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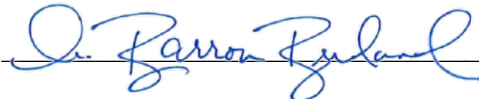
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A CASE STUDY OF FINANCIAL SUSPENSIONS IN WICHITA: WHAT FACTORS
KEEP DRIVERS SUSPENDED?

By
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A DISSERTATION IN PRACTICE

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Abstract

This dissertation in practice identifies the factors within a financial suspension of a driver's license system that inhibit drivers from regaining the ability to drive legally in the City of Wichita and Sedgwick County, Kansas. This was done by documenting the system that generates, maintains, and resolves financial driver's license suspensions. Then, a qualitative case study approach explains how people interact with this system through interviews with drivers whose suspensions began with a financial suspension and practitioners who work with drivers to help them regain the legal privilege to drive. These interviews illuminate a three-stage lifecycle driver's experience within this system: suspension, compounding, and intervention. The results illuminate three changes that would improve the likelihood of reinstatement. First, drivers need better access to actionable information to guide their restoration efforts. Second, restoration tools need to be extended to extended to administrative suspensions. Third, a continued reduction in the number of situations that result in revocations. These changes would help drivers break out of the compounding cycle and have a better likelihood of regaining their legal driving privileges. The dissertation, in practice, concludes with recommendations that practitioners and City Managers can implement to manifest change in the system that will result in more successful restoration efforts.

Keywords: case study, driver's license suspension, complexity, systems theory, systems thinking, transformational leadership

Dedication

This dissertation in practice is dedicated to my wife, Brittani Emmorey. She continually supported my dreams, tolerating and covering for my absence for military service, deployments, and educational endeavors. Without her, nothing I have done would have been possible.

Acknowledgments

This study would not have existed without the vision and leadership of Robert Layton, the City Manager of Wichita. He understood the need for driver's license assistance in Wichita and directed me to create a program. This charge catalyzed this research and continues to positively impact people through the Wichita Area Restoration Program, which helps people get their driving privileges back. I hope that this research continues to help achieve his vision. I am exceptionally thankful for my dissertation chair, Dr. Candace Bloomquist, who provided excellent guidance and hard deadlines to help me get the work done. Thank you to Kevin Lee, committee member, whose thoughts, input, and friendship are highly valued.

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SECTION ONE: PROPOSAL

Introduction

For many U.S. residents, their first interaction with the criminal justice system occurs at a low level, frequently through a traffic infraction. However, a traffic infraction can snowball into something much more severe if not resolved. Many jurisdictions suspend driver's licenses for non-payment of traffic fines and court costs. The financial suspension criminalizes future driving due to failure to pay for past infractions. If a suspended individual is caught driving, they will be charged with misdemeanor driving on a suspended license, and it is much more severe than the original infraction. The penalty might include much higher court costs, fines, and fees the individual must pay before their driver's license is reinstated. Compounding court costs, fines, and fees create a cycle of insurmountable debt to the courts, ensuring these individuals may never drive legally again (Pilar, 2021).

According to the 2020 census, Kansas had a population of 2.9 million residents. There are currently 227,000 suspended drivers in Kansas, 25% of those occurring in Sedgwick County/Wichita (Padilla, 2021), an area containing 17% of the Kansas population (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). The number of suspended drivers has more than doubled in Kansas since 2007, when Carnegie and Voorhees (2007) completed an audit of suspensions across the United States. Of the 227,000 suspensions in Kansas, roughly 70% are financial suspensions (Pilar, 2021). Within Wichita Municipal Court, there are 84,057 cases with suspensions on 43,563 people (Wichita Municipal Court, 2021). This figure illustrates the substantial number of people with suspensions and the sizeable number of suspensions.

Once a person is suspended, police will charge them with driving on a suspended license if caught driving. A conviction for a first offense of driving on a suspended license carries a maximum penalty of six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine (Kan. Stat., 2023b). A second offense can carry a mandatory five days in jail, with a maximum of one year, and a \$1,500 fine. A third or subsequent offense can carry a mandatory 90 days in jail, a mandatory \$1,500 fine, and up to one year in jail (Kan. Stat., 2023c). Additionally, if the individual fails to pay penalties (which include fines, fees, and reinstatement costs) from subsequent cases, they will receive additional financial suspensions.

People often receive suspensions from multiple courts due to the transitory nature of traffic violations and the fractured nature of traffic court jurisdictions across Kansas (Carnegie & Eger, 2009). Each suspension results in an additional \$120 reinstatement fee, which is added to the fines and court costs owed and is assessed at the time of the suspension, further increasing the difficulty of paying off the case (Kan. Stat., 2023c). The problem Sedgwick County/Wichita policymakers and practitioners face is the cycle of financial suspensions in which tens of thousands of citizens are stuck. To address this problem, a better understanding of the financial suspension system in Sedgwick County/Wichita is needed.

This study seeks to create an understanding of the process that leads to failure to regain the ability to drive legally after a financial suspension. By understanding why people fail to regain their driving privileges, policymakers and practitioners can craft interventions that break the endemic cycle of failure in the system.

Literature Review

People who lose their driver's licenses often have difficulty regaining the legal ability to drive. This case study aims to create a process model for the problem of failing to regain the legal privilege to drive to create the opportunity for meaningful interventions to interrupt the model. This literature review provides the background needed to understand the factors that cause the problem, introduces the issues suspended drivers face, and identifies a framework for a meaningful solution. I look to General Systems Theory (GST) as an approach to understanding the complicated issues surrounding driver's license suspension and how the multiple variables involved in this system function internally, externally, and collaboratively. Then, I use GST to describe the problem of driver's license suspensions and the impact suspensions have on the lives of individuals and the community. Finally, I delve into the research on transformational leadership as a potential leadership framework that could be helpful when intervening in the problem of driver's license suspension.

The Problem of Driving Suspensions

For many communities, driving is the only viable method to move across the area (Pawasarat & Quinn, 2014), making good and reliable transportation a necessary component of participating in society (Blumberg & Pierce, 2017). Because many communities are automobile-centric, access to transportation by car implicates a variety of socioeconomic outcomes, including health, education (Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Collins et al., 2020), and employment (Blumberg & Pierce, 2017; Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Crozier & Garrett, 2020; Pawasarat & Stezer, 1998; U.S. GAO, 2017).

Obtaining a driver's license is essential, and retaining that license is equally important (Pawasarat & Quinn, 2014). While the Supreme Court has found on several occasions that driver's licenses implicate a property interest protected by the due process clause (Bell v. Burson, 1971; Mackey v. Montrym, 1979), those findings do little to quell suspensions of driver's licenses. States and courts continue to suspend licenses for various interests and purposes, some having little connection with driving (Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Sohoni et al., 2019). While the original purpose of driver's license suspensions was a means to address poor driving behaviors, now it is used primarily to punish bad behavior or encourage the payment of costs or fines associated with a driving offense (Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007).

Access to a driver's license disproportionately impacts the ability to engage in employment and society of people who are minorities, low-income, and marginalized (Collins et al., 2020; Porykali et al., 2021; Stetzer, 1998; U.S. GAO, 2017). For example, programs that successfully assisted native people in acquiring a driver's license were more likely to help them achieve employment or change employment than similarly situated peers (Porykali et al., 2021). Driver's license acquisition improves social determinants for youth in foster care and is associated with well-being (Porykali et al., 2021). Further, Blumberg and Pierce (2017) found when studying low-income participants in a welfare-to-work voucher program that "household access to automobiles has a positive association with employment" (p. 77). Blumberg and Pierce also found access to automobiles to impact employment significantly more than housing or housing assistance.

It is important to note that not all suspensions are the same (Carnegie & Eger, 2009). Most suspensions fit into two categories: driving-related suspensions and non-driving-related suspensions. The literature for each is discussed below.

Driving-Related Suspensions

Driving-related suspensions are directly related to an individual violating a law while driving, for example, driving without auto insurance, driving without a license, accumulating too many speeding tickets, reckless driving, performing illegal turns, or other traffic violations (Carnegie & Eger, 2009; Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007). A typical example of a driving-related suspension is driving while impaired (Wagenaar & Maldonado-Molina, 2007). This suspension serves two primary purposes. First, in theory, it removes the offender from the road, making it safer for the community. Second, it is designed to be a significant sanction that deters people from engaging in the activity.

Wagenaar & Maldonado-Molina (2007) found that the speed with which the sanction is applied to the offender impacted the offending behavior; however, the severity of the penalty did not. Frequently, sanctions for criminal behavior are significantly disconnected in time from the actions being sanctioned; driver's license suspensions are the same in this regard, with the driver's license suspension being imposed after conviction many months later. Driving-related suspensions are applied to many charges, including driving under the influence, driving without valid insurance, and driving with a suspended license.

Drivers with driving-related suspensions face many of the same challenges as those with non-driving-related suspensions. These people frequently find it difficult to fully participate in an automobile-centric society with far greater difficulty obtaining or

maintaining healthcare, education (Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Collins et al., 2020), and employment (Blumberg & Pierce, 2017; Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Crozier & Garrett, 2020; Pawasarat & Stezer., 1998; U.S. GAO, 2017). Carnegie and Voorhees (2007) surveyed over 700 suspended drivers and found that only 49% had been suspended for driving-related activities alone. Of those suspended drivers, 42% lost their jobs, with 45% of those who lost their jobs unable to find another job. Among the individuals who did find a job, 88% took a job with a reduced income.

While suspensions related to driving have a stronger apparent connection between trying to deter the crime committed by using a sanction, the connection between non-driving related suspensions and crime deterrence is more challenging to identify. The following section will look at non-driving related suspensions.

Non-Driving-Related Suspensions

Non-driving-related suspensions are not directly related to a person's driving (Carnegie & Eger, 2009; Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007). These suspensions can be further broken down into two categories: suspensions designed to discourage illegal substance abuse and suspensions designed to encourage payment of penalties. While these suspensions are non-driving-related, they differ substantially and are addressed separately below.

Suspensions designed to discourage illegal drug abuse emanated from the 'War on Drugs' movement, which started in the 1970s and continued to ramp up into the 1990s (Sohoni et al., 2019). To increase the collateral consequences of illegal substance abuse, many states, under the direction of the Federal Government, passed laws that automatically suspend driver's licenses upon conviction for a drug offense. The

suspension occurred regardless of whether there was an accompanying driving offense. Reentry advocates asserted that such suspensions increased the difficulty for offenders to return to full participation in society and were successful in getting many states to opt out of the federal mandate. However, several states continue the practice despite the advocacy against non-driving-related suspensions. Sohoni et al. found minimal evidence for public safety benefits from drug-related driving suspensions. However, they tempered that minimal evidence by stating that there may be other means to achieve the result of lower drug abuse. While the suspension of a driver's license for drug offenses is not the practice in Kansas, the practice is a poignant example of how suspensions are used in attempts to deter nondriving-related offenses.

Another example of a non-driving-related suspension is one for failing to pay child support (Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007). Most state child support suspensions originated from the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which required states to enact laws to suspend drivers who fail to pay child support. In Kansas, people who fail to comply with a warrant or summons for a child support hearing (Kan. Stat., 2023d) or are delinquent for more than three months' worth of child support can be suspended with a finding by a judge that there was an ability to pay (Kan. Stat., 2023e).

Suspensions due to failure to appear in court or to pay fines have recently garnered significant attention from advocates (Crozier & Garrett, 2020; Hirsh & Jones, 2021; Levin, 2020; Mughan & Carroll, 2021; Salas & Ciolfi, 2017). It is essential to note that financial suspensions now comprise the majority of suspensions across the United States (Levin, 2020). Advocates for these financial suspensions describe them as a

valuable tool that induces payments on court cases (Pawasarat & Quinn, 2014). However, advocates against financial suspensions argue that most courts have few procedural safeguards to ensure that indigent people are not suspended for their inability to pay. Those courts with procedural safeguards, like hearings on the ability to pay, have few standards for their application, and often, a defendant must assert their inability to pay after the imposition of a financial suspension.

Recent literature also demonstrates a disparate impact of non-driving related suspensions on people in marginalized groups (Crozier & Garrett, 2020; Levin, 2020). Crozier and Garrett (2020) performed a quantitative analysis in North Carolina to understand how race, sex, poverty, ethnicity, and location contributed to driver's license suspension. The suspension data showed that white individuals below the poverty line and black individuals above the poverty line were statistically more likely to receive a financial suspension in North Carolina. Levin (2020) examined the issue of financial suspensions and their relationship to race using state-provided data. The data show a significant disparate impact on people of color, with greater numbers of sanctions with greater severity. Crozier and Garrett (2020) and Levin (2020) show that this problem affects those who can least afford it and those already marginalized in society.

A suspension can add significant costs and fees to the people who are least able to pay them (Hirsh & Jones, 2021). Once suspended, drivers must frequently pay late fees, warrant fees, additional court costs, reinstatement fees, and collections agencies. These fees and costs add up quickly, transforming a seemingly affordable ticket into a nearly insurmountable barrier to regaining the legal ability to drive.

For example, in Wichita, if a person received a speeding ticket for ten miles per hour over the limit, they could resolve the ticket by paying \$121.50 (Wichita, Kan., Code of Ordinances, 2021). If a person receives a speeding ticket for ten over the speed limit and fails to take care of it, after fourteen days, \$20.00 will be added for failing to comply with the ticket. After forty-five days, their license is suspended, a \$122.00 reinstatement fee is attached to the case (Kan. Stat., 2023c), a \$5.00 processing fee is assessed, a warrant is issued, and a \$50.00 warrant fee is assessed. After forty-five days, a \$121.50 ticket grows to \$318.50 (Wichita, Kan., Code of Ordinances, 2021). If caught driving on a suspended license, the conviction will result in a minimum of \$81.50 in court costs and a \$300 fine totaling \$381.50 if it is their first time receiving a driving on a suspended license conviction (see Table 1). Failing to pay a speeding ticket and then receiving a first-time conviction for driving on a suspended license results in a minimum of \$700.00 in fees, court costs, and fines, which can increase from there if a driver fails to comply with the requirements of the conviction or receives more suspended driving charges.

Table 1

Fee, Fines, and Court Costs for Speeding Tickets, Paid and Unpaid, and a First Time Suspended Driving Conviction

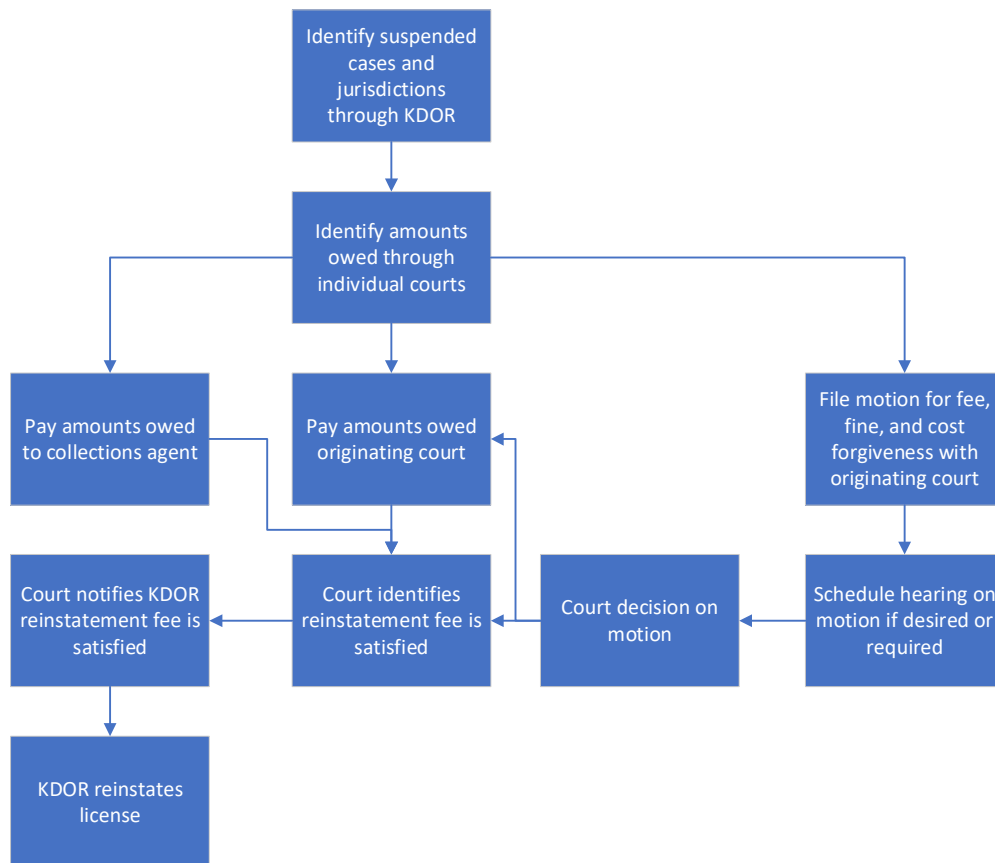
Fees, Fines, and Court Costs	Speeding Ticket, 10MPH Over, Paid	Speeding Ticket, 10MPH Over, Unpaid	Driving on a Suspended License, First Offense
Court Costs	\$71.50	\$71.50	\$81.50
Fine	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$300.00
Failure to Comply Fee		\$20.00	
Suspension Fee		\$122.00	
Warrant Fee		\$50.00	
Total	\$122.00	\$318.50	\$381.50

Note. These values represent the minimum the Court will charge. There are other variations

where the fees, fines, and court costs can be higher.

In addition to the added financial costs created by a suspension, there are likely significant costs in time and effort to clear the suspension, especially if an individual acquires several suspensions in multiple jurisdictions. The main reasons for this difficulty are information and process. First, the process for clearing a suspension differs from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Figure 1 shows the process an individual suspended driver would need to use in an individual jurisdiction. While Figure 1 shows a generalized process map for driver’s license reinstatement, the process will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. These variances are due to the differing applications of state law, administrative law, and administrative policy.

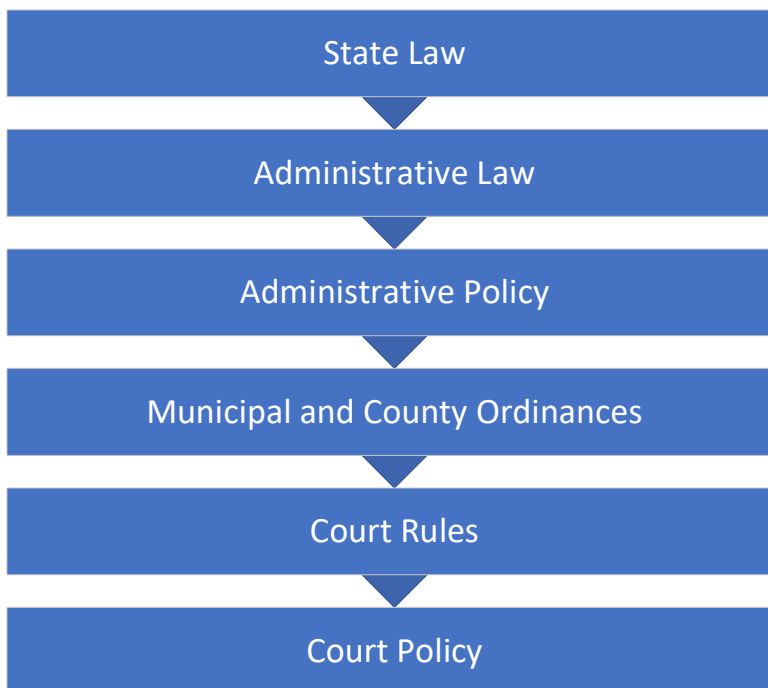
Figure 1
A General Process Map to Get a Financial Suspension Lifted



Note. This process differs from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

Kansas State law creates the general policy for how driver's licenses are managed and is found in Kan Stat. (2023a); however, the state law does not create a complete structure to manage driver's licenses in the state. The Kansas Department of Revenue (KDOR) is the state department in charge of implementing and regulating the driver's license program (Kansas Department of Revenue, n.d.-a). KDOR does this by issuing written regulations and policies. Combined, state law, administrative law, and policy represent the functional framework under which individual jurisdictions operate. The state process, while uniform, is then implemented by individual jurisdictions. These processes are mediated by local ordinances, court rules, and court policy. The result is not uniform, but rather uses differing processes, forms, and timelines. The hierarchy of law, policy, and rules is shown in Figure 2.

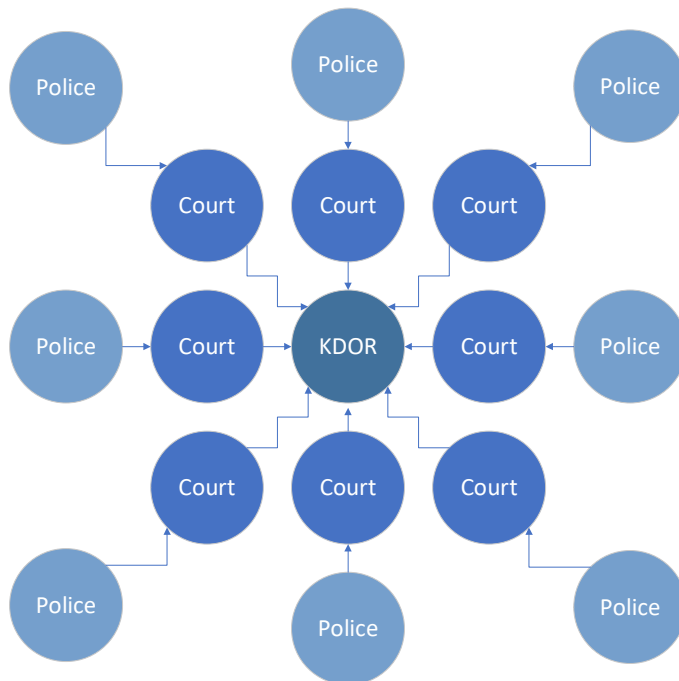
Figure 2
A Hierarchy of Law, Policy and Rules



Note. This hierarchy is meant to be illustrative and likely is not comprehensive.

Information flows create additional complexity for suspended drivers seeking to reinstate their licenses. To understand how the information moves when there is a financial suspension, I will first describe how information flows when a person gets suspended, followed by how it flows to get a license reinstated. The unidirectional flow of information in this process is illustrated in Figure 3. The process begins with an individual citation issued by the police of a given jurisdiction. That citation serves as a charging document for a court, and the police route the offense information and charging document to a court with jurisdiction. The court creates a case and waits for the defendant to either pay the ticket or set the infraction for a trial. If the defendant does neither, notices are sent to the defendant notifying them that if they fail to comply with the ticket within thirty days, notice of their non-compliance will be sent to KDOR, their license may be suspended, and a reinstatement fee will be added to the case. If no action is taken by the defendant, then KDOR is notified, and the defendant’s license is suspended.

Figure 3
Information Flow Related to Financial Suspension



Note. Information will flow differently for different forms of suspension.

To get a driver's license reinstated after a suspension, the driver must identify which jurisdictions and which cases within those jurisdictions have suspensions. A driver can have multiple suspensions in one jurisdiction or in several jurisdictions. Identifying the jurisdiction and cases is the first step in Figure 1 and is done using the KDOR website (Kansas Department of Revenue, n.d.-c). If a driver has only financial suspensions, then the driver can qualify for a hardship license that will allow them to work on the suspensions; however, the hardship license only lasts one year and is not renewable. The driver must then identify the individual costs associated with each case for which they have a suspension through the court with jurisdiction over the case. If the driver has the ability to pay, they can pay off the case including the reinstatement fee. Once the reinstatement fee is paid the court will let KDOR know and they will remove the suspension on that case. If the case is an adjudicated case, then the driver may have to contact the court's collections agency to pay off the case. Once the case is paid with the collections agency, the agency notifies the court. After the court receives notification that the reinstatement fee is paid, it lets KDOR know and KDOR can then reinstate the license. If the driver is unable to pay the fees, fines, and cost on their suspended cases, they can file a motion with the court for fee, fine, and cost forgiveness (Kan. Stat., 2023b). Relief is entirely discretionary and even if granted, it is likely the driver will still need to pay some portion of their fees, fines, and cost to get their suspension lifted. As with all other paths to lifting the suspension, it is only removed once the court identifies the reinstatement fee is satisfied and notifies KDOR.

Information about the status of a driver's license flows from individual courts to KDOR. Because of the one-way flow of information, drivers must deal with each jurisdiction to regain the ability to legally drive rather than dealing with KDOR. Only when each individual jurisdictions' suspensions reinstatement fees are satisfied will KDOR show a valid license.

General Systems Theory

The criminal justice system comprises loosely linked agencies, bureaucracies, and government bodies that lack integration and exhibit differences across locations, making the system an excellent candidate for study using General Systems Theory (GST) (Bernard et al., 2005). Bertalanffy (1968; 1975) conceptualized GST as a method of understanding issues as systems greater than the sum of their parts while acknowledging that the parts are not independent of the whole. Since Bertalanffy, researchers across various disciplines have used GST to understand substantive issues and systems with interrelated parts and processes (Hanson, 1995). GST seeks to form models of how related parts work synergistically or antagonistically as part of the whole (Bernard et al., 2005; Hanson, 1995). Accordingly, Rapoport asserted, “a whole which functions as a whole by virtue of the interdependence of its parts is called a system, and the method which aims at discovering how this is brought about in the widest variety of systems has been called general systems theory” (Bernard et al., 2005, p.205).

GST is pan-disciplinary because its application surpasses disciplinary bounds, allowing broad usage in virtually unlimited contexts (Hanson, 1995). Researchers have used GST to understand biological, scientific, political, social, and behavioral systems (Bernard et al., 2005; Bertalanffy, 1975; Hanson, 1995). Researchers leveraging GST extend its value beyond simple description, classification, and terminology to create valid generalizations common to all systems that inform a better understanding of a wide variety of phenomena.

While called a theory, GST is more approach than theory, eschewing assumptions eminent in conventional theories; it is a point of departure for examining the whole of

systems (Hanson, 1995). Hanson asserts that theories typically begin with a series of assumptions, and observations emanate from the assumptions. Because of the assumptions, many theories are wholly incompatible with other theories. Incompatibility is not an issue with GST as it starts with a whole assumed to be larger than the component parts identified. As such, disparate and seemingly incompatible parts can come together to form the amalgam of the whole.

There is no academic consensus regarding what factors, definitions, and interpretations underpin GST. Sadowski has thirty-five distinct definitions for systems (Hanson, 1995), while Hanson describes thirty-one GST concepts, while others argue that GST is a metatheory. This paper focuses on the overarching GST concepts of wholeness and change. Within wholeness are three sub-concepts of interest: system, unit, and nonsummativity. Within change, two sub-concepts exist: interest feedback and equifinality/multifinality. Together, I will use these concepts to form a GST framework to better understand driver's license suspensions.

Wholeness

The concept of wholeness is critical to understanding GST and is the context for the content of the theory (Hanson, 1995). Thus, understanding wholeness is a prerequisite to understanding GST. Wholeness comprises three sub-concepts: nonsummativity, system, and unit. Each is discussed below.

System. "A system can be defined as any two or more related parts, such that a change in any one part changes all parts" (Hanson, 1995, p. 26). When parts are working in a system, each part is necessary to the system. Because of the necessity of each part, a change in one part necessarily changes the entire system. Each part is essential in relation

to other parts to create the whole. When a change in one-part changes other parts or their relation to other parts, the system changes.

The transportation system in Kansas is fairly one-dimensional, with 82% of all Kansans relying on driving to and from work (Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 2020). There are few alternative options other than driving in many Kansas communities. Losing the legal ability to drive significantly impacts an individual's ability to participate fully in work, education, social events, family events, and health systems. Beyond the cost to the individual, there is an aggregated cost to communities as fewer people can fully participate in the economy due to difficulty accessing jobs without transportation. The one-dimensional transportation system exacerbates the effects on the individual and other systems due to the lack of viable alternatives.

The system that manages driver's licenses in Kansas is complicated and a product of state law. Kan. Stat. (2023c) creates the construct for creating and regulating driver's licenses. Within that construct, the Kansas Department of Revenue (KDOR) has administrative authority (Kansas Department of Revenue, n.d.-b). Within KDOR, Driver's License Examinations is responsible for applications and examinations, while Drivers Solutions maintains driver's license records. Many governmental entities create the records Drivers Solutions maintains at several points in the process.

First, records are sent to Drivers Solutions by law enforcement entities. These law enforcement entities may be State, County, or Municipal. When Drivers Solutions receives a record, depending on the charge, it may issue an administrative suspension. While initiated by law enforcement creating a case against an individual, an administrative suspension is independent of any criminal case that may follow. Drivers

who receive an administrative suspension have fourteen days from Drivers Solutions' receipt of the record to request an administrative hearing to challenge the suspension. If a driver fails to challenge the suspension or loses the challenge in the administrative hearing, the suspension will remain in place for the duration prescribed by law.

Second, records are sent to Drivers Solutions by courts. In Kansas, the courts often have overlapping or concurrent jurisdiction over cases. The determining factor for which court will receive a case is the law enforcement entity that issues the citation. If a city police officer issues the citation, the case will go to the corresponding municipal court. If a state or county officer issues the citation, it will go to the county traffic court. If an individual fails to pay a citation or schedule a court date, they will receive a notice that their driver's license will be suspended (Kan. Stat., 2023c). If they fail to act, the Municipal or County Court will report the case to Drivers Solutions, and Driver Control will suspend the driver's license. This process will occur if the driver appears in court, is found guilty of the charged traffic offenses, and fails to pay the fines promptly.

Courts will also notify Drivers Solutions when drivers are convicted of specified offenses like driving on a suspended license, driving under the influence, or other serious traffic crimes (Kan. Stat., 2023b). When Drivers Solutions receives the notice, they will suspend the driver's license for the period prescribed by state law.

Once suspended, drivers who have a time-based suspension must pay the fees, fines, and costs with the court that has jurisdiction and wait the requisite amount of time before paying a reinstatement fee. Those drivers who only have a financial suspension must satisfy all the original fees, fines, and costs, plus additional costs and fees, before being allowed to pay a reinstatement fee to get their suspension lifted. Additionally, all

suspensions must be lifted from all jurisdictions and all cases within those jurisdictions before a person can legally drive.

For those who have suspensions in multiple jurisdictions, access to information can be a problem. Drivers Solutions only provides drivers with skeletal information about their suspensions when they provide a driving record. The record provided does not contain the amounts owed or the court case number for the offense causing the suspension. To regain their driving privileges, the person must contact each court to get the case numbers and the required amounts they must pay before being allowed to pay their reinstatement fee to get their license reinstated on an individual case.

While some additional safeguards have been built in, such as the ability to file a request for fee, fine, or cost relief for an articulated manifest hardship (it is worth noting that manifest hardship is not defined), it is a challenging process for drivers to navigate (Kan. Stat., 2023c). Drivers face a complex and expensive system to navigate the system to regain their license.

Nonsummativity. Hanson (1995) in summing up nonsummativity in systems said simply, “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts” (p. 22). At their most basic, systems are multiple individual units acting in concert. Those units together create a thing or an outcome that exceeds that of the individual units themselves. As such, the whole cannot be fully understood by disassembling the component parts because the parts do not add up to the whole. Likewise, the parts cannot fully be understood without relating them to their context, the whole. GST and complexity theory hold that reductionist efforts, breaking systems down into smaller and smaller pieces to explain the system, cannot provide a complete description of the whole system (Turner & Baker, 2019).

Complexity theory helps to expand on the idea of nonsummativity (Mitchell, 2009). In complex systems, individual parts do not add up to a whole. For example, individual genes do not cobble together a person. Instead, large networks of genes together form individual traits. Additionally, nonsummative systems frequently exhibit characteristics of self-organization. Much like a network of genes, the complex system regulating driver's licenses is a system within systems. The overall driver's license system includes many individual court subsystems working independently within the overall systems to accomplish the same purposes with both subtle and significant differences. Likewise, subsystems, i.e., courts, organize their own systems and subsystems within the overall state driver's license system. This self-organization in subsystems within the overall driver's license system adds significant complexity to the system overall.

As stated before, 82% of Kansans drive to get to work (Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 2020). A suspension does not just take a driver off the road—it removes an employee from the workforce, reducing a community's productive labor force and inhibiting economic growth. It reduces access to education, decreasing the skills of the workforce and potentially that of driver's children. It reduces access to healthcare, which may increase the occurrence of emergencies as routine checkups are eschewed. For drivers and the Kansas communities where drivers live, suspensions do not just take one driver off the road; they have a greater cumulative impact.

For drivers with suspensions, the system is not additive, it is multiplicative; each suspension creates additional layers of complexity, requiring communication, money,

information, and actions. Nonsummativity makes complicated systems almost unintelligible as the processes loop and build upon themselves.

Unit. “Unit refers to how we divide up the world in order to study it” (Hanson, 1995, p. 31). Because the wholes or systems view requires looking at systems, there must be a minimum of two parts together. However, the principle of nonsummativity dictates that systems are greater than the sum of their parts. Thus, determining the unit is paramount as slicing up systems to study them changes them. Hanson suggests that while there is no perfect unit of analysis, in practical terms, a researcher must utilize a unit of analysis based on relational observations.

Mitchell (2009) illustrated the importance of unit in her study of complexity. Looking back to the gene example used in the previous section, for years geneticists treated genetics as a linear code, where each individual gene was supposed to do a particular thing or create a particular trait under circumstances. However, it was discovered that genes operate in networks. This discovery changed the view of what a gene did and even what a gene is. Looking at single genes was too small of a unit to take into account the complexity of how genes are expressed. Here the principle of nonsummativity reduces the meaningfulness of individual gene study to the point of near irrelevance.

Thus, in a bounded case study, it is exceptionally important to select the appropriate unit. The unit needs to be small enough to reasonably be studied, and yet large enough to capture complicated network and system interactions. For the purposes of this DIP, the unit of analysis will be the financial suspension system used in Sedgwick County Traffic Court and Wichita Municipal Court. I will use observations of specific

cases and their relationships with the system, including practitioners who help drivers who experience financial suspensions navigate their way to legal driving, and suspended drivers themselves, to learn more about the system.

Change

Within GST, change is defined by what is and is not altered (Hanson, 1995). Change and nonchange are not presumed to be good, nor are they thought to be bad. Instead, GST looks for patterns in the change and non-change. This differs from traditional linear or evolutionary thinking on the issue. Instead of assuming an observed difference is a change, GST looks to overall patterns over time with emphasis placed on time and process to determine the long-term stability of the change or pattern.

Hanson (1995) points out that this view allows researchers to identify long-term patterns or generational cycles that would otherwise be identified as short-term change. Time is relevant to understanding change, and it is necessary to know if change or non-change is being observed.

In addition to time, linearity and nonlinearity add complexity to identifying and understanding system patterns (Ceja & Navarro, 2011). Change over time can generally align with three patterns: linear, chaotic, and random. In linear patterns, the focus is placed on the impact on one variable by changes in other variables. Linear patterns give little attention to the impact of feedback on changing the pattern. With chaotic patterns, a dynamic approach is employed and examines the changes in the process over time.

By understanding changes in processes over time, GST researchers may identify nonlinear patterns in processes that previously appeared random (Ceja & Navarro, 2011). Some seemingly random patterns are impacted by a change in process due to feedback in

the system, making them chaotic but not random. The following explores two change processes occurring over time: feedback and equifinality and multifinality.

For the purposes of this DIP, I will look at any changes in patterns of financial suspensions over the past six years, 2018-2024. I will discuss how institutions and officials have changed their approach to financial suspension. Perhaps more importantly, I will outline the change to the legal structures that create and maintain the system of financial suspension.

Feedback. Feedback takes results and makes them the raw materials for processing (Hanson, 1995). Modern driving feedback displays are an excellent example. When a driver drives inefficiently, the display cluster shows red, providing input to the driver to encourage them to drive more efficiently or to make a change. Conversely, the driver may drive very efficiently, and the display cluster shows green, providing input to the driver to continue driving efficiently, i.e., to not make a change.

Positive feedback leads to change, while negative feedback leads to no change (Hanson, 1995). In the previous driving example, the red light providing the driver input to change is positive feedback, while the green light providing the driver input not to change is negative feedback. Positive and negative are not value judgments as they relate to feedback; instead, they relate directly to whether the feedback creates or does not create change.

In traffic courts, suspensions are readily identifiable as feedback. When drivers receive an infraction, the input is positive feedback to change something about their driving. At the same time, they receive a punishment (fine) because of that infraction, designed as positive feedback to change that same thing about their driving. Suppose the

individual does not pay the assigned punishment (fine) after a specific time. In that case, another positive feedback input is initiated, the suspension of the driver's license, to give feedback to change their behavior about paying the fine (not to change their driving behavior). The suspension becomes another positive feedback input if the driver is subsequently caught driving and is issued the criminal charge of driving on a suspended license. If convicted of the charge, the driver will receive an additional suspension of their license and cost and fees. This suspension feedback loop tends to continue to repeat itself. However, after the initial feedback, the subsequent feedback inputs are no longer about driving behaviors but have become about financial behaviors.

Equifinality and Multifinality. Equifinality and multifinality are input and output models (Hanson, 1995). Equifinality is a system where a single stimulus can produce multiple different outputs. Multifinality is the inverse, where multiple stimuli can produce a single output. In equifinality, there are many ways to get one result, whereas in multifinality, one way or one action can have many or different results. Together, equifinality and multifinality are tools to understand systems processes and their interrelated parts. They also remind us that effects cannot be guessed or predicted by knowing the input alone.

An example of equifinality in the driver's license suspension system is accidents with no valid insurance. Suppose a person gets into an accident without valid insurance. In that case, Drivers Solutions will suspend the driver's license until notice that the claim against the driver is satisfied or waived or until the statute of limitations runs out for a civil claim (two years). However, if children are in the car at the time of the accident, the statute of limitations will not begin until each child reaches the age of majority. This

means that if a six-year-old is in the car during an uninsured accident, the uninsured driver could be suspended for fourteen years if they cannot receive a release from the other driver. In this case, the stimulus is driving without insurance, which can result in very different outputs depending on factors outside the driver's control.

An example of multifinality in driver's license suspensions is how a driver can get the same outcome: a suspension. A license may be suspended for failing to pay a citation or scheduling it for court, failing to pay fines or costs after conviction, a conviction of a delineated offense, medical reasons, failing to provide a blood or breath sample, failure to pay child support, and many other reasons. Each input results in the same output: a suspension.

System Thinking

While GST helps practitioners understand the interconnections of a system to see the full and complex nature of a problem or phenomenon, system thinking is "the ability to understand these interconnections in such a way as to achieve a desired purpose. One of the benefits of system thinking is that it helps people understand the purpose that a system is accomplishing" (Stroh, 2015, p. 24).

System thinking is a way of approaching truly complex problems like homelessness, obesity, or smoking (Meadows, 2008; Previte & Pomfret, 2019; Stroh, 2015). The solution to complex problems and their cause is rarely obvious, and the result is that conventional thinking frequently creates simple solutions that address symptoms rather than causes. System thinking recognizes the complexity of these problems. It seeks to understand relationships between the parts of the system to create effective

interventions that optimize the relationships between parts instead of optimizing the parts themselves.

Because system thinking recognizes complexity and avoids the quick, easy fix, it is inclusive. Social change is a people business, and frequently, people who genuinely care about creating solutions are focused on their narrow roles and responsibilities (Stroh, 2015). A system theory approach breaks down those silos creating the conditions for collective success through identifying mutually reinforcing activities that build trust and understanding of collective and individual impact while avoiding unintended consequences. Further, it creates alignment through a common understanding of the issues and shared measurements of the solutions. Finally, it provides people with feedback through continuous communication, allowing for increased personal responsibility and understanding of long-term impacts.

In this DIP, the case study methodology will facilitate my use of systems thinking by creating a comprehensive system description, including participants, institutions, interests, and interrelated parts. This system description will help to augment the understanding of individual experiences working and living inside the system. Through a thorough understanding of the system and individuals' experiences in the system, opportunities will be identified to create better outcomes for the individuals and the system.

Transformational Leadership

In order to address the problems people face to regain the legal ability to drive, local governments need senior leaders who practice transformational leadership to create a climate of creativity and reform. Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek (2022) suggests that investing

time and energy in senior leaders relating to transformational leadership can assist in propagating the leadership style throughout organizations. Such investments in senior local government leaders can improve creativity, strengthen team collaboration, and potentially further interdivisional and interdepartmental collaboration, which are needed to change the system positively.

Transformational leaders do more than set up simple exchanges with their followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Instead, their leadership exhibits aspects of the four core components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These four components set transformational leadership apart from other styles and theories of leadership which are more transactional. The following paragraph will briefly describe each of the core components of transformational leadership.

Bass and Riggio (2006) identified the following four core components of transformational leadership. Idealized influence represents the behaviors of the leader which inspire followers to emulate them and their leadership. They create a collective sense of mission and are willing to work with the followers to overcome obstacles and instill confidence they will achieve the desired result. Inspirational motivation is the activities of the leaders to provide meaning and challenge to the work of those who follow. Often this quality is described as charismatic leadership. The leader creates goals and a shared vision for all to believe in and work toward. Intellectual stimulation is the ability of the leader to encourage creativity and innovation by creating safety for followers to put forward new ideas. Followers are included in the problem-solving process, and their input is shown value. Individualized consideration is the special

attention paid by leaders to each individual's needs for achievement and growth.

Followers are provided opportunities to learn and achieve using individualized talents.

The leader provides support, while checking to ensure the follower has what they need to achieve. [08]

Transformational leadership provides a conceptual link between leaders and followers where the leaders provide a vision for the future and give followers confidence to succeed (Bass & Avolio, 1993). By being attentive to followers' needs, transformational leaders help followers reach their fullest potential while achieving the leader's and organization's goals. While this leadership style may have an exchange between leaders and followers, leadership activities focus on encouraging followers' creativity, personal growth, and a vision for the future (Notgrass, 2014).

Transformational leadership can occur at all levels of organizations; however, senior leaders play a unique role in instilling transformational leadership within organizations (Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, 2022). Using transformational leadership in local governance networks can increase social capital and resilience within the networks (Kim & Yoon, 2015). Social capital "describes the closeness of relations between network nodes, including the level of trust and mutual respect" (Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, 2022, p. 4). Frequently, local government networks provide services autonomously, reducing creative and collaborative opportunities. Transformational leadership can link independent interrelated actors, creating more robust responses to problems and greater trust through social capital.

The social capital built through transformational leadership is interrelated and reliant on leaders' system thinking (Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, 2022). Bringing the nodes in

networks closer requires a system thinking perspective that understands the complex relationships between loosely linked parties required to create effective and sustainable change.

Transformational leadership and system thinking acknowledge the importance and contribution of disparate parties and encourage and facilitate collaborative interactions that improve the relationships between the actors and different parts of the system required to facilitate changes (Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, 2022). Both transformational leadership and system thinking place a premium on well-organized collaboration while avoiding quick unilateral actions that typically address symptoms rather than the root of the problems. Systems theory recognizes the value and contribution of all the parts of the system to the function of the system (Hanson, 1995). Similarly, transformational leadership places a premium on the relationship between people in systems and maximizing their potential (Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, 2022).

The problem of driver's license suspension is well-documented and significantly impacts the affected individual. People who cannot move freely are unable to participate fully in society. They struggle to maintain employment, attend school, get the necessities of life, and care for loved ones. Further, those who are most vulnerable are most affected if their license gets suspended. By understanding the whole picture of this problem using GST, system thinkers and transformational leaders can create and propagate creative solutions that interrupt the vicious cycle in the system that leads drivers to fail to regain their driving privileges. Through transformational leadership and a complete understanding of the system that propagates failure, policymakers and practitioners can intervene effectively and create better outcomes for suspended drivers.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this case study will be to describe the financial suspension system in Sedgwick County/Wichita.

Research Question

The following research question will guide this case study: How is the financial suspension system in Sedgwick County/Wichita experienced by practitioners and suspended drivers trying to regain the legal right to drive?

Aim Statement

The aim of this dissertation in practice will be to create at least three ideas for interventions that policymakers and practitioners could use to interrupt the vicious cycle and instead create a system that increases the likelihood of drivers regaining full reinstatement of their driving privileges. This dissertation, in practice, will identify the factors within the system that inhibit drivers from regaining the ability to drive legally after a financial suspension, which policymakers and practitioners can use. I will use the results of this case study to create action plans and memos that will begin to advocate for changes and set the stage for further research that will be needed to reform the system.

Method

I will use a qualitative case study research design model to conduct practitioner and suspended driver interviews about the process and system that leads drivers who receive a financial suspension to fail to regain the legal right to drive. Case study research design is focused on explaining or describing a present bounded system through the detailed accumulation of data gathered from multiple sources (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). Case studies are frequently bounded by time, location, and the research

question the researcher seeks to answer. Within case study research, data sources frequently include investigator interviews and observations, historical documents and artifacts, reports, and audiovisual materials (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Case studies can describe a single case or use multiple cases to describe a contemporary system in a collective case study. In a collective case study, a researcher deliberately selects several cases to develop multiple viewpoints on the same issue (Yin, 2018). The researcher will then use the same protocols for each case to create a replicable process for examination. When using multiple cases in a case study, the researcher should not generalize from one case to another due to the differing contexts of the cases. Instead, findings may be generalized from multiple related cases in the case study. Case study research generally has five components to its design: questions, propositions, cases, logic linking the cases, and the criteria for interpreting the findings. “Case studies are preferred when the relevant behaviors still cannot be manipulated and when the desire is to study some contemporary event or set of events” (Yin, 2018, p. 12).

This case study will occur in three phases. The first phase will gather data through current policy, procedure, and court documents to describe Kansas's driver's license suspension system. The second phase will gather data through interviews with practitioners working with suspended drivers to describe the factors within the system. The third phase will develop a model of the system and verify the model through interviews with suspended drivers.

Phase One

The first phase will thoroughly describe the financial suspension process in the City of Wichita and Sedgwick County. Data collection will include state laws,

administrative regulations, police procedures, court rules, and court procedures.

Gathering and synthesizing system artifacts will help create a comprehensive understanding of the system in which practitioners and drivers succeed and fail to regain the legal ability to drive following a fanatical suspension. This section will also provide the historical context of recent changes impacting the driver's license suspension system over the past six years, 2018-2024. The comprehensive description will provide the context for the following two steps. Additionally, understanding the process will be imperative for practitioners to facilitate and implement effective interventions within the process.

Phase Two

The second phase will be qualitative interviews with six practitioners who work with suspended drivers to regain the legal ability to drive. Practitioners are familiar with the legal system, language commonly used, and issues and barriers faced by suspended drivers seeking to regain the legal ability to drive. These practitioners can also rely on individual suspended driver experiences to describe suspensions better and what causes them to remain suspended over time. The descriptions generated by the interviews will be used to create a model for failure to regain the legal ability to drive, which will be tested in the following phase.

Sampling

The sample used in the second phase of this study will be six practitioners who work on driver's license restoration. Practitioners have many cases and client experiences to draw from as they describe factors impacting drivers' time spent suspended. By engaging practitioners instead of suspended drivers, more factors and patterns can be

identified through fewer interviews. Additionally, the legal system is complicated, challenging to navigate, and uses its language. The law frequently uses terms of art with different meanings to standard English. By interviewing practitioners, the language of suspension and reinstatement used by practitioners with suspended drivers can be developed for the qualitative instrument. This language will include the language of the law and, more importantly, the language used by suspended drivers and practitioners to explain complicated legal frameworks more understandably.

This sample will be recruited from practitioners with extensive experience in driver's license restoration. Many private practitioners work exclusively within municipal and traffic courts and have the required knowledge and experience to contribute rich, thick, descriptive data to inform our understanding of the system. Additionally, Kansas Legal Services (KLS) has produced a group of volunteer attorneys who now have experience in driver's license restoration through clinic participation. My recruitment will begin with the attorneys who were experts in driver's license restoration before the KLS clinics and offered their services to train other attorney participants in the practice of driver's license restoration.

While several of these experts are readily identifiable, I will ask them to lead me to other practitioners with experience and knowledge. Thus, my first qualitative interviews will lead to my following qualitative interviews. I will either get the phone or email contact information from the attorney providing additional practitioners or acquire the necessary contact information from the Kansas Bar to initiate contact. To be included in qualitative interviews, a practitioner must have been engaged in assisting drivers with reinstatement services as part of their practice for more than one year.

Those identified for interviews will receive a phone call personally inviting them to participate and explaining the nature of the interview. If the identified practitioners agree to participate, they will receive an email invitation containing the letter of agreement in Appendix A, the bill of rights in Appendix B, a short questionnaire to capture demographic information, which will be included as an appendix, and a calendar invitation to a 60-minute Microsoft Teams meeting with instructions on how to connect to the meeting. In addition to the description of the study that I will provide in the phone call, the letter of agreement in Appendix A provides a written description of the study and the risks of participating in the study.

Data Collection

Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews with the six participants. The interview protocol (see Appendix C) will use open-ended questions to allow practitioners to share their knowledge of their clients' experiences dealing with suspensions.

The questions in the interview protocol will be designed to have the practitioner recall individual client experiences based on criteria associated with the client. These criteria may be duration of suspension, number of suspensions, suspensions in different jurisdictions, or other similar experiential characteristics that may separate one client from another. The protocol will also ask the practitioner to compare client experiences to illuminate differences in experiences based on the client identification criterion. Potential questions include:

Think of a client suspended for at least five years on financial suspensions. What was happening in their life that caused the initial suspension? What prevented this

individual from getting their license back? What did you need to do to help them get their license back?

Think of a client who received a financial suspension and got their license back quickly. What was happening in their life that caused the initial suspension? What did you need to do to help them get their license back? What factors reduced the amount of time they spent suspended?

Compare the two clients we you described, what were the differences in the clients and their cases that created disparate results? What factors lead to success in each case? What factors lead to failure in each case?

How do economic resources relate to the suspension and continued suspension of your clients? Please provide an example.

The semi-structured format will allow the interviewer to develop additional questions to expand on the information provided as the opportunity arises. Since the interview will be held on Microsoft Teams, the system will record and transcribe the interview. The video of the interview and transcript will be removed from the Microsoft Teams environment and saved on an encrypted one-terabyte USB hard drive. Each participant will be assigned a pseudonym to be used thereafter.

Phase Three

The final phase will be qualitative interviews with six individuals who experienced financial suspensions. Specifically, the people targeted will be people who experienced at least one financial suspension in Wichita Municipal Court or Sedgwick County Traffic Court and used legal services to regain or attempt to regain the ability to drive legally. Suspended drivers are best positioned to describe a human interaction with

the driver's license suspension system. They will be able to describe their personal feelings, difficulties, and situations they encountered as they sought, successfully or not, to regain their ability to drive legally. Further, these interviews will be used to validate the model of the system identified through the previous two phases of the study.

Sampling

The sample used in the third phase of this study will be six suspended drivers with at least one suspension in Wichita Municipal Court or Sedgwick Court Traffic Court who engaged with legal practitioners to regain their ability to drive legally. The practitioners interviewed in phase two will be asked to recruit participants for the suspended driver interviews. Practitioners will receive an invitation letter to provide to former clients (Appendix D) describing the study and providing my phone number to participate. The practitioners will provide it to appropriate clients who have experienced financial suspension. Beyond identifying potential candidates and distributing informational letters, the practitioners will have no further involvement in this stage to protect the anonymity of participants.

Those identified for interviews who call to participate will receive a description explaining the nature of the interview over the phone. If the identified practitioners agree to participate, they will receive an email invitation containing the letter of agreement in Appendix A, the bill of rights in Appendix B, a short questionnaire to capture demographic information, a permission statement to allow me to pull their driving record (Appendix E), and a calendar invitation to a 60-minute Microsoft Teams meeting with instructions on how to connect to the meeting. In addition to the study description, I will

provide the letter of agreement in Appendix A, which provides a written description of the study and the risks of participating in the phone call.

Data Collection

Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews with the six participants. The driver interview protocol (Appendix F) will use open-ended questions to allow each participant to share their experiences dealing with suspensions and provide feedback on the system model I have developed.

The questions in the interview protocol will be designed to have the driver recall specific experiences and circumstances related to dealing with traffic offenses and suspensions. The protocol will also ask the driver to recall experiences related to individual charges in their record to illuminate barriers that prevented them from regaining the legal ability to drive. Potential questions include:

Looking at the suspension issued in [jurisdiction] on [date], what was the original charge or ticket and what were the circumstances that caused you to receive them? What were you experiencing in life when you received charge one? What do you believe prevented you from satisfying the ticket requirements prior to receiving a suspension? Did you understand the requirements prior to receiving the suspension? How did the suspension impact on you? (this series of questions will be asked for each suspension).

Looking at your reinstatement for the suspension issued in [jurisdiction] on [date], What had to change for you to get your license back? How did you accomplish the change? (this series of questions will be asked for each reinstatement).

How did economic resources relate to your suspensions? Please provide an example.

The semi-structured format will allow the interviewer to develop additional questions to expand on the information provided as the opportunity arises. The interview will be held on Microsoft Teams, which will be used to record and transcribe the interview. The video of the interview and transcript will be removed from the Microsoft Teams environment and saved on an encrypted two-terabyte USB hard drive. Each participant will be assigned a pseudonym to be used thereafter. Likewise, the driving record will be coded into an Excel spreadsheet associated with the pseudonym, and the original record copy will be destroyed.

Data Analysis

To analyze the qualitative interviews, each audio interview will first be prepared for analysis. Each interview will be transcribed using transcribing software and then checked for accuracy against the recordings; all identifying information will be de-identified, and I will store the files in a folder on my computer organized by the participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I will then explore the data by reading through the transcripts while documenting my initial perceptions of the data. Those initial perceptions will likely lead to some preliminary codes.

The analytical technique used in this study is pattern matching (Yin, 2018). First, I will identify patterns in the data that reveal how a person ended up with a financial suspension. Once the data is organized and generally understood, I will implement a coding process where I will code the data in each set of interviews separately, looking for individual patterns. Then, I will look across the individual transcripts to see if any patterns match one another to develop descriptions and themes by grouping codes (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Next, to better understand the relationship within the data for each set of interviews, I will manipulate them in the following ways. I will place the matched pattern codes into themes (and sub-themes as needed) by forming a matrix of the patterns with the evidence for the patterns and the corresponding interviewee within the matrix. Quotations from the interviews will be included to provide rich support for the findings. Once I have all the data for the patterns in the matrix, I will organize this data into themes and then create figures and tables that depict the information in easy-to-view ways (Yin, 2018). The findings from the initial set of interviews, along with the document analysis, will be used to create a systems model. The findings from the second set of interviews will be used to compare and contrast the initial model so I can make adjustments and finally create a finalized system model for failure to regain a license after a financial suspension.

Methodological Integrity

Trustworthiness

The case study must be trustworthy. It is not the goal of qualitative research to be replicated, as different researchers with different subjects on different days will likely get different results (Stahl & King, 2020). However, four factors lend trustworthiness to qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Each will be discussed below in the context of this study.

Credibility

A study's credibility rests on how the findings align with or reflect reality (Stahl & King, 2020). While the alignment of findings with reality appears subjective, there are methods that can promote credibility. One method is triangulation, or using multiple

sources of information to show clear and identifiable patterns. This study will use triangulation of data sources, by looking at how well practitioner interview transcripts, suspended driver interview transcripts, state laws, administrative regulations, police procedures, court rules, and court procedures provide a picture of the system of driver's license suspensions. During the triangulation process I will look for how the information aligns with each other and report the picture of the system that is described by these multiple sources of data.

Transferability

Producing findings that are transferable to a similar circumstance is imperative (Stahl & King, 2020; Yin, 2018). Transferability requires researchers to richly describe their process and findings in such a way that they can translate to another area, creating lessons for use elsewhere. While the study is limited by its low number of participants, it is augmented by the depth of investigation into the predicament's experiences. I will describe in great detail those individuals' experiences in a system, which likely reflects other's experiences as well. This study will be documented in a manner that would allow others to use the methods and findings in other studies or situations.

Dependability

Dependability, at its essence, is "trust in the trustworthy" (Stahl & King, 2020, p. 27). This trust is created through peer review and reflexive analysis by the researcher. The DIP process requires extensive review and reflection. This measure of trustworthiness is structural and is baked into the DIP process through consultations with DIP committee members.

Confirmability

Confirmability is coming as close as possible to objective reality (Stahl & King, 2020). While it is often challenging to create confirmability in a qualitative study, the operation of the study is repeatable and well-documented, making the results of the study, to an extent, repeatable (Yin, 2018). To verify that I correctly interpreted the members words, I will employ member checking with the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Ethical Considerations

Creswell & Creswell (2018) emphasize the need to use ethical practices throughout the design of a study and ask researchers to go further and anticipate the ethical issues that may arise before engaging in the study. There is a risk of influence in the qualitative interviews as the researcher may have relationships with many practitioners in the restoration practice. When there is a personal relationship involved, caution must be taken not to influence answers with the researcher's presence, presentation, or body language. Similarly, a researcher must not impose biases in interpreting the data to fit preexisting mental constructs. While having expertise in the field is helpful for research, it comes with the risk of tainting the results if they are misinterpreted through preconceptions.

Yin (2018) emphasizes the importance of care when performing human research. This study has two groups of people who will be interviewed. In each, their identities must be protected (i.e., anonymity). I will be responsible for protecting the identities of the practitioners as I will personally select them (i.e., confidentiality). If a practitioner is recommended, I will protect their participation status from the person who makes the recommendation. For the suspended drivers, I will request multiple recommendations

from each practitioner to shield their participation from the practitioner. The practitioner will provide the drivers with a letter explaining the study and what they will be asked to do if they volunteer to participate. Additionally, the letter will provide my contact information to use if they choose to participate. At no time will the practitioner be made aware of the participation of the drivers they identified. Further, it is worth noting that suspended drivers are misdemeanants, making neither prisoners nor parolees.

The questions asked in the interview will not create risk of harm to those being interviewed. The practitioners will not be asked to identify the clients whose experiences they will describe and will not be asked any other questions that would breach attorney-client confidentiality. Interviews with suspended drivers will also create no risk of harm. The questions asked relate to their past driving record and behaviors for which they have already been sanctioned. Because of this, there should be no risk of creating confessions of criminal behaviors.

To minimize the risk of data leakage or loss, data will be removed from the cloud and computers whenever possible and stored on an encrypted one-terabyte USB hard drive. The data will be locked in a fireproof safe with a combination lock when not used.

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Appendix A

Research Information Sheet

A Case Study of Financial Suspension in Wichita: What Factors Keep Drivers Keep Drivers Suspended

Introduction

You have been invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this Research Information Sheet is to help you decide if you want to participate. It is up to you whether you want to take part. You should only participate if you want to. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to participate after reading this letter, you can change your mind and stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this research or you decide to stop participating before the end of the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

This sheet may include words that you do not understand. Please ask the researcher to explain any words or procedures with which you are unfamiliar.

Study Summary

The purpose of this study is to create an understanding of the system of driver's license suspension and an understanding of why people frequently remain suspended once they receive a financial suspension. You are being asked to take part in this research because you are either a practitioner who has worked on driver's license reinstatement or a person who has experienced a financial suspension. This study is for research purposes only. Your alternative to participating in this study is not to participate.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview regarding your experience in a location that is convenient to you.

We expect that your participation in this study will take between 1 and 1.5 hours, with .5 hours of follow-up at a later date.

Risks and Benefits of Participation

This study is minimal risk research, which means that the risks to you by participating in this study are no greater than the risks you ordinarily encounter in your daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Risks of participating in this study include anonymity, confidentiality, and emotional harm. As with participation in any research study, there may be risks to your confidentiality and privacy because of your participation in this study. The following measures are in place to help guard against these risks: Removing identifying information from documents and data, storing data on an encrypted hard drive in a fireproof safe, and the right to stop any interview if you are uncomfortable or unwilling to continue.

There may or may not be direct benefit to you as a result of your participation in this study. This study may help researchers learn more about the driver's license suspension systems and what factors keep people suspended. This information will benefit the researcher as he completes his doctoral dissertation and society as the information gained may better inform those to shape and advocate for change in the driver's license system.

Compensation

You will not be compensated for your participation in this study.

What Will Happen to My Identifiable Private Information and/or Biospecimens?

Although we are asking for your name, driver's license number, date of birth, sex, ethnicity, highest level of education, approximate annual income, marital status, and number of people in your household, it is unlikely that someone could identify you because as soon as your

driver's public driving record is pulled from the public-facing website, your name and driver's license number will be removed and will not be stored as part of the study.

The information collected as part of the research and/or biospecimens, even if identifiers are removed, will not be used or distributed for future research studies.

Contact Information

If you have questions or concerns about this study, please contact Nathan Emmorey at ___ - ___ -7236 or nathanemmorey@creighton.edu. If you have questions about research participants' rights, contact the Creighton University Institutional Review Board (CU IRB) at 402-280-2126.

By choosing to participate in this study, I acknowledge or am aware that:

- The researcher(s) discussed the study with me and answered all my questions.
- I can contact the study team or the CU IRB using the contact information provided above if I have any questions or concerns about the study.

*Appendix B***Bill of Rights for Research Participants**

As a participant in a research study, you have the right:

1. To have enough time to decide whether or not to be in the research study, and to make that decision without any pressure from the people who are conducting the research.
2. To refuse to be in the study at all, or to stop participating at any time after you begin the study.
3. To be told what the study is trying to find out, what will happen to you, and what you will be asked to do if you are in the study.
4. To be told about the reasonably foreseeable risks of being in the study.
5. To be told about the possible benefits of being in the study.
6. To be told whether there are any costs associated with being in the study and whether you will be compensated for participating in the study.
7. To be told who will have access to information collected about you and how your confidentiality will be protected.
8. To be told whom to contact with questions about the research, about research-related injury, and about your rights as a research participant.
9. If the study involves treatment or therapy:

- a. To be told about the other non-research treatment choices you have.
- b. To be told where treatment is available should you have a research-related injury, and who will pay for research-related treatment.

Appendix C

Practitioner Interview Protocol

Date:

Interviewee:

I would like to thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for this research study investigating the system of driver's license suspension and illuminating the reasons people frequently remain suspended once they receive a financial suspension. The purpose of this research is to develop a better understanding of these factors that increase the likelihood an individual will fail to regain the legal ability to drive. I would like to remind you that any information collected for the study, such as your comments and any observations made, will remain anonymous. I would ask that you read and sign the consent form before we start. If you feel the need to stop, take a break, or clarify anything, please feel free to do so. If you have any further questions or concerns at any point, you may contact me at ___ - ___ -7236 or nathanemmorey@creighton.edu.

1. Think of a client suspended for at least five years on financial suspensions. What was happening in their life that caused the initial suspension? What prevented this individual from getting their license back? What did you need to do to help them get their license back?
2. Think of a client who received a financial suspension and got their license back quickly. What was happening in their life that caused the initial suspension? What did you need to do to help them get their license back? What factors reduced the amount of time they spent suspended?

3. Compare the two clients you described. What were the differences in the clients and their cases that created disparate results? What factors led to success in each case? What factors led to failure in each case?
4. How do economic resources relate to the suspension and continued suspension of your clients? Please provide an example.
5. How do incomplete information or informational barriers relate to the suspension and continued suspension of your clients? Please provide an example.
6. How does the complexity of the driver's license suspension system relate to the suspension and continued suspension of your clients? Please provide an example.
7. How do the factors that cause people to be and remain suspended interrelate? What is the result for your clients?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience working to restore driver's licenses or your clients' experiences?

Appendix D

Driver Solicitation

DATE:

Dear [Client's Name],

Please accept my invitation to participate in an interview on factors that increase the length of financial suspensions in Wichita. This study intends to create an understanding of the system of driver's license suspension and an understanding of why people frequently remain suspended once they receive a financial suspension. Your participation in this research may help policymakers and advocates create programs and policies that help people break the cycle of suspension. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time. Your participation will not be disclosed to any other person.

This study is minimal risk research, which means that the risks to you by participating in this study are no greater than the risks you ordinarily encounter in your daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

While there are no direct benefits to you for completing the interview, your participation may inform future programs or legislation to assist those with driver's license suspensions.

Your identity will be kept anonymous. The video and transcript of the interview will be stored under a pseudonym on an encrypted portable hard drive in a safe when not in use.

While your participation is valued, there is no compensation for completing this survey.

If you are interested in participating in the interview, please call Nathan Emmorey at ___-___-7236 or email at nathanemmorey@creighton.edu. If you have questions about research participants' rights, contact the Institutional Review Board at 402-280-2126.

Sincerely,
[Attorney's Name]

Appendix E

Permission to Review Driving Record and Demographic Questionnaire

I agree to allow Nathan Emmorey to check my driving record using the public Kansas Department of Revenue Kansas Driver's License Status Check. Any information stored by Nathan Emmorey relating to me will be stored under a pseudonym to protect their identity.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Demographic Questionnaire

1. Name _____

2. Driver's License Number _____

3. Date of Birth _____

4. Sex _____

5. Ethnicity

Caucasian _____

African American/Black _____

Hispanic _____

Asian Other _____

6. Highest level of Education

High school diploma

Some college

College Degree

Some Graduate school

Graduate Degree

7. Approximate Annual income

\$15,000-24,999 _____

\$25,000-34,999 _____

\$35,000-44,999 _____

\$45,000-59,999 _____

\$60,000+ _____

8. Marital Status

Married _____

Single _____

9. Number of People in Household _____

Appendix F

Driver Interview Protocol

Date:

Interviewee:

I would like to thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for this research study investigating the system of driver's license suspension and illuminating the reasons people frequently remain suspended once they receive a financial suspension. The purpose of this research is to develop a better understanding of these factors that increase the likelihood an individual will fail to regain the legal ability to drive. I would like to remind you that any information collected for the study, such as your comments and any observations made, will remain anonymous. I would ask that you read and sign the consent form before we start. If you feel the need to stop, take a break, or clarify anything, please feel free to do so. If you have any further questions or concerns at any point, you may contact me at ___ - ___ -7236 or nathanemmorey@creighton.edu.

For the following questions I have pulled a copy of your driving record from the department of revenue. I am going to look at each of your suspensions and ask you questions about what was happening in your life at the time.

1. Looking at the suspension issued in [jurisdiction] on [date], what was the original charge or ticket, and what were the circumstances that caused you to receive them? What were you experiencing in life when you received charge one? What do you believe prevented you from satisfying the ticket requirements prior to receiving a suspension? Did you understand the requirements prior to receiving the suspension? How did the suspension impact on you? (this series of questions will be asked for each suspension).

2. Looking at your reinstatement for the suspension issued in [jurisdiction] on [date], what had to change for you to get your license back? How did you accomplish the change? (this series of questions will be asked for each reinstatement).
3. How did economic resources relate to your suspensions? Please provide an example.
4. How did incomplete information or informational barriers relate to your suspensions? Please provide an example.
6. How did the complexity of the driver's license suspension system relate to your suspensions? Please provide an example.
7. What factors caused you to be and remain suspended?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with the driver's license suspension system?

SECTION TWO: SUBMISSION-READY MANUSCRIPT

Background

Driving and Financial Suspensions

For many communities, driving is the only viable method to move across the area (Pawasarat & Quinn, 2014), making good and reliable transportation a necessary component of participating in society (Blumberg & Pierce, 2017). Because many communities are automobile-centric, access to transportation by car implicates a variety of socioeconomic outcomes, including health, education (Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Collins et al., 2020), and employment (Blumberg & Pierce, 2017; Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Crozier & Garrett, 2020; Lopez, 2022; Pawasarat & Stezer, 1998; U.S. GAO, 2017).

Obtaining a driver's license is essential, and retaining that license is equally important (Pawasarat & Quinn, 2014). While the Supreme Court has found on several occasions that driver's licenses implicate a property interest protected by the due process clause (*Bell v. Burson*, 1971; *Mackey v. Montrym*, 1979), while those findings provide individuals with due process rights, they did little to quell suspensions of driver's licenses. States and courts continue to suspend licenses for various interests and purposes, some having little connection with driving (Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Sohoni et al., 2019). However, the original purpose of driver's license suspensions was a means to address poor driving behaviors; now used primarily to punish bad behavior or encourage the payment of costs or fines associated with a driving offense (Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007).

Drivers with suspensions frequently find it difficult to fully participate in an automobile-centric society with far greater difficulty obtaining or maintaining

healthcare, education (Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Collins et al., 2020), and employment (Blumberg & Pierce, 2017; Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007; Crozier & Garrett, 2020; U.S. GAO, 2017; Pawasarat & Stezer., 1998). Carnegie & Voorhees, (2007) surveyed over 700 suspended drivers and found that only 49% had been suspended for driving-related activities alone. Of those suspended drivers, 42% lost their jobs, with 45% of those who lost their jobs unable to find another job. Among the individuals who did find a job, 88% took a job with a reduced income.

Access to a driver's license disproportionately impacts people who are minorities, low-income, and marginalized (Collins et al., 2020; U.S. GAO, 2017; Porykali et al., 2021). Driver's license acquisition improves social determinants for youth in foster care and is associated with well-being (Porykali et al., 2021). Further, Blumberg and Pierce (2017) found when studying low-income participants in a welfare-to-work voucher program that "household access to automobiles has a positive association with employment" (p. 77). Blumberg and Pierce also found access to automobiles to impact employment significantly more than housing or housing assistance.

Suspensions due to failure to appear in court or to pay fines have recently garnered significant attention from advocates (Crozier & Garrett, 2020; Hirsh & Jones, 2021; Levin, 2020; Mughan & Carroll, 2021; Salas & Ciolfi, 2017). It is essential to note that financial suspensions now comprise the majority of suspensions across the United States (Levin, 2020). Proponents of these financial suspensions describe them as a valuable tool that induces payments on court cases (Pawasarat & Quinn, 2014). However, advocates against financial suspensions argue that most courts have few

procedural safeguards to ensure that indigent people are not suspended for their inability to pay. Those courts with procedural safeguards, like hearings on the ability to pay, have few standards for their application, and often, a defendant must assert their inability to pay after the imposition of a financial suspension.

Recent literature demonstrates a disparate impact of failure to appear in court or to pay fines and suspensions on people in marginalized groups (Crozier & Garrett, 2020; Levin, 2020; Lopez, 2022). Crozier and Garrett (2020) performed a quantitative analysis in North Carolina to understand how race, sex, poverty, ethnicity, and location contributed to driver's license suspension. The suspension data showed that white individuals below the poverty line and black individuals above the poverty line were statistically more likely to receive a financial suspension in North Carolina. Levin (2020) examined the issue of financial suspensions and their relationship to race using state-provided data. The data show a significant disparate impact on people of color, with greater numbers of sanctions with greater severity. Crozier and Garrett (2020) and Levin (2020) show that this problem affects those who can least afford it and those already marginalized in society.

A suspension can add significant costs and fees to the people who are least able to pay them (Hirsh & Jones, 2021). Once suspended, drivers must frequently pay late fees, warrant fees, additional court costs, reinstatement fees, and collections agencies. These fees and costs add up quickly, transforming a seemingly affordable initial penalty into a nearly insurmountable barrier to regaining the legal privilege drive.

The Wichita Context

Law Enforcement Interactions, Prosecutions, Suspensions, and Revocations

In the Wichita area, there are two courts that handle most of the traffic citations, the City of Wichita Municipal Court and the Sedgwick County Traffic Court (District Attorney, n.d.). The factor determining which court a citation is sent to is the law enforcement agency that produced the citation. Citations from the Wichita Police Department go to the Wichita Municipal Court, while Citations from the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office and the Kansas Highway Patrol written in Sedgwick County go to the Sedgwick County Traffic Court.

Within the Wichita Municipal Court, the City Prosecutor's Office prosecutes cases (C.O.W. Law Department, n.d.), while the 18th Judicial Circuit District Attorney's office performs that duty in the Sedgwick County traffic court (District Attorney's Office, n.d.). In both prosecutorial offices, there are diversion programs for driving on a suspended license in which a qualifying driver can avoid a conviction for the crime if they complete the program (C.O.W. Law Department, n.d.; District Attorney's Office, n.d.).

In all courts in Kansas, if a driver does not satisfy the requirements of the citation by either paying or appearing in court, the courts notify the driver via a letter delivered to the address listed on their driver's license that the state will suspend their driver's license if the citation is not complied with within thirty days (Kan. Stat., 2023). If the driver fails to take action on the citation, the court will notify the Kansas Department of Revenue (KDOR), which will suspend the driver's license.

Courts will also notify Drivers Solutions when drivers are convicted of specified offenses such as driving on a suspended license, driving under the influence, or other serious traffic crimes (Kan. Stat., 2018). When Drivers Solutions receives the notice, they will suspend the driver's license for the period prescribed by state law. Once suspended, drivers with a time-based suspension must pay the fees, fines, and costs with the court that has jurisdiction and wait the requisite amount of time before paying a reinstatement fee (Kan. Stat., 2018).

Those drivers who only have a financial suspension must satisfy all original fees, fines, and costs, plus additional costs and fees, before being allowed to pay a reinstatement fee to get their suspension lifted. Additionally, all suspensions must be lifted from all jurisdictions and all cases within those jurisdictions before a person regains the legal privilege to drive.

Drivers can get a free report regarding their driver's license status from the KDOR website (KDOR, n.d.). The information contained within the available report includes convictions, accidents, and sanctions, with sanctions generally representing suspension. The free records check report provides drivers with skeletal information about their suspensions but does not contain the amounts owed or the court case number for the offense that resulted in the suspension. Additionally, the report produces a separate three-page code guide to understand the data in the report (Kansas Department of Vehicles, 2021). Because the amounts owed and case numbers are not contained in the driving record report, a driver must contact each court in which they have a citation to get the case numbers and the required amounts they must pay (Racial Profiling Advisory Board, n.d.). For drivers and practitioners requiring additional information on a driver's

license status beyond that available in the free record check report, they can call the Drivers Solutions telephone number or fax, mail, or email a request to the Drivers Solutions office in Topeka, KS (Driver's Solutions, n.d.). There is also the option of being a walk-in customer at one of the local Drivers Solutions offices.

The Kansas Legislature delegated the responsibility to KDOR for the imposition of other administrative sanctions, suspension, and revocation of driver's licenses (Kansas Department of Vehicles, 2023). Administrative sanctions can include the requirement of filing an SR22 document of liability insurance, requiring an ignition interlock device to be installed to start a vehicle, or requiring additional reinstatement fees to get a license back among other possible administrative sanctions. Administrative suspensions can occur for convictions such as driving on a suspended license, failure to submit a breath test, or violations of driving restrictions. Revocation most commonly occurs when a driver receives three convictions for major violations, i.e., driving under the influence, lacking insurance coverage, leaving the scene of an accident, driving while revoked or suspended, in a five-year period. This revocation precludes any driving for three years. Further, the revocation is extended each time the driver is convicted of driving on a revoked license.

Changes in the Suspension Laws

Prior to 2020, there were no legal mechanisms for a driver to restore their driver's license short of paying the reinstatement fees, which usually required paying all court costs and fines first. Since 2020, four pieces of legislation passed that altered the driver's license reinstatement system to the benefit of Kansas citizens.

In 2019, House Bill 2211 passed which allowed courts to waive, in whole or in part, a driver's reinstatement fees upon a showing of manifest hardship on the driver or the driver's immediate family (Kan. Leg., 2019). Once a driver's reinstatement fees are satisfied, a driver's suspension is lifted by KDOR.

In 2021, Senate Bill 127 passed which allowed courts to waive, in whole or in part, a driver's fees or court costs upon a showing of manifest hardship on the driver or the driver's immediate family (Kan. Leg., 2021). Additionally, it eliminated the requirement of an additional ninety-day suspension for conviction of driving on a financial suspension, expanded eligibility for restricted licenses, and removed the fee associated with applying for a restricted license.

In 2023, House Bill 2216 passed which removed the mandatory term of imprisonment associated with a conviction for driving on a suspended license predicated on a financial suspension (Kan. Leg., 2023).

In 2024, Senate Bill 500 was passed (Kan. Leg., 2024). This bill created several significant changes. It established a sixty-day restriction on driving privileges, rather than a suspension, for those who fail to comply with citation requirements. Driving privileges can be reinstated upon agreement with the court to comply. The bill also extended the duration of restricted licenses from one year to a period until substantial compliance is found by a court. Additionally, it expanded restricted licenses to drivers whose revocations were due to financial suspensions. If a court finds substantial compliance, a suspended driver's driving privileges can be reinstated. The bill also removed certain nonmoving violations as a basis for financial suspension. It limited the look-back period to five years for suspension or revocation purposes.

Finally, it limited reinstatement fees to one fee per citation, instead of one fee per charge. These changes take effect on January 1, 2025.

Methods

I used a qualitative case study research design model to conduct practitioner and suspended driver interviews about the process and system that leads drivers who receive a financial suspension to fail to regain the legal privilege to drive. Case study research design is focused on explaining or describing a present bounded system through the detailed accumulation of data gathered from multiple sources (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

Case studies are frequently bounded by time, location, and the research question the researcher seeks to answer. Within case study research, data sources frequently include investigator interviews and observations, historical documents and artifacts, reports, and audiovisual materials (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Case studies can describe a single case or use multiple cases to describe a contemporary system in a collective case study. In a collective case study, a researcher deliberately selects several cases to develop multiple viewpoints on the same issue (Yin, 2018). The researcher will then use the same protocols for each case to create a replicable process for examination.

To contextualize the case study, I created a description of the financial suspension process in the City of Wichita and Sedgwick County. This description was based on publicly available state laws, administrative regulations, procedures, and organizational descriptions. Gathering and synthesizing system artifacts creates an understanding of the system in which practitioners and drivers succeed and fail to regain the legal privilege drive following a fanatical suspension.

This case study occurred in two phases. During the first data collection phase I (first author) interviewed six practitioner participants. I used a semi-structured interview guide which included open-ended questions and allowed me to ask additional questions to expand on the information provided as the opportunity arose and allowed practitioners to share their experiences assisting clients with suspensions. I asked the practitioners to recall individual client experiences based on criteria associated with the client. These criteria included duration of suspension, number of suspensions, suspensions in different jurisdictions, or other similar experiential characteristics that separate one client from another. I also asked the practitioners to compare client experiences to illuminate differences in experiences based on the client identification criterion.

In the second data collection phase, I interviewed six suspended driver participants. I used a driver interview guide which included open-ended questions to allow each participant to share their experiences dealing with suspensions. The questions in the interview guide were designed to have the driver recall specific experiences and circumstances related to dealing with traffic offenses and suspensions. I asked the drivers to recall experiences related to individual charges in their records to illuminate barriers preventing them from regaining their legal privilege to drive. I conducted two practitioner and one driver interview in person and the rest of the interviews were conducted on MS Teams and by phone.

The purpose of this case study was to describe the financial suspension system in Sedgwick County/Wichita and was guided by the question: How is the financial suspension system in Sedgwick County/Wichita experienced by practitioners and suspended drivers trying to regain the legal right to drive?

The analytical technique used in this study is pattern matching (Yin, 2018). I identified patterns in the data that reveal shared experiences within and between practitioner and driver groups. This was done through a coding process where I coded the data in each set of interviews separately, looking for individual patterns. Then, I looked across the individual transcripts to see if any patterns matched one another to develop descriptions and themes by grouping codes (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Results

To the average citizen, the image of the financial suspension system might look like a simple linear process that goes from receiving a license suspension because of not paying for a traffic citation to paying the citation and having the suspension lifted. However, my findings reveal anything but a simple linear process. Instead, what I found was the patterns in the financial suspension system that impact the experiences of Wichita area financially suspended drivers take on a more cyclical nature. All six of the drivers I interviewed experienced similar patterns throughout their suspensions and the examples of the drivers the practitioners told me about also fit this cyclical pattern.

The pattern begins with a financial suspension. The suspension occurs when a driver receives a traffic citation, then fails to act or pay the citation. The process develops into a compounding stage when the driver continues to drive and receives a new citation and a charge of driving on a suspended license. The compounding stage continues until the driver does something to interrupt the compounding. The intervention stage begins with the driver taking action to interrupt the compounding stage. If the intervention does not result in the restoration of driving privileges, drivers frequently fall back into the compounding stage, with drivers cycling between the compounding and intervention

stages repeatedly. Some drivers never achieve a restored license even after decades of trying. The following will illuminate the three stages through interviews with drivers and practitioners.

First Suspension

When the citation is ignored, the driver's license of the driver is suspended due to “failure to answer the citation, pay fines, penalties, and/or court costs related to the original violation” (Kan. Stat., 2023). The causes of the driver’s failure to take care of their first citation and receive a financial suspension are diverse. Interestingly, the interviews with Practitioners revealed a universal belief that the crux of financial suspensions is an inability to pay the citation; however, the interviews with the drivers showed that an inability to pay was a factor for each in the first suspension but was not the main factor. Only Driver #3 listed the inability to pay as the main reason, stating, “I didn’t have the money, but yeah, I wanted to pay. But I didn't have the money at the time.” While Driver #6 initially stated he did not have the money to pay, he later claimed, “If I'd have known more about the consequences, yeah, I would have dealt. I would have put forth the effort to try to get that paid other than other things.” He went on to say, “Nobody was really chasing me for the money, like the landlord and the power company. They come at you, but nobody was chasing me for the money from downtown, so I just kind of blew it off. The next thing I know, I don't have a driver's license.”

An inability to prioritize was the most common primary factor cited by the drivers for failing to satisfy the requirements of a traffic citation, with four of the drivers describing it as the primary reason for not handling the first citation. Driver #5 described his failure to prioritize as,

Still being in high school, still focusing on school and graduation, on sports, the pressure of figuring out what you're going to do when you get out of school, are you going to be able to keep going to school, are you going to focus to go to school? I had other things that I was thinking and dealing with other than, hey, you got this [citation]. I was focused on school, and I was focused on making sure I graduated and making sure that this was done, and that wasn't a priority (Driver #1).

Like Driver #5, Driver #1 identified prioritization issues due to youthful immaturity, while Driver #6 and Driver #4 chose to spend their time and money on other items rather than take care of their citation.

The third most common factor cited by drivers after the ability to pay and prioritization was family issues. Driver #2 and Driver #6 identified painful divorces as contributing significantly to failing to take care of their initial citations. Driver #2 described his mental state when he got his first citation, "Pretty much, I just shut down emotionally, and depression came over me. It was a bad divorce and I didn't understand it, and I just shut down completely. I just mentally and emotionally just went and did me. I just threw responsibility out the window."

While an inability to pay is a factor in drivers receiving a financial suspension, it is not generally the only factor. For many drivers, significant life stressors shift the focus away from a seemingly insignificant traffic citation. The drivers interviewed indicated that divorces, job losses, and immaturity, coupled with limited financial resources, deprioritized taking care of the initial citation, resulting in their first financial suspension. Once suspended, many of the drivers were unaware that they were suspended. The notice of suspension is mailed to the address on the driver's license. Drivers are often unaware of the suspension because they routinely fail to keep the address on their license updated. Due to this oversight, drivers frequently discover that they are suspended when they get

pulled over post-suspension and receive a citation for suspended driving, in addition to the reason they were pulled over. For many drivers, receiving a citation for suspended driving alerts them to the suspension and begins their compounding process.

The initial suspension is the catalyst for everything that follows. An unpaid speeding citation can snowball into the nearly insurmountable problem described in the following section.

Compounding

Short Compounding Time Drivers

All the drivers indicated they continued to drive following a suspension, with Driver #5 succinctly stating, “No one ever stopped driving because you don't have a license.” All the drivers experienced a first suspension followed by a period of compounding suspensions; however, two drivers—Drivers #2 and #3—stood out as spending relatively little time in the compounding stage compared to the other Drivers.

Driver #3 became suspended in December 2021 after not being able to pay his traffic citation. Although he continued driving, he did not receive another driving citation until December 2022. Driver #3 paid the new citation and then thirteen days later, paid the old citation and the fees associated with the suspension. Because he took care of the new citations, he never had a suspension in more than one jurisdiction at a time. Driver #3 then had a valid license until May 2024, when he failed to pay another citation, which led to a financial suspension; however, three months later, in June 2024, he took care of that suspension. While Driver #3 generally sought to meet his obligations, it was not always clear to him what he needed to do, “...when I have to go talk to a judge, you know, some things that they tell me that I don't really understand what they're trying to

tell me, you know, because English is my second language, so it's kind of hard sometimes, you know, to understand those words that they use at court, you know, like it's not stuff that I use every day, you know, it's not words that I use every day, so it kind of confuses me a little bit.”

Unfortunately, on the same day in June his financial suspension was lifted, the KDOR administratively suspended his license for being “Unable to pass DL test(s) or meet qualifications,” an action related to a DUI he believed was resolved. When he sought assistance from legal aid practitioners, they were unable to pull up his driver's license status from the state site although he had a copy of his driver's license in hand. The legal aid practitioners directed him to a physical location of Drivers Solutions in Wichita, KS. Drivers Solutions informed Driver #3 that to regain his license, he would need to pay \$1,200 and take a test. Driver #3 asked if he could follow a payment plan or get a restricted license but was told he did not qualify for a restricted license and would need to pay the fine in a lump sum. Driver #3 expressed frustration with the accessibility of information, stating, “They didn't tell me that I had to pay those reinstatement fees back then. Otherwise, you know, I would have tried to pay them so I wouldn't have my license suspended. So, sometimes I feel like they don't have good communication with us, you know, to make us understand what we have to do.” He continues to drive while saving for his \$1,200 payment.

Driver #2 also left the compounding stage relatively early. He received a financial suspension in 2009 and another in 2010. Although he stopped driving, he received another financial suspension in 2011 after not paying a citation for riding a bicycle at night without a headlight. Unlike all the other drivers, Driver #2 stopped driving. Because

he stopped driving, his record is relatively straightforward, with three financial suspensions all in one jurisdiction. However, the reason he stopped driving was his descent into alcoholism, substance abuse, and homelessness.

I was an alcoholic before then, but I was a functional alcoholic because I was working, paying my bills, and everything...And then, after [my divorce, loss of job, and suspension] happened, I just went deeper. I became a full-blown alcoholic, and I'd wake up early in the morning, start drinking, and go throughout the day. Then it got to the point within the last four or five years, I was drinking while I was working, and that was just due to me shutting down and me being depressed...I had my first drink when I was eight years old and I told myself that I want to feel this way every day for the rest of my life.

Only recently has he found sobriety and, as part of that process, he sought help on his driver's license and was referred to Drivers Solutions. “

So [Drivers Solutions] told me that, you can come [to municipal court] and file out a motion for reduction. It can reduce your fines significantly or wipe them all off. You will go before a Judge and so forth. Oh, ok, I can do that...and I believe and feel if it does get reduced or waived, it will greatly reduce my stress and frustration level and make my risk factor for relapse go way down (Driver #2).

Driver #2 continues to work on maintaining his sobriety while working towards getting his driver's license back through a motion for forgiveness through the court. If the Court does not forgive his debts, for the three financial suspensions dating from 2009, 2010, and 2011, Driver #2 owes \$1,603.21. If Driver #2 is allowed to have a payment plan of \$100 or \$200 a month, he could have his debt paid off in 8-10 months. Driver #2 believes resolving this issue helps him stay sober, “as long as I keep reducing my stress factors and frustration to where it lowers my risk of relapse.”

Long Compounding Time Drivers

When a driver enters the compounding stage of their suspension journey, their path to reinstatement is still relatively simple: they must satisfy their financial obligations

along with the reinstatement fee. However, regaining the legal privilege to drive does not stay simple for long if the driver remains in the compounding stage. Four of the drivers spent significantly more time in the compounding stage than the two described above. These drivers spent eight, fifteen, twenty-four, and twenty-six years suspended or revoked, with each continuing to drive throughout that period.

The following sections describe the compounding factors that make getting a license more difficult once the drivers finally decide to take action to regain the legal privilege to drive.

Multiple Suspensions. Receiving multiple suspensions is a hallmark of the compounding process. Every driver interviewed had multiple suspensions on their driving record. Driver 5 described drivers often receiving multiple suspensions if they are still driving and not prioritizing satisfying their citations.

After the first suspension, it's just another suspension. It's just a recurring event. It's like you know that you're not going to be able to get out of this cycle no time soon because you financially cannot. So it's every day you're waking up, and you're rolling the dice, and you're like, am I going to get pulled over today? Or am I going to go to jail today? But you got to go to work. And I got to go home. And I got to go get my kid. And I got to go to the grocery store. It's like, it's never going to stop. There's never going to be a time that you can tell yourself not to drive this car.

Once the compounding process starts, the drivers begin accumulating suspensions. From the perspective of the driver, one suspension has the same impact on them as multiple suspensions. A driver with many suspensions is not more prohibited from driving; it is just more difficult to get the legal privilege to drive back and, for some, more difficult to prioritize taking care of the citations. Driver #5 explains, "Once it's suspended and you have bills of everyday life, you're not going to be worried about paying no [citations.]" The four drivers who spent a significant amount of time suspended

and driving acquired six, ten, sixteen, and twenty-one suspensions. Driver #6 indicates, “I haven't counted them up, but I know last I did look, I was around 60, 65 suspended driver's license [citations].”

Many of the drivers think they can avoid getting more citations and suspensions through good driving, and some of them succeed for a time. Driver #1 received his first suspension in 2009 and found out about that suspension when he got a citation in 2010. He was able to avoid his third suspension for 11 years, stating, “That was 11 years. I was driving. When I say I was driving, I was driving. I was in and out of the state and everything. But that third one was because someone hit me.” He has since been in two other accidents that were not his fault, with the last one occurring without insurance and resulting in an additional administrative suspension.

Multiple Jurisdictions. In addition to the number of suspensions, the breadth of suspensions significantly increases the difficulty of regaining the legal privilege to drive. Breadth relates to the number of jurisdictions in which a driver has suspensions. Due to the transitory nature of driving, drivers frequently receive citations and suspensions, in many jurisdictions. Driver #4 saw this occur over a very short period.

So I got the first driving on suspended, and I was like, no big deal. Pay an attorney, get my license back, we're good. Well, so from that point, I went to, I was still traveling. I ended up catching a driving on suspended in Hayesville, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Newton, Hutch, and there's one more, Newton, Hutch, and one in McPherson, maybe, I believe. Okay, there's five of them total that I caught all within, I mean, I'm talking all at the exact same time. (Driver #4)

When only one jurisdiction is involved, the steps to resolution are relatively simple; however, when there are many, everything increases relative to the number of jurisdictions. A driver may have fees, fines, court costs, collections agencies, probation,

warrants, and bonds in every jurisdiction they have a suspension. Each of the four drivers who stayed in the compounding phase had cases in multiple jurisdictions. Due to cases in multiple jurisdictions, each driver experienced greater complexity when they finally chose to act on their suspensions.

Jail. Drivers caught up in the compounding process frequently experienced jail time. These drivers can go to jail on bench warrants for failing to appear in court, probation violations for picking up new charges, and depending on the violation for the new charges themselves. Once arrested the highest priority of the driver is to bond out. Warrants typically have a bond associated with them which is an amount of money a person can deposit with a court as a promise to show for their court date. If a person posts a bond, is released, and fails to return on their court date, the bond is forfeited and a new warrant issued. As an alternative to posting the bond themselves, a driver can pay a bondsman ten percent of the total bond amount for the bondsman to ensure their presence in court. If a driver follows this route, the ten percent is not returned to them upon the conclusion of the case, while if the driver posts the bond without a bondsman, the money is returned. According to Driver #5,

You have to bond out. Every time you go to jail on a drive without suspended, it gets a little worse. You have to pay a little bit more each time to get out. So, you got to pay to get out. If you don't get out in time, you're going to lose the job. So, then you don't have no more money. So, now you're back looking for a job. So, the fines aren't going to get paid because you don't have the money to pay them.

A driver who does not bond out quickly may face many consequences, with one often leading to the other. They can incur jail fees associated with the cost of imprisonment. The driver can lose a job and, with it, the ability to pay for the necessities of life including housing. Finally, and furthest from the driver's concerns during this

stage, they can lose the ability to pay costs, fines, and fees associated with the cases suspending their licenses, causing them to be arrested again. Additionally, money used to pay a bondsman is money that is not being used to pay off a case. Driver #6 describes this cycle through his interaction with a frustrated Judge.

The Judge is sitting there on his desk, and he asked my name. He said, (Driver #6)? 'Yes, sir.' Then didn't say nothing. He just went through page after page after page. Making me watch him, I watched him go through all them pages. He says, (Driver #6) I got 18 bond sheets in front of me. I said, yes, sir. He said, do you realize that's \$81,000 worth of bonds? I said, yes, sir. He says, and you bonded out every time. I said, yes, sir. He said, do you know what I find at the bottom of this pile? I said, I'm afraid to ask, sir, a \$400 ticket. He says, would you be willing to pay that ticket today? Or would you like to bond out again? I said, how about I pay that ticket? He said, that's \$8,100 [to a bondsman] out of your pocket for a \$400 ticket. He just shook his head.

Being jailed becomes a normal part of a suspended driver's experience. All four of the drivers who were in lengthy compounding periods spent significant amounts of time in jail. Driver #1 estimated that he had spent two years in jail on his driving charges. While not unexpected by the drivers, each arrest was a serious setback in their lives. Drivers described a sense of begrudging acceptance when an officer would declare they were going to jail. More time, money, and hassle.

Administrative Suspensions. Often, drivers will begin to receive suspensions for reasons other than failing to pay a traffic citation. For example, Driver #5 explained, "you don't got no insurance because you can't even really afford to pay for the car. You shouldn't even be driving a car, so you know it's not gonna be legit like it's supposed to be." These administrative suspensions can be through the State and add another level of complexity to the driver's situation. Administrative suspensions show up differently on driving records and are only tangentially related to a case. Adding the State as a new

suspension source adds another jurisdiction to the driver's mix of suspensions. Additionally, administrative suspensions have different requirements to resolve depending on the type of suspension. Five of the six drivers interviewed received administrative suspensions and, in each case, the driver was confused about how to deal with that suspension.

Revocation. If a driver receives three convictions for major violations, i.e., driving under the influence, having no insurance, leaving the scene of an accident, driving while revoked or suspended or having no insurance in a five-year period, their license gets revoked for three years. Further, the revocation is extended each time the driver is convicted of driving on a revoked license. To remove the revocation, the driver is expected to pay the citations and suspensions that predicated the revocation.

Two of the drivers interviewed received revocations, and both expressed a sense of hopelessness. Driver #4 explained, "I don't know what they expect you to do because...there's nothing that can be done." The driver is stuck in a vicious cycle, they were not able to pay the previous citations (due to lack of funds or confusion about how to carry out the administrative tasks) and with no positive change in their circumstances are still not able to pay and now they have even more financial and administrative burdens. The penalty of revocation assumes an ability to prioritize time and money in a way that the driver did not demonstrate while getting their first suspension or accumulating others in the compounding stage. For the drivers interviewed, revocation created a seemingly insurmountable barrier to regaining a driver's license and greatly reduced efforts toward that end.

Return to Compounding. Most of the drivers had times when they moved out of the compounding stage to the intervention stage. These drivers would decide to finally get their license back and stop worrying or looking over their shoulders. For two drivers, that effort involved tens of thousands of dollars paid to lawyers and towards fees, fines, and costs. In both circumstances, significant numbers of suspensions and citations were resolved. Driver #4 spent two years and thousands of dollars working with multiple attorneys to get his cases resolved but when he believed he had finally crossed the finish line, he made an unexpected discovery:

I mean, and I was like, I'm gonna go get a new license, and I'll never forget it. I was in Derby, I was working, and I was like, I'm going to go get me a new license, you know. Finally, I'm done with this, and we're good. No more court. I go in there, and they look at me, and they're like, hold on, I've got to make a phone call. I'm like, okay. They get off the phone, they're like, sorry sir, we can't give you a license because it's going to get revoked in three days.

Because he had different attorneys in different jurisdictions who did not communicate, he pleaded guilty to three major violations in a five-year period under their advice, and his license was revoked. For him, the compounding stage began again. A failed intervention or an inability to intervene when there is the willingness and financial ability to make an effort often leads to more suspensions or extended revocations.

Intervention

When a driver decides to take action and get their driving privileges back, there are three mechanisms to achieve that goal: self-help, limited representation, and full representation. The drivers I interviewed had used each of these methods with varying degrees of success, and each is described in further detail below.

All the mechanisms rely on individuals knowing about the significant changes in law over time. For example, before 2020, in Kansas, there were no legal tools to reduce or remove fees, fines, and court costs from a case suspending a driver's license based on financial hardship. Before 2020, the only way to regain a license was to pay the amount owed in full. One driver, not understanding that there were new restoration tools and how they functioned, was frustrated that no one had told him earlier about the legal tools to reduce or remove fees, fines, and court costs and angrily exclaimed, "There's no way that you just got these resources or these programs or these motions, you know?" After the interview, I took the time to explain that these legal tools were new in 2020. His lack of knowledge about the change in the law and misunderstanding of how the new laws could apply to his situation also reveals that the changes may be significant but can only be helpful if the people for whom these legal tools are for know about them.

Self-help

Self-help occurs when a driver both organizes and executes restorative activities without additional assistance. The organizing and execution steps I will outline next would likely require having a computer, internet access, and basic to intermediate computing and information processing skills. Organizing activities include identifying the jurisdictions with cases suspending a driver's license, identifying the cases that are suspending the driver's license, and identifying the costs or actions required to satisfy the requirements in each of the cases suspending the driver's license. Executing activities include applying for a restricted license, calculating and satisfying fees, fines, and costs, filing motions for a fee, fine, and cost forgiveness, following up with courts to ensure

information did not change, and a myriad of other tasks if there are administrative suspensions to be satisfied with the state.

When seeking information to organize restorative activities, drivers generally need to pull their publicly available status report from the Drivers Solutions website. That report will include a series of codes that must be checked against a spreadsheet to understand each suspension or conviction. If it is a relatively simple suspension history, the driver will need to contact the court from the proper jurisdiction to identify how much is owed and the case numbers related to the suspensions. The driver can then use the information to file motions for fee, fine, and cost forgiveness in the identified courts. Those motions can be granted in full but are more likely to be granted in part with some fees, fines, and costs still needing to be satisfied before the restoration of driving privileges.

If the driving record is complex or there are administrative suspensions, the driver will need to contact Drivers Solutions to get information on how to resolve the suspensions. Drivers Solutions can be contacted by phone (in which the driver can expect to be on hold for several hours), email (with a typical response time of one week to ten days), mail (with a typical response time of two to three weeks), or in person at a local Drivers Solutions office.

Needless to say, success through self-help is a series of daunting tasks. The Practitioners, when asked whether their clients could achieve restoration on their own, universally that the drivers they worked with could not be successful without assistance. They saw the informational and procedural barriers as simply too high and held the belief that their clients would require “education” to be able to succeed. Practitioner #2

provided a story that illustrates how the drivers they work with lack an understanding of the suspension system that inhibits their ability to succeed. In this example, the driver came to the practitioner and stated, “I’m just here to take care of the City of Wichita one because then I can drive in the city of Wichita.” The driver believed that if suspensions were cleared in one jurisdiction, they would be able to drive in that jurisdiction. If this driver had not engaged legal assistance, they easily could have continued getting suspended driving charges predicated on this erroneous belief.

Self-help can work, but its success is based on drivers having basic to intermediate computer skills and information processing skills that can then be used to overcome the steep learning curve that is needed to understand the suspension system. Driver #3 engaged in self-help with some success due to the simplicity of his driving record; however, the practitioners held out little hope for those with more complicated records or those with a poor understanding of the suspension system.

Limited-Scope Representation

Limited scope representation takes much of the organizing activity away from the drivers. Instead, legal practitioners and paralegals identify which cases are holding a license and where they are located. In a typical driver’s license clinic, ten to fifteen practitioners and five to ten paralegals see up to 200 drivers in a single day. These services are provided by nonprofits and volunteer practitioners. Typically, the practitioner creates a “road map” that the driver would then need to follow to get their license reinstated. The creation of the road map is one of, if not the most important activity, of the limited-scope representation as it is assembling disconnected or difficult-to-obtain information into an actionable plan. Additionally, the practitioner produces motions for

the individual cases in each jurisdiction. The driver will then file those motions as their own attorney to avoid having the practitioner appear in court or being required to show up for hearings. This approach allows the practitioner to provide assistance to a greater number of people.

Limited scope representation leaves many tasks to be accomplished by the driver. Oftentimes, the road map is incomplete or requires follow-up or future visits to the driver's license clinic from the driver. When follow-up is required, the driver will frequently fail to return and complete the necessary tasks. One clinic practitioner discussed looking up past clients in preparation for our interview. "I looked up eight people. She's the only success story, which is kind of sad." This anecdote illustrates both the difficulty in organizing the activities of individuals to pursue reinstatement and why practitioners believe self-help is unlikely to produce success. Each of the eight received a restricted license, which provides a year for drivers to work on the suspensions that would otherwise prevent them from driving legally, and a road map providing direction on how to regain a full license. However, drivers who receive a restricted license often have a sense of success and conclusion. This sense of relief may result in drivers being inactive in resolving existing suspension cases and becoming suspended again after the restricted license expires. Each of the eight drivers described by the practitioner became suspended again after the restricted license expired. Only one took the actions thereafter to regain the legal privilege to drive.

Another clinical practitioner shared the power and impact of the limited scope representation,

The one thing to emphasize is that people were incredibly appreciative of the work that we were able to do. And it can be difficult, you know, trying

to get someone to collect documents the second or third time, or trying to parse the driver's record, or follow up with a court with a motion that you filed four months ago that now they're saying they didn't receive or something like that. And that's a lot of what this work is. It's not just your, you know, high-profile legal work necessarily, but for us as practitioners, I think it's important to remember that it's really impactful for people, and they are incredibly appreciative of even this, what we view as a basic service (Practitioner #1).

Limited-scope representation organizes information to make it actionable by a driver, prioritizes individual cases within the information to help the driver understand what order to take action in, assists in requesting restricted licenses to give the driver time to take action, and files motions with courts to reduce the costs that drivers must pay when taking action. Most important in limited-scope representation is follow-up and follow-through. If the practitioner requires more information from the driver, they must follow up for the practitioner to produce a complete roadmap. The driver must then follow through by following the road map once complete. If they do not, they are unlikely to regain the legal privilege to drive.

Full Representation

Full Representation does all the things that limited-scope representation does but adds appearances and additional advocacy. Just as with limited-scope representation, the practitioner often produces a road map and/or organizes gathered information into an actionable plan. Where the representation differs from limited-scope representation is that the full representation practitioner may appear in court for the driver for motions or for unresolved cases. Appearing for clients on unresolved cases provides advocacy at a different point in time than that provided in clinics. Additionally, having a practitioner appear for the driver reduces time costs for the driver. This allows them to work or even

remain employed while resolving their cases. Through such advocacy, charges can be dismissed or amended to a charge that will not result in revocation. Additionally, these practitioners often structure the timing of pleas to ensure that convictions for major violations do not occur within the timeframe to trigger revocation. None of the drivers using self-help or limited-scope representation mentioned charges being dropped or amended, while all the drivers who paid for representation did.

This type of representation comes at a cost. One practitioner stated that he does not take driver's license cases for less than \$1,500. The drivers I interviewed who had used full representation both identified that they had spent tens of thousands of dollars on representation for their driver's license cases. It is worth noting that both drivers who had received what they deemed to be successful assistance from their attorney spoke of that attorney with not just professional admiration but love.

Importantly, even with full representation, drivers have to follow the road map, satisfy fees, fines, and costs, and follow up with their attorneys. When asked about his success rate with driving suspensions, a practitioner stated, "Probably about 40% of the people will follow through and do what you ask them to do and can actually do the work and actually get back to a valid driver's license. I say about 40% out of the people."

Discussion

The results of this project appear to show that the prevailing view that financial suspensions are limited to people who cannot pay misidentifies the prime reason drivers receive their first suspension. While financial resources are a contributing factor, the primary reason for a first suspension is an inability or unwillingness to prioritize satisfying the requirements of the initial citation. Once the driver is suspended, the

problem can quickly compound to a point where the driver cannot satisfy the financial requirements, or the sanctions are no longer purely financial; however, this compounding process is catalyzed by a failure to prioritize.

This finding is important in a system with significant recent legislative changes that reduced sanctions and increased availability of tools for reductions of fees, fines, and court costs within court cases (Kan. Leg., 2019; Kan. Leg., 2021; Kan. Leg., 2023; Kan. Leg., 2024). To take advantage of these changes, drivers must be able to access information about their individual cases, fees, fines, court costs, and suspensions to organize and prioritize restorative activities. Interviews with practitioners showed that drivers they worked with are generally believed to be incapable of doing so without assistance.

While other studies of driver's license suspension systems across the country did not identify information access as a significant reason for continued suspension, this could be explained by differing administrative systems and court structures within other states, which may offer less complexity or greater access to actionable information (Carnegie & Eggers, 2009; Carnegie & Voorhees, 2007). The role of access to and organization of information in the success or failure of drivers in regaining the legal privilege to drive is an area ripe for more research.

This research is limited to the cases within this bounded system: people with financial suspensions in Wichita Municipal and Sedgwick County Traffic Courts. The study is also limited by its relatively small sample size: six practitioners and six suspended drivers. What this case study lacks in breadth, however, it makes up for in depth by exploring individual cases in detail and identifying patterns between the stories

(Yin, 2018). The individual cases do not create data for generalization to other cases; however, findings can be generalized from multiple cases, as is done here. Future research could further develop the model identified through this research and better quantify the effects of finances, information, and compounding on drivers' ability to regain the legal privilege to drive. Additionally, future research could identify if the findings are transferable to other jurisdictions.

While this research provides the basis for the additional study described above, it also provides data for policymakers to continue creating effective interventions and legislation to reduce the number of suspended drivers in Kansas. Understanding how drivers and practitioners interact with the current system informs how to manage those interactions effectively to create better outcomes.

Conclusion

The results of this study point to the need for drivers to have better access to actionable information to guide their restoration efforts, the expansion of recent legislative relief to administrative suspensions, and continued reduction in revocations. These changes would help drivers break out of the compounding cycle and have a better likelihood of regaining their legal driving privileges.

The tools for driver's license restoration have substantially improved since the legislature began intervening; however, it appears that access to information has not kept up with these positive changes. Drivers need ready access to actionable information to direct their intervention efforts. Without actionable information, drivers require the assistance of practitioners to gather information, synthesize the information into a format understandable by laypeople, and organize the information to guide their actions—an

effort requiring more practitioners than appears to currently exist. Access to information must catch up to the restorative tools available.

Recent legislation created and expanded tools for drivers to regain the legal privilege to drive. This includes fee, fine, and cost forgiveness, expansion of restricted licenses, and use of payment plans to create substantial compliance, to name a few. However, these changes apply only to suspensions generated by the courts, and through noncompliance with citation requirements, they do not apply to administrative suspension and requirements from KDOR. Existing criminal suspension reforms need to be expanded to administrative suspensions to give drivers the tools to achieve reinstatement.

Finally, the legislature has reduced the application of revocation for convictions arising solely from financial suspension, but there is still room for improvement. Convictions for financial suspension should be wholly excluded from revocation. Revocations prevent drivers from working on restoration and revocations need to continue to be reduced to allow drivers the opportunity for intervention efforts.

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SECTION THREE: PRACTITIONER RECOMMENDATION PLAN

Self-Reflections of the Practitioner-Scholar

Korth (2008) defines reflection as “a thoughtful reconsideration of some subject matter, experience, idea, purpose, or spontaneous reaction, to grasp its significance more fully” (p. 283). Reflection adds meaning and understanding to experiences and is essential after an experience to gain more complete insights (Dickel, 2017). This reflection looks back on four years of study, work, and leadership. The Creighton EdD program sits in the middle of my Venn diagram, at the intersection of my many differing leadership roles. I serve as a military officer, court administrator, adjunct professor, father, and husband. Leadership is the commonality linking each divergent role together. My time in the EdD program has added to and augmented my toolbox of leadership knowledge and practice across my multiple domains of activity. It has improved my understanding of leadership and enhanced my ability to perform as a leader in each.

While my leadership was enhanced across multiple domains, this reflection will focus on my role as court administrator for the City of Wichita. I use leadership philosophy and tactics in each environment; however, there is no area more impacted in my life by the EdD program than that as a court administrator. As such, I will address how the EdD program impacted my development of a program to assist suspended drivers and helped me expand my understanding of the experiences of suspended drivers through my DIP scholarly project.

Wichita Area Restoration Program (WARP)

In August 2020, I began my Creighton EdD journey. When I started the program, I did not know that my experience with it would become inextricably linked to a task from the City Manager six months prior. In February 2020, I was asked to create a

program similar to the Durham Expunction and Restoration Program (DEAR) in North Carolina but suitable for the legal constructs within the City of Wichita and Kansas.

DEAR provided people with better access to expungements to clear their records and broad restoration of driver's licenses to suspended drivers. DEAR collaborations across legal and governmental organizations to create a program with a broad base of stakeholders (City of Durham, n.d.).

While it was readily apparent that DEAR was not a model for Wichita or Kansas due to radically different laws and court structures, the ethos of seeking opportunities to help suspended drivers achieve reinstatement resonated with Wichita's city manager. It provided an opportunity to do something new and different to make a difference in the lives of Wichita citizens. Interaction with the scholarly literature and synthesis through discussion board posts and papers throughout the EdD program created the intellectual foundation for the development of the Wichita Area Restoration Program (WARP).

WARP is a program tailored to Wichita that delivers informational and clerical assistance to suspended drivers to provide them information on the cases that are suspending their license and assist in filing motions for fee, fine, and cost forgiveness and filing for restricted licenses.

The EdD was integral in advancing the initiative in three important ways. First, it served as an incubator for my thinking about driver's license suspension. My papers and discussion board posts were filled with suspension thoughts and concepts as I worked to develop WARP. My interdisciplinary peers were able to critique, support, and further my thinking on developing the program. I fully engaged in the rare opportunity to socialize the ideas and concepts I was working on with people outside the legal system. This

helped me ensure that the ideas and language I was using regarding the program were accessible to people who did not have a legal background.

The second area informed by the EdD program was the intellectual basis for action. The papers I wrote throughout the program required me to engage the literature on the subject of driver's license suspension. This research forms the intellectual foundation for a call to action. Without it, the WARP program and the arguments for the program would have relied on intuition and anecdotal evidence instead of peer-reviewed research from many sources and jurisdictions.

The final area informed by my journey through the EdD program was my increased understanding of scholarly methods that informed the WARP program creation. I gathered a broad group of practitioners and participants to understand the needs and opportunities of a driver's license reinstatement program. This group included judges, administrators, and prosecutors from municipal and district courts, as well as public service and private attorneys with restoration experience. In organizing and facilitating these groups, I integrated adaptive, transformational, and servant leadership principles and scholarly methodologies to orient my approach to leading leaders. There were four meetings over the course of four months. Through the meetings, I was able to convince the parties that there was a need for action and generate support for the action by providing evidence-based justifications.

The coursework, peer discussions, and scholarly grounding of the EdD program helped form the intellectual basis for the WARP program and informed my leadership in creating and executing it. Further, it helped me identify gaps in the literature on driver's license suspensions, specifically on drivers' experiences working to regain the legal

privilege to drive. By identifying those gaps, I targeted my DIP to explain better why drivers often fail to regain the legal privilege of driving after a financial suspension.

The following section reflects on the DIP process. It identifies preconceptions that affected my research, changes I would make if I had to do it over, and findings that surprised me.

Suspended Driving Research

I expected to find that suspended drivers' failure to regain the legal privilege to drive was caused by a compounding process of a lack of financial resources, information, and discouragement. This belief was predicated on preliminary interviews with practitioners coupled with my experiences in restoration programs and was reflected in the interview protocols. In hindsight, these preconceptions did not benefit the research project and resulted in significant time spent discussing topics with practitioners and drivers that were not the principal issues for them.

My thinking around a financial, information, and discouragement compounding model was informed by my experiences as a court administrator and through interviews with two practitioners, which occurred as part of earlier projects in the EdD program. The belief that interviews would reflect this model caused me to place too much emphasis on the components of this compounding model in the interview protocol. It may have been better to leave the protocol more open, which may have given me the opportunity to explore the concept of prioritization more directly in the interviews, although I am not entirely sure I would have understood that pattern well enough prior to coding to ask meaningful questions.

Throughout the research I had to pause to thoughtfully remove myself and preconceived notions from the process. My knowledge as an attorney and court administrator was helpful at points but often inhibited my ability to act as an impartial observer. This observation has implications for this study but provides an opportunity to reflect more broadly on how I interact with followers as a leader and how I consume information. It begs the question: How much am I listening to others' actual thoughts versus how much am I adding my thoughts and expectations to others' speech? As with this study, it is an area in which I will need to be more thoughtful and deliberate.

The driver's interview protocol also assumed that each suspension had an impact on the driver. It became readily evident that drivers saw no difference in one suspension versus many. As I continued to ask each driver how their subsequent suspensions affected them, it became almost laughable as the drivers reiterated that they were just as unable to legally drive on subsequent suspensions as they were on the first. Once understood, this line of questioning did not add to the research and only served to make the drivers feel that I did not understand their experience. It would have been better to put greater focus on the actions they were taking at different points in time toward driver's license restoration. This different line of questioning may have created more opportunities to discuss the difficulty of accessing information required to achieve restoration.

An area where I paid too much attention was the practitioners themselves. I believed the practitioners would serve a two-fold purpose in my research. First, their experiences in driver's license restoration would confirm the compounding process described above. While each practitioner verified that each element of the compounding model was a factor in drivers remaining suspended, the compounding link between the

factors was tenuous at best. The predominant thinking of the practitioners was that the primary problem of the financial suspension process was poverty, and the other issues were secondary. A potential reason for this belief among the practitioners is the state in which their services are obtained. Once they engage a practitioner, most drivers have already proceeded through the compounding process, and their suspension situation has become financially untenable. This could support the belief that the entire problem is financial if, at the point of intervention, most, if not all, drivers cannot financially achieve restoration.

The second area where I believed practitioners would advance my research was linguistically. Because the suspension system is a legal system with terms outside of general usage, the practitioners would provide language used with clients that paralleled legal language but is better understood by drivers. This was not the case. The language used in the legal system is the language used by drivers, even without a complete understanding of the terms.

Likely, I placed too much emphasis on the practitioners' experience because I value my own experience. I am a practitioner, a court administrator involved in the system, and a licensed attorney. Because of this, I had preconceived notions that practitioners know better. I thought they knew the process better and likely understood the experience of drivers better than the drivers themselves. This belief caused me to spend far too much time looking at and listening to the practitioners' interviews and coding them. I coded, discarded, and re-coded the practitioner interviews several times because I overvalued them. My time could have been better used in conducting additional driver interviews or coding the existing driver interviews.

While the practitioners were instrumental in connecting me to drivers, it would have been better to interview fewer practitioners and more drivers. Each of the practitioners' experiences were very similar and began, and ended, in the intervention stage. In contrast, the drivers' experiences provided a more complete picture of the financial suspension system as they had experienced each stage. More driver interviews would have created richer stories and data from which to draw insights.

In my proposal, I stated that after performing and coding the interviews with the practitioners and drivers, I would employ member checking to verify with participants that I correctly interpreted their words. Due to time constraints, I was not able to perform follow-up interviews with either the drivers or practitioners. While I do not think that this impacted the quality of the research I presented in section two, it remains a missed opportunity. Had there been time to perform member checking, I would have had the opportunity to address some of the weaknesses in my interview protocol described above. I would have engaged the drivers to describe their interactions with information gatekeepers better. Likewise, I would have discussed the same with the practitioners, along with discussing discrepancies between the results, generally held beliefs, and the literature. These additional interactions would have better confirmed the findings presented in section two.

Additionally, member checking would have helped ensure the validity of the findings and act as a buttress against my bias potentially influencing the results. While formal member checking was not performed, informal member checking was done through dialogues and conversations with practitioners working in the driver's restoration space. However, as stated before, this still may place too much emphasis on the

experience and thinking of the practitioners and too little on the drivers. While not a defect in the study, not including member checking stands as a missed opportunity.

Reflecting specifically on the experience of conducting the interviews with the drivers, I found it very difficult not to provide necessary information or assistance. As a practitioner in the suspension process, I have technical information and knowledge, and it was difficult to be a dispassionate observer. With some of the drivers, I chose to provide information they could use in the process after the interview. For others, I saw they needed legal advice I could not give, nor was it appropriate for me to direct them to someone who could provide it. While I believe I appropriately navigated this issue throughout my research, conflicts of interest are a challenge of which legal professionals must be cognizant. This is the case with leadership as well. Frequently, there are times when I know the answers, but I need to let my team discover them for themselves; to do otherwise would deprive followers of important lessons and self-discovery.

The drivers and their stories impacted me at a human level. Each driver interviewee was highly emotional about their experience, having endured hardships I could not imagine going through. Each shared their story with zeal without expectation of remuneration; they shared in the hope that their story might make a difference in the lives of others and gave of their time in an attempt to do so.

I stayed in touch with several drivers following the interviews and they shared their successes and failures with me. Unfortunately, the failures continue to predominate. Since the interviews, participating drivers lost their licenses, relapsed, and got revoked. Their stories continue to underscore the need for leadership and continued change.

Leadership Philosophy Statement

I believe leadership is about marshaling people, processes, and resources to create outcomes. Frequently, people are the outcome of leadership. People can be developed into leaders or provided with the tools and abilities to self-actualize. Leaders achieve notoriety by making people more than additive components to create outcomes; instead, leaders add to the whole system by inspiring people to do and achieve more and providing the tools and skills to create other leaders. Leaders add value to the overall system by empowering their followers and growing the overall resources in the system.

This leadership statement combines several leadership theories, including transformational and servant leadership. The theoretical contributions of these theories and my personal analysis of how these leadership theories contributed to my leadership philosophy statement are explored below.

Transformational leadership shifts the focus from me as a leader to my leadership and its effect on followers (Bass & Avolio, 1993). With this approach, I, as a leader, look to understand the motives of followers to create alignment between my goals, the goals of the organization, and then followers. By being attentive to my followers' needs, I can help them reach their fullest potential while achieving my goals and the goals of my organization. Transformational leadership activities create win-win outcomes by actively considering the needs and intent of all parties. This leadership style allows my leadership activities to focus on what Notgrass (2014) noted as encouraging the team's creativity, personal growth, and vision for the future. It's a collective effort where everyone's input is valued and contributes to overall success.

For city department directors like me, I employ the transformational leadership skills Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek (2022) suggests to support and create a climate of creativity and reform. By investing time and energy in my team relating to transformational leadership, I can assist in propagating the leadership style throughout my organization and grow other transformational leaders. This effort can improve creativity, team collaboration, and potentially better inter-divisional and interdepartmental collaboration, and also pave the way for personal and professional growth for all involved.

Further, I can increase social capital and resilience within my team and adjacent teams by using transformational leadership in local governance networks. Social capital “describes the closeness of relations between nodes in networks, including the level of trust and mutual respect” (Kim & Yoon, 2015, p. 4). Frequently, local government networks provide services autonomously, reducing creative and collaborative opportunities—siloed leadership and management results in redundancies, territorial behaviors, and reduced efficiency (Kim & Yoon, 2015). I can link independent interrelated actors through transformational leadership, creating more robust responses to problems and greater trust through social capital.

Greenleaf (2002) describes servant leadership as a natural inclination to service followed by a conscious choice to serve. At first, this seemed troublesome. Servant leadership appeared to be a contradiction. However, servant leadership does not require servitude but rather a servant’s heart. It starts with an inclination and a genuine concern for others and their needs. I have always sought to do good over doing well, so I relate well to this concept as it prioritizes this mindset.

Prosser (2010) crystallized the usefulness of servant leadership for me by identifying it as a leadership philosophy rather than a theory. Servant leadership as a leader theory breaks down as there are circumstances where the needs of the mission or organization may overshadow the needs of individuals. All leaders need to accomplish objectives, and likely, the final objective is not the service of the leader. Prosser distills servant leadership into a salve applicable to most leadership theories and practicable by everyone.

As a philosophy, I can apply servant leadership alongside transformational leadership as I inspire people to action while helping them toward self-actualization. As a transformational leader, I can shape “emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals” (Northouse, 2018, p. 163) while ensuring that the people I lead and work with end up “healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants,” (Greenleaf, 1998, p. 4). By creating a leadership philosophy, I am not bound by the rigid science of one leadership model; however, I am liberated to practice the art of leadership that my personal philosophy brings to life.

Aim Statement

The aim of this dissertation in practice will be to create at least three ideas for interventions that policymakers and practitioners could use to interrupt the vicious cycle of financial suspension of a driver’s license. I aim to create a system that increases the likelihood of drivers regaining their driving privileges. This dissertation in practice identified the factors within the system that inhibit drivers from regaining the ability to drive legally after a financial suspension, which policymakers and practitioners can use. I will use the results of this case study to create memos for city managers and legal

professionals that outline action plans that will begin to advocate for changes and set the stage for further research that will be needed to reform the system.

Proposed Recommendations

The following proposed recommendations are formatted as a memorandum to the City Manager and practitioners. While the executive summaries and study findings are very similar, if not the same in parts, the differences in the action plans highlight that each role has opportunities to facilitate the changes recommended by this study.

Memorandum to the City Manager

Executive Summary

The attached case study shows that while the Kansas Legislature has made substantial improvements to the process for drivers to regain the legal privilege to drive after a financial suspension, there is room for further improvement. As a key stakeholder, the City can engage in three activities to help drivers achieve the legal ability to drive and reshape the system to make that end more likely: active intervention, advocacy for legislative changes, and advocacy for administrative change.

Study Findings

The study identified three stages in the lifecycle of a financially suspended driver: the initial suspension, the compounding stage, and the intervention stage. The time spent in the compounding stage is directly correlated to the complexity of regaining the legal privilege to drive in the intervention stage. Additionally, the study found that the primary reason for initial financial suspensions is an inability or unwillingness to prioritize satisfying the requirements of a ticket. This finding is important for understanding the other two stages, as it is unlikely that suspended drivers will suddenly achieve this skill and, because of that, will require substantial assistance.

Drivers who reach the intervention stage actively take steps to regain the legal privilege to drive. Drivers and practitioners alike indicated that the information currently available is not accessible or actionable enough for drivers to succeed without assistance or education. Drivers also identified that when they receive an administrative suspension, the restorative tools that can be used for court-related suspensions, like payment plans, restricted licenses, and motions for fee, fine, and cost forgiveness, do not exist.

The results of this study point to the need for drivers to have better access to actionable information to guide their restoration efforts, the expansion of recent legislative relief to administrative suspensions, and continued reduction in revocations. These changes would help drivers break out of the compounding cycle and significantly increase their chances of regaining their legal driving privileges. The following action plans are ways the City can make a substantial difference in achieving these three ends to improve outcomes for financially suspended drivers.

Action Plans

Active Intervention. Drivers need assistance synthesizing hard-to-obtain information into actionable plans to regain the legal privilege to drive. The City, specifically the Municipal Court, has a greater understanding and access to the information held by Drivers Solutions. The Municipal Court exercises this informational dexterity through the Wichita Area Restoration Program (WARP). WARP uses court staff to reduce informational barriers for suspended drivers by explaining the information provided by Drivers Solutions and assisting them in filling out and filing motions for fee, fine, and cost forgiveness with Wichita Municipal Court and the Sedgwick County Traffic Court.

The City can continue to actively intervene in the driver's license suspension space by continuing or even expanding funding for WARP. WARP fills a gap created by information that is not accessible or actionable. Certainly, until substantial legislative changes are made, this

program helps meet drivers' informational needs and could be expanded to accomplish even more.

Advocacy for Legislative Change. While advocacy efforts in the driver's license suspension space have dramatically altered drivers' ability to access restoration, further advocacy is still needed. The City can advocate by adding the three recommended changes to its state legislative agenda.

By taking this action, the City would send a powerful signal to both the legislators and to other government entities regarding its support for a suspension system that works better for drivers and the community. Further, this action would allow City leaders to advocate for changes and testify before the legislature to support change.

Advocacy for Administrative Change. While all recommended changes could be made legislatively, only one could be made administratively. Drivers Solutions can change or enhance the amount, appearance, and access to information. These changes would likely not be without a cost; however, they are completely within that agency's purview.

The City and City leaders can leverage their personal and professional networks to communicate and advocate with KDOR to improve the quality and distribution of their information. Likewise, the same advocacy can be directed at the gubernatorial administration to encourage and affect change within KDOR. Like legislative advocacy, the City's strong support for change sends a message to administrators and other stakeholders that change is needed.

Memorandum to Practitioners

Executive Summary

The attached case study shows that, while the Kansas Legislature has made substantial improvements to the process for drivers to regain the legal privilege to drive after a financial suspension, there is room for further improvement. Practitioners can engage in three activities to help drivers achieve the legal ability to drive and reshape the system to make that end more

likely: active intervention, advocacy for legislative changes, and advocacy for administrative change.

Study Findings

The study identified three stages in the lifecycle of a financially suspended driver: the initial suspension, the compounding stage, and the intervention stage. The time spent in the compounding stage is directly correlated to the complexity of regaining the legal privilege to drive in the intervention stage. Additionally, the study found that the primary reason for initial financial suspensions is an inability or unwillingness to prioritize satisfying the requirements of a ticket. This finding is important for understanding the other two stages, as it is unlikely that suspended drivers will suddenly achieve this skill and, because of that, will require substantial assistance.

Drivers who reach the intervention stage actively take steps to regain the legal privilege to drive. Drivers and practitioners alike indicated that the information currently available is not accessible or actionable enough for drivers to succeed without assistance or education. Drivers also identified that when they receive an administrative suspension, the restorative tools that can be used for court-related suspensions, like payment plans, restricted licenses, and motions for fee, fine, and cost forgiveness, do not exist.

The results of this study point to the need for drivers to have better access to actionable information to guide their restoration efforts, the expansion of recent legislative relief to administrative suspensions, and continued reduction in revocations. These changes would help drivers break out of the compounding cycle and have a greater likelihood of regaining their legal driving privileges. The following action plans are ways practitioners can make a difference in achieving these three ends to improve outcomes for financially suspended drivers.

Action Plans

Active Intervention. Drivers need assistance synthesizing hard-to-obtain information into actionable plans to regain the legal privilege to drive. Practitioners understand the information brokers as they are currently and can produce actionable plans; however, the volume of need does not match the service currently available.

Practitioners should volunteer their time to limited-scope representation efforts to help fill informational gaps that drivers cannot fill themselves. These efforts make a difference in suspended drivers' lives and help justify the legislative and administrative changes described below.

Advocacy for Legislative Change. Practitioners' input and advocacy are integral to integrating these changes into state law. While advocacy efforts in the driver's license suspension space have sparked recent changes that have significantly altered drivers' ability to access restoration, further work is still needed. Practitioners and other advocates can push recommended changes as part of their personal and organizational agendas. Personal and professional connections can lend credibility and potency to the efforts toward change.

Finally, as with most initiatives and changes, individuals are a key component in making the case. Here, many individuals are working in the space, including lawyers who are actively engaged in making a difference by working directly with drivers to restore their driving privileges. Practitioners could help legislators see the benefits of proposed changes by detailing how substantial changes to the reinstatement process have positively impacted drivers' lives and how further changes would continue to do so.

Advocacy for Administrative Change. While all recommended changes could be made legislatively, only one could be made administratively. Drivers Solutions can change or enhance the amount, appearance, and access to information. These changes would likely not be without a

cost; however, they are completely within that agency's purview. The remaining changes would require legislative change.

Practitioners can leverage their personal and professional networks to communicate and advocate with KDOR to improve the quality and distribution of their information. Likewise, the same advocacy can be directed at the gubernatorial administration to encourage and affect change within KDOR. Just as with legislative advocacy, practitioners are uniquely positioned to share how the change would positively impact suspended drivers' success regarding the legal privilege to drive.

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