of correctional youths are in need of special education services. As previously noted "special education programs for incarcerated youths often fail to meet legal requirements and currently accepted professional standards. As a result, youths with disabilities in correctional settings do not participate in education programs to which they are entitled, and which can prepare them to reenter their schools and communities"(Meisel, 2003).

The deprivation model applies to this section of the research. The model suggests that youth performance scores are directly affected by the deprivations associated with detention. As previously noted, the deprivation model is illustrated by Gresham M. Sykes in his text The Society of Captives (1958). Sykes discusses the difficulties male inmates are forced to cope with as a result of their punishment – as a result of their loss of liberty. He contends that the inmate subculture emerges from an inmate's attempt to adapt to deprivations imposed by incarceration.

2. Measures of the youth's social and behavioral history (import measures).
    a) Number of prior arrests.
    b) Number of schools attended prior to admission (academic mobility).
    c) Truancy.
    d) Classified as learning disabled.
    e) Reading level at time of entry

Leone and Cutting, "*Appropriate Education, Juvenile Corrections, and No Child Left Behind",* (May 2004) indicate that "large numbers of juveniles in corrections are marginally literate or illiterate and have experienced school failure

and retention. Many of these youths have significant learning and/or behavioral problems." A great percentage of correctional students were public school dropouts at early ages thus lagging three or more years behind their non-delinquent counterparts (Moody, Sept. 2003). Correctional youths are often bounced from school system to school system throughout their academic career thus disrupting the continuity of their education.

New York City defines truancy as a student's failure to attend school with no lawful justification. Any student enrolled in the New York City public school system who misses school with no legal excuse is defined as truant (New York City's Board of Education – Department of Attendance). A suspension history can be defined as time periods in which a youth has been prohibited to attend school as a result of a school code violation (New York City's Board of Education – Department of Attendance). For the purposes of this research, the definitions of both truancy and suspension history have been based on that provided by the NYC Board of Education.

The most common learning disabilities found among incarcerated youths include emotional or behavioral disorders (EBD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disabilities (LD) and mild mental retardation (MR) (Rutherford, Bullis, Anderson, & Griller, 2000). This study has defined learning disabilities by these four disorders.

As previously indicated, the import model is the most appropriate explanation for this section of the research. The importation model suggests that academic performance scores are linked to the individual characteristics a youth

imports into the correctional setting. The importation model is illustrated by the work of John Irwin and Donald Cressey, "Thieves, Convicts and the Inmate Culture" (1962). Irwin and Cressey believe that too much emphasis has been placed on the impact of prison on inmates. They contend that the prison subculture evolves from various subcultures imported into the institution by the inmates themselves.

D: Statistical Methods Employed

Based on the hypothesis and the questions derived from it, the first methods of statistical means utilized were frequency distributions and basic descriptive statistics. These simply provided a more visual understanding of the data.

Chi-Square – or Fishers Exact Test (as appropriate) – was used to observe relationships between categorical variables. Spearman Correlations were also conducted to describe relationships among continuous variables and between continuous and ordinal variables.

The third statistical means employed was Analysis of Variance to compare differences between grouping variables and continuous variables.

The final statistical procedure utilized for this study was multiple regression analysis. Multiple regression models were used to explain relationships between student and/or teacher variables and the outcomes. These models were then refined by using Backward Selection which eliminated any redundant variables thus protecting the findings from multicollinearity.

Concluding, logistic regression models were utilized to explain relationships between gain score (yes vs. no) and the student and/or teacher variables.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

The results of this research are presented by first summarizing findings based on the total sample population (n = 78), followed by an examination of findings broken down by individual schools (School A, School B and School C), and finally, an analysis of the identified variables based on school security level (secure vs. non-secure).

A: Description of the Population

To obtain a better understanding of the research sample as a whole, as well as to rule out differential student backgrounds, frequency distributions are presented for all variables.

Three correctional schools participated in the study – School A, School B and School C. Schools A and B are secure facilities, School C is non-secure. School A (n = 17) represented 22% of the sample population; School B (n = 34) represented 43% of the sample population; and School C (n = 27) represented 35% of the overall sample population.

The dependent variable – current academic performance – had been derived from calculating an English gain score (incoming reading level subtracted from the reading level produced by the ELA exam) for each sample participant (Table 1). The frequency distribution of gain scores (the dependent variable) for

the overall sample shows an equal distribution in gain scores – one half of the youths went down in reading level and one half went up or remained the same.

Table 1

Example Calculations of Student Reading Gain Scores

	Incoming Reading Level	Spring 06 Reading Level	Gain
Student A	6.3	5.0	-1.3
Student B	5.8	5.8	0
Student C	2.1	3.7	+1.6

In reference to the dependent variable, the mean reading gain for each school as well as the average number of days the students have spent in the school prior to their participation on the Spring 2006 ELA exam are illustrated below:

Table 2

Mean Gain Scores for Schools A, B and C

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
School A: Gain	17	-0.2	2.67
(secure) ndays	17	124	
School B: Gain	34	-0.1	1.48
(secure) ndays	34	127	
School C: Gain	27	-0.8	2.0
(non- ndays secure)	27	129	

The following represents the mean scores for the dependent variable (gain) based on school type – secure vs. non-secure.

Table 3

Mean Gain Scores Based on School security Level

	N	Mean	Std Dev
Non-Secure: Gain (School C)	27	-0.8	2.0
Secure: Gain (Schools A & B)	51	-0.2	1.9

Frequency distributions were constructed for the entire sample based on the importation, independent variables. Results indicated that – prior to the administration of the 2006 ELA exam – no youth had been incarcerated for less than 3 months. The majority of youths (70%) had been confined to one of the 3 correctional sites for 4 months or longer. As indicated by Table 4, approximately 60% of the entire sample had been arrested 2 or more times prior to their current admission into the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice. This statistic supports the high level of juvenile recidivism rates reported in New York City.

Table 4

The Frequency Distribution for Number of Arrests

Number of Arrests

Number of Arrests	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency
0	14	17.95	78
1	17	21.79	64
2	38	48.72	47
3	7	8.97	9
4	1	1.28	2
5	1	1.28	1

Other findings indicated that 57 % had a prior history of school suspensions; and 74% had previously demonstrated a history of truant behavior.

Academic mobility – the number of prior schools attended by the individual – is prevalent among NYC correctional youths. Findings indicated that 65% of the sample studied had been enrolled in 3 or more school systems prior to their admission into the correctional setting. This supports the literature that delinquent youth are victims of poverty, homelessness, dysfunctional family units, etc.

Frequency distributions for the variables learning disabled (yes/no) and type of learning disability indicated that exactly one half of the sample (50%) entered the correctional school site with a learning disability and exactly one half did not. Of the 50% diagnosed as having a learning disability, 28% were defined as emotionally disabled and 22% defined as learning disabled.

B: Hypothesis Testing and Analysis

The Chi-Square test of statistical significance was used to determine whether or not relationships exist between the correctional schools and the independent variables.

1. School (A, B or C) Effects

Findings indicated that no significant relationships existed between the correctional school (School A, School B or School C) the student was enrolled in and the number of prior arrests, the number of prior schools, a history of suspensions, a history of truant behavior, and the importation of a learning disability. As seen in Table 5, these findings suggest that of the three correctional school systems, differences among their student populations are virtually non-existent. Table 5 also shows that there is no significant relationship between school of enrollment and suspension history (Chi-Square = .35, 2 df, p = .84).

Table 5

Frequency Distribution for Suspension History by School

	Suspension History		
School	No N(%)	Yes N(%)	Total N(%)
School A	10 58.82	7 41.18	17 21.79
School B	20 58.82	14 41.18	34 43.59
School C	14 51.85	13 48.15	27 34.62
Total	44 56.41	34 43.59	78 100.00

Statistics for Table of School by Suspensions

Statistic	DF	Value	Probability
Chi-Square	2	0.3490	0.8399

The existence of a relationship between school of enrollment and a positive gain in reading level was statistically significant (Chi-Square = 6, 2df, $p = 0.05$). Students enrolled at either School A or School B were more likely to show improvement in their reading levels (71% and 53% improved respectively) after the Spring 2006 ELA exam, whereas, many fewer students enrolled in School C improved (33%). Note those students enrolled in one of the two secure

academic environments were at a greater likelihood of increasing their reading levels than those in the non-secure educational setting (see Table 6 below).

Table 6

Frequency Distribution for Reading Gain by School

School
(name of school) Gain in reading score

Frequency Row Pct	No	Yes	Total
School A (secure)	5 29.41	12 70.59	17 21.79
School B (secure)	16 47.06	18 52.94	34 43.59
School C (non-secure)	18 66.67	9 33.33	27 34.62
Total	39 50.00	39 50.00	78 100.00

Statistics for Reading Gain by School

Statistic	DF	Value	Probability
Chi-Square	2	6.0000	0.05

2. Security Level Effects

Although it has been shown that students in the non-secure educational system were less likely to increase their reading scores after the Spring 2006 ELA

exam, they were also less likely to lose reading scores; hence, many were likely to remain at the same grade level as entry. This data is supported by a frequency distribution for reading gain by school type – secure vs. non-secure. See Table 7 below.

Table 7

Frequency Distribution for Reading Gain by School Security Level

School Type Gain in Reading Score

Frequency Row Pct	No	Yes	Total
Non-Secure	18 66.67	9 33.33	27 34.62
Secure	21 41.18	30 58.82	51 65.38
Total	39 50.00	39 50.00	78 100.00

Statistics for Table of Type by Reading Gain

Statistic	DF	Value	Probability
Chi-Square	1	4.5882	0.0322

As demonstrated above, students enrolled in a non-secure detention facility were less likely to lose reading scores – 33% (9/27) vs. 59% (30/51) (Chi-Square 4.6, 1df, p= .03).

Frequency distributions are shown for all variables by school type (secure vs. non-secure); only the relationship which was previously discussed in Table 7 was significant. For example, no relationship was found between the number of prior arrests, type of learning disability and truant history and the school security level. This could be explained by the fact that New York City assigns delinquent youths to correctional sites based on where the student lives as opposed to facility type. School A is located in Manhattan; School B and School C are located in the Bronx. This once again demonstrates that the youths in all three schools are similar regarding the variables for which they import into the correctional setting.

Frequency distributions were constructed to examine the relationships among the independent variables. Two relationships proved to be statistically significant. First, students who maintained a history of school suspensions also demonstrated a history of truancy (Chi-Square = 8.9, 1 df, p=0.002). Second, students who had attended more schools prior to their admission into the correctional system were also more likely to have a history of school suspensions (Chi-Square = 14.8, 8 df, p=0.06).

3. Learning Disability Effects

A relationship between the type of learning disability and school was found (Chi-Square = 6.96, 2df, p = 0.03). The majority of students from school B were diagnosed with a learning disability (61%) – the less intrusive impairment when compared to those with emotional disabilities (Note, as indicated above, only two types of learning disabilities – of those students diagnosed as learning

impaired – were found (or described or listed): 1) LD (learning disabled) or 2) ED (emotionally disabled)).

A relationship between having been diagnosed with a learning disability and whether a student remained at or above grade level – after the admission of the 2006 ELA exam – proved to be statistically significant. Results have indicated that 100% of those students previously identified as having a learning disability were not on or above grade level after the Spring 2006 exam. In comparison, 87% of those students who were not previously classified as learning impaired were not on or above grade level after they partook in the NY state English assessment test (see Table 8 - Note, because 50% of the cells in the frequency distribution have expected counts less than 5, Chi-Square could have produced non-valid results therefore, the Fisher's Exact test was used to determine significance).

Table 8
Reading Gain By Learning Disability

On or Above Grade Level Learning Disabled

Frequency Col Pct	No	Yes	Total
No	34 87.18	39 100.00	73 93.59
Yes	5 12.82	0 0.00	5 6.41
Total	39 50.00	39 50.00	78 100.00

Statistics for Table of On Grade Level by Learning Disabled

Fisher's Exact Test
Two-sided Pr <= P 0.05

A correlation matrix was examined in order to determine the nature of the relationships among the continuous variables. The results indicated a strong correlation ($R^2 = .89$) between a student's incoming reading level (based on the STAR exam) and whether he/she had a positive or negative gain in academic performance ($p < .0001$). The result indicates that those students entering the correctional site with higher reading levels had more to lose and those entering with a lower reading level had more to gain. All other correlations produced no significant correlations between the variables.

4. Multiple Regression

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to predict a gain in reading scores based upon all student and teacher variables. Four variables proved to be statistically significant ($F=38.87$; 8,69 df, $p<.0001$) – 1) was the youth diagnosed as learning disabled (Yes or No - categorical), 2) was the youth on or above reading level at the time of entry (Yes or No – categorical), 3) the student's reading level at the time of entry (continuous) and 4) the number of prior arrests (continuous). Table 9 presents these findings. The R-Square value was .81 indicating that 81% of the change in reading level is a result of the significant

variables. No teacher variables were shown to be significant – state certification, the number of years with the NYC Department of Education and/or the number of years providing instruction in the juvenile correctional school system.

Table 9

Multiple Regression for Reading Gain by all Student and Teacher Variables

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	8	239.83796	29.97975	38.87	<.0001
Error	69	53.21858	0.77128		
Corrected Total	77	293.05654			

R-Square 0.8184

Parameter Estimates

Variable	DF	Parameter Estimates	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t
Intercept	1	3.38	0.75	4.50	<.0001
Suspensions	1	0.02	0.22	0.08	0.93
Truant	1	- 0.02	0.25	-0.10	0.92
Learning Disabled	1	- 0.55	0.22	-2.45	0.02
Read on grade	1	- 0.85	0.36	-2.37	0.02
Incoming read level	1	-0.70	0.07	-9.56	<.0001
number of arrests	1	0.25	0.10	2.42	0.02
number of school days	1	0.02	0.05	0.42	0.68
total days at school	1	-0.00 4	0.004	-1.01	0.31

The above model includes both categorical and continuous independent variables which is reasonable based on the sophistication of the linear regression model and the intention of the research. The dependent variable – reading gain –

has been defined as a continuous variable. As indicated above, four variables proved to be statistically significant – 1) was the youth diagnosed – at the time of admission – with a learning disability, 2) was the youth on or above reading level at the time of entry, 3) the student's reading level at the time of entry and 4) the number of prior arrests. The first significant variable – diagnosed with a learning disability – is a categorical variable (yes, coded as a 1), the youth was diagnosed with a LD upon entry or no (coded as a 0), the youth was not diagnosed with a LD upon entry) – and based on the beta coefficient (parameter estimate) of -.55 it can be concluded that youths who enter the correctional facility with a learning disability would be predicted to lose .55 years of reading level after the Spring 2006 ELA exam (note, -.55 represents the average number of years a student with a learning disability is predicted to lose).

The second significant variable in the regression model is also a categorical variable – was the student on (or above)(coded as a 1) reading level at the time of entry. Based on the above finding of -.85, it can be predicted that a youth – upon admission to the detention site – below reading level, would lose .85 years of reading level after the Spring 2006 exam.

The third and fourth significant variables are both defined as continuous. The first, incoming reading level, produced a -.70 parameter estimate indicating that for each additional year of reading level at entry, the student would be predicted to lose .7 years of reading level by the Spring. The final statistically significant variable was the number of prior arrests. The regression findings

indicate that for every less number of arrests a youth maintains, he/she would be predicted to go up .25 years in reading level.

In order to further refine the model a multiple regression model using backward selection was performed to eliminate variables which did not add to the prediction, either due to multicollinearity or due to no relationship with gain/loss. The findings of this statistical analysis further support the above results (see Table 10). Once again, the same four variables demonstrate statistical significance in predicting the dependent variable – diagnosed as learning disabled, reading score at entry and the number of prior arrests.

Table 10

Multiple Regression Analysis – Backward Selection

Variable	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	F Value	Pr> F
Intercept	2.91075	0.40	54.76	<.0001
Learning Disabled	-0.51809	0.21	5.71	0.02
On grade level entry	-0.91625	0.34	7.13	0.009
Incoming read level	-0.68823	0.07	96.05	<.0001
number of arrests	0.25452	0.10	6.39	0.01

The only teacher variable that showed any relationship with the dependent variable was the number of years the instructor worked for the NYC Board of Education. This was found when examining a logistic regression model constructed to predict a gain in reading scores (yes/no) based solely upon the teacher variables (see below). The logistic regression model produces a logistic linear outcome which is bivariate – yes or no. The purpose for examining the

dependent variable categorically is simply that – regarding the teacher variables – the amount of gain in reading level is less important as to whether or not a gain actually occurred.

Table 11

Logistic Regression Model based on Teacher Variables

Odds Ratio Estimates

Effect	Point Estimate	95% Wald Confidence Limits	
Number of years with Board of Education	1.201	1.014	1.422

The odds ratio indicates that for each year a teacher had with the Board of Education, the student was 1.2 times more likely to gain in reading level. Hence, the more experienced the instructor, the more likely the student was to gain.

Another analysis was conducted to predict the gain in reading score based upon all student and teacher variables to see if differences existed between the secure and non-secure academic systems. The results indicated that school of enrollment along with a history of academic suspensions and incoming reading level all had a significant effect on gain scores (Chi-Square =5.99, 1 df)(see below).

Table 12

Reading Gain for all Student and Teacher variables by Security Level

Effect	DF	Wald Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSquare
Suspensions	1	5.9882	0.0144
School	2	6.9444	0.0310
Incoming read level	1	16.2439	<.0001

Based on the Odds Ratio Estimates for the above analysis, students who attended School C vs. School A were only .05 times more likely to demonstrate a positive gain in reading level. Students enrolled at School C vs. School B were .43 times more likely to produce a positive gain. The results indicate that those youths attending School C – the non-secure facility – were more likely to do poorly than those enrolled at School A or B – the secure sites. The results also indicate (Table 13) that those students with a history of academic suspensions are 6.8 times as likely to lose a grade level than those with no history of suspension activity.

Table 13

Odds Ratio Estimates for Gain by all Student and Teacher Variables

Odds Ratio Estimates

Effect		Point Estimate	95% Wald Confidence Limits	
Suspensions	N vs. Y	6.831	1.466	31.827
School	School A vs. School C	0.058	0.007	0.483
School	School B vs. School C	0.437	0.099	1.934
Incoming read level		3.542	1.915	6.551

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

Research Hypothesis:

Measures of school quality consistent with No Child Left Behind principles will account for New York City's correctional youths academic performance scores better than measures consistent with an importation explanation.

The research findings have supported an acceptance of the null hypothesis. The importation variables demonstrated a greater level of significance in predicting reading gain, although not completely discrediting all the deprivation variables.

A: Deprivation Variables

A review of the literature supports the contention that correctional school systems are staffed by 1) unqualified instructors; 2) provide inadequate educational services; and 3) fail to offer students computer and library resources. The New York City correctional schools examined contradict these claims.

1. Unqualified Instructors:

The literature strongly asserts that correctional schools are facing accelerated problems in the recruitment and retention of competent, qualified instructors. Leone and Cutting (May 2004) maintain that too many "correctional

educational programs have unqualified and underpaid teachers who are isolated from the public schools and who do not have access to adequate staff development and advancement opportunities."

According to section 120.6 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education (January, 2005) - as well as the NY City Board of Education - a qualified instructor can be defined as one who holds at least a bachelor's degree; has passed the state teacher licensing examination; and has obtained full state certification as a teacher. Research findings have indicated that all the New York City 6th grade English instructors who provided English language arts to the sample youths satisfied each of the above requirements thus deeming themselves as qualified and challenging the available literature.

The only teacher variable providing support to the literature and having demonstrated any relationship with the dependent variable was the number of years the instructor worked for the New York City Board of Education (a deprivation variable). Results indicated that for each year a teacher had with NYC Board of Education, the student was 1.2 times more likely to gain in reading level. Unfortunately, although the 6th grade English instructors who participated in this study were defined as qualified, they were also deemed inexperienced. Each of the instructors, at the time of the data collection, had only worked for the NYC Board of Education for a minimal number of years. Jonathan Kozol, in his 2005 book, The Shame of The Nation, points out that in New York City, "teachers with the least seniority and least experience are commonly assigned to schools in the most deeply segregated neighborhoods"(p.47) – juvenile

correctional schools fall within this realm of teacher assignment. These findings suggest that quality instructors are important but experienced teachers are critical in producing a positive reading gain.

2. Inadequate Educational Services:

The current literature regarding educational services/programs provided to youths in the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice maintains that a lack of available funding limits correctional school systems from providing the best academic materials for their students. Many of the educational resources utilized by youth detention facilities are more than 10 years old and tattered. Meisel and others (2003) conclude that youth in correctional environments "may receive substandard educational services that deviate from currently accepted instructional practices." Tom O'Rourke, Improving the Odds For Incarcerated Youths (Feb. 2003), indicates that prior to the State of Georgia's adoption of a new educational curriculum for detained youths, "most sites had outdated textbooks, supplies, materials and other resources necessary to adequately support an educational program."

The research findings have disproved the above literature for NYC youth correctional schools. The 6th grade English texts and learning materials utilized by Schools A, B and C were up to par with the required English language arts materials mandated by the New York City Board of Education. The textbook choices along with the supplementary workbooks were in great condition and supplies were sufficient. These findings suggest that New York City correctional schools are beginning to demonstrate progress in their attempts toward the overall

improvement of academic quality in accordance with the mandates imposed by *No Child Left Behind*.

3. Computer and Library Resources:

Computer technology was available for all youths detained in Schools A, B and C during the time frame of this research project. Computers were plentiful and in good functioning condition, utilized by both the faculty and students. Students received formal computer classes and were encouraged to participate in informal recreational usage. Supporting the literature, these findings recognize the importance of assisting incarcerated youths toward the development of computer skills in an attempt to master information retrieval. Mike Kollhoff, *"Juvenile Correctional Education in the 21st Century: Leave No Child Out"* (2002), points out that "correctional students must learn to use all of the resources of the workplace to be employable. It is our responsibility to do all we can to make these tools accessible."

Computers along with a multitude of software packages have already been installed in the majority of youth detention sites throughout the country. SAFETY-NET (Systems Applications for Educating Troubled Youths) has been developed to bring high quality computer and inter-net educational resources to incarcerated youths (Amall, July 2002). SAFETY-NET has been made available nationwide and enables correctional instructors a diversion from traditional learning methods toward ones that are more fun and challenging (2002).

Youth detention schools fail to maintain a quality-infused functioning library. Puffer and Burton, *"Correctional Education Reform"* (2002), contend

that the relationship between correctional educators and librarians is either nonexistent because there is no library, or is based on peripheral contact through a recreational reading program usually supported by public library outreach services in the community." The research findings uphold this contention.

Library resources were barely existent in all three academic sites. School C had no functioning library. Schools A and B each had a room – small in size – designated specifically for library materials. School librarians were non-existent at all three schools. If a student demonstrated an interest in loaning a book from the so-called library, a teacher or staff member would informally document the student's name, title of the book and the date of removal. Many of the books were tattered in appearance and were donated from various others to the correctional center. Very few recommended literary works were available at these libraries. On multiple occasions – during school hours - it was noted that the library facilities were dark on the interior and locked – not a welcoming sight for one interested in retrieving either recreational or informational materials.

Libraries are important for they could provide both recreational and informational materials for inmates and staff. Libraries teeming with both age-appropriate informational and recreational materials can provide incarcerated youths with a positive outlet/activity while enhancing their reading skills. As John Stewart, "A Special Edition on Education Programs in Juvenile Correctional Facilities"(2002), points out "School library services need to be a part of the services in juvenile correctional schools in order to continue equivalent educational services while students are incarcerated."

B: Significant Predictors of Reading Gain

Multiple regression analyses provided significant findings regarding predictor variables. The most significant factors in predicting NYC youth gain scores include (all importation variables): 1) learning disabled at the time of admission (yes or no), 2) incoming reading level and 3) the number of prior arrests.

1. Learning Disabled at Entry:

Most of the literature regarding special education in juvenile corrections has indicated that detained youths diagnosed with a learning disability fail to receive proper specialized educational services. As noted by Meisel (2003), "special education programs for incarcerated youths often fail to meet legal requirements and currently accepted professional standards. As a result, youths with disabilities in correctional settings do not participate in education programs to which they are entitled, and which can prepare them to reenter their schools and communities." Although this may be true, the research demonstrated no relationship between the availability and quality of special education services (deprivation variable) and reading gain thus providing no support to the current literature.

Regarding special education instructors, the literature asserts that educators working in juvenile corrections seldom have a background or training in specialized education. "Corrections educators are unfamiliar with special education law, their required role in the student IEP (Individualized Education

Plan), or how these components should influence their classroom instruction" (Moody, 2003).

Deviating from the literature, Schools A, B and C employed only qualified special education instructors and each of the school's special education programs/services were in compliance with the mandates imposed by both the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (1975) and *No Child Left Behind.*

The literature is confirmed when exploring the learning disability variable as an import variable. Upon admission to the detention facility, receiving a learning disability diagnosis (yes/no) does provide significance in predicting the dependent variable. Any youth who imports a learning disability into the detention site is more likely to perform poorly on the New York ELA assessment exam. Based on the above findings, this may suggest that many youths import into the correctional school setting learning disabilities beyond the capabilities of the educational system as a whole. Learning disabilities, which have gone unrecognized and/or untreated in the past, may now have escalated to a level beyond any educational system – correctional and conventional – demanding specialized attention from psychologists, doctors, counselors, etc.

2. Incoming reading level:

A common feature characterizing most incarcerated youths is their poor academic performance in school prior to their admission to the juvenile justice system. These academic deficiencies can be observed by low grades and low rates of advancement –lagging behind the average grade level for a given age. Fox and Lyons, *Juvenile Confinement Conditions and Services* (Jan. 2003),

indicate that the average confined ninth grader can read at only a fourth grade level. The research findings confirm the literature indicating that 57% of the sample youths entered the facility below reading level; 35% entered on or close to grade reading level; and 8% above reading level.

The research findings have indicated that for those students entering the correctional site with higher reading levels had more to lose and those entering with a lower reading level had more to gain.

3. Arrest history:

Juvenile delinquent arrest histories have shown to be significant predictors in determining reading gain. No literature was found regarding a relationship between juvenile arrest histories and youth correctional education systems.

Juveniles who have had multiple contacts with the justice system develop negative attitudes towards figures of authority – police, teachers, etc. Teachers are treated with disrespect and learning is viewed as unimportant with little or no value toward what the delinquent youth defines as necessary for survival. Juveniles who uphold this attitude are likely to perform poorly on any examination.

C: Conclusion

No Child Left Behind has been instrumental in recognizing the existence and educational rights of detained youths. New York City correctional schools have attempted to make various academic amendments in accordance with the mandates imposed by *No Child Left Behind*. Research has indicated that NYC

detention facilities have sought to cleanse their schools of unqualified instructors and outdated learning materials and has shown that efforts are being made to incorporate computer resources into the daily curriculum as a supplementary learning aid.

The implementation of these positive educational amendments - based on the research findings - are nothing but a futile attempt to improve student academic levels. *No Child Left Behind* shines in its recognition that all students – delinquent and non-delinquent – are entitled to a quality education but is disillusioned in its presupposition that all students are equal. Students receiving their educational entitlements in the custody of the NYC Department of Juvenile Justice fail to reflect those students enrolled in conventional school systems. Confined juveniles are often burdened by a multitude of emotional, behavioral and/or academic challenges distinguishing them from mainstream students. Detained youths need to partake in educational programs that are specifically geared toward their individual needs – not bound to participate in academic programs that are state mandated, paralleling those currently employed in conventional school systems.

Efforts must be shifted away from the educational and more toward the therapeutic. Counseling is critical. Rehabilitation programs are essential. School B contained a minimal number of counselors who met with the students on random occasions. Research findings suggest that confined youths require more than minimal contact with counselors, psychologists, etc. Each juvenile should receive daily treatment sessions managed by licensed therapists and/or medical

practitioners. This will aid the youth in developing coping mechanisms geared toward anger management and trust-related issues. Other rehabilitative programs headed by qualified leaders must be installed and provided to all those in need.

Data for this study was collected by gathering information from student academic files. All documents regarding the detained juveniles were contained in these files including various admission forms. Upon entry, each New York City youth was asked about a drug and/or alcohol dependency and – of the 78 sample youths – not one responded yes. The school psychologist indicated that only on those rare occasions has a youth responded truthfully to this inquiry. When asked if this resulted in a drug and/or alcohol dependent youth failing to receive treatment for the duration of his/her stay at the correctional site, the psychologist responded yes. Thorough examinations and prior history evaluations must be conducted to ensure those in need of treatment services receive them.

In conclusion, the research has demonstrated that New York City correctional students are not going to benefit from *No Child Left Behind*. Youths in the custody of the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice enter correctional schools with complicated and troublesome backgrounds inhibiting their abilities to perform successfully in educational programs – quality-infused or not. *No Child Left Behind* principles have failed to demonstrate significance in predicting reading gain. These findings are significant and should provide a bit of guidance for juvenile justice administrators as to where the future of juvenile corrections should be headed. These findings suggest that New York City's detained youth populations necessitate living environments focused on

rehabilitative and therapeutic measures. New York City's Department of Juvenile Justice – in order to attain any degree of academic success - must continue the availability of quality-infused academic programs with the acknowledgement that educational opportunities can only be successful when received and embarked upon by a healthy young mind.

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