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*Artwork by a prisoner at
Sopronkőhida Prison,
Hungary, within the
partnership training activities
of Convicts Liberty Aid Project*

Editor's Welcome

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Dear reader:

We have started a new year, and with the new year comes the second volume of *Journal of Prison Education and Reentry*.

We have received numerous messages from around the world following the release of the first issue. Some of these messages can be seen on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/JournalofPrisonEducationandReentry>), but others have been received through our Twitter account (@JPERatBOAP). We are inspired by your feedback, and these low threshold social media constitute a good opportunity to share your experience of the journal with us, and also to comment and discuss the content of the journal.

As we have announced, the contributions for the following volumes will be published instantly as soon as they have been through the editorial process. There will be no deadlines, and no queuing for publication. This is one of the benefits of online publishing. We are not presenting a complete issue at this time, but the contributions that are cleared through the editorial process. This will save time for the authors, who do not have to wait to see their work in public, and the readers will have access to the full version of a paper as soon as the quality control has been completed. We have now received the so called DOI-code for JPER. DOI is a unique document identifier attached to each publication, and should make it even easier to get access to the articles published by the JPER. The cost of the DOI is generously covered by the University Library of the University of Bergen.

Search engines (such as Google and Google Scholar) should now recognize both the journal as such, and will also return the individual papers of the journal. Some of the more advanced, scholarly search engines, like MedLine, ERIC etc, are waiting for a larger volume of journal articles and more issues to be presented before they will index us. Hopefully we will be recognized during the year when we have published enough high quality papers. We have several manuscripts in the review process, and if they hold up to the standards of the journal, they will be available to you over the next couple of months.



The High Cost of Jim Crow Institutions in the U.S.—Who Would Have Gessed?

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Janie Porter Barrett, in the U.S. State of Virginia, advocated community social services as one strategy to help correct injustice. The particular injustice that commanded her attention occurred when she saw an African American girl sentenced to an adult jail because there was no facility for African American girls in the State.

During the segregation period, states in the Old South had to have four institutions for delinquent children: one for White boys and another for African American boys, and one for White girls and another for African American girls. Of course, the Virginia legislature was willing to provide State funds to establish institutions for White boys and girls, but it did not extend this service to African American boys and girls. So Barrett mobilized funds to establish an institution for African American girls from Virginia's African American communities, and from White citizens who found merit in the project. First she established a Statewide Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, and then she worked with that Federation to raise \$5,000. In 1915, on a neglected farm outside Richmond, Barrett constructed what would later be called Barrett Learning Center for African American girls. Then, almost immediately after the institution was opened, the State legislature assumed control of its physical plant and all its programs. Barrett continued in her role as institutional superintendent, despite this change. (Barrett, J.P. [1917]. *Second Annual Report of the Superintendent, To the President and Members of the Board of Trustees. Peake's Turnout, Virginia: The Virginia State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs.*)

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Symptoms of ADHD are Related to Education and Work Experience Among Incarcerated Adults

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Abstract: *Several reports document increased prevalence of attention deficit and hyperactivity (ADHD) and similar symptoms in incarcerated members of the community. Such conditions have been associated with employment, educational outcomes, and development of anti-social behaviour in the general population. Little is known about how these symptoms are related to education and work experience in incarcerated adults. A study among Norwegian prison inmates reveals that 60 % report signs of ADHD. In the present study a sample of 600 inmates incarcerated in Norway completed a questionnaire including the WURS-k (Wender Utah Rating Scale, short form) and questions to survey completed education level and work experience. A clear relationship was found between the WURS-k score and earlier job experience, with increased probability of ADHD associated with work experience from low socio-economic status jobs. The scale scores were also found to share variance with reported education history, as higher education reduces the probability of ADHD. Thus, the WURS-k could be a useful screening instrument in education assessment of incarcerated populations.*

Keywords: *ADHD; incarcerated adults, adult education, special needs education; work experience*

Introduction

The present study focuses on self-reported symptoms of attention deficits and hyperactivity (ADHD) and how such symptoms are related to education and work experience in a sample of incarcerated adults in Norway. Several reports emphasize that the prevalence of ADHD is increased among prison inmates (Dalteg, Gustavfsson, & Levander, 1998; Rasmussen, Almvik, & Levander, 2001; Rösler et al., 2004), and theoretical perspectives also emphasize ADHD and similar neuro-cognitive deficits as risk factors for development of anti-social behaviour and later criminal behaviour (Moffitt, 2006). In addition, ADHD has an impact on education and employment (Barkley, Fischer, Smallish, & Fletcher, 2006; Mannuzza, Klein, Bessler, Malloy, & Hynes, 1997), and knowledge about the prevalence of ADHD may have implications for program planning and also for classroom and schedule planning (Abramowitz & O'Leary, 1991; Appelbaum, 2008). However, little is known about how symptoms of ADHD are related to education and work experience among incarcerated adults, and the implications of

such conditions for planning and calibration of education in prisons.

What is ADHD?

Attention Deficits and Hyperactivity (ADHD) is described as a syndrome consisting of symptom clusters of inattention, impulsivity and hyperactivity (DSM 5, American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The disorder is classified as a pervasive developmental disorder. The symptoms should be present before age twelve, and there should be clear evidence of clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning. However, the requirement of a diagnosis before age twelve imposes problems for diagnosing ADHD in adults, in particular when assessment has not been conducted in pre-school age. Necessary background information from family or school records are frequently unavailable for incarcerated adults as impaired family relations and school dropout frequently are seen as additional problem situations. In addition, problems of ADHD may not be represented identically in adults as in children, as also are seen in follow



up studies of adults who were diagnosed as children. To meet this arguments, Wender (1995) proposed a set of criteria, the Utah Criteria, for diagnosing ADHD in adults. First, there should be a childhood history consistent with ADHD (although a diagnosis is not required). Adult symptoms should include hyperactivity and poor concentration, and in addition two of the following: affective lability (hot temper; inability to complete tasks and disorganization), stress intolerance or impulsivity. ADHD continues into adulthood in a large proportion of those diagnosed as children (Rösler & Retz, 2006). Neuropsychological deficits are seen in adults with ADHD across several domains of functioning, with notable impairments in attention, behavioural inhibition, and memory (Balint et al., 2008; Hervey, Epstein, & Curry, 2004).

Attention deficits and delinquency

Developmental trajectories of disruptive behaviours are often described as life-course-persistent and adolescent-limited antisocial pathways (Moffitt, Caspi, Harrington, & Milne, 2002). Profound neurocognitive impairments, in particular impairment in spatial and memory functions, are described in males on the life-course-persistent antisocial pathway. Likewise, these boys show increased prevalence of ADHD as 31.8 % of the life-course-persistent participants were diagnosed, compared to 14.8 % of the controls. The adolescent limited group were even lower, with 11.8% (Raine et al., 2005). It is now recognized that a large proportion of children with ADHD have persisting symptoms into adulthood (Barkley et al., 2002; de Graaf et al., 2008; Müller et al., 2007). The exact persistence rate is not known, but the prevalence of adult ADHD has been reported between 1.2 and 7.3 % (de Graaf et al., 2008), and 49 to 66 % of childhood cases complained of significant symptoms or met the diagnostic criteria for the disorder at adult age (Barkley et al., 2006). Studies have shown that adults with ADHD have both a high load of symptoms and significant functional impairment (Barkley et al., 2006; Gjervan, Torgersen, Nordahl, & Rasmussen, 2012; Mannuzza et al., 1997). Young and colleagues also found ADHD as a major factor explaining disruptive behaviour problems in personality disturbed offenders (Young, Gudjonsson, Ball, & Lam, 2003). On the other hand, it has not been documented that ADHD alone is related to increased criminal behaviour except in the context of conduct disorder (Mordre, Groholt, Kjelsberg, Sandstad, & Myhre, 2011).

There are few studies available addressing the prevalence of ADHD in adults in general, and in particular we lack reliable figures for populations of incarcerated

adults. However, de Graaf and colleagues, based on the WHO World Mental Health Survey Initiative, found that 3.5 % of workers in the 10 participating countries were estimated to meet the DSM-IV criteria for adult ADHD (de Graaf et al., 2008). Persistent ADHD is common among prison inmates. Out of a sample of 82 Norwegian inmates, 46 % scored in the ADHD window (on WURS25) and an additional 18 % in the borderline window for an ADHD diagnosis (Rasmussen et al., 2001). ADHD was also found in two thirds of a sample of 80 serious recidivist juvenile offenders in Sweden (Dalteg et al., 1998; Dalteg & Levander, 1998). In a sample of German inmates, the overall prevalence of ADHD according to DSM-IV was found to be 45 %, which is significantly elevated when compared to non-delinquent controls. Generally, the population of young adult male prison inmates exhibits a considerable psychiatric morbidity. 64 % suffered from at least 2 disorders, and only 8.5 % had no psychiatric diagnoses (Rösler & Retz, 2006, 2008). This is seriously increased figures compared to the 3.5 percent estimate reported in the general population.

ADHD is, however, not the only source of attention deficits and agitated behaviour among prison inmates. Intoxication and abstinence, atypical affective disorders, and high risk behaviour with probable brain injuries before conviction could cause similar symptoms (Raine et al., 2005; Rasmussen et al., 2001; Ward, Wender, & Reimherr, 1993). In addition, conduct disorder is another diagnostic category with considerably overlap with incarceration in juvenile samples (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) where antisocial behaviour and criminality are among the main diagnostic criteria. Therefore, it should be of no surprise that there is also found a considerable overlap between conduct disorder and ADHD in US juvenile prisons (Eme, 2008).

The right to education

The rate of imprisonment for the total population in Norway is approximately 72/100,000 (Kriminalomsorgen, 2013). According to Norwegian law, prisoners are entitled to access to education in the same manner as other citizens and residents. This implies seven years of obligatory primary school (age 6-13), and three years of obligatory lower secondary school (age 13-16). In addition the law also assures the right to three years of upper secondary school (age 16-19), which has three main branches of general, mercantile, and vocational programs. Prisons in Norway have adopted the so-called import model (Christie, 1970; Karsikas et al., 2009) for delivery of services to the prisoners (i.e.,

the normal school system will supply educational services in prison). Recent studies reveal that more than half of the prisoners in Norway participate in education while incarcerated (Eikeland, Manger, & Asbjørnsen, 2013). As activity participation is mandatory during incarceration in Norway, those who do not participate in education will have to participate in prison work or specific programs (e.g., programs for sexual offenders, aggression reduction programs etc.)

Can signs of ADHD predict earlier education and work experience?

Not many studies have addressed the relationship between symptoms of ADHD, incarceration and job experience. However, Moffitt and colleagues (Moffitt, 2006), found that males on the-life-course-persistent track of antisocial behaviour had increased problems that may be predictive of job life and career, like elevation on psychopathic personality traits, mental-health problems, substance dependence, numbers of children, financial problems, work problems, and drug-related and violent crime (Moffitt et al., 2002). These traits may also interact with academic skills and the ability to complete education. In an early study, Mannuzza and colleagues reported findings from a prospective follow-up of boys with ADHD, and found that they, as young adults, on the average had two years less formal schooling, and had lower ranking occupational positions than controls. These findings were not related to other comorbid psychiatric diagnoses (Mannuzza et al., 1997). When Gjervan and colleagues followed a sample of 149 adults with confirmed ADHD diagnosis, they revealed that only 22.2% had ordinary work as their source of income, compared with 72% in the general population. The most prevalent comorbid disorders were lifetime depression (37.8%), substance abuse (28.1%), and alcohol abuse (23.3%). They concluded that Adult ADHD was associated with lower educational attainment and lower level of employment. Later age of first central stimulant treatment and higher inattentiveness ratings were associated with lower level of employment (Gjervan et al., 2012). When addressing adult outcome of hyperactive children, Barkley *et al* reported lower educational performance and attainment as 32% had failed to complete high school. Those with a childhood history of ADHD had been fired from more jobs and showed lower job performance than the controls. Severity of lifetime conduct disorder was predictive of several of the most salient outcomes (failure to graduate, earlier sexual intercourse, early parenthood), whereas attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and oppositional defiant disorder at work were predictive

of job performance and risk of being fired (Barkley et al., 2006). ADHD is also found to include comorbidity with other psychiatric conditions, like disruptive behaviour, substance use, mood and anxiety disorders, oppositional defiant disorder, and conduct disorder, which also may interact with learning and education (McGough et al., 2005). We have less information on how attention deficits stemming from other psychiatric conditions interfere with the requirements of education (Balint et al., 2008). In addition, conditions that can be associated with incarceration and conduct disorder, such as sensation seeking and high risk behaviour may have led to blows to the brain and minor brain damage (Raine et al., 2005). Excessive alcohol and drug abuse may also lead to persisting attention and learning problems, and also depressive reactions and abstinence from drug and alcohol may temporarily lead to similar symptoms (Rasmussen et al., 2001; Rasmussen, Stor-saeter, & Levander, 1999). The prevalence of ADHD is frequently reported to be higher among incarcerated adults, and education level is also frequently reported to be lower among incarcerated adults compared to the general population (Dalteg et al., 1998; Eme, 2008; Rasmussen et al., 1999; Rösler et al., 2004). So far we have, however, no good data on how signs of ADHD interfere with education and work career among incarcerated adults.

Screening of ADHD in adults

The *Wender Utah Rating Scale (WURS)* was developed to assess for symptoms of attention deficits among adults, according to the Utah Criteria. The different scales derived from the WURS are based on retrospective ratings of symptoms of attention deficits and hyperactivity present at school age. The scale has been found to be a valid and reliable measure of symptoms of attention deficits, and has earlier been used in similar populations in Norway (Rasmussen et al., 2001).

Several short forms have been constructed based on the original scales and further empirical studies. WURS-36 consists of the items that originally differentiated between ADHD and major depression. In addition, Wender and colleagues also described the WURS-25, the items describing the more obvious symptoms of hyperactivity and attention deficits (Ward et al., 1993). Later, WURS-k was developed to assess ADHD-symptoms among prison inmates (Retz-Junginger et al., 2003; Retz-Junginger et al., 2002).

In an earlier study (Asbjørnsen, Jones, Munkvold, Obrzut, & Manger, 2010), the authors reported good concordance between WURS scores and objective and present measures of attention skills in a sample of 24

incarcerated adults. Others have raised the question of whether there is a systematic relationship between self-reported scores and objective measures of attention (Mackin & Horner, 2005), but they found that poor performance on a digit-symbol task that measures executive functions, response speed and visuomotor coordination were related to elevated scores on the WURS-25.

In the present study we focus on two main questions: Does the WURS-k yield a comparable description of the prevalence of ADHD among the prison inmates in Norway as we have seen from other studies, and can the WURS-k score predict the responders' former education level and work experience?

Method

Participants

Six hundred prisoners in Norway participated as voluntary informants in this survey. During the time of the survey, the prison population of Norway was 3467 (Kriminalomsorgen, 2007). Invitation to participate was determined by geographical location in Norway. The prisons are organized in six regions across the country, and an even distribution of prisons across the country was assured. Further, the chosen sample was balanced with regard to security level (incarcerated in high or low security prisons), and by size of the prison (small < 50 inmates; medium 50 -200 inmates, large > 200 inmates (it should be noted that the largest prisons in Norway have the capacity of slightly less than 500 inmates). A total of 19 prisons with 1682 prisoners received the invitation to participate, and 923 prisoners enrolled. Three hundred and twenty three were excluded due to lack of necessary language skills to complete the questionnaire, giving a total sample of 600 with a response rate of 44.2 percent. Special effort was used to include female participants, as a constant proportion of 5 % female inmates would give a small number and therefore an unreliable estimate of the state among the females, so the final sample consisted of 93 % males, and 7 % females. The mean age of the participants was 34.4 years ($SD= 10.5$), and according to data authority regulations in Norway, all participants were above the age of 18 years. However, young offenders under the age of 18 are rarely sentenced to prison in Norway. The mean level of education was 10.4 years ($SD = 1.9$), equivalent to completed compulsory schooling in Norway. As such, the sample should be representative of the prison population of Norway at large.

Tests and measurements

The present study was a part of a more extensive sur-

vey of the incarcerated adults in Norway. The questionnaire consisted of questions regarding work history, education history; history of convictions and offence for the present conviction; earlier assessment for ADHD and learning problems; self-report of skills and deficits in reading, spelling and mathematics; more general symptoms of psychological problems; dyslexia; locus of control and self-efficacy, in addition to scales for assessment of ADHD-symptoms. WURS-k was used as the only instrument for recording ADHD-symptoms.

The *Wender Utah Rating Scale, short form* (WURS-k, Retz-Junginger et al., 2002) consists of 21 questions from the original WURS-scale regarding behaviour *as a child in school*. The short form was originally developed in German, but was translated to Norwegian and back-translated to German by two independent bilingual Norwegian-German speakers. The items that were included describe the more obvious symptoms of hyperactivity and attention deficits, in addition to items that are related to early development of antisocial, criminal and oppositional behaviour. The items are scored as a five point scale (not at all; very rarely; rarely; sometimes; often; very often) that was allocated numerical scores from 0 to 4 for the statistical analyses. Four of the items are formulated in opposite direction, but were recoded for the summary of the scale score. A cut-off of 30 points yielded a sensitivity of 85 %, and a specificity of 76 % when compared to a formally diagnosed sample, which is clinically acceptable (Retz-Junginger et al., 2003). The WURS-k has shown acceptable specificity and sensitivity among incarcerated adult in Germany (Retz-Junginger et al., 2003; Retz-Junginger et al., 2002) when compared to clinical and formal assessment of ADHD. The scale may, however, be less effective in distinguishing symptoms of ADHD from symptoms of atypical depression, withdrawal and abstinence, and personality disorders. Such symptoms may be frequently found in incarcerated samples (Rasmussen et al., 2001).

Descriptive data for the participants are presented in Table 1.

Results

Validity assessment of the WURS-k gave a Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.92$, indicating a high internal consistency of the scale. The average item to scale sum correlations was $r=0.53$, varying from $r=-0.48$ to $r=0.80$, as four of the items are responded in the opposite direction, but all items contribute significantly to the variance of the scale.

The average scale score for the WURS-k in this sample of incarcerated adults was 35.2 points, which is

Table 1

Descriptive data for the participating sample

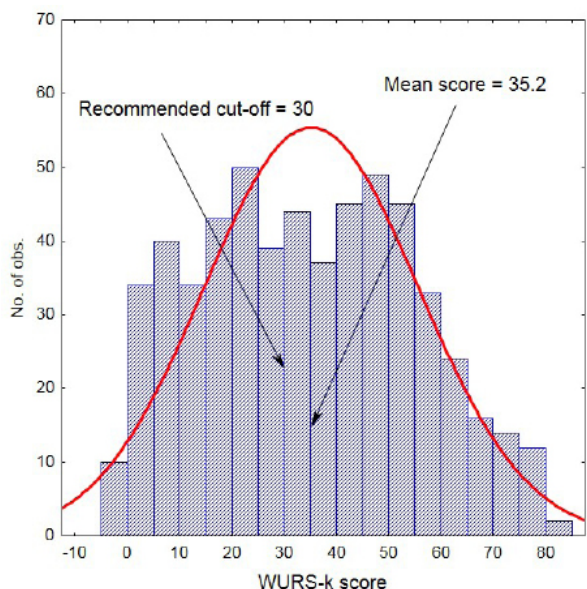
	Valid N	Mean	Std.Dev.
Age	591	34.4	10.5
ADCL	597	6.4	4.7
WURS-k	571	35.2†	20.5

† = above recommended cut off of 30 points

Abbreviations: ADCL = Adult Dyslexia Checklist; WURS-k = Wender Utah Rating Scale, short form

significantly above the recommended cut-off for considering ADHD ($t_{(570)} = 6.04, p < 0.001$) analysed with a single sample *t*-test. More than half (56.2 %) of the

Figure 1 . The Distribution of Scores on the WURS-k Scale. As Can Be Seen, the Mean Score of The Sample is Above the Recommended Clinical



Cut-Off Value of 30 Points, and the Distribution is Slightly Bimodal.

participants in the present study obtained a WURS-k score of above 30, which is suggested as the cut-off

score for an ADHD diagnosis. This is higher than expected from normative prevalence studies, where approximately half of those diagnosed as children were found to continue to show symptoms into adult age, and also a slightly elevated prevalence estimate compared to other studies among incarcerated adults.

One hundred and thirteen participants (19.8 %) reported that they had been diagnosed with ADHD earlier, either as a child, or later as an adult. Ninety eight participants (17.2 %) reported that they had earlier been diagnosed with ADHD and showed an elevated score on the WURS-k scale. Fifteen participants (2.6%) reported that they had been diagnosed earlier, but did not show an elevated score on the WURS-k scale in the present study. However, 223 participants obtained elevated scores on the WURS-k scale, but reported that they had not been referred for assessment of attention deficits, or had received a diagnosis of ADHD (see table 2). The participants with WURS-k score above threshold had on the average less work experience [8.15 years (*sd* = 7.8) vs. 15.3 (*sd* = 11.7), $t_{(525)} = 8.38, p > 0.001$]. They were also on the average younger [30.5 (*sd* = 8.5) years vs 36.7 (*sd* = 14.7) years, *n.s.*] compared to participants with lower score on the WURS-k.

For the further analyses we used a categorization of

Table 2

Frequency of participants reporting symptoms of ADHD on the WURS-k Scale, compared with frequency of participants reporting they have been diagnosed with ADHD

	nADHD	ADHD
Diagnosed with ADHD?	Yes	98
	(2.6 %)	(17.2 %)
	No	223
	(41.2 %)	(39.1 %)
All Grps	250	321
	(43.8 %)	(56.2 %)

$\chi^2 = 53.27, df = 1, p < .005$

the participants above or below the cut-off score for WURS-k as the independent variable, and analysed for the probability of simultaneously being a member of other sub categories based on type of offence, work experience, or completed education, as the dependent variables.

Table 3

WURS-k Classification and offence

	nADHD	ADHD	Totals
Violence	64 (13.4 %)	113 (23.6 %)	177 (37.0 %)
Sexual offence	16 (3.4 %)	7 (1.5 %)	23 (4.8 %)
Drug related offences	59 (12.3 %)	75 (15.7 %)	134 (28.0 %)
Driving under influence	22 (4.6 %)	25 (5.2 %)	47 (9.8 %)
Property offences	52 (10.9 %)	45 (9.4 %)	97 (20.3 %)
All Grps	213 (44.6 %)	265 (55.4 %)	478 (100 %)

$$\chi^2 = 14.25, df = 4, p < .05$$

WURS-k score and offending

The next analyses were directed toward disentangling the relationship between increased score on the WURS-k scale and type of offences the participants reported to be convicted for. The χ^2 analyses revealed that the observed frequency of being convicted for violence or drug related offences was increased above the expected with high scores on the WURS-k. The observed frequency of being convicted for sexual offences was slightly reduced, and the frequencies of being convict-

ed for property offences and driving under the influence was as expected from the distribution of participants with a high or a low score on the WURS-k (see Table 3). These frequency differences yielded a significant effect (*Pearson* $\chi^2 = 14.1, df = 3, p < 0.05$). In addition, 79 % of the high WURS-k respondents re-

ported they had been convicted earlier, as opposed to

55 % of the low responders. This is also a significant effect (*Pearson* $\chi^2 = 34.6, df = 3, p < 0.05$).

Many of the participants with elevated WURS-k scores reported they had been referred to assessment for

reading and spelling difficulties ($\chi^2 = 24.8, p < 0.005$) or

mathematics difficulties ($\chi^2 = 23.4, p < 0.005$), either

in primary or in secondary school. Following this, the

number of participants with high scores on WURS-k

who reported to have been diagnosed with learning dif-

Table 4

WURS-k Classification and Self-Reported Reading, Spelling and Mathematics Skills

	Reading	Spelling	Mathematics
ADHD	147(70)	180 (70)	248 (69)
nADHD	43(19)	65 (19)	124 (14)
χ^2	61.1	79.1	75.6

Figures in brackets indicate number of participants reporting they had been diagnosed with impaired skills within reading, spelling or mathematics. In Norway, reading and spelling skills are usually combined in diagnostic work, as one implication of the close resemblance between graphemes and phonemes ("shallow orthography").

faculties within these areas were also increased compared to those with a low score on WURS-k [Mathematics ($\chi^2 = 28.1, p < 0.005$; reading and spelling skills ($\chi^2 = 22.4, p < 0.005$)].

When the participants were asked to report if they experienced problems with their reading, spelling or mathematics skills, a large discrepancy between the number of participants who experienced lack of skills, and the number of participants who reported they had

ported they had had more demanding jobs like running their own business or having a job demanding higher education (professional work). As WURS-k was not found to correlate with general abilities or learning skills, it is supposed to have a unique contribution to accumulation of work experience. Log linear analysis of the interaction between the WURS-k classification and the different categories of work experience resulted in a good fit with the data (Pearson $\chi^2 = 0.384, df$



Figure 2: Ratio of participants with and without ADHD within each job experience category.

actually been referred and had received assessment of their skills appeared (see Table 4).

The WURS-k score was related to work experience, as the high WURS-k participants are overrepresented among inmates without work experience and unskilled jobs, but were underrepresented among those who re-

ported they had had more demanding jobs like running their own business or having a job demanding higher education (professional work). As WURS-k was not found to correlate with general abilities or learning skills, it is supposed to have a unique contribution to accumulation of work experience. Log linear analysis of the interaction between the WURS-k classification and the different categories of work experience resulted in a good fit with the data (Pearson $\chi^2 = 0.384, df = 1, p = 1.00$). The final contrasts that were analysed were the relationships between categories of work the participants reported to have had experience with and the score they obtained on the WURS-k scale. When we calculated the ratio of high responders (WURS-k > 30) to low responders (WURS-k < 29), a close to linear

Table 5

WURS-k Score Classification and Completed Education

Group	Primary		Secondary			Tertiary	
	Old, 7 years	New* (9/10 ys)	1. year	2. year	Completed three years	Vocational	University/college
ADHD	11	271	133	76	33	28	8
nADHD	45	191	98	76	48	41	31
ADHD/nADHD	0.24	1.42	1.36	1	0.69	0.68	0.26
χ^2	33.5	7.2	n.s.	n.s.	9.04	7.7	21.5

($\chi^2 = 34.12, df = 5, p < .001$)

*= New Primary Education in Norway was introduced in 1997, when the primary school was extended from 9 to 10 years as school start was lowered to six years of age. Participants who report to have completed 7 years primary school were born before 1985.

relationship was found for the proportion when considering the different levels of education demanding jobs (see Figure 2). Figure 2 shows the ratio of participants scoring above the threshold of 30 on the WURS-k (ADHD) compared to the number of participants scoring below the threshold (nADHD) as a function of variation in work experience. Nearly three times (2.67) as many high scorers compared to low scorers reported to never have had a job and twice as many reported to have had unskilled work. This difference disappeared for those who reported to have been working as skilled workers, and for the more complex job situations, like running one's own company or being employed in jobs with a demand for higher education (professional work). Approximately half of the members of the latter group yielded WURS-k scores equivalent to belonging to the ADHD-group (see Table 5). This also gave a significant effect ($\chi^2 = 52.17$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.001$) (see Figure 2).

Further, the WURS-k was also related to level of completed formal education. For those who reported to leave school after the obligatory 9/10 years of elementary school, three out of five returned a WURS-k score similar to an ADHD diagnosis. Among those who reported to have completed three years of upper secondary ("senior high school"), half of them yielded a score above the clinical cut-off. For those who reported some higher (tertiary) education or a completed degree, only one in four produced a WURS-k score above the clinical cut-off. These differences gave a significant effect ($\chi^2 = 34.12$, $df = 5$, $p < 0.001$) (see Table 5).

A small subsample ($n = 56$) of participants reported the old Norwegian 7 years elementary school as their highest education, and they also had low scores for WURS-k, as only 20 % ($n = 11$) of this group report increased WURS-k score. This ratio is equivalent to what is seen in the group reporting some higher education, but considerably lower compared to the 58.7 % with scores above cut-off in the group reporting elementary school as their highest education. One possible explanation may be the higher age in this group.

Discussion

The first important finding of the present study was an increased estimate of prevalence of attention deficits and hyperactivity in this sample of incarcerated adults, compared to what was expected from population studies (de Graaf et al., 2008). However, the finding is in line with studies using self-report scales in prison populations (Dalteg et al., 1998; Dalteg & Levander, 1998; Rasmussen et al., 2001; Rösler et al., 2004). The average score of the self-report measure that was

used in this study, the WURS-k, was above the cut-off recommended for clinical screening purposes, and this criterion has been found to yield high sensitivity and specificity in earlier clinical studies in similar populations (Retz-Junginger et al., 2003). This indicates an increased prevalence of ADHD, suggesting an estimated prevalence of 56.2 % of the incarcerated adults showed significant signs of ADHD. Only approximately one third of those who achieved a score above the recommended cut-off score were earlier diagnosed with ADHD. This is also in line with results from clinical assessment of incarcerated adults in a Norwegian prison (Stokkeland, Fasmer, Waage, & Hansen, 2014), showing that 35 % of inmates referred for assessment fulfilled the criteria when a comprehensive assessment was conducted, although the majority reported symptoms in accordance with the diagnosis both in childhood and as adults.

We have no objective measures to claim they all qualify for the formal diagnosis, as this is based on a retrospective self-report, without confirmation from other sources of information. As the WURS-k score is strongly correlated with presented attention skills (Asbjørnsen et al., 2010), we can expect the results to at least show impaired attention skills and lack of cognitive control in this group. However, as earlier discussed, the impaired attention performance may also be related to other frequently seen conditions among incarcerated adults, like affective disorders, drug abuse or abstinence from drug use, that will complicate the diagnosis of ADHD among prison inmates (Rasmussen et al., 2001). Elevated scores on the WURS-k were associated with increased chances of being convicted for violent offences, but otherwise no obvious differences were seen when comparing the two subgroups, which is also in line with earlier studies (Mordre et al., 2011).

A very small proportion of the Norwegian population is incarcerated (approximately 72/100,000), and we could expect that a major portion of our participants have shown a developmental trajectory that overlaps with what Moffitt and colleagues call "life-course-persistent antisocial behaviour" (Moffitt, 1993, 2006). Earlier research does suggest increased prevalence of neurocognitive impairments among the life-course-persistent group (Moffitt & Caspi, 2001; Moffitt et al., 2002; Moffitt & Lynam, 1994; Raine et al., 2005), that can explain the rather high prevalence of ADHD-symptoms in the present sample.

A second important finding was that the WURS-k score was associated with self-reports of work history, as a high score on the scale was found to be associated with earlier unemployment and lack of work experi-

ence. If the high responders reported job experience, it was mainly related to unskilled or other low SES work (see Figure 2), and more rarely they reported experiences from work that require higher education or independent work. This is also in line with studies showing challenges to career as a function of ADHD symptomatology (Barkley et al., 2006; Bliko, 2008; de Graaf et al., 2008; Gjervan et al., 2012). In addition to the effects of the ADHD symptoms on occupation, our sample will also face the additional challenge of being an earlier convicted person when approaching the labour market following release. This further emphasises the importance of closing the educational gap to increase employability on re-entry to society.

Further, the score on the WURS-k was related to earlier education, as the number of participants scoring above the clinical cut-off diminished as each level of education was completed (Table 5), also suggesting a longer history of similar impairments, and early dropout for participants who reported increased symptomatology in the present study. Approximately two thirds of the sample (70 %) reported that they have not completed upper secondary education. For the population at large, approximately 72 % completes upper secondary school and continues to tertiary (higher) education (Eikeland et al., 2013).

Even though the analyses did not reveal shared variance between the WURS-k score and basic reading skills, self-reported reading and spelling skills and also perceived weaknesses within these fields were clearly associated with increased WURS-k score. In addition a large proportion of the sample with increased WURS-k score also reported that they had been referred for assessment of learning problems and attention deficits earlier in their lives. This does indicate that the problems have persisted through a significant part of their development, and could also be taken as support for the assumption that the prevalence of ADHD in this sample of incarcerated adults is higher than population estimates. However, as no additional confirmation of the occurrence of the symptoms during school age is available, one should be cautious to conclude that these findings represent a valid documentation of increased prevalence of ADHD among the incarcerated adults. As we have discussed, several conditions can be associated with incarceration and conduct disorder: Sensation seeking and high risk behaviour may have led to blows to the brain and minor brain injuries that can explain impaired attention functions. Excessive alcohol and drug abuse may also lead to persisting attention and learning problems, and depressive reactions and abstinence from drug and alcohol may temporarily

lead to similar symptoms (Rasmussen et al., 2001; Rasmussen et al., 1999).

We found no differences between the high and low responders when they were compared on willingness or motives for approaching education during the incarceration. Education is one of the options offered during incarceration in Norway, along with programs for coping with some of the associated disposing conditions for the offence, like drug management programs, anger management, social skills training, sexual offender programs, or a diversity of production work programs. However, the motivation for education may change through the course of incarceration, as push factors, like getting away from the boredom of the cell, are substituted with pull factors like willingness to learn, competence building or concern for the future (Costelloe, 2003; Manger, Eikeland, Diseth, Hetland, & Asbjørnsen, 2010).

The probability of meeting a student with pronounced attention impairments in prison education is quite high, as an estimated prevalence rate of 25-59 % has been frequently reported across countries. In particular, if the student has a major deficit in formal education, the probability of impaired attention skills is quite high. This has implications for teaching and program delivery. First of all, teachers working in this setting need a minimum of competence in special needs education to be able to guide students with attention problems appropriately.

The high prevalence of ADHD has implications for prison education, as this will directly influence the study situation for the students in prison education. As Appelbaum (2008) concluded following a study on persons with ADHD in incarceration, even if medication may be a good option for adults with ADHD, it is not a cure, and treatment options for ADHD in correctional settings, as in community settings, may include nonpharmacologic interventions. Education about the disorder can help ease frustration, enhance self-esteem, and teach organizational skills. Group therapy with other inmates who have ADHD can have similar benefits. A willingness to participate in these activities provides an indication of the inmate's investment in treatment. In contrast, the absence of a meaningful commitment of time and energy should call into question the inmate's degree of distress and need for medications and possibly the diagnosis itself (Appelbaum, 2008, p. 1522).

For students with ADHD firm structuring of the tasks and the work environment to decrease distraction will be of help. Preparation for program participation and mentoring of the students should include guidance in how the work can be planned to reduce the impact of

the attention problems. Such guidance may reduce frustration and increase behavioural control (Knivsgberg, Reichelt, & Nodland, 1999). Several intervention programs based on behavioural management techniques have been developed to assist the learning situation for students with ADHD (Reiber & McLaughlin, 2004), including modification of classroom structure, modification of schedules, teaching modifications, peer interventions, and token economies, in addition to self-management. As inattention, distractibility and impulsivity are the core signs of ADHD, planning of the classroom and the schedule to reduce the impact of ADHD on the performance is probably the least intrusive and single most important intervention approach (Abramowitz & O'Leary, 1991). A few studies lend support to mindfulness training increasing control over behavioural problems and attention skills in adults with ADHD (Edel, Hölter, Wassink, & Juckel, 2014; Zylowska et al., 2008), and they even show a tendency to give better results than more established skills training based on dialectical behaviour therapy (Edel et al., 2014). Probably interventions aiming to increase mindfulness could be a supplement to regular teaching activities for adults with ADHD.

In the present study, we addressed signs of ADHD as they appear in a self-report scale, and not as a clinically confirmed diagnosis. This investigation did not allow for access to school or health records to confirm the present findings and this will of course yield uncertainty to whether the function profile described in the paper is equivalent to a clinically confirmed diagnosis of ADHD, or whether they reflect attention deficits and agitated behaviour ("hyperactivity") of a different aetiology. But based on earlier findings, the WURS-k score yields a strong correlation with present attention skills (Asbjørnsen et al., 2010), and as such should give a valid measure of skills important for an educational setting.

To conclude, a sample of unselected incarcerated adults showed increased symptoms of ADHD, and these symptoms were related to completed earlier education and work career, as the majority of those who reported signs of ADHD had lower formal education and limited or low SES work experience. As prisons are important arenas for adult education and also constitute opportunities for the community to close the educational gap between those who end up in prison and the population at large, teachers working in the prison setting need to be aware of the special education needs that may be excessive in the student group they meet, and to plan the teaching and study work accordingly.

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Racial Disparities and Similarities in Post-Release Recidivism and Employment Among Ex-prisoners with a Different Level of Education

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Abstract: *Previous studies, both international and domestic, rarely examined racial disparities in post-release employment and recidivism. Finding a job is an immediate challenge to all ex-prisoners, and often more difficult for African American ex-prisoners who typically return to economically-depressed neighborhoods upon release from prison. The present researchers conducted a 5-year (2005-2009) follow-up study in an attempt to understand racial disparities in post-release employment and recidivism among 6,394 ex-prisoners (2,531 Caucasian ex-prisoners and 3,863 African American ex-prisoners), while controlling for the ex-prisoner's level of education. Results of this study showed that African American ex-prisoners had a higher unemployment rate and recidivism rate than Caucasian ex-prisoners. This study also revealed that ex-prisoners, if employed, would likely be under-employed and experience difficulties in sustaining employment, regardless of the ex-prisoner's race. Most importantly, post-release employment and level of education were the two most influential predictors to recidivism among ex-prisoners, regardless of race.*

Keywords: *Prison Education; Reentry; Racial Disparities; Employment; Sociology*

Introduction

Quite often, post-release employment is regarded as the most influential factor in determining recidivism, but rarely have researchers obtained post-release employment data to further analyze the effect of post-release employment on recidivism among ex-prisoners. Ex-prisoners are usually characterized as economically poor, educationally illiterate, and disproportionately unemployed after release from prison. Researchers (Clear, et al., 2001; Gunnison and Helfgott, 2010; Lukies, et al., 2011) indicated that employers were reluctant to hire ex-prisoners. Additionally, ex-prisoners generally lacked up-to-date job skills or formal education to meet the job demands from a variety of industrial sectors (Lockwood, et al., 2012; Nally, et al., 2012).

It is reasonable to believe that uneducated and unskilled ex-prisoners are likely to be unemployed after release from prison; and, probably that they will become recidivists simply because they do not have the

financial means for independent living in the community. To examine the interrelationship between an ex-prisoner's education, post-release employment, and recidivism, the present researchers collected both post-released employment and recidivism-related information to conduct a 5-year follow-up study of a cohort of 6,394 ex-prisoners from the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC). There has been very little research on racial disparities in post-release employment and recidivism, while considering an ex-prisoner's level of education. Additionally, this study explored the role of an ex-prisoner's level of education in determining post-release employment and recidivism.

Previous studies of post-release recidivism identified a variety of factors, such as educational illiteracy, lack of job skills, lack of interpersonal skills, criminal history, or unemployment, as contributors to a relatively high recidivism rate among ex-prisoners (Hemphill et al., 1998; Kubrin and Stewart, 2006; Rossman and Ro-



man, 2003; Uggen, 2000; Vacca, 2004; Visser et al., 2005). For example, ex-prisoners' criminal records become a barrier to employment because employers are generally reluctant to hire them (Backman, 2011; Clear, et al., 2001; Giguere and Dundes, 2002; Gunnison and Helfgott, 2010; Harris and Keller, 2005; Lukies, et al., 2011; Varghese, et al., 2010). Furthermore, Nally, et al., (2014(a); 2012) found that a notable number of ex-prisoners lacked formal education and job training during incarceration, which resulted in a relatively high unemployment rate among ex-prisoners after release from prison. Nonetheless, consistent findings from previous studies indicated post-release employment and recidivism among ex-prisoners were empirically correlated (Allen, 1988; Blomberg, et al., 2012; Burke and Vivian, 2001; Vacca, 2004; Wilson, et al., 2000).

Racial Disparities in Post-Release Recidivism

Identifying racial disparities in post-release recidivism, undoubtedly, is very complex and difficult to measure. Researchers (Hipp and Yates, 2009; Kubrin and Stewart, 2006; Olusanya and Gau, 2012; Reisig, et al., 2007) frequently used the neighborhood context to explain racial disparities in recidivism. Accordingly, African American ex-prisoners would likely have a higher recidivism rate than Caucasian ex-prisoners because they would often return to neighborhoods saturated with poverty, high unemployment, and crime. It is important to note that, due to a relatively small sample or lack of race-specific coding, this study only included Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners.

However, a neighborhood-based contextual analysis of post-release recidivism could be misleading, not accounting for the underlying problems of socio-economic disadvantages in African American neighborhoods. For example, there are substantially fewer business establishments in predominately African American neighborhoods to provide job opportunities to African American ex-prisoners. To fully understand racial disparities in post-release employment and recidivism, this study used an individual-level analysis across ex-prisoners' characteristics (demographic or employment status) as indicators for post-release recidivism among ex-prisoners with different ethnicities. In other words, a systematic collection of post-release employment information among ex-prisoners after release from prison was used in an attempt to examine any empirical correlation between post-release employment and recidivism, while controlling for an ex-prisoner's race. In doing so, racial disparities or similarities in

post-release employment and recidivism were identified clearly.

Educational Gaps among Incarcerated Ex-prisoners

According to the recent school drop-out rates from the National Center for Education Statistics (U.S. Department of Education, 2012), the school drop-out rate in 2010, in the age group of 16-24 years old, was 8.0 percent among African Americans, but only 5.1 percent among Caucasians. Even though the gap between Caucasians and African Americans has narrowed in the past decade, school drop-outs among African American teens are high. On the other hand, prisoner statistics from the U.S Department of Justice (2012) showed that more than 40 percent of prison inmates (as of June 30, 2009) were African American, which represented 4.8 percent per 100,000 African American males.

In the criminology arena, education is generally perceived as a deterrent to crime. Previous studies (Chappell, 2002; Erisman and Contardo, 2005; Steurer and Smith, 2003; Winterfield, et al., 2009) indicated that ex-prisoners with lower levels of formal education were disproportionately unemployed after release from prison. However, the effect of an ex-prisoner's level of education on post-release recidivism would need to be examined further.

Nally, et al. (2014(a), 2012) indicated that ex-prisoners who lacked educational competency or job skills were likely to have a higher unemployment rate and recidivism rate after release from prison. Educational deficiency, undoubtedly, is a common problem among incarcerated inmates. Even though most adult correctional facilities have provided educational programs, such as basic literacy and high school equivalency classes, correctional education administrators are struggling to accommodate an increasing demand for academic remedies for educationally-deficient inmates. Quite often, inmates cannot complete education program requirements due to early release or administrative transfers from one prison to another. Another serious challenge was that funding for correctional education programs across the nation was reduced because of shrinking state budgets and weak economic conditions. As a result, ex-prisoners lacked the competencies to meet job demands from most employment sectors upon release from prison. The present researchers examined the impact of an ex-prisoner's level of education on post-release employment and recidivism, and also systematically analyzed racial disparities relative to post-release employment and recidivism.

Barriers to Post-Release Employment among Ex-prisoners

According to recent employment statistics (U.S. Department of Labor, 2012), the African-American unemployment rate surged to 14.4 percent in June of 2012; however, it was only 7.4 percent for Caucasians. For young African American males, the unemployment rate was much higher. And, recent prison statistics from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (U.S. Department of Justice, 2012) indicated that African American non-Hispanic males, at year-end 2010, had an imprisonment rate (3,074 per 100,000 U.S. African American male residents) that was nearly 7 times higher than Caucasian non-Hispanic males (459 per 100,000 U.S. Caucasian male residents). Furthermore, an estimated 7.3 percent of African American males ages 30-34 were in state or federal prison in 2010.

Undoubtedly, ex-prisoners would encounter incremental challenges to finding jobs when they were released from prison. Results from previous studies (Bellair and Kowalski, 2011; Cox, 2010; Wang, et al., 2010) indicated that economic conditions (e.g., recession) exerted a great impact on post-release employment and recidivism among ex-prisoners. However, the effect of economic circumstances on post-release recidivism was difficult to verify because previous studies lacked specific, individual-based employment information among ex-prisoners. A recent study (Nally, et al., 2011) revealed the unemployment rate among ex-prisoners was 65.6 percent during the recent recessionary period of 2008-2009, which was 10 times higher than the general population. Such findings clearly show that ex-prisoners encounter numerous hardships in obtaining a job upon release from prison. These hardships are not limited to criminal backgrounds or educational competency but also the economic conditions at the time of release to their communities. It is important to mention that the present researchers collected the employment-related information of ex-prisoners who were employed after release from prison. This 5-year follow-up study carefully analyzed racial disparities in post-release employment rates before, during, and after the recent economic recession of 2008. In doing so, any distinctive effect of economic conditions on post-release employment among different races was determined.

Methodology

Data Description

The present researchers conducted a 5-year (2005-2009) follow-up study on the correlation between post-release recidivism and employment, while con-

trolling for an ex-prisoner's level of education, among a cohort of 6,561 ex-prisoners who were released to five Indiana metropolitan counties from the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) throughout 2005. One main focus in this study was to examine racial disparities (or similarities) in post-release recidivism and employment among ex-prisoners with a different level of education prior to release from prison. In order to deliberately examine racial disparities (African American versus Caucasian ex-prisoners) in post-release employment and recidivism, approximately 2.5 percent (n=167) of ex-prisoners who were Hispanic, Asian, or other ethnicities were excluded from the present analyses. Therefore, the sample in this study included 2,531 Caucasian and 3,863 African American ex-prisoners, totaling 6,394 ex-prisoners who were released from IDOC throughout 2005.

The dataset of the present study was collected from three (3) primary data sources: (1) IDOC Division of Research and Planning, (2) IDOC Education Division, and (3) Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IDWD). The IDOC Division of Research and Planning provided up-to-date information such as ex-prisoners' demographical characteristics and legal information (e.g., re-conviction or re-admission to Indiana prison). The IDOC Education Division provided the incarcerated ex-prisoners' level of education prior (e.g. high school completion) to release from IDOC custody. The IDWD verified the ex-prisoner's post-release employment information (e.g., job title or income), if employed. The IDWD documented employment information quarterly, but there would be no employment information among ex-prisoners if they had never been employed since release from prison during the study period. The IDWD data also included quarterly income, which would indicate the length of employment and annual income among ex-prisoners if they were employed during the study period of 2005-2009. Meanwhile, the IDWD systematically documented the job sectors where ex-prisoners were employed. Previous studies on post-release recidivism usually lacked post-release employment data that limited the understanding of the impact of employment on recidivism.

Outcome Measures

Racial disparities and/or similarities in post-release recidivism and employment were two major outcome measures in this 5-year follow-up study. It is important to mention that this 5-year follow-up study was conducted during the timeframe of the recent economic recession which started in December of 2007 and ended in December of 2008 (U.S. Department of La-

bor, 2012). Accordingly, this 5-year follow-up study (2005-2009) would examine the post-release unemployment rates among Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners in the pre-recessionary, during-recessionary, and post-recessionary period. Meanwhile, the present researchers would further analyze racial disparities in the length of employment and annual income between Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners. Undoubtedly, the correlation between post-release recidivism and employment would be the main focus in this study. Additionally, the contributing factors to post-release recidivism were examined among all Indiana ex-prisoners, Caucasian ex-prisoners, and African American ex-prisoners.

In this study, post-release recidivism was measured by re-incarceration in the Indiana Department of Correction, which would include a violation of parole (including technical and regular), violation of probation (including technical and regular), committing a new crime, or a violation of community transition program (similar to probation and parole). Through reviewing IDOC data, such as ex-prisoners' release dates and return dates, the present researchers could determine the recidivism status of the ex-prisoner. Also, the survival time (elapsed time between release and return to IDOC custody) among recidivist ex-prisoners was calculated. By calculating the elapsed time between the date of re-incarceration and the initial release, the present researchers could examine racial disparities (or similarities) in the patterns of re-incarceration (i.e., recidivism) between Caucasian and African American recidivist ex-prisoners in the study period of 2005-2009. Such information would allow the present researchers to examine whether or not African American or Caucasian ex-prisoners were likely to become recidivist ex-prisoners and contributing factors to post-release recidivism among each ethnic group. However, due to limitations of data, the present study could not analyze some important effects, such as drug treatment programs, housing, or relationships with the family, on post-release recidivism.

Data Analysis

Data analyses in this study included characteristics (i.e., race, gender, age, and education) relative to post-release recidivism and employment among 6,394 ex-prisoners who were released to five metropolitan counties from the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) throughout 2005. One specific focus of the data analysis was racial disparities and/or similarities in post-release recidivism and employment between Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners, while

controlling for the ex-prisoner's level of education. By using data from IDWD, the present researchers were able to examine the unemployment rate among Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners. Rarely had researchers examined the income that ex-prisoners could earn, if employed, after release from prison. With the IDWD data, the present researchers could examine the earnings and the length of employment among employed, ex-prisoners. In the meantime, racial disparities and/or similarities in the unemployment rate, length of employment, and annual income between Caucasian and African American employed ex-prisoners were carefully examined.

One main analysis in this study was to further examine post-release recidivism and employment among Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners with a different level of education (i.e., below high school, high school, and college). Such analyses allowed the present researchers to examine the effect of an ex-prisoner's level of education on post-release recidivism and employment. Meanwhile, the effects of ex-prisoner's characteristics (e.g., race or age) and post-release employment on recidivism were carefully examined in order to understand the patterns of racial disparities (or similarities) in determining the post-release recidivism between Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners. Also in this study, the patterns of re-incarceration between Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners, with a different level of education, were examined. Due to the dichotomous nature of dependent measurement (recidivist ex-prisoners versus non-recidivist ex-prisoners), a logistic multiple regression analysis was used to examine the effect of ex-prisoners' characteristics and post-release employment on recidivism in three different samples (all ex-prisoners, Caucasian ex-prisoners, and African American ex-prisoners). These multiple regression analyses provided a clear indication of which of the ex-prisoner's characteristics had exerted the most influential impact on post-release recidivism among Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners.

Findings

Table 1 illustrates the ex-prisoner's demographical characteristics, education, post-release employment, and recidivism status. Results of this 5-year follow-up study of 6,394 ex-prisoners showed that a majority of ex-prisoners were male, in the age range of 20-40 years old. Specifically, 86.5 percent (n=5,529) of ex-prisoners were male and 13.5 percent (n=865) were female. In regard to age, this study's results showed that 1.8 percent (n=118) of 6,394 ex-prisoners were under 20

years old, 36.0 percent (n=2,304) were in the age range of 20-29 year old, 30.3 percent (n=1,938) were in the age group of 30-39 years old, 24.3 percent (n=1,556) were in the age group of 40-49 years old, 6.4 percent (n=407) were in the age group of 50-59 years old, and 1.1 percent (n=71) were 60 years old or above. Results of this study also revealed that racial disparities in ex-prisoners' gender and age were insignificant.

In terms of ex-prisoners' level of education, this study's results showed that 35.1 percent (n=2,247) of a total of 6,394 ex-prisoners had an education below high school, 53.0 percent (n=3,391) had a high school diploma or equivalent, 4.7 percent (n=300) had completed a 2-year college degree, and 7.1 percent (n=456) had an unknown education level. However, this study's results showed that racial disparities in ex-prisoners' level of education were notable. Even though the IDOC provided access to high school curricula, through high school

equivalency instruction and testing in adult correctional facilities, this study found that a notable number of African American ex-prisoners did not complete high school equivalency prior to release from prison. For 2,531 Caucasian ex-prisoners, 29.8 percent (n=753) had an education below high school, 57.2 percent (n=1,447) had a high school diploma or equivalent, 5.7 percent (n=145) had completed a 2-year college degree, and 7.3 percent (n=186) had an unknown education level. For 3,863 African American ex-prisoners, 38.7 percent (n=1,494) had an education below high school, 50.3 percent (n=1,944) of ex-prisoners had a high school diploma or equivalent, 4.0 percent (n=155) had completed a 2-year college degree, and 7.0 percent (n=270) had an unknown education level.

As Table I indicates, during the study period of 2005-2009, approximately 62.5 percent (n=3,998) of a total of 6,394 ex-prisoners were employed for at least one

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of ex-prisoners' characteristics (N=6,394)

Variable	Caucasian (n=2,531)	African American (n=3,863)	Overall (N=6,394)
Ex-prisoner Gender			
female	379 (15.0%)	486 (12.6%)	865 (13.5%)
male	2152 (85.0%)	3377 (87.4%)	5529 (86.5%)
Ex-prisoner Age			
under 20 years old	28 (1.1%)	90 (2.3%)	118 (1.8%)
20-29 years old	870 (34.4%)	1434 (37.1%)	2304 (36.0%)
30-39 years old	792 (31.3%)	1146 (29.7%)	1938 (30.3%)
40-49 years old	643 (25.4%)	913 (23.6%)	1556 (24.3%)
50-59 years old	169 (6.7%)	238 (6.2%)	407 (6.4%)
60 years old or above	29 (1.1%)	42 (1.1%)	71 (1.1%)
Ex-prisoner Education			
below high school	753 (29.8%)	1494 (38.7%)	2247 (35.1%)
high school or GED	1447 (57.2%)	1944 (50.3%)	3391 (53.0%)
college	145 (5.7%)	155 (4.0%)	300 (4.7%)
unknown	186 (7.3%)	270 (7.0%)	456 (7.1%)
Employment Status			
unemployed	849 (33.5%)	1547 (40.0%)	2396 (37.5%)
employed	1682 (66.5%)	2316 (60.0%)	3998 (62.5%)
Recidivism Status			
non-recidivist ex-prisoner	1396 (55.2%)	1910 (49.4%)	3306 (51.7%)
recidivist ex-prisoner	1135 (44.8%)	1953 (50.6%)	3088 (48.3%)

Note: The released ex-prisoner was regarded as "employed," if he or she was employed at least one quarter in any given year in the study period. On the other hand, the released ex-prisoner was regarded as "unemployed," if he or she had never been employed since release from IDOC custody in 2005.

quarter after release from prison. The post-release recidivism rate among 6,396 ex-prisoners in this 5-year follow-up period reached as high as 48.3 percent. This study also indicated that racial disparities in post-release employment and recidivism were distinguishable. Results of this study revealed that African American ex-prisoners, rather than Caucasian ex-prisoners, would likely be unemployed after release from prison. Specifically, 40.0 percent (n=1,547) of 3,863 African American ex-prisoners, but only 33.5 percent (n=849) of 2,531 Caucasian ex-prisoners, were never employed after release from prison. Most importantly, this study found that the recidivism rate among 3,863 African American ex-prisoners was 50.6 percent, but only 44.8 percent among 2,531 Caucasian ex-prisoners.

Table 2 illustrates the unemployment rates among 6,394 ex-prisoners, including 2,531 Caucasian ex-pris-

oners, and 3,863 African American ex-prisoners during the study period of 2005-2009.

Based upon IDWD employment information among ex-prisoners, results of this study revealed that ex-prisoners had encountered tremendous difficulties in finding jobs upon release from prison. This study's results clearly showed that regardless of race, ex-prisoners were virtually unemployed within the first year (1st quarter thru 4th quarter) after the initial release from prison. Specifically, the unemployment rates among both Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners were in the range of 92-97 percent from 1st quarter to 4th quarter in 2005. This study's results also revealed that African American ex-prisoners had consistently higher unemployment rates than Caucasian ex-prisoners throughout the study period of 2005-2009, but such differences might seem to be insignificant.

Table 2: Racial disparities in the unemployment rates after the initial release in 2005
(Excluding ex-prisoners were incarcerated in that given time period)

Time Period	Caucasian (n=2,531)	African American (n=3,863)	Overall (N=6,394)
2005 1 st Quarter	96.6%	96.2%	96.4%
2005 2 nd Quarter	95.8%	95.5%	95.6%
2005 3 rd Quarter	93.7%	93.4%	93.5%
2005 4 th Quarter	93.1%	92.4%	92.7%
2006 1 st Quarter	59.5%	65.3%	63.0%
2006 2 nd Quarter	58.3%	63.9%	61.6%
2006 3 rd Quarter	59.4%	63.2%	61.7%
2006 4 th Quarter	61.9%	64.8%	63.7%
2007 1 st Quarter	65.9%	72.2%	69.7%
2007 2 nd Quarter	65.1%	71.9%	69.1%
2007 3 rd Quarter	64.9%	69.0%	67.3%
2007 4 th Quarter	66.9%	71.6%	69.7%
2008 1 st Quarter	70.3%	76.2%	73.8%
2008 2 nd Quarter	69.4%	75.9%	73.3%
2008 3 rd Quarter	72.2%	75.6%	74.2%
2008 4 th Quarter	74.7%	77.8%	76.5%
2009 1 st Quarter	78.4%	82.3%	80.7%
2009 2 nd Quarter	77.0%	82.4%	80.2%
2009 3 rd Quarter	78.8%	82.8%	81.2%
2009 4 th Quarter	76.7%	79.3%	78.2%

As Table 2 indicates, this study's results also revealed that post-release employment among Indiana ex-prisoners improved slowly and steadily from 2005-2009. For example, the unemployment rates steadily decreased from the range of 90 percent (from 1st quarter to 4th quarter of 2005) to the range of 60 percent during the pre-recession period (from 1st quarter of 2006 to 3rd quarter of 2007). It also indicated that ex-prisoners had a better chance of finding employment during strong economic conditions, but the unemployment rates among ex-prisoners remained higher than the general population. Expectedly, the unemployment

rates increased into the range of 70 percent during the recession period (from 4th quarter of 2007 to 4th quarter of 2008) and became even higher during the post-recession period (from 1st quarter of 2009 to 4th quarter of 2009). In this 5-year study, there was a similar pattern of unemployment among Caucasian ex-prisoners and African American ex-prisoners during the pre-recession period, the recession period, and the post-recession period.

Even though there was a relatively high unemployment rate among ex-prisoners in the study period of 2005-2009, the analysis revealed that approximately

Table 3: Racial disparities in Length of Employment (by quarter) among employed ex-prisoners in the study period of 2005-2009

Number of Quarter	Caucasian (n=1,682)	African American (n=2,316)	Overall (N=3,998)
Had 1 quarter of employment	219 (13.0%)	357 (15.4%)	576 (14.4%)
Had 2 quarters of employment	218 (13.0%)	307 (13.3%)	525 (13.1%)
Had 3 quarter of employment	161 (9.6%)	243 (10.5%)	404 (10.1%)
Had 4 quarters of employment	136 (8.1%)	200 (8.6%)	336 (8.4%)
Had 5 quarter of employment	124 (7.4%)	152 (6.6%)	276 (6.9%)
Had 6 quarters of employment	98 (5.8%)	157 (6.8%)	255 (6.4%)
Had 7 quarter of employment	84 (5.0%)	132 (5.7%)	216 (5.4%)
Had 8 quarters of employment	81 (4.8%)	115 (5.0%)	196 (4.9%)
Had 9 quarter of employment	78 (4.6%)	107 (4.6%)	185 (4.6%)
Had 10 quarters of employment	77 (4.6%)	82 (3.5%)	159 (4.0%)
Had 11 quarter of employment	63 (3.7%)	84 (3.6%)	147 (3.7%)
Had 12 quarters of employment	60 (3.6%)	83 (3.6%)	143 (3.6%)
Had 13 quarter of employment	62 (3.7%)	58 (2.5%)	120 (3.0%)
Had 14 quarters of employment	60 (3.6%)	51 (2.2%)	111 (2.8%)
Had 15 quarter of employment	46 (2.7%)	51 (2.2%)	97 (2.4%)
Had 16 quarters of employment	89 (5.3%)	101 (4.4%)	190 (4.8%)
Had 17 quarter of employment	16 (1.0%)	13 (0.6%)	29 (0.7%)
Had 18 quarters of employment	8 (0.5%)	14 (0.6%)	22 (0.6%)
Had 19 quarter of employment	1 (0.1%)	9 (0.4%)	10 (0.3%)
Had 20 quarters of employment	1 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.0%)

62.5 percent (n=3,998) of a total of 6,394 ex-prisoners had been employed for at least one quarter after release from prison. Table 3 illustrates the length of employment among 3,998 employed ex-prisoners, which included 1,682 Caucasian ex-prisoners and 2,316 African American ex-prisoners. Additionally, results of this study showed that regardless of race, ex-prisoners, if employed, would likely be under-employed and experience difficulties in sustaining employment. For example, in the study period of 2005-2009, approximately 46.0 percent of 3,998 employed ex-prisoners had 1-4 quarters of employment after release from prison, 14.4 percent (n=576) had only 1 quarter of employment, 13.1 percent (n=525) had 2 quarters of employment, 10.1 percent (n=404) had 3 quarters of employment, and 8.4 percent (n=336) had 4 quarters of employment. Meanwhile, almost 70 percent of employed ex-prisoners had less than 12 quarters (i.e., 2 years) of employment in this 5-year follow-up study. These statistics regarding length of employment indicated that ex-prisoners were likely employed as part-time workers, but were less likely to retain their employment for an extended time period.

Statistics regarding length of employment, as Table 3 indicates, showed that racial disparities in the length of employment were not significant. Regardless of

American ex-prisoners, had been employed 1-4 quarters after release from prison. Relatively few ex-prisoners, if employed, retained their employment more than 8 quarters (i.e., 2 years), regardless of race or type of employment.

With assistance from IDWD, the present researchers were able to systematically collect and analyze the earnings among employed ex-prisoners. As Table 4 illustrates, results of this study revealed that a majority of ex-prisoners, both Caucasian and African American, would likely earn a low wage if employed. Most surprisingly, there were a significant number of employed ex-prisoners, both Caucasian and African American, who earned less than 5,000 dollars annually in the study period of 2005-2009. Regardless of ex-prisoner race, this study also found that ex-prisoners, if employed, were likely to be marginally-employed. Most marginally-employed ex-prisoners were only employed 1-2 quarters in any given year during this 5-year study period. Consequently, such marginally-employed ex-prisoners were likely to be classified as “working poor” and their annual income was clearly under the poverty line.

One striking finding in this study was that racial disparities in earnings among employed ex-prisoners were significant. Specifically, African American ex-prison-

Table 4: Racial disparities in annual income among employed ex-prisoners in the study period of 2005-2009 (statistics in percentage)

Income Level/Year	2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	W	B	W	B	W	B	W	B	W	B
Under \$5,000	41.3	55.0	41.0	53.3	41.3	52.9	43.8	54.8	45.1	53.9
Between \$5,000-\$9,999	21.6	31.1	18.4	18.2	17.6	17.8	16.1	15.7	17.1	17.9
Between \$10,000-\$19,999	26.9	11.3	22.4	19.7	20.7	18.2	19.6	15.7	18.5	14.3
Between \$20,000-\$29,999	7.2	2.1	10.4	5.7	11.9	7.1	11.7	8.0	9.7	7.9
Between \$30,000-\$39,999	2.4	0.0	4.8	1.8	5.2	2.7	5.5	4.0	6.0	3.7
\$40,000 or above	0.6	0.4	2.9	1.1	3.3	1.3	3.4	1.7	3.7	2.3

Note: “W” represents for Caucasian ex-prisoners and “B” for African American ex-prisoners

ex-prisoner race, a majority of ex-prisoners, if employed, would likely have 1-4 quarters of employment in a variety of industrial sectors after release from prison. For example, 43.7 percent of 1,682 employed Caucasian ex-prisoners, and 47.8 percent of 2,316 African

ers consistently earned less than Caucasian ex-prisoners, if employed. For example, as Table 4 indicates, there were more African American ex-prisoners than Caucasian ex-prisoners with an annual income below 5,000 dollars in any given year during the study pe-

riod of 2005-2009 (i.e., 55.0% versus 41.3% in 2005; 53.3% versus 41.0% in 2006; 52.9% versus 41.3% in 2007; 54.8% versus 43.8% in 2008; 53.9% versus 45.1% in 2009). The study demonstrated a similar pattern across all income levels in regard to racial disparities in annual income among employed ex-prisoners. This disparity in income between African American and Caucasian “employed” ex-prisoners was persistent throughout the pre-recession, recession, and post-recession period. This study also found that a relatively small number of employed ex-prisoners, regardless of race, earned 20,000 dollars or more in any given year

of the study period.

As Table 5 illustrates, the present researchers also examined racial disparities in re-incarceration in terms of survival time (i.e., elapsed time between the initial release and re-incarceration) among 3,086 recidivist ex-prisoners, which included 1,134 Caucasian ex-prisoners and 1,952 African American ex-prisoners. The most striking finding was that a notable number of ex-prisoners were likely to be re-incarcerated within 12 months (i.e., 1 year) after the initial release from prison, regardless of ex-prisoner race. Specifically, results of this study revealed that 46.7 percent (n=1,439)

Table 5: Racial disparities in elapsed time of re-incarceration after the Initial Release among recidivist ex-prisoners

Time Return	Caucasian (n=1,134)	African American (n=1,952)	Overall (N=3,086)
Within 3 months	65 (5.7%)	132 (6.8%)	197 (6.4%)
Within 3-6 months	143 (12.6%)	254 (13.0%)	397 (12.9%)
Within 6-9 months	175 (15.4%)	265 (13.6%)	440 (14.3%)
Within 9-12 months	152 (13.4%)	253 (13.0%)	405 (13.1%)
Within 12-15 months	127 (11.2%)	215 (11.0%)	342 (11.1%)
Within 15-18 months	124 (10.9%)	173 (8.9%)	297 (9.6%)
Within 18-21 months	81 (7.1%)	158 (8.1%)	239 (7.7%)
Within 21-24 months	66 (5.8%)	116 (5.9%)	182 (5.9%)
Within 24-27 months	45 (4.0%)	108 (5.5%)	153 (5.0%)
Within 27-30 months	33 (2.9%)	56 (2.9%)	89 (2.9%)
Within 30-33 months	12 (1.1%)	34 (1.7%)	46 (1.5%)
Within 33-36 months	2 (0.2%)	9 (0.5%)	11 (0.4%)
Within 36-39 months	6 (0.5%)	5 (0.3%)	11 (0.4%)
Within 39-42 months	8 (0.7%)	23 (1.2%)	31 (1.0%)
Within 42-45 months	25 (2.2%)	33 (1.7%)	58 (1.9%)
Within 45-48 months	22 (1.9%)	33 (1.7%)	55 (1.8%)
Within 48-51 months	25 (2.2%)	39 (2.0%)	64 (2.1%)
Within 51-54 months	16 (1.4%)	28 (1.4%)	44 (1.4%)
Within 54-57 months	5 (0.4%)	15 (0.8%)	20 (0.6%)
Within 57-60 months	2 (0.2%)	3 (0.2%)	5 (0.2%)

of a total of 3,086 recidivist ex-prisoners were re-incarcerated within the first year of release; 6.4 percent (n=197) were re-incarcerated within 3 months after release, 12.9 percent (n=397) were re-incarcerated within 3-6 months after release, 14.3 percent (n=440) were re-incarcerated within 6-9 months after release, and 13.1 percent (n=405) were re-incarcerated within 9-12 months after release. Furthermore, 81.0 percent (n=2,499) of 3,086 recidivist ex-prisoners were re-incarcerated within 2 years after the initial release from Indiana Department of Correction. This study also found that a vast majority of recidivist ex-prisoners were unemployed.

Results of this study also showed a similar pattern of re-incarceration between Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners, as Table 5 illustrates. Variations in the survival time between Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners were not significant. Specifically, 46.4 percent (n=904) of 1,952 recidivist African American ex-prisoners were re-incarcerated within 12 months (i.e., 1 year); 80.3 percent (n=1,566) of African American ex-prisoners were re-incarcerated within 24 months (i.e., 2 years); 90.9 percent (n=1,773) of African American ex-prisoners were re-incarcerated with 36 months (i.e., 3 years) after the initial release in 2005. On the other hand, 47.1 percent (n=535) of 1,134 recidivist Caucasian ex-prisoners were re-incarcerated within 12 months (i.e., 1 year); 82.1 percent (n=933) of Caucasian ex-prisoners were re-incarcerated within 24 months (i.e., 2 years); 90.3 percent (n=1,025) of Caucasian ex-prisoners were re-incarcerated with 36 months (i.e., 3 years) after the initial release in 2005. Undoubtedly, results of this study indicated that ex-prisoners were likely re-incarcerated within the first year of the initial release, and reentry supports need to be provided to ex-prisoners to help reduce the barriers they encounter soon after release.

The present researchers also examined racial disparities (or similarities) in the re-incarceration rate among ex-prisoners with a different level of education in order to analyze the effect of an ex-prisoner's level of education on post-release recidivism. Results of this study, as Table 6 indicates, showed that ex-prisoners with a lower level of education, regardless of race, had a higher recidivism rate than ex-prisoners who had a higher level of education. For example, this study's results revealed that the recidivism rate within the first year after initial release (i.e., within 9-12 months) was 26.2 percent among Caucasian ex-prisoners who had an education below high school, 20.8 percent among Caucasian ex-prisoners who had a high school diploma or GED, and 13.0 percent among Caucasian ex-pris-

oners who had a 2-year college degree or higher. On the other hand, the recidivism rate within the first year after initial release was 26.9 percent among African American ex-prisoners who had an education below high school, 22.1 percent among African American ex-prisoners who had a high school diploma or GED, and 14.2 percent among African American ex-prisoners with a 2-year college degree or higher.

Most importantly, this 5-year follow-up study demonstrated the distinct impact of an ex-prisoner's level of education on post-release recidivism. Regardless of race, ex-prisoners who had an education level below high school had a higher recidivism rate than ex-prisoners with either a high school diploma or college degree. At the end of this 5-year follow-up study (i.e., within 57-60 months), the recidivism rate was 55.2 percent among Caucasian ex-prisoners with an education level below high school, 43.4 percent among Caucasian ex-prisoners with a high school diploma, and 31.7 percent among Caucasian ex-prisoners with a 2-year college degree or higher. There was a similar pattern among African American ex-prisoners in regard to post-release recidivism. The recidivism rate was 57.8 percent among African American ex-prisoners with an education below high school, 48.6 percent among African American ex-prisoners with a high school diploma, and 30.8 percent among African American ex-prisoners with a 2-year college degree or higher.

Table 7 illustrates the logistic multiple regression analyses of post-release recidivism among three (3) different samples: all 6,394 ex-prisoners, 2,531 Caucasian ex-prisoners, and 3,863 African American ex-prisoners. In this study, data were standardized across all three (3) logistical multiple regression analyses. Results of the logistic multiple regression analysis (the *Overall* equation – Table 7) indicated that ex-prisoner's demographic characteristics (i.e., gender and age) and post-release employment were statistically and correlated ($p < .05$) with recidivism. In other words, results of this study found that male ex-prisoners or younger ex-prisoners were likely to become recidivist ex-prisoners after release from prison. Meanwhile, results also revealed that an ex-prisoner's level of education and post-release employment were statistically, but negatively, correlated ($p < .001$) with recidivism. It indicated that ex-prisoners would likely be re-incarcerated if they were uneducated (or under-educated) or unemployed. Most importantly, results of the multiple regression analysis showed that the effect of race on post-release recidivism was not significant.

In regard to 2,531 Caucasian ex-prisoners, results of the logistic multiple regression analysis (the *Cauca-*

Table 6: Racial disparities in re-incarceration rate (cumulative) after initial release among Caucasian and African American ex-prisoners with a different level of education

Time Return	Caucasian			African American		
	Below High School (n=753)	High School (n=1447)	College (n=145)	Below High School (n=1494)	High School (n=1944)	College (n=155)
Within 3 months	3.7%	2.3%	1.4%	3.7%	3.3%	2.6%
Within 3-6 months	9.9%	8.2%	5.5%	11.0%	9.8%	6.5%
Within 6-9 months	18.9%	14.9%	9.6%	19.3%	15.9%	9.7%
Within 9-12 months	26.2%	20.8%	13.0%	26.9%	22.1%	14.2%
Within 12-15 months	33.0%	24.7%	19.9%	33.9%	27.1%	17.4%
Within 15-18 months	39.4%	29.5%	21.3%	38.5%	31.6%	20.0%
Within 18-21 months	43.0%	32.6%	22.7%	43.5%	35.2%	25.2%
Within 21-24 months	45.4%	35.5%	26.1%	47.0%	38.1%	25.8%
Within 24-27 months	47.9%	37.0%	28.2%	50.5%	40.6%	27.7%
Within 27-30 months	49.2%	38.5%	28.9%	52.5%	41.8%	29.0%
Within 30-33 months	49.5%	39.2%	28.9%	53.2%	43.3%	29.0%
Within 33-36 months	49.8%	39.4%	28.9%	53.4%	43.3%	29.0%
Within 36-39 months	51.1%	39.7%	29.6%	53.5%	43.5%	29.0%
Within 39-42 months	51.4%	40.8%	30.3%	54.2%	44.1%	29.0%
Within 42-45 months	51.9%	41.8%	30.3%	54.9%	44.9%	29.6%
Within 45-48 months	52.7%	42.7%	30.3%	55.6%	46.0%	29.6%
Within 48-51 months	53.9%	43.3%	30.3%	56.3%	47.4%	30.2%
Within 51-54 months	54.8%	43.4%	31.0%	57.2%	48.1%	30.8%
Within 54-57 months	54.9%	43.4%	31.7%	57.7%	48.5%	30.8%
Within 57-60 months	55.2%	43.4%	31.7%	57.8%	48.6%	30.8%

sian equation – Table 7) showed that ex-prisoner age and education were statistically correlated ($p < .05$) with post-release recidivism. In other words, this study's results revealed that younger or uneducated (or under-educated) Caucasian ex-prisoners were likely to be recidivists. Meanwhile, results of the multiple regression analysis also demonstrated post-release employment was statistically, but negatively, correlated ($p < .001$) with recidivism among Caucasian ex-prisoners, while controlling for other variables. In other words, post-re-

lease employment was the most important predictor to recidivism among Caucasian ex-prisoners.

Among 3,863 African American ex-prisoners, results of the logistic multiple regression analysis (the *African American* equation – Table 7) showed ex-prisoner's demographic characteristics (i.e., gender, age and education) and post-release employment were statistically correlated ($p < .001$) with recidivism. In other words, this study's results revealed that male, younger or uneducated (or under-educated) African American

Table 7: Logistic multiple regression analyses of the post-release recidivism among Caucasian ex-prisoners, African American ex-prisoners, and all ex-prisoners

Variable	Caucasian (n=2,531)	African American (n=3,863)	Overall (N=6,394)
Ex-prisoner Race	n/a	n/a	-.141
Ex-prisoner Gender	-.094	.407***	.187*
Ex-prisoner Age	-.027***	-.014***	-.019***
Ex-prisoner Education	-.377***	-.389***	-.380***
Employment Status	-.379***	-.378***	-.374***
Constant	1.771	1.059	1.555

Note #1: Statistics in Table 7 are logistic regression coefficients and “*” denotes that coefficient is statistically significant at 0.05 level, “***” at 0.01 level, and “****” at 0.001 level.

Note #2: “n/a” means that logistic regression coefficient statistic is not applicable in that equation due to the fact that only one racial group has been considered in the equation.

ex-prisoners were likely to be recidivists. Most importantly, results of the multiple regression analysis showed that post-release employment was statistically, but negatively, correlated with recidivism among African American ex-prisoners, while controlling for other variables. Consistent with results from the sample of Caucasian ex-prisoners, post-release employment was the most important predictor of recidivism among African American ex-prisoners.

Discussion

One important finding from this 5-year follow-up study of 6,394 ex-prisoners from the IDOC was that ex-prisoner race was not statistically and correlated with post-release recidivism, while controlling for other variables. Meanwhile, results of this study consistently revealed that an ex-prisoner’s age, level of education, and post-release employment were the most influential indicators of recidivism. Regardless of ex-prisoner race, ex-prisoners were likely to be re-incarcerated if they were young, uneducated (or under-educated), and unemployed after release from prison. Undoubtedly, these ex-prisoners were likely school drop-outs upon admission to IDOC and did not complete the GED program prior to release from IDOC. Consequently, young and uneducated (or under-educated) ex-prisoners found it difficult to obtain employment upon release from prison. A further examination of post-release recidivism in this 5-year follow-up study revealed a recidivism rate of 68.8 percent among African American ex-prisoners who were under 30 years old, under-educated (below high school), and unemployed after re-

lease from IDOC. On the other hand, the recidivism rate reached 65.1 percent among Caucasian ex-prisoners who were under 30 years old, under-educated (below high school), and unemployed after release from IDOC. This study also found that young, uneducated and unemployed ex-prisoners had a high recidivism rate and were likely to return to IDOC custody due to committing a new crime or violating probation or parole.

Another important finding in this 5-year follow-up study was that racial disparities in post-release employment were distinctive. In other words, throughout the study period of 2005-2009, African American ex-prisoners would likely have a higher unemployment rate than Caucasian ex-prisoners after release from prison. A further examination showed that post-release employment and recidivism were statistically and negatively correlated (chi-square=51.79 at $p<.001$). The recidivism rate was 53.7 percent among ex-prisoners who had never been employed after release from IDOC custody. As results of this 5-year follow-up study indicated, at its core, post-release employment was the most influential factor on post-release recidivism regardless of ex-prisoner race.

It is important to mention that it was extremely difficult for ex-prisoners to find a job upon release from prison, and “unemployment” was positively correlated with recidivism, regardless of ex-prisoner race. Nonetheless, this 5-year follow-up study further revealed that not only “finding a job” was an important factor to reduce recidivism, but “retaining employment” was the most influential factor on recidivism among ex-prison-

ers. Undoubtedly, this study's results clearly indicated that ex-prisoners encountered tremendous difficulties in finding jobs after release from prison; if employed, they were unlikely to retain their employment for a long period of time. Even though this study's results show there are relationships between employment, education and recidivism, however, it cannot be determined from this data the degree to which education in and of itself leads to higher levels of post-release employment. A further examination of the relationship between ex-prisoner education and post-release employment is needed in future research.

This study revealed that racial disparities in levels of education were also significant. Specifically, there were a notable number of young African American males who did not complete high school prior to admission to the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) and prior to release from IDOC. Results of this 5-year follow-up study clearly revealed that the effect of an ex-prisoner's level of education on post-release recidivism and employment was significant. In other words, ex-prisoners with a higher level of education would likely have a higher employment rate and a lower recidivism rate compared to those ex-prisoners with a lower level of education. For example, a further examination revealed that the recidivism rate was 61.8 percent among African American male ex-prisoners who were under the age of 30 and without a high school diploma. Those African American male ex-prisoners under the age of 30 with a 2-year college degree or higher had a recidivism rate of 25.9 percent. There was a similar trend among Caucasian ex-prisoners; the recidivism rate decreased when the ex-prisoner's level of education increased.

Most importantly, this 5-year follow-up study clearly revealed that regardless of ex-prisoner race, there was a strong interrelationship between an ex-prisoner's level of education and post-release employment and recidivism. Consistent with previous studies (D'Alessio, et al., 2013; Nally, et al., 2011 & 2104(a); Phillip and Land, 2012; Varghese, et al., 2010), post-release employment was the most influential factor to determine recidivism among ex-prisoners.

A recent study (Nally, et al., 2012) found that a significant number of incarcerated inmates did not complete high school prior to release from prison and did not possess adequate and up-to-date job skills to meet with demands from a variety of industrial sectors. Consistent with previous researchers' findings (Chappell, 2004; Erisman and Contardo, 2005; Steurer and Smith, 2003), this study found that educationally-illit-

erate ex-prisoners were disproportionately unemployed and would likely have a higher recidivism rate. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Education (2012) indicated that the school drop-out rate in 2010 in the age group of 16-24 years old was 8.0 percent among African Americans, but only 5.1 percent among Caucasians. Racial disparities in educational deficiency further exacerbated many different social problems in urban communities where a majority of ex-prisoners would likely reside after release from prison (U.S. Department of Justice, 1998).

A further examination revealed that 60.5 percent (n=3,869) of a total of 6,394 ex-prisoners in this 5-year follow-up study returned to urban neighborhoods in the Indianapolis metropolitan area after release from IDOC custody; 63.5 percent (n=2,457) of 3,869 ex-prisoners in the metropolitan areas were African American. Due to an array of underlying socio-economic problems in urban communities, ex-prisoners, particularly African American ex-prisoners, would likely have a higher recidivism rate because they typically returned to neighborhoods saturated with poverty, unemployment, and crime. Specifically, post-release recidivism was correlated with unemployment among ex-prisoners (Blomberg, et al., 2012; Burke and Vivian, 2001; Cooney, 2012; Finn, 1998; La Vigne, et al., 2008; Makarios, et al., 2010; Steurer and Smith, 2003; Sung and Richter, 2006; Uggen, 2000). Undoubtedly, these unemployed ex-prisoners would exacerbate the crime problems in urban neighborhoods if there were insufficient supporting mechanisms to facilitate their re-entry into these communities. As this study's results showed, the recidivism rate among young, uneducated (or under-educated), unemployed, African American males was close to 70 percent. Clearly there is a need to address this specific demographic group when developing reentry strategies and supports.

Conclusion

Results of this study clearly implicated the need to enhance correctional education for incarcerated inmates in order to increase their employability after release from prison; which, in turn, would decrease post-release recidivism. The effect of correctional education on post-release employment and recidivism among ex-prisoners is widely recognized (Burke and Vivian, 2001; Nuttall et al., 2003; Rose, et al., 2010; Vacca, 2004). Correctional education plays a crucial role in enhancing the odds for post-release employment which is critical to an ex-prisoner's successful reentry. For many incarcerated ex-prisoners, African American, in

particular, correctional education might be the only educational remedy for improving their educational competencies and job skills prior to release from prison. Furthermore, correctional education could be a partial solution to narrowing racial disparities in post-release employment and recidivism among ex-prisoners.

A most recent study (Nally, et al., 2014(b)), which exclusively analyzed the job sectors that hired ex-prisoners, found that ex-prisoners likely would be employed in the following five major industrial sectors; they are (ranked in order): (1) the “temporary help services” sector, (2) the “leisure & hospitality” sector, (3) the “manufacturing” sector, (4) the “construction” sector, and (5) the “retail trade” sector. Nally, et al. (2014(b)) further indicated that the “temporary help services” and “leisure & hospitality” sectors were the two most prevalent employers of ex-prisoners, providing mostly hourly-based or seasonally labor-intensive jobs. Undoubtedly, skill-based manufacturing or construction jobs provided better wages for ex-prisoners with the necessary skill sets, but these job opportunities decreased during the recession (Nally, et al., 2014).

In recent years, funding for correctional education programs across the United States has decreased due to federal and state budget constraints. Needless to say, many skill-based vocational programs, such as manufacturing, are difficult to implement in prison settings due to the cost. However, correctional education administrators could selectively implement several of these skill-based programs. Undoubtedly, the benefits of employment-oriented, skill-based correctional education outweigh the cost of incarceration. Future research shall focus on the long-term impact of correctional vocational programs on post-release recidivism among ex-prisoners.

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Correctional Practitioners on Reentry: A Missed Perspective

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Abstract: *Much of the literature on reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals revolves around discussions of failures they incur during reintegration or the identification of needs and challenges that they have during reentry from the perspective of community corrections officers. The present research fills a gap in the reentry literature by examining the needs and challenges of formerly incarcerated individuals and what makes for reentry success from the perspective of correctional practitioners (i.e., wardens and non-wardens). The views of correctional practitioners are important to understand the level of organizational commitment to reentry and the ways in which social distance between correctional professionals and their clients may impact reentry success. This research reports on the results from an email survey distributed to a national sample of correctional officials listed in the American Correctional Association, 2012 Directory. Specifically, correctional officials were asked to report on needs and challenges facing formerly incarcerated individuals, define success, identify factors related to successful reentry, recount success stories, and report what could be done to assist them in successful outcomes. Housing and employment were raised by wardens and corrections officials as important needs for successful reentry. Corrections officials adopted organizational and systems perspectives in their responses and had differing opinions about social distance. Policy implications are presented.*

Keywords: *Reentry; Practitioners; Success; Corrections Officials; Wardens*

Reentry is a pressing issue at the forefront of corrections today. In 2013, just under 7 million persons were serving under some form of correctional supervision (i.e., prison, jail, probation, and parole) (Glaze & Kaeble, 2014). Of that total, approximately 1.2 million individuals were serving sentences in prison. Every day in the United States, 1,800 adults (600,000 annually) leave federal and state prisons and return to society (Carson & Sobel, 2012). Each day these individuals attempt to successfully reintegrate back into their communities. However, successful reentry is an elusive goal for many given the almost insurmountable obstacles facing them (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013; Petersilia, 2003). Research on reentry over the past thirty years has demonstrated that formerly incarcerated persons' ability to reintegrate successfully is hindered by numerous obstacles such as difficulty in obtaining employment, acquiring housing, and being admitted to higher education (Allender, 2004; Cowan & Fionda, 1994; Delgado, 2012; Harlow, 2003; Harris & Keller, 2005; Hunt, Bowers, & Miller, 1973; Latessa, 2012;

Nagin & Waldfogel, 1993; Paylor, 1995; Pinard, 2010; Rodriguez & Brown, 2003; Starr, 2002; Whelan, 1973); many also have serious social and medical problems (Petersilia, 2003). Newly released persons encounter stigmatization (Bahn & Davis, 1991; Funk, 2004; Steffensmeier & Kramer, 1980; Tewksbury, 2005), lose social standing in their communities (Chiricos, Jackson, & Waldo, 1972), and are in need of social support (Berg & Huebner, 2010; Cullen, 1994; La Vigne, Visser, & Castro, 2004; Lurigio, 1996) as well as substance abuse and mental health treatment (Petersilia, 2003). Thus, successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated persons into the community is critical if reductions in recidivism are to be achieved (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013; Shinkfield & Graffam, 2009).

Several researchers have explored whether criminal justice professionals are aware of the needs and challenges formerly incarcerated persons face upon reentry (Brown, 2004a; Brown, 2004b; Graffam et al., 2004; Gunnison & Helfgott, 2007; Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013; Helfgott, 1997; Helfgott & Gunnison, 2008).



For instance, Brown (2004a) examined perceptions of federal parole officers regarding formerly federally incarcerated persons' needs in Canada, and Graffam and colleagues (2004) examined criminal justice professionals' perceptions of formerly incarcerated persons' needs in Melbourne, Australia. Additionally, Gunnison & Helfgott (2007) examined community correction officers' (CCO)¹ perceptions of the needs of formerly incarcerated individuals, the value officers placed on the specific needs, and the opportunities available to meet their needs in Seattle, Washington. More recently, Lutze (2014) provided a comprehensive examination of the professional lives of CCOs and their critical involvement in reentry success. Describing CCOs as "street-level boundary spanners," Lutze (2014, p. xii) offers a detailed account of how individuals in the CCO role provide necessary links that cut across criminal justice, social service, and mental health systems. This attention to the CCO role and perspective in the reentry process is a critical missing piece in understanding the complexities of reentry success. To date, the research exploring criminal justice professionals' perceptions of needs and challenges has focused specifically on CCOs, but has not on perspectives of other correctional professionals, such as correctional superintendents and wardens, correctional counselors, or other correctional personnel.

This study builds on previous research (Brown 2004a; Brown 2004b; Graffam et al., 2004; Gunnison & Helfgott, 2007; Gunnison & Helfgott 2013; Helfgott, 1997; Helfgott & Gunnison, 2008; Lutze, 2014) to fill the gap in the literature by examining the needs and challenges of formerly incarcerated individuals and successful reentry from correctional officials across the nation—wardens and non-wardens. The perspectives on successful reentry from these professionals have not been heard to date. While some may argue that warden and superintendent perspectives are not directly relevant in the reentry literature because these executive correctional administrators do not interface with the delivery of reentry programs, this is a misconception. "Leaders of state and federal institutions define and set the tone for what constitutes success and how systems may collaborate to provide essential services to achieve shared goals" (Lutze, 2014, p. 240-241). Reentry success depends on buy-in from all levels of correctional administration and staff to ensure continuity of reentry efforts

¹ CCOs refer to employees in the court and correctional systems who monitor both pre-sentenced and sentenced persons in the community (e.g., probation and parole offenders) to ensure that they are complying with regulations, such as obtaining employment and refraining from criminal activity, and assist their clients in gaining access to programming that they need (e.g., drug and/or alcohol treatment). All CCOs receive training as part of their jobs and their educational backgrounds vary from those who are only high school educated to those that are college graduates.

across prison and community corrections contexts with "continuum of care beginning the first day of incarceration, flowing into community supervision, and solidifying in the community long-term" (Lutze, 2014, p. 256). Thus, the views of correctional administrators regarding reentry are ultimately as critical as line-level community corrections personnel in implementing system-wide reentry programs that span and are supported within institutional and community corrections contexts. Additionally, this research further examines the narratives of these officials from an organizational and systems theory perspective with attention to the ways in which social distance (Helfgott & Gunnison, 2008; Jones, 2004; Schnittker, 2004) may impact the ability of correctional professionals to assist formerly incarcerated individuals in the reentry process.

Literature Review

With the passage of legislation in the United States (U.S.) designed to assist formerly incarcerated persons in successful reintegration from prison into their communities and discussions by international scholars of new legislation in countries, such as Serbia, that aim to reduce recidivism in these newly released individuals, the topic of reentry resonates across international borders (Batricevic & Ilijic, 2013; Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2011). Utilizing research studies from both U.S. and international scholars, the following sections provide an overview of what formerly incarcerated persons need during reentry as well as the views that correctional professionals have about what is needed to enhance reentry success. The views of *both* correctional professionals and formerly incarcerated individuals are important to investigate when it comes to examining reentry. A shared understanding of the needs and challenges that these persons face in the transition from incarceration to community life among line-staff and administrative correctional professionals, as well as between them and their families, have the potential to enhance reentry success. From an organizational and systems theory perspective, all players and structures within the criminal justice system are interconnected and ideally work together to perform the function of criminal justice. Gibbs (1970) describes an organization as a creation to achieve means for specified objectives or outcomes. Its design determines how goals are subdivided and emulated within subdivisions of the organization. Therefore, these divisions, departments, sections, positions, jobs, and tasks make up the work structure or work group. Furthermore, within the criminal justice system, there are various levels within the

structure with the goal of positive outcomes. As seen through the interaction of the offender with the criminal justice system, he or she is input into the criminal justice system via an act of criminality, and then processed into some form of correction, and the anticipated goal is the output of a non-offender. Additionally, criminal cases processed within the criminal justice system not only include the offender; the victim and the general public are a part of the systems as noted in outputs such as increased safety and retribution. Any defective products of the criminal justice system would be those of re-offending offenders and dissatisfied victims (Benard, Paoline, & Pare, 2005). Thus, the shared goals among professionals across components of the criminal justice as well as shared goals among administrative-level and line corrections personnel has the potential to improve reentry success (Bernard et al., 2005; DeMichele, 2014; Gibbs, 1970; Giblin, 2013; Kraska & Brent, 2011; National Research Council, 2004).

Issues of technology transfer, however, whereby administrators and line-level staff are disconnected can be a hindrance to successful rehabilitation (Gendreau, Goggin, & Smith, 1999). After all, if correctional administrators are expecting their employees to both know and follow principles of effective rehabilitation, but they are not, then it is likely that reentry will not be successful. Additionally, on a broader cultural level, social distance and the view of formerly incarcerated persons as “other” (e.g., not “normal;” antisocial; or lower in social status) is a feature of the late modern culture of control (Garland, 2001) that can be seen as the antithesis of the creation of opportunities for these individuals to succeed in the reentry process. Furthermore, as the individual is perceived as the “other” and thus a member of the marginalized and criminalized populations, they have very little political power or voice including public sympathy when it comes to providing more opportunity such as social services for a successful reentry (Garland, 2001).

Needs and Obstacles in the Reentry Process

Over the past several decades, research has emerged, in the United States and across the world, that has identified critical needs that formerly incarcerated individuals have during reentry as well as some of the obstacles that they face trying to fulfill their needs. Reentry needs consistently identified in the literature include housing, employment, and substance abuse treatment (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013; Petersilia, 2003). Housing has been identified as one of the most difficult obstacles that these persons face (Corden, Kuipers, & Wilson, 1978; Cowan & Fionda, 1994; Graffam et al., 2004; Paylor,

1995; Roman & Travis, 2004; Starr, 2002). Limited credit, rental history, finances, and the tendency for property managers to conduct background checks and to deny housing to particular types of persons, severely reduces housing opportunities for formerly incarcerated persons (Helfgott, 1997). While legislation was passed in the United Kingdom in 2002 to assist formerly incarcerated persons in gaining access to housing, barriers still remain ranging from limitations to where they may reside to availability of housing options (Gokovic, Mills, & Meek, 2012). Newly released persons cite employment as another primary obstacle in the reentry process (Latessa, 2012; Visher, Baer, & Naser, 2006). Many must rely on personal connections to find a job (Visher, LaVigne, & Travis, 2004) and attempts to secure employment are often thwarted by legal barriers (Harris & Keller, 2005) and employer unwillingness to hire them (Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2003). In an examination of employment legislation for twelve countries in the European Union, for instance, Loucks, Lyner, and Sullivan (1998) found that a criminal record was a substantial barrier for formerly incarcerated persons in gaining employment. More recently, Pijoan (2014) reports that this is still a problem and states that there is an increased use of criminal background checks for employment in continental Europe. Employment discrimination for formerly incarcerated persons has been found in other countries such as Australia (Saliba, 2013). Drug addiction is a struggle for many of these individuals (Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008; McKean & Raphael, 2002), many of whom are in need of mental health support (Lurigio, 1996; Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008) and may resort to drastic measures such as suicide in response to the stress (Biles, Harding, & Walker, 1999). Formerly incarcerated persons need assistance with the prevention of relapse into alcohol and/or drug use (Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008; Prendergast, Wellich, & Wong, 1996). Such assistance, mental health treatment and relapse support, is particularly important as social support can contribute to successful reintegration (Cullen, 1994; Hepburn & Griffin, 2004; Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008). Also of consideration are the legal penalties placed upon them known as “collateral consequences [that] burden individuals long past the expiration of their sentences and which, individually and collectively, frustrate their ability to move past their criminal records” (Pinard, 2010, p. 1214). These collateral consequences are defined as ineligibility for the following: federal welfare benefits; government assisted housing; jury service; restriction from certain types of employment and licensing; restriction from military service; sex offender registration and voting

disenfranchisement. It should be noted that these consequences not only affect the formerly incarcerated individual, they also create an impact upon their families and communities—thus exasperating an already difficult reentry for them into the community (Pinard, 2010).

The high level of need for social services and assistance one year after release such as housing-assistance, job training, education, medical assistance, and general financial support and the difficulty in obtaining such services can make reentry into society very difficult (Visher, 2007). Also, consequences due to limited access to resources impact not only the formerly incarcerated individual and his/her family; it can also affect mainstream society. For example, from 1982- 2005, U.S. taxpayers experienced a 700% increase in spending for corrections, from \$9 billion to over \$65 billion. This is reflective of the inability for many to reintegrate into society as a result of limited access to social service benefits (Mouzon, 2008).

With a dearth of knowledge that has emerged on reentry due to not only researcher interest but also the availability of federally supported research investigations on reentry, much has been learned beyond needs and challenges of formerly incarcerated persons reentering society (Miller, 2014). For example, reentry success, or the ability of these persons to reintegrate successfully into society following incarceration, may depend on the availability of programming to assist those considered high risk as well as aftercare provided in the community to these individuals (Bouffard & Bergeron, 2006; Miller & Miller, 2010). Despite such gains in knowledge, much of the research on reentry has focused on defining success as “recidivism” which often leads to an incomplete understanding of reentry (Miller, 2014).

Correctional Perspectives on Needs and Challenges

Similar to research emerging on reentry, over the past decade, research has emerged on state and federal correctional officers’ perspectives about the needs and challenges formerly incarcerated individuals have during reentry (Brown, 2004a; Brown, 2004b; Graffam et al., 2004; Gunnison & Helfgott, 2007; Gunnison & Helfgott 2013; Helfgott, 1997; Helfgott & Gunnison, 2008). In 2002, Seiter examined 114 state parole officers in Missouri as to their perceptions of what is important to reentry and how their own job contributions could be a factor in successful reintegration. Consistent with previous needs pinpointed in the empirical literature, the parole officers identified employment, abstaining from drugs, and social support as important needs.

The officers believed that they could help facilitate reentry by establishing close surveillance of the parolees, assisting parolees in maintaining employment, and referring parolees to community agencies that would meet their needs. Additionally, Brown (2004a; 2004b) examined perceptions of 74 federal parole officers regarding formerly federally incarcerated persons’ needs and challenges in the first 90 days of release in Canada. Officers identified food, clothing, shelter, transportation, life skills, education, and employment assistance as the most important needs that parolees have when first released. Officers stated that the challenges they faced included: establishing family support, readjusting to non-institutional life, financial problems, lack of employment experience, stigma, and lack of access to programming.

In a study of 132 state and federal CCOs in Seattle, Washington, Gunnison and Helfgott (2007) reported the top five needs that CCOs identified that newly released persons face are shelter/housing, job placement services, knowledge of the crime cycle, having a realistic community plan, and understanding risk factors. Further, officers reported the following challenges that newly released persons face upon release as the top five: finding shelter/housing, returning to substance abuse, being accustomed to getting money easily through illegal means, returning to dysfunctional families, and developing positive associations. In a 1997 study, Helfgott, who interviewed formerly incarcerated persons about their needs, reported that they believed that their CCOs did not truly understand their needs and did not see their CCOs as a resource in the reentry process. One subject stated, “they [CCOs] just want you to tell a good lie...they have no understanding of what it’s like...take them out [of their environment] and they wouldn’t be able to survive on the streets” (Helfgott, 1997, p. 16). Yet, Helfgott’s (1997) study did not examine CCOs’ views of reentry needs as well as their perception of whether or not officer-client social distance² influences the reentry process. This idea of CCO and client social distance was explored in subsequent research investigations with CCOs. For example, in another study on CCO perceptions, Helfgott and Gunnison (2008) found that social distance was significantly related to officer identification of some needs and challenges, and offi-

² “Social distance” has been defined in the research literature as and the level of trust one group has for another (Schnittker, 2004) and the degree of perceived similarity of beliefs between a perceiver and target (Jones, 2004). Several scales in the institutional corrections literature have been developed to measure social distance between officers and offenders (e.g., Hepburn, 1984; Klofas & Toch, 1982). However, no clear consensus exists regarding the definition or measurement of officer-client social distance.

cer attitudes toward their clients. However, from the officers' perspective, social distance did not appear to play a large role in officer ability to identify reentry needs. Officers did not collectively perceive officer-client social distance as a hindrance in the reentry process and suggested that their clients may use the notion of social distance as an excuse not to change. To further explore CCOs' perspectives on reentry, Gunnison and Helfgott (2011) reported results from narrative survey responses from state and federal CCOs. Some CCOs reported that successful reentry is due to a rational decision to change. For instance, one officer reported, "Prosocial living is a choice just as crime and drug use is a choice" (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2011, p. 295). Another theme that emerged from the research revolved around officer attitude. That is, the CCOs' attitude may contribute to or hinder reentry success. As one officer stated, "Sometimes depends on the CCO if they have a superior attitude or not, if the CCO believes he/she is better than the offender, then offender will see that and act accordingly" (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2011, p. 296). This statement suggests that if CCOs view the formerly incarcerated person as the "other," then perhaps they will be unable to help their clients. When the CCOs were asked whether social distance played a role in reentry success, they overwhelmingly reported that it did not. In response to this question, one officer reported, "No! The offenders will find all kinds of excuses to lurk behind. It's the offenders that would want to change and the community corrections officer's situation does not matter here" (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2011, p. 295). Therefore, this statement emphatically displays the belief there is not social distance in the relationship between the CCO and formerly incarcerated individual; it is the formerly incarcerated individual's motivation to change rather than the influence of the CCO rather than social distance.

More recently, Gunnison and Helfgott (2013), in a qualitative study, interviewed 19 CCOs on their perceptions of reentry success and probed CCOs about what is needed to foster reentry success. The researchers began with asking the CCOs to define "success." Some CCOs reported the lack of re-offending as success while others mentioned that success is when there are small improvements in the life of the formerly incarcerated individual. That is, not all CCOs viewed success in terms of recidivism. Additionally, the researchers reported that CCOs cited factors such as housing, family support, sobriety, and mental health assistance as the foundation pieces to successful reentry. One of the CCOs described how having a basic need met, such as housing, can free formerly incarcerated persons to

focus on what they need to do to be successful:

What is huge for this population in particular is housing; I mean that is important for any one, but when you're working with people who have chronic mental illness and such a lengthy history, it is another compounding factor that keeps them from doing well in addition to being a convicted felon, in addition to having a history of homelessness; then they have this chronic mental illness and probably, maybe a drug or alcohol addiction with it. . . . I've seen housing be an amazing component to someone's success and turn people's lives around in a way you never thought. . . like a motel room would even do (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013, p. 152).

The researchers also asked CCOs how they contribute to success. Many CCOs reported that building trust, establishing rapport, and guiding clients towards resources were ways in which they contributed to reentry success. With regard to social distance, several CCOs in their research investigation believed that the perceptions of social distance by formerly incarcerated individuals about their CCOs may be due to the nature of the CCOs' role—to maintain professional boundaries between themselves and their clients. Other CCOs did acknowledge that their clients may perceive social distance, but that the CCOs work to break down these barriers through establishing good communication and rapport with them. Gunnison and Helfgott (2013) reported that beyond the needs (i.e., housing, employment, treatment) being met, CCOs mentioned that formerly incarcerated persons' willingness to change as well as having a good social support structure are critical to fostering successful reentry. Lutze (2014) explains that when the perspective of CCOs is examined, it becomes clear that community supervision of clients is a complex endeavor; it involves multiple approaches that straddle a broad range of criminal and social justice and community agencies, and, ultimately, community corrections and reentry is a human business characterized by the success and depth of interpersonal relationships.

There has been very limited research conducted on correctional perspectives of reentry outside the U.S., and the scant research that does exist has centered on probation officers' views of their needs. For example, McNeill (2000), who interviewed 12 probation officers in Scotland, reported that the officers emphasized meeting the needs of their clients as one key to promoting probation effectiveness. However, in an examination of 15 French probation officers, Herzog-Evans

(2011) found that probation officers had had no knowledge about what needs their clients had or how they could even assist their clients. In fact, many officers felt nothing could be done for their clients and viewed that their role was to give their client a push towards law-abiding behavior when it seemed like they were ready for such a push. This finding suggests a problem with technology transfer. On the other hand, in an analysis of 300 intervention plans created by probation officers in the Netherlands, Bosker, Witteman, and Hermanns (2013) found that officers are aware of needs that should be met for their clients as they administer a risk assessment instrument to their clients. However, the officers' intervention plans often fail to address the identified needs—suggesting again a problem with technology transfer or disconnect between knowledge and intervention plans that could promote desistance.

The present study seeks to fill the gap in the literature by examining successful reentry from the perspective of correctional officials in administrative and other professional roles across the nation—wardens and non-wardens. The perspectives on successful reentry from these professionals (i.e., wardens or upper level administrators) have not been heard to date. Additionally, moving beyond examining reentry through the lens of recidivism, the researchers asked the respondents to report on the needs and challenges facing formerly incarcerated individuals, define success, discuss social distance, describe how they may have contributed to their success, identify factors that may contribute to success, and report on what needs to be done *right now* to foster successful reentry. Further, the researchers examine their responses to ascertain how their narratives fit within the existing organizational and system perspectives and whether they adopt the view of formerly incarcerated persons as “other.”

Method

To explore the needs and challenges of those reentering society, reentry success, and what is needed today for successful reentry, this research investigation required the inclusion of multiple practitioners in the corrections field to garner their perspectives. Through such an investigation, this research study seeks to contribute to the understanding of the needs and challenges faced by formerly incarcerated persons and the identification of successful reentry factors.

Sample

The data used in the following analyses are gathered from a voluntary self-report survey that was

e-mailed to 904³ correctional workers (i.e., wardens and non-wardens) across the nation via Survey Monkey⁴. Specifically, this survey collected responses from a national pool of correctional staff including wardens, superintendents, chaplains, social workers, counselors, and correctional officers from adult and juvenile prison facilities. The e-mail addresses⁵ were obtained from the *American Correctional Association, 2012 Directory*. This directory lists individuals by name and position (ex. warden, prison chaplain, etc.) along with their contact information (i.e., e-mail address) for each state. Before data collection began, approval from the Institutional Review Board at Seattle University was granted.

The first surveys were e-mailed to wardens and superintendents from January to March of 2013⁶. Following the survey administration to administrators, a second, and final, wave of surveys were e-mailed to correctional staff from June to September of 2013. After the survey was first e-mailed for each wave, two subsequent e-mail reminders were e-mailed to the sample pool in hopes of garnering more participation. While the survey response rate was low at 12.7%, it is not unexpected as e-mailed surveys historically yield low response rates (Bachman & Schutt 2013). The following sections describe the demographics of all 71 respondents for both waves and then demographics for the respondents who identified as wardens (n=49) or superintendents and those who did not identify as wardens or superintendents (n=22) (See Table 1).

Overall, for the 71 participants who completed the survey, the majority were White (73%), male (51%), indicated they held a bachelor's degree as their highest level of education (47%), worked in the corrections field before their current position (75%), and had

3 This number includes the total number of working e-mail addresses that the survey was sent to. An additional 103 surveys were e-mailed to participants but the e-mails bounced back to us. Thus, we have excluded these from our total possible sample size count.

4 Note: The researchers were members of the ACA and had access to the national database as part of the membership. The researchers are academics and not correctional professionals although they have many years of experience conducting research in correctional facilities.

5 The researchers tried to purchase all of the e-mail addresses for American Correctional Association (ACA) members, but this was not an option made available by the ACA. Therefore, a research assistant created a nationwide database of e-mail addresses that were published in the directory. The unavailability of a full list of ACA member e-mails very much limited our sample size.

6 When the authors first e-mailed the surveys to participants, some states (e.g., Tennessee, Michigan, Washington) would not allow their employees to participate in the survey unless the authors went through a separate state Research Review/Institutional Review Board (IRB) process even though the project had already been approved by the IRB at Seattle University. Such state Department of Corrections policies resulted in a further limitation to the sample size since not all 50 states could be included. Specifically, the exclusion by these states further limited our total sample size by 48 participants which resulted in our final sample size of 904. It is unknown as to whether such policies also contributed to no responses from employees in other states.

worked in their position for 1-5 years (47%). The ages of the total sample ranged from 33 years to 69 years of age with the average age being 51. The total number of years of service that the participants had worked in the correctional field prior to the current position was as follows: 7% held 1-5 years of service; 7% held 6-10 years of service; 16% held 11-15 years of service; 17% held 16-20 years of service; and 30% held 21 years or more of service. The majority of participants worked in a state facility at 87% while only 3% worked in a

non-governmental facility.

For the 49 participants who identified as wardens or superintendents who completed the survey, the majority were White (84%), male (53%), indicated they held a bachelor's degree as their highest level of education (58%)⁷, worked in the corrections field before their current position (88%), and had worked in their position for 1-5 years (61%). The age of participants ranged from 38 years of age to 62 years of age with average

Table 1

Demographics for ACA National Pooled Respondents

	Wardens (N=49)	Non-Wardens (N=22)	Overall (N=71)
Race/Ethnicity			
Black	9.3%	13.6%	9.9%
White	83.7%	72.7%	73.2%
Asian	2.3%	0.0%	1.4%
American Indian	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Hispanic	2.3%	4.5%	2.8%
Bi-Racial	0.0%	4.5%	1.4%
Other	2.3%	4.5%	2.8%
Educational Status			
High School	4.7%	0.0%	2.8%
GED	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tech School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tech Diploma	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some College	0.0%	9.1%	2.8%
Associates	0.0%	4.5%	1.4%
BA	58.1%	36.4%	46.5%
MA	37.2%	50.0%	38.0%
Gender			
Male	53.5%	59.1%	50.7%
Female	46.5%	40.9%	40.8%
Current Employer Status			
State	97.6%	95.5%	87.3%
Federal	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Previous Correctional Work Experience			
No	11.6%	31.8%	16.9%
Yes	88.4%	68.2%	74.9%
Years in Correctional Field Prior to Current Position			
0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
1-5	5.1%	20.0%	7.0%
6-10	5.1%	20.0%	7.0%
11-15	17.9%	26.7%	15.5%
16-20	20.5%	26.7%	16.9%
21 years or more	51.3%	6.7%	29.6%

age being 50. The total number of years of service that the participants had worked in the correctional field prior to the current position was as follows: 5% held 1-5 years of service; 5% held 6-10 years of service; 18% held 11-15 years of service; 20% held 16-20 years of service; and 51% held 21 or more years of service. The majority of participants (98%) worked in a state facility while only 2% worked in a non-governmental facility.

Of the 22 participants who were identified as non-wardens who completed the survey, the majority were White (73%), male (59%), indicated they held a Master's degree as their highest level of education (58%), worked in the corrections field before their current position (68%), and had worked in their position for 6-10 years (32%). The age of participants ranged from 33 years of age to 69 years of age with the average age being 51. The total number of years of service that the participants had worked in the correctional field prior to the current position was as follows: 20% held 1-5 years of service; 27% held 6-10 years of service; 27% held 11-15 years of service; and 7% held 16-20 years of service. The majority of participants (96%) worked in a state facility while only 4% worked in a non-governmental facility.

The survey instrument had a total of 14 open-ended questions that asked subjects about ex-offender re-entry. Participants were queried about the needs and challenges ex-offenders have upon release, their definitions of ex-offender reentry success, how they can contribute to success, inhibitors to success, factors that foster success, the role of social distance, and what is needed to better help ex-offenders during reentry (See Table 2). Through a process of narrative analysis, the responses of the survey from the 22 correctional staff and 49 wardens and superintendents were inductively evaluated in search of common themes.⁸ Each response was read several times, labeled, coded per theme noted, and then entered in SPSS to determine frequency of theme per respondent through a descriptive analysis. Additionally, themes were explored further through the inspection of open-ended responses.

The analyses proceeded in several stages. First, all data was entered into SPSS, and then frequencies for all variables including the narrative responses were run. For all the remaining data that was narrative, the researchers reviewed and inspected the responses for each question line by line and applied code to key words and phrases. Then, the researchers counted the

frequency of the occurrence for the key word or phrase for the individual question. The researchers also applied the same approach when examining narratives that were indicative of an organizational and systems perspective as well as views of formerly incarcerated persons.

Results

The results are presented within themes that emerged from the data⁹. For both correctional administrators (i.e., wardens and superintendents) and correctional line staff, we report on their perceptions of the needs and challenges faced by formerly incarcerated persons during reentry. Next, we report on the how both groups adopted an organizational and systems perspective in response to our questions. Then, we report on the perspectives that both groups had of formerly incarcerated individuals to ascertain whether they viewed them as "other." Finally, we investigated the similarities and differences between the two samples in regard to their responses.

Correctional Administrator (Warden and Superintendent) Perspectives of Needs

The researchers asked correctional administrators about their views of the needs and challenges faced by formerly incarcerated persons during reentry and asked them to recall some examples of those who had successfully reintegrated back into their communities. When asked about the needs their clients had upon re-entry, wardens and supervisors identified employment as the most important need after release at 76%, followed by the need for housing at 67% (See Table 3). Other important needs were identified such as community corrections at 45% and support from family at 41%. Challenges often experienced by formerly incarcerated persons upon re-entry were described as limited or no employment at 58%, limited or no housing at 40%, no acceptance from family and community at 35%, associating with friends in deviant networks at 23%, and limited or no coping skills at 23%.

As noted, employment and housing, followed by family support are important factors in facilitating successful reentry for the individual. One warden described the short-term and long term needs for formerly incarcerated persons as follows:

Immediate needs are to secure appropriate housing, family re-integration, employment (application, interviewing techniques), job leads. Longer-term needs include NA/AA counseling, family counseling, life skills

⁸ While the survey did allow for the survey respondent to provide his/her contact information in order for the researchers to engage in follow-up interviews, very few participants provided this information. Thus, the researchers were unable to engage participants in follow-up conversations.

⁹ Note: To preserve the integrity of the data, all participant responses were used without editing. Thus, any typos or misspellings observed are part of the original responses.

Table 2

Survey Instrument

1) What needs do ex-offenders have upon reentry? Please specify both immediate (i.e., within 90 days of release) and longer-term needs (i.e., 6 months to one year later). Also, please be as exhaustive as possible in your listing of needs. Feel free to add any additional comments regarding the factors that you identified.
2) What challenges do ex-offenders have upon reentry? Please specify both immediate (i.e., within 90 days of release) and longer-term challenges (i.e., 6 months to one year later). Also, please be as exhaustive as possible in your listing of challenges. Feel free to add any additional comments regarding the factors that you identified.
3) What recollections of success stories do you have? Please provide a number count of how many ex-offenders successful reentry stories you can recall and provide a few examples of stories of successful ex-offender reentry. Also, please specify if these offenders were probationers, parolees, work release clients, etc., their criminal offense, as well as any demographics that you can recall about the offender such as approximate age, race/ethnicity, and gender.
4) How do you think you contributed to the success of the offenders you have worked with who have succeeded in the reentry process?
5) How do you personally define reentry success?
6) Describe your personal style of interaction with ex-offenders.
7) How does your above-mentioned interaction with offenders impact offender success upon release?
8) What factor(s) can you identify that inhibit successful ex-offender reentry? Please be as exhaustive as possible in your listing of responses. Feel free to add any additional comments regarding the factors that you identified. Please note if any of your identified factors differ by the types of crime that offender may have committed or by demographics such as gender, race/ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.
9) What factor(s) can you identify that enhance successful ex-offender reentry? Please be as exhaustive as possible in your listing of responses. Feel free to add any additional comments regarding the factors that you identified. Please note if any of your identified factors differ by the types of crime that offender may have committed or by demographics such as gender, race/ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.
10) In situations where there are opportunities in the community for ex-offenders to meet the above identified needs, but offenders do not take advantage of the opportunities and are not able to create "niches" in the community to enhance their success, what do you see as the primary factor obstructing offenders' ability to get their needs met?
11) What are your general thoughts about what should be done in your community to deal with offenders who re-enter the community upon release from a period of incarceration? What gaps exist or hinder successful ex-offender transition?
12) Previous research has suggested that some offenders feel that their community corrections officers do not understand their situations because they come from very different social backgrounds. We are interested to get your perspective on this issue. Is social distance (differences in past experiences, economic circumstances, drug/alcohol use, etc) between offenders and community corrections officers a problem that hinders offenders success upon release?
13) What barriers do you face in your job that inhibits your ability to foster successful ex-offender reentry?
14) If you were to ask for one thing that would make your job easier in enhancing ex-offender success upon release, what would it be?

training.

Another warden poignantly mentioned that they have:

Every need you and I have. Clothing, housing, medications, transportation, employment, health care, pro-social contacts and activities.

Given that successful reentry is difficult, not surprisingly, many wardens in our sample had difficulties in recalling success stories. For those who were able to recall success stories, the following factors for a suc-

cessful outcome were identified as: placement into employment (44%); education (31%); and support from family, faith, support groups, and corrections (28%). Finally, volunteering within the community or prison environment was also identified as a contributor to successful reentry (19%). For example, wardens reported,

Most successful stories I have heard are due to their age. Most offenders who began their criminal beginnings at a young age, by the time they reach their 50's are less likely to return. For example, I have an offend-

Table 3

Correctional Administrator (Warden and Superintendent) Perspectives of Needs & Challenges

<u>Needs</u>		
Code	Category	
Fam	Family	41%
CommCo	Community Corrections	45%
House	Housing	67%
Employ	Employment	76%
<u>Challenges</u>		
Code	Category	
NoCope	Limited or No Coping skills	23%
BadFriends	Bad Friends, Old networks	23%
NoHouse	Limited or No Housing	40%
NoEmploy	Limited or No Employment	58%
Stigma	No Acceptance from Family and Community	35%

er in the 80's, 90's and 2000's, for selling drugs. Each time he was release he returned to the same neighborhood, and had the same acquaintances, until their acquaintances moved or died and they became older, their crime stopped.

I worked with an offender who was doing very poorly on supervision. He was using drugs regularly, stealing from his supportive others, engaging in violent behavior. Complicating matters, he was hearing impaired and did not know sign language. We were at the point we were recommending revocation because we were concerned about community safety. His supportive other called me and asked for another chance. He was able to get into an AODA program, we were able to get him a hearing device that was able to amplify sound enough for him to use and we were able to enroll him in sign language classes. He excelled in the program and we worked to give him positive feedback on his progress. I get a card from him every year telling me that he is doing great and thanks me for giving him another chance. He was a probationer, on for burglary, while male in his late 20's.

Although successful reentry is possible, there are various factors that the wardens and superintendents identified as inhibitors. For example, 29% noted that associating with deviant social networks contributed to unsuccessful reentry. Limited access to counseling or therapy was determined to be an inhibiting factor at 22% as well as a bad attitude, lack of support from family, community, and corrections, and limited employment at 21%. Finally, the "offender type" was an inhibiting factor or collateral consequence dependent

upon the type of offense, disabilities, age, gender, and race as well. One participant reported, "Females generally get lower paying jobs out of prison. Sex Offenders can't find employment or housing." Another participant, referencing age and type of crime committed, reported,

The younger the inmate, the harder for them to achieve positive habits. I know this theory is opposite from what most experts feel as the general thought is "the younger person can change their habits easier than an older person". However, I view the younger person has less motivation to conform, feel they are less "cool", and they do not get notices and praised by peers unless they are acting out. I have also witnessed those incarcerated for Murder are most often our best inmates and if these individuals do get released, are more likely to succeed. Those who commit some robberies and all sex crimes tend to be impulsive and cause more problems. Also, those who have drug/stimulant dependency.

Other wardens reported,

Those offenders released to a large inner city in my opinion are more likely to return than those who live in rural areas. The offenders in rural areas are predominantly white and those released to larger metropolitan areas appear to be African American.

Unobtainable goals; minimizing their responsibility; portraying themselves as victim; negative attitudes; substance abuse; mental illness; lack of pro-social support from friends and family.

Offender is unwilling to change, lack of resources (e.g. money to have enough staff to appropriately case plan with offenders, not enough money to address programming needs of the offenders, not enough money to utilize current technology, etc.), lack of understanding from the judicial system on risk/needs assessments and what they mean, who is at risk to reoffend and how to appropriately “treat” them, lack of understanding from the legislature on needing to fund us so we can provide those things that “work” to reduce recidivism so we aren’t dealing with the revolving door, lack of training in evidenced based approaches, not training corrections officers on motivational interviewing techniques, not building accountability into employee position descriptions and performance evaluations, not enough emphasis on department mission statement – how peoples job responsibilities tie into the mission, agencies operating in silos rather than cooperatively, underutilization of stakeholders (e.g. old belief that we can do it ourselves), offering programs that have little impact on recidivism, not addressing gender responsive or cultural needs, not receiving visits while incarcerated.

I believe that African Americans definitely have a harder time obtaining jobs upon release mainly due to lack of help from friends, relative, former employers in addition to just their race.

Substance abuse, not finding employment, not connected to community – having someone to rely on for support in re-entry i.e. mentors; faith community; support group.

Attitude, motivation, drive, all have a big role in their success. If a young man believes that they can’t achieve anything or do anymore than they currently are they will never become more. They also have to learn new ways to respond to challenging situations instead of being reactive. They have to learn to think before reacting. Sometimes that requires additional counseling and medication in the community.

Wardens and superintendents were then asked to identify primary factors obstructing the formerly incarcerated persons’ ability to get their needs met. No motivation was noted as the highest factor at 36%, with a lack of support from family and community at 18%, followed by deviant social networks and bad attitude at 13%. One warden explained,

This is probably the most disheartening part of working in corrections. We have programs, services and re-

sources available that we know work and inmates don’t take advantage of them. I think most inmates think they will do things differently once they are released but fail to understand the impact of their environment and culture that led to their incarceration.

Other wardens reported,

You can lead a horse to water but you can’t make them drink. Typically the individual is their own worst enemy. They have to want something different, not just say they want something different, but truly want it from deep inside. If they really want it and it is available they will involve themselves in it. Other obstacles are time management and transportation. Just because they are available doesn’t mean they are easy to access because of transportation issues or how it fits into their lives (job, family, school, etc.).

People cannot be motivated unless they have a desire to do better. Primary factor obstructing is their own lack of responsibility.

They do not have a strong enough desire to lead a crime free lifestyle or do not have the skills necessary to engage in a pro-social lifestyle.

Correctional administrators’ responses indicate that they are indeed aware of the needs and challenges faced by formerly incarcerated persons during reentry. However, a few responses from administrators indicated that they had indeed adopted an organizational and system perspective on reentry and that perhaps some of their views regarding one’s attitude, such as formerly incarcerated persons being “their own worst enemy,” may suggest a view of them as “other.”

Correctional Administrator Organizational and Systems Perspectives on Reentry

The wardens and superintendents were asked to define how they may have contributed to the success of the formerly incarcerated persons in the stories recounted, what successful reentry meant to them, to describe the barriers they faced in their jobs, as well as what could make their job of enhancing successful reentry easier. Upon analyzing their responses to these questions, many in the sample adopted an organizational or systems perspective.

With regard to how the participants may have contributed to the success of formerly incarcerated persons, they identified factors such as being a role model and providing education (46%), providing resources and links to resources (44%), earning and treating inmates with respect (24%), and motivating ex-offenders

(20%). However, some admitted that they played no direct role or could not take credit while others claimed that a team approach and hiring staff (providing resources, allowing creativity), influencing policy, and programming contributed. Thus, several of the responses were consistent with the adoption of an organizational or systems perspective. For instance, wardens reported,

I believe it is a team effort that makes it success happen. It usually isn't just one person.

My education, training, and utilization of effective interventions. My belief that it is my role to assist the offenders in a way that helps them "stay out" of prison once they are out. Targeting offenders antisocial attitudes, associates, and personality. Treating them humanly. Holding them accountable for their "negative" behaviors. Rewarding their "positive" behaviors. Treating them humanely. Not giving up on them when they have given up on themselves. Believing that the offender can change if they are given the skill sets and have the desire to make changes. The offenders knew I liked my job, they knew I wanted them to be successful.

Consistent with previous research on narrative definitions of success, successful reentry was defined as exhibiting prosocial behavior (61%) and no recidivism (56%). Many referred to the three year standard measure of recidivism, but not all embraced that definition. Responses to our question of success included:

An offender who never comes back into the system. Forget the three year time frames. WE aren't successful unless he never comes back into the system.

Reentry success has to have a time line. We have recidivism which is measured out 3 years. If we don't have an inmate return in 3 years - it is a success. On a smaller scale, offenders completing a transition program and now residing on their own is a success. I also look at 6 months after their final release from a facility and those who have not been rearrested are a success.

I don't like to define success in terms of recidivism (however you might define that). I like to define success in terms of the individual person. For example, if I have a person who was very defiant and closed, and they begin to open up and work on their problems - I think that is a success. If it is a person who had a lot of needs, but they remained vigilant in addressing those needs - that is a success.

Correctional administrators' responses suggest that they adopt an organizational systems perspective on reentry. For example, comments by administrators that for reentry to be successful it takes a team approach suggest that these administrators view successful reentry with a systems approach rather than an individualistic one. Also, their adoption of the absence of recidivism as the measure of "success" is consistent with how the overall correctional system views success (i.e., recidivism).

Correctional Administrator (Warden and Superintendents) Perspectives about Formerly Incarcerated Persons

The warden and superintendents were questioned about their personal interactions with offenders in an effort to determine if their descriptions of their interactions with their clients depicted a view of the formerly incarcerated persons that reflected social distance and a view of the formerly incarcerated individual as "other." Most of the correctional administrators viewed their interactions with formerly incarcerated persons as being professional, hands on, a good listener, approachable, and firm and fair. Thus, administrators saw their interactions with formerly incarcerated persons as professional. For instance, wardens reported,

Firm, fair, consistent. I am not afraid to challenge their thinking errors, distortions, tactics. I express empathy when appropriate. I use humor when appropriate. I allow them time to talk. I believe good boundaries means it is my job to know what is going on with offenders, they just don't need to know that information about me. If I don't know the answer to something - I tell them that. I don't make promises I can't keep. I believe in integrity. I role model the behavior I expect of them. When they have stepped over a boundary, I don't hesitate to tell them. I believe in the 4:1 ratio (4 positives for every negative). I try to identify what stage of change they are in, and use skill sets (e.g motivational interviewing, effective case planning strategies) to move them along the continuum.

I draw on the personal experience of ex-offenders to help guide me in the decision making process. Ex-offenders can tell me what works and what doesn't. They can explain what their needs are and what causes them to return to prison. Ex-offenders need to be part of the solution.

You need to have great listening skills. You need to be able to communicate and treat the inmate with re-

spect. Be honest, set goals for the inmate, and make sure you show appreciation for their accomplishments. I contributed to their success by remembering they are human beings that made mistakes and trying not to judge them but to instill in them to look to the future. I managed a work release center for 9 years and assisted men in obtaining employment, housing and referring them to support agencies on the street that would help them succeed. My standard message was, "You can't change what happened yesterday, you can only change what you want to do tomorrow."

These responses reveal conflicting messages about formerly incarcerated individuals including references that may be seen as a view of the formerly incarcerated as having a character deficit potentially rooted in social disadvantage while also reflecting a humanistic and empathetic approach. For example, the warden who mentioned using a "firm, fair, and consistent" approach clearly articulates professional officer-client interaction. However, reference to the formerly incarcerated as using thinking errors and distortions and the need to have good boundaries could be said to imply a sort of social-distancing whereby the officer maintains professional boundaries with the client while utilizing organizational terminology to treat the client in a particular ("firm, fair, and consistent") manner. On the other hand, some of the wardens noted that the unique experience of the formerly incarcerated is an asset in the reentry process that correctional professionals need to make use of in conjunction with a humanistic, respectful approach. This suggests that the correctional professional views include both elements of social

distancing as well as an understanding and empathetic approach that recognizes how the unique experience of the formerly incarcerated can be utilized as a strength rather than a deficit in the reentry process.

Wardens were specifically asked about the role of social distance between CCOs and their clients to determine how they see differences between themselves and the formerly incarcerated as impacting their ability to assist in the reentry process. The majority of respondents (57%) reported that they thought social distance was not an issue hindering reentry success. One warden respondent offers his perspective on the issue of social distance,

No. BUT, lack of empathy for where a person came from is a problem that hinders success. First of all, that research is clearly flawed because it is dealing with an offenders perception that their agent did not have the same social obstacles. An agent does not share their personal stories of upbringing, economic status and drug and alcohol history. I have found that if an agent listens, tries to understand and tries to motivate a person to change for the better, the relationship is positive and strong.

Thus, the warden discounted social distance as an issue, suggesting that regardless of differences in backgrounds between officers and their clients, an approach to clients that involves empathy is critical to reentry success.

The correctional administrators saw their role as assisting the formerly incarcerated in whatever way they could. They did not view social distance between

Table 4

Correctional Line-Staff Perspectives of Needs & Challenges

<u>Needs</u>		
Code	Category	
Support	Support/Faith/Groups	38%
CouTher	Counseling/Therapy	43%
Med	Medical Treatment/Medication	43%
House	Housing	81%
Transp	Transportation	38%
Employ	Employment	76%
<u>Challenges</u>		
Code	Category	
BadNeig	Bad Neighborhoods	32%
BadFam	Issues with Family or No Family Support	23%
BadFriends	Bad Friends, Old networks	28%
NoHouse	Limited or No Housing	41%
NoEmploy	Limited or No Employment	73%

CCOs and their clients as inhibiting reentry. However, the tone of their responses indicated that they saw their clients as “other” in the sense of having to maintain strong boundaries while having an empathetic approach in their interactions.

Correctional Line-Staff Perspectives of Needs

Correctional staff were questioned about the needs that formerly incarcerated persons have upon re-entry (See Table 4). They reported that housing was the most important need after release (81%) followed by the need for employment (76%). Other important needs were identified such as continued counseling and therapy as well as medical treatment and medication at 43%. Support from family, community, and corrections as well as reliable transportation were also noted as necessities (38%). The correctional staff reported many challenges faced upon reentry including limited or no employment (73%), limited or no housing (41%), residing in bad neighborhoods (32%), associating with friends in deviant networks (28%), and issues with family or no family support (23%).

Housing is an important factor in facilitating a successful reentry for the formerly incarcerated persons. Corrections officials reported,

Housing, many offenders don't have a relationship with family any longer and have no place to go and no money to get housing. Of course we try to place them but due to some crimes this isn't possible.

Many offenders are homeless so I would say housing is the number one need. Our half-way houses are closed due to budget cuts and our homeless shelters can only take so many offenders.

For formerly incarcerated persons to be successful during reentry, the correctional staff survey participants identified several factors that were related to success. The participants identified the availability of legal financial resources (63%), desistance from substance abuse (38%) and support from family, faith, support groups, and corrections (31%) as being important for successful reentry. Additionally, they reported that strong coping skills were also a contributor to success (27%). Many of the correctional staff were hard pressed to recall success stories. Either there were too few to recount or they did not track client outcomes. As one correctional staff mentioned, “The success stories in my thirty plus years are few and far between. Most inmates that I have witnessed not come back have aged out and are on some sort of public assistance.”

One correctional staff, who could recall many successes, discussed legal means of financial resources and support from family as being critical,

Approx. 10-15 success that I know about. Most are due to family support, both emotional and financial. One offender was able to go home to his wife and to a job with his father and brother. As far as I know he has been successful for the 5-6 years. Another had a business that his son kept going and owned his house and has been successful for approx 9 years.

Another correctional staff participant reported that strong coping skills are necessary to face the challenges of reentry. The staff participant stated,

I can recall two successful reentry occurrences. Both were parole violators... He had some mental problems but had a strong sense of faith that helped him cope greatly. He experienced severe attacks on his life on two occasions. Through mental health counseling, cognitive skills training and reentry classes he gained the tools to be successful. (offender 2) He gained them because he internalized the information and applied them to his life and current situations. There are various factors that can inhibit a successful re-entry. Correctional staff identified the following as inhibitors: issues with families or no family support (33%); associating with deviant social networks (33%); lack of support from support groups and community stigmatization (28%); and substance abuse relapse (22%).

The correctional staff participants described support from family, faith and support groups, and corrections an important factor in successful reentry (63%). Other important factors that they identified included employment (47%) and access to community and personal resources (42%). All three factors were noted by one correctional staff member when asked about what factors are needed for successful reentry,

Support, support, support and employment. Daycare for women to leave their children. Counseling for both sexes as well as gang prevention/intervention, as well groups relating to understanding people of different ethnicities.

Other participants reported,

A welcoming home situation. The household and ex-offender realize that former roles and current roles will need to be redefined. A receptive community that

is willing to receive a former offender. Involvement in a supportive community of faith. Employers willing to hire ex-offenders.

Adequate planning, developing realistic and appropriate goals. Community support as well as family support. Motivation. Friends and family who are supportive and provide encouragement. The availability of Academic and Employment opportunities.

Correctional staff were then asked to identify primary factors obstructing the formerly incarcerated person's ability to get their needs met. The participants reported that factors were lack of motivation by the individual (48%), prideful behavior and issues with family (24%), and low self-esteem and deviant social networks (19%). One participant explains,

Pride, not being able to ask for the help that would otherwise help them be successful. For those that are more entitlement-driven in their perspective, they seem to be more demanding, wanting the resource to provide more for them individually than they are eligible to receive. This is what I have gleaned from the inmate that return and are discussing with me their pitfalls while they were out on the streets. No support, no transportation are barriers as well as feelings that ethnic groups are not well represented in the opportunities presented.

Another correctional staff participant references the preference of a deviant lifestyle and lack of motivation as inhibitors to success, "They do not want to change. The benefits of a criminal lifestyle outweigh a prosocial lifestyle for them."

Correctional line-staff responses indicated that they are indeed aware of the needs and challenges faced by formerly incarcerated persons during reentry. However, a few responses from this group reflect the adoption of an organizational and system perspective on reentry that maintains a social distance and deficit view of the formerly incarcerated. For example, views about the formerly incarcerated as needing support, having low self-esteem, being entitlement-driven, or wanting more assistance than they are due, suggests a deficit view of the formerly incarcerated that can be seen as a form of "othering" that may have an impact on the experience of the formerly incarcerated in the reentry process.

Correctional Line-Staff Organizational and Systems Perspectives on Reentry

The correctional line-staff were asked to define how they may have contributed to the success of the former-

ly incarcerated in the stories recounted what successful reentry meant to them, to describe the barriers they faced in their jobs, as well as could make their job of enhancing successful reentry for formerly incarcerated persons easier. Upon analyzing their responses to these questions, many in the sample adopted an organizational or systems perspective.

When asked about the barriers they faced in their jobs, as well as what could make their job easier in enhancing successful re-entry for the ex-offender, correctional staff identified limited resources (25%), limited staff (20%), and time constraints (15%) as barriers to fostering successful ex-offender re-entry. Specifically, correctional line staff reported,

Lack of resources not being able to track these individuals by providing evidence based programs that will ensure success.

We are locked into a box with few programs. Materials and resources are available but we need staff to be more educated about re-entry.

Powerlessness in follow-up and the economic climate, as well as political Leaders wanting to lock up offenders and throw away the key versus treatment and rehabilitation.

Time, never enough. Resources, the lack of them. Contact in the communities across the state, building them takes time and a lot of effort.

To enhance successful reentry, correctional staff described the ability to follow up with ex-offenders (19%), community outreach, (15%), and more resources (10%) as critical factors. Correctional staff reported,

The ability to follow up to see how the inmate is progressing. We have Fraternalization policies.

Long term sober living housing to give the offenders a fresh start and not return them to the same place they came from. Many times your setting them up to fail. More resources, programs that actually deal with addiction/substance abuse, resources center for ex-offenders to utilize once released and when struggling, mentor programs.

Correctional line-staff responses suggest that they adopt an organizational systems perspective on reentry. For example, comments by administrators that for reentry to be successful it will take more resources,

materials, and leaders that adopt a more rehabilitative perspective towards reentry is needed for reentry to be successful. Additionally, the acknowledgement by one respondent who mentions that “you are setting them up to fail” reflects the view that perhaps the system, as it currently is working, is broken and that it is the system itself that is hindering successful reentry.

Correctional Line-Staff Perspectives about Formerly Incarcerated Persons

The correctional staff participants described their personal interactions with formerly incarcerated persons as motivating (31%), developing trust (31%) and serving as a role model (27%). In their descriptions of their interactions, their responses indicated support for formerly incarcerated persons. Correctional staff reported,

I am down to earth, and honest. I talk to them and treat them with respect. I am firm, fair and consistent.

I personally try and be a role model that shows an offender that I truly do care about his success while in prison and after his release. I try to be person that doesn't treat them like they are a “nobody”, that they are somebody and they can make a difference.

This aforementioned response further highlights the professional boundary-setting and empathetic approach taken by correctional staff toward the formerly incarcerated. The staff-member here articulates an attempt to treat the client like a “somebody,” however the approach reinforces what might be seen a form of empathetic organizational distancing seen as necessary by correctional staff in their interactions with clients.

In fact, one correctional line staff, when reflecting on what can be done in the community to assist formerly incarcerated persons successfully reenter society, reports,

Community re-entry programs which include churches, community centers, victims, and citizens with open minds to embrace these individuals. Gaps that hinder successful transition are individual with closed minds who don't believe that people can change.

In regard to the lack of community acceptance, one staff explains the role of stigmatization,

The stigma of ex-offenders is still very alive and well. No one wants a half-way house or group home in their neighborhood. We could well benefit from neighborhood awareness of the challenges of ex-offenders and

the real concerns of the citizens. If society could look past what they have done and focus on what the ex-offenders could offer the community, it would be helpful. Most older citizens are not as open to change and acceptance of people who have made mistakes. Sex Offenders face a greater challenge and in some cases there can be a real concern. I might add that the employees of the group homes and half-way houses have to be actively involved and have a vested interest in the ex-offenders. This is perhaps a very unrealistic view, but a hope for the future one.

In order to ascertain whether social distance exists between community correctional officers their clients, as reported in previous research, participants were asked if social distance exists. A total of 64% of participants felt there was a level of social distance between CCOs and their clients. This finding contrasts with some of the correctional administrators' opinions indicating that they did not believe that there was social distance between CCOS and their clients. One correctional line staff respondent describes this view of social distance as having a necessary but negligible role in the officer-client dynamic,

That has to be assumed, unless the officer is a former thief, drug-user, etc. their individual perspectives will be poles apart. Not having the handicap of a criminal past, the officer is not going to be on the same wave length as the parolee, that disconnect will always be a part of the problem, although a necessary one. It will be the same hindrance that I have in working with these guys behind the walls, if they won't follow the few, basic rules that we have inside, how do they think they will be successful dealing with the world on the outside?

Another agrees that social distance is apparent and highlights the need to make use of formerly incarcerated individuals who have similar backgrounds to their clients as an aid in the reentry process.

I believe we need to use more ex-offenders with proven track records in non-custody type positions as substance abuse counselors, case managers, counselors, re-entry coaches. Most of my friends who work in this areado not have a clue as to what an offender faces on the outside. Some do not care.

When reflecting on the narratives of the correctional administrators, they saw their role as assisting the formerly incarcerated by being role models and mo-

tivating them. A sizeable majority of the correctional line-staff did think that social distance was an issue between CCOs and their clients. Respondents viewed stigmatization of formerly incarcerated persons as another problem. Again, these views reinforce the notion that the formerly incarcerated have character deficits and are socially disadvantaged while at the same time are in need of understanding, empathy, role modeling, and motivation. This is a complex and in some respects contradictory view of the formerly incarcerated whereby correctional line-staff see their formerly incarcerated clients as “other” while at the same time noting that in order for reentry to be successful, interactions with the formerly incarcerated must also involve understanding and empathy.

Common Themes and Differences among Wardens and Non-Wardens

Upon further inspection of the participant data, there were some commonalities in responses as well as some differences between wardens and correctional line-staff. When asked to define the needs and challenges of formerly incarcerated persons upon reentry, both housing and employment were important needs for them identified by both wardens and correctional staff. Similarly, both wardens and non-wardens identified challenges faced by formerly incarcerated persons during reentry to be limited housing, limited employment, and bad friends or old (social) networks. Interestingly, both wardens and non-wardens raised concerns about enhanced difficulties during reentry experienced by both formerly incarcerated females and those incarcerated for sex offenses. Wardens also specifically mentioned difficulties for formerly incarcerated African-Americans in securing employment. Both groups articulated that support was important for successful reentry—although each group viewed support in a different way. Wardens believed that support is an important factor that should come from the family; however, correctional staff believed that support should come in the form of assistance. Additionally, both correctional administrators and correctional line-staff adopted organizational and systems perspectives on reentry. A few differences, however, emerged between the groups. While wardens and superintendents thought more transitional programs would be helpful to foster successful reentry, correctional line-staff believed having the ability to follow up with formerly incarcerated individuals would be an important factor. Moreover, some of the correctional administrators did not perceive that social distance between CCOs and their clients was a hindrance in the reentry process. However, their responses

depict a dichotomous approach to their clients -- a socially disadvantaged formerly incarcerated individual in need of the professional assistance of an empathetic role model. This sets up an inherent dynamic in the officer-client relationship that organizationally institutionalizes a view of the formerly incarcerated person as “other.”

Organizational Institutionalization of the Other

The responses of the correctional professionals reveal conflicting views of the formerly incarcerated. On one hand, the correctional administrators and staff view formerly incarcerated persons as lacking skills or referring to their character in some manner, thereby, adopting a deficit view. For instance, correctional administrators and staff identified clients’ deficits as “substance abuse” and “mental illness” while also noting that character deficits such as “negative attitudes,” “motivation,” “drive,” and lack of rule following as inhibitors to reentry success for those formerly incarcerated. On the other hand, the correctional administrators and staff described that the formerly incarcerated lack larger structural supports such as friends and family, housing, programmatic resources, and community supports. For instance, the administrators and staff had noted, “many offenders are homeless,” “not having someone to rely on for support in re-entry,” that there is a “lack of understanding from the legislature on needing to fund us,” and that community does not want “a halfway house or group home in their neighborhood.” Additionally, the correctional administrators and staff acknowledged the value of seeing the formerly incarcerated as experts who can help other formerly incarcerated individuals in the reentry process. Statements such as, “Ex-offenders can tell me what works and what doesn’t,” and “Gaps that hinder successful transition are individuals with closed minds who don’t believe that people can change” suggest understanding, empathy, and humanist views of formerly incarcerated persons. These conflicting views of the formerly incarcerated whereby correctional professionals see their clients as having a deficit, living within inadequate social structure, and being seen by the larger society as “nobodies” on the one hand, while recognizing the importance of an empathetic approach in dealing with the formerly incarcerated characterize the correctional professionals’ view of the formerly incarcerated as the other.

Discussion

The results from this study offer perspectives and insights from correctional wardens/superintendents

and correctional staff— an important missing piece in the literature on reentry success to enhance work that has previously examined views of CCOs (Brown, 2004a; Brown, 2004b; Graffam et al., 2004; Gunnison & Helfgott, 2007; Gunnison & Helfgott 2013; Helfgott, 1997; Helfgott & Gunnison, 2008; Lutze, 2014). Lutze's (2014) important work on CCOs' professional lives as the "invisible side of reentry" highlights the need to recognize how system dysfunction can hinder reentry success and how the support, tools, education, and incentives available to CCOs in their everyday working realities impacts their ability to implement evidence-based practice in reentry. The correctional administrators and line-staff views presented here echo the need for shared organizational and system-wide definitions and goals such as shared definitions of measures of recidivism in relation to reentry (e.g., recognition that definitions of recidivism that focus solely on re-offense and reconviction without attention to smaller personal changes offenders may make that may result in longer time periods between offenses). The results presented here add the additional missing perspective of correctional administrators and staff in both institutional and community corrections contexts. Lutze (2014, p. 259) notes:

Considering the perspective of CCOs offers the reminder that community supervision is a human business concerned with success and depth of interpersonal relationships... Understanding the reality of working with offenders, who to CCOs are not just abstract statistics to be managed but complex individuals who also experience the joy of success and the agony of defeat, brings one closer to realizing that CCO's work cannot be easily categorized but instead exists on a continuum. CCO's decisions are influenced by the quality of the human relationships in which they engage and whether they trust the potential effectiveness of providing support, treatment, sanctions, or some combination of the three.

One of the most problematic issues in the reentry process is the disconnection between institutional and community contexts. Understanding the perspectives of correctional professionals in diverse roles that span institutional and community corrections contexts adds an important additional element to understanding the ability of correctional professionals to implement evidence-based practice in offender reentry as well as provides an understanding for why these same professionals eschew early release policies even in light of current budget problems (Taxman, 2011). From a sys-

tems perspective, as noted by the correctional professionals surveyed, in particular the line staff, the degree to which different components of the system are disconnected will be an obstacle to the reentry process.

The findings presented here indicate that despite popular belief, wardens are aware of their clients' needs and challenges. While wardens may not be in charge of overseeing correctional or reentry programming, the wardens in our sample were aware of the needs and the challenges that formerly incarcerated persons face, and that the perceived disconnect between top administrators and their front line staff may not exist. Additionally, the findings are consistent with past studies that have shown that housing and employment are recognized by CCOs as critical issues in reentry and that highlight distinct needs of specialized populations such as female offenders and those who served time for sex offenders and exacerbated discrimination faced by African American formerly incarcerated persons (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013; Holzer et al., 2003; Petersilia, 2003; Tewksbury et al., 2012). Concern expressed by wardens about African-Americans and employment was also a similar theme raised by CCOs in previous research. For instance, research has revealed that African-Americans face employment discrimination in getting hired and promoted (Holzer et al., 2003; Queralt, 1996). Further, several researchers have uncovered employment discrimination for African-Americans job applicants when compared to Caucasian job applicants (Beauchamp & Bowie, 1993; Turner, Fix, & Struyk, 1991; Weatherspoon, 1996). Findings also echo work by Clear (2007) highlighting issues with formerly incarcerated persons returning to disadvantaged communities and social environments.

Finally, the findings highlight the great need for resources (e.g., housing employment, programming), both in-house and in the community, in order to foster successful reentry.

The results presented here regarding the issue of social distance suggest that some correctional professionals believe social distance is inherent and, in some cases, a necessary part of the correctional role; however, they do not see social distance as a hindrance to the reentry process. Correctional professionals emphasize the need to see formerly incarcerated persons as human beings, and note the detriments to reentry associated with the stigmatization their clients experience in the community as dangerous others. The correctional professionals note the importance of developing rapport with their clients, especially in interactions where social distance issues are salient. Thus, the correctional professionals' responses reflect a nuanced understanding of the

complex issues of social disadvantage, stigmatization, and social distance experienced by their clients. This unique understanding that correctional professionals have regarding the situations and experiences of their clients supports what some have observed as a cultural and historical shift that may be slowly occurring toward a more humanistic and empathetic correctional sentiment and a more restorative and community justice approach to reentry (Bazemore & Boba, 2007; Bazemore & Maruna, 2009; Bazemore & Stichcomb, 2004; Clear, 2007; Clear, Hamilton, & Cadora, 2010; Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013, Helfgott, 2005; Settles, 2009, Swanson, 2009; Travis, 2001; 2005; Van Ness & Strong, 2010) and away from the more punitive culture of control (Garland, 2001). However, the issue of what we have called institutionalized organizational “othering” is complex and needs to be further examined. Previous research indicating that formerly incarcerated experience themselves having an outsider identity and express concerns about the social distance between themselves and correctional professionals (Helfgott, 1997; Helfgott & Gunnison, 2008) highlights the need to more fully understand how this negative experience of feeling “other” impacts the reentry process. The experience of feeling like an outsider or “other” can have many sources including negative or deficit views espoused by correctional staff as well as interactions that hold particular meaning for formerly incarcerated individuals as they experience social distance between themselves and correctional staff. Additional research is needed to further examine correctional professionals’ perceptions of formerly incarcerated persons and how organizational and system elements contribute to reentry successes and failures. Furthermore, further examination of the ways organizational expectations and professional approaches may be changing in corrections and reentry in the United States is needed. Restorative correctional and reentry programs have been implemented in other countries in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and Great Britain (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2013). The views of correctional professionals presented here suggest that small steps may be occurring to identify system gaps that have historically hindered reentry success in the United States. Future research is needed to unpack the complex interpersonal and organizational dynamics that contribute to the formerly incarcerated individuals’ experience of themselves as “other” and the elements of professional support help and hinder reentry success.

This study represents the first to examine the perspectives on formerly incarcerated persons reentry needs and success utilizing a sample of correctional pro-

fessionals other than community corrections officers whose roles span institutional and community corrections contexts and staff and administrator roles. However, the current study is not without its limitations. First, sample size was a limitation in the study methodology. Our sample pool was limited as a result of difficulty in acquiring e-mail addresses for all corrections officials in the nation. Additionally, we had several incorrect e-mail addresses as e-mails were returned and reported as being unable to send. Further hindering our data collection efforts were various state policies that either prohibited the dissemination of our survey to correctional employees or disallowed employees from taking the survey. Second, while the sample included both wardens and non-wardens, our survey response rate was lower than desirable. E-mailed surveys tend to produce a low response rate (see Bachman & Schutt, 2013). Third, while we offered respondents the opportunity to list their names and contact information for further follow-up conversations, very few opted to do so. This resulted in a limited amount of information that we were able to glean from open-ended typed comments.

Future research examining the views of correctional professionals that span institutional and community corrections contexts and administrator and staff roles will enhance understanding of system deficiencies and the capacity for individual correctional staff and administrators to implement evidence-based initiatives that enhance opportunities for successful reentry. As recognition of the importance of evidence-based practice increases, continued research examining the ways in which organizational culture, system characteristics, and interpersonal dynamics between correctional personnel and their formerly incarcerated impact the reentry process is needed. Further examination of the perspectives of correctional professionals in multiple jurisdictions with larger sample sizes, as well as the perspectives of other professionals in the criminal justice system regarding reentry, will continue to improve opportunities for reentry success.

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Prisons, Pipelines, and Pedagogy: Diary of the Birth of a Behind-Bars College Program

Part 2

BAZ DREISINGER

*With Krystlelynn Caraballo, Marcus Chandler, Craig Coston, Rowland Davis, Patrick Gallimore, Lenecia Lewis-Kirkwood, Devon Simmons, Theron Smith, Robert Taitt, Matthew Wilson and Lamumba Woods
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One semester down.

One thing I do differently since starting P2CP (Prison to College Pipeline program): I told myself that I was going to finish things that I start. And since then, just about everything I start, whether it be a book, some homework, an essay or a class, I finish.

I just can't read any kind of book anymore.

Our humanity will always shine through when placed in intellectual environments.

I am able to be myself without having to be a convict.

College is a chance to live, this experience confirmed that.

My view of release is hopeful and vibrant.

It's been a while since I took part in getting an education and being a part of this experience further proved that I got what it takes to make it through college.

I always thought that college was not fun, that learning is not for me. But again I was wrong. College is everything and I can't wait till I'm in John Jay on the outside. My view on release is now all about education! (last word bolded and underlined)

I've learned that I have much more to offer mentally than I give myself credit for. I'm always observing and listening so much that I tend to deprive myself and others fruitful knowledge...my fellow peers take college so seriously...I am usually influenced by the positive energy around me. -Incarcerated students' written reflections after the first semester

After participation in college, prisoners and former prisoners were far more likely to offer advocacy, social supports, and services to other prisoners, their children, and families. The credential itself mattered far less than the process of learning to revise: experiences of reading, interpreting, analyzing, and writing; participating intellectual conversations; being a mentor to others; meeting new kinds of friends; learning how to question social arrangements and researching social situations; cultivating the skills to assess choices and see options individually and collectively; appreciating the ability to revise; and developing persistence in the face of obstacles. -Fine and Torre, Bar None

Like you, I was tremendously disappointed with my denial of release, but I refuse to become discouraged or lose hope. This educational opportunity has allowed me to intellectualize as well as internalize my life....please continue to have faith as I have it. I am not leaving school but plan to accomplish all that I can while I'm here so there will be less to do when I get out. -Theron's letter to me, after being denied parole. He has served 16 years.

February 10, 2012

Semester two is up and running: Anthropology 101. The professor says it's going well thus far, although we're one student down. Edward elected to transfer to another facility, where he could have a job in the DMV call center. Money before education—I grasp this.

Today's learning exchange is all about conflict. Well, conflict resolution, taught by a sociology professor. The inside students might well have taught this session; conflict resolution workshops are some of the few educational options liberally offered in prison. Theron and Rowland took courses in "pastoral care" back at Arthur Kill, so they know the conflict lingo.

The men are asked to draw conflict; most of them depict scenarios from prison—as opposed to life beforehand—and many involve fights over TV rights. William holds up his diagram for the class to see.

"This is Otisville, and this is my conflict with it. This clock is all the time passing me by. And this is all the walking I have to do. This"—he points to an airplane hovering above the scene—"I just threw that in there. Maybe 'cause it can get me out of here."

"So what issue is your conflict really about?" the professor asks. William thinks for a good minute.

"Rights?"

¹ Some names have been changed for the purposes of privacy



In the midst of this, Kenneth approaches me to say he may ask for a facility transfer. I see the hesitation on his face; he wants to talk to me, tell me why, but says he can't.

"You gotta understand certain codes here, Baz." He says he'll stay the semester but doesn't know beyond that. I tell him how much I don't want him to go, urge him to reconsider.

March 16, 2012

Today's learning exchange subject: violence. David Kennedy, known for his high-profile, revolutionary work in community policing—author of *Don't Shoot: One Man, a Street Fellowship and the End of Violence in Inner-City America*—leads this learning exchange. He mines the men for their stories. When did they first experience violence?

Kenneth: my dad had a gun and one day I stole it; I must've been 8 or 9.

Robert: my mother and grandmother tried to get me to stay in the house, so I'd be safe.

Juan: I was scared to go outside.

The outside students are mostly silent, but there's a closeness and camaraderie now, so it's not an awkward silence.

I pull William and James out, one by one, to talk about their impending release, some two months away. There is terror in William's eyes, and he showers me with questions that double as accusations: Can I count on you? What if I don't see you before I get out—how do I find you? I make him a personal promise. Come to my office the day you get out. *You can count on me.*

"I've been promised a lot of things out there that doesn't come through, Baz." I want to tell him I wake up nights worrying about him and James, the program's first releases, but I say nothing. I remember his journal entry about fear: "I'm fearful of my weaknesses. I'll be released in 6 months and will be attending CUNY if all is as promised...one of my fears is to stray away from this path. I pray to God not to let my past life and friends influence me. That I learn to be content. From living a life that any desire was obtainable to having to work hard...I hope that the status of my situation doesn't influence me to get off track."

James seems calmer. So does Theron; his hope and faith in the future, despite the massive parole-rejection setback, never cease to amaze me. Daniel, who'll be released in five months, asks for material about housing—he doesn't want to be in a shelter if he can avoid it. Anxiety about leaving prison can trump anxiety about prison itself. I carry some tiny fraction of the burden but it just barely lightens their load.

April 20, 2012

My guest professor cancelled on me so I run the show today. It was a blast: Jonathan Swift's satirical essay "A Modest Proposal" and class debates about moral utilitarianism.

James and William are weeks away from release, and they have my contact information in hand. Daniel practically cries to me about the guilt he feels and his fear of leaving prison. Right here, right now, the program is really being

put to the test. The idea is to build on the momentum of their identities as students and get them in college as soon as possible, but "re-entry" is a too-easy technical term for an all-consuming, full-time job.

An astonishing 94 percent of state and federal inmates interviewed prior to release consistently identified education as a personal reentry need. In fact, more of them identified this need than identified financial assistance, housing, employment, drug treatment or any other listed reentry need.—Steurer, Linton et al. "The Top Nine Reasons to Increase Correctional Education Programs"

May 8, 2012

I bolt out of class and fly to our meeting spot. Will he be there?

He is, at the top of the escalator, with his girlfriend. As of two days ago, James is a free man. In a brilliant twist of timing he's being celebrated today, his first visit to campus, at a reception honoring the students published in *John Jay's Finest*, a collection of the best writing of the year. He reads an excerpt of the research paper he wrote for me about racial classifications, to a room that includes familiar faces: professors and students he met during learning exchanges. It feels like a real homecoming, to a community he joined while still behind bars.

In my mailbox is a letter William has written me. He comes out tomorrow, and I've been worried about him since our last talk, when he said he didn't fully trust me and I saw the terror in his eyes. The letter makes me cry. He thanks me for being someone he can count on, and promises that he will do me proud as a student.

May 9, 2012

Finally, a call from William. He sounds, literally, like a different person, livelier, relaxed—like a "normal" 26-year-old. He says he's been dodging people in his hood.

"My friends wanted to take me to the club the first night I got out but I said, 'Nah, just family.' Then my parole officer showed up at 5:30 am. But he seems aight."

He tells me about the drama of his release. When he got to the door they didn't want to let him out, because there was some paperwork missing.

"I almost had a heart attack. My mother worked it out but I was flipping out. I didn't give anyone a hug—I just got in the car and said, 'Drive.'"

May 15, 2012

James returns to campus today. Michelle, one of our learning exchange students who's a peer ambassador, takes him for an official tour, then I take him for lunch at a Thai restaurant. He tells me he's barely seen his family and has hit the ground running. There's reentry programs; a meeting at our partner organization, the College Initiative; tomorrow the Department of Motor Vehicles to get a state ID card, so he won't have to show his prison ID to random people anymore. He's been running into familiar faces in the neighborhood: "They try to tell me about the block. I tell them I'm

not a teenager anymore—I don't want to hear it." He let his 17-year-old daughter know that he's home, but hasn't met up with her just yet.

"I don't want to impose," he says. "She can come to me when she's ready. I saw her walking down the street with her boyfriend but I just stayed back—didn't want to disturb her."

He hopes to go into counseling, and wants a job doing HIV/AIDS trainings, for which he was certified while inside. Fellow prisoners hassled him for getting those certifications, he recalls—was he gay or something? But he disregarded the comments and kept his eye on the prize. After all, it got him out and about, doing trainings, and it's one of the few educational options inside.

"I just want to give back," he declares.

May 16, 2012

William seems shell-shocked. We walk from campus to lunch and it's almost as if he forgot, while in prison, how to cross the street. Or ride the train; today he took that first ride and admitted to violating rule number one of the NYC subway: He stared at people. During lunch we discover that we grew up in the same part of the Bronx.

Back in my office he goes incognito, sitting in on my interviews with John Jay students applying to be part of next year's learning exchanges. I introduce him only as a John Jay student who participated in the P2CP. Were you scared? the interviewees ask. What was it like? I'm pleased that they pegged him wrong—they don't realize what side of the barbed-wire fence he was on. I give him Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*; he tells me he thinks he'll be English major.

May 18, 2012

The last learning exchange, and the readings are theirs. I've asked everyone to bring in some of their own writing to read aloud for the class. Some read academic papers, two of them about criminal justice issues. Rowland reads a tragic journal entry; Robert reads two beautiful poems about starting over; Patrick reads a poem he wrote in the voice of a prisoner. Tony shares his personal essay and Kenneth, his labored-over research paper. Things get intense when Daniel reads a statement about his crime and promises the class he won't cry. Dale, though, does cry, reading his contrite parole statement—a litany of life's poor choices. By the end of class, all the two sets of students can do is thank each other.

Daniel is a nervous wreck about his release date. The anxiety centers on practical issues like housing and work, but really it cuts deeper; release time means grappling with the crime all over again. Grappling with it for the first time, really. Far from opening doors to one's inner self, prison is the opportunity to tuck all feelings of guilt and regret firmly beneath necessary self-protective shells. And by virtue of its fundamental unjustness, prison transforms "offenders" into victims. When they head home, they're suddenly overcome with all that's entailed in having to be "offenders," yet again.

Daniel, meanwhile, practically throws a fit in his frustra-

tion. Where's that information about the shelter? Where's the reentry contact person? Part of me wants to holler back: *I am doing my best!* The lack of trust, the demands—I fully comprehend where it comes from. These men have been disappointed by the system their whole lives; I could easily be just another living letdown.

Out of the gates and on the road, students in tow. One year of getting them in and out hasn't been easy.

Over the academic year, the class became very close. We were closer, I venture to say, than any other class in the country because of the nature of the program and yet we were kept apart by our two very different daily realities. No text messages, no getting together for study groups, no communication whatsoever until the next learning exchange, and yet there was an understanding and a level of acceptance that I have not experienced in a classroom since.

Our assignment for the May learning exchange was to bring in a creative writing sample that we authored and present it to the class. I chose a sermon I wrote based on Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Minister's Black Veil." My work's underlying message was to not allow yourself to surrender to the taunts of those who judge your actions, when they too are guilty of wrongdoing. The two presentations after me were by two inside students who shocked the class by opening up about their crimes, a previously unspoken topic. One wrote a letter to his victim and gave a heartfelt apology and admitted guilt. "[My friend] had nothing to do with why I was mad, I just took it out on him... and I am so sorry." The other spoke of his actions in his presentation, and could not finish through the tears and emotional outpouring that resulted. It was heart wrenching. I had several conversations with one of the guys and he asked me if I believed in forgiveness and I replied, "I believe everyone deserves a second chance." This was a moment where I had to decide whether or not I believed those words. I had to stop and decide whether my presentation was just for show or if I could truly practice what I preach. I decided that I still felt the same, perhaps with even more force now. Who was I to decide that these guys, my classmates, should spend their lives paying for an action that they seemed genuinely remorseful for? Who was I to deny them the opportunity to start over? I looked around the classroom and no one seemed to be acting any differently. No one felt the need to pass judgment on these men either. It was a moment of trust, a moment of acceptance, a moment I'll never forget.
-Krystlelynn Caraballo, outside student

I compare meeting the outside students to being on a first date. It was awkward at first; we didn't know one another. So we asked probing questions like, "What's your name?" "What's your major?" "Why did you decide to partake in this kind of program?" The second Exchange was a little more relaxed. Everyone conversed and it felt more real, not so stuffy. By the final Exchange it was like we were at a family reunion. Everybody was happy to see each other and was sad knowing it would be the last time we would see each other until the inside students return to society. So it's

a bittersweet memory.

—Robert Taitt, inside student

May 29, 2012

James and William blew the board of trustees away. They're part of a panel about the P2CP at the annual board dinner, which the Otisville superintendent and the Commissioner of Corrections for New York State attended. Both guys giggle nervously as they shake hands with those who formerly incarcerated them.

They wow everyone and I'm pleased, even with my requisite reservations about the whole dog-and-pony-show routine. Comment made by a trustee: I had no idea you guys just got out—I thought you were “regular students.” Question posed by a trustee: What's tomorrow about for you guys?

“It's about all the guys inside. I do this for them,” says William.

“Tomorrow,” says James, slowly, “is about being one step closer to where I want to be.”

July 9, 2012

The VP of Enrollment lets me know that James failed the math exam required to attend John Jay; he'll have to start at a two-year college instead. William, though, passed, so he is good to go—officially the first one in our pipeline.

I meet William in my office. He's been worrying me for days now. Says he may not want to go to school.

“I don't really feel like I was in prison—like it never really happened.” This is good and bad, I say. I don't want him to have to be marked—even self-marked—with that scarlet letter, but at the same time, he needs to recognize that odds are working against him. Should I insist that he be defined by his incarceration? He admits that he's been partying. He wants to move out of his mom's place and rent a two-bedroom apartment with his boy. I understand his need and right to be a regular 26-year-old, but the reality is that he isn't one. A single slipup and he's back inside. The stakes are high, I tell him.

“Don't worry,” he assures me. “My parole officer is cool with me.”

“Don't fall into that trap,” I insist. He still thinks I have some ulterior motive for wanting him in school. He tells me I'm too trusting; I tell him he needs to tone down the cynicism and distrust—not everyone is out to get you. Is it wrong of me to want him to be a model citizen of reentry America? William hasn't been remotely institutionalized. He's bitter about the system and won't stop questioning it. That's beautiful and awful.

July 24, 2012

Interviews for the new class of P2CP students. It's grueling trying to gauge someone's intellectual capacity in ten minutes. And even more grueling making sense of nonsensical sentences: What the hell is “15 to life”? Either your crime is worthy of 15 years, or it's worthy of life—what sort of range is that?

I am looking for men who will be released within three

years, an admissions requirement for our program. No one here seems to be coming home. That's because, as one inmate explains, in the past year Otisville has become packed to the gills with lifers and long-termers. “They call it the lifers' graveyard,” he explains. Apparently I am, in mourning, interviewing the living dead.

The day I went to my counselor's office for the telephone interview, I was excited and nervous. I thought to myself, “this is it. This is your shot.” My counselor said something that captured the feeling I had at that moment: “Mr. Wilson, this phone call can change your life as we know it.” At that time in my life and up until this day I believed it could and it did. That phone call was an opportunity to meet a goal I set for myself during my incarceration, to get educated and be the successful person I was meant to be.

—Matthew Wilson, inside student

July 25, 2012

Today I see James on campus, looking dapper in crisp white shirt and tie. The girlfriend didn't work out so he's moved back in with his mom. He'll attend Bronx Community College and has scored a full-time job as a counselor with a reentry organization. He promises me he'll check in on William, who's MIA. I've been trying to get him to show up and register at John Jay for days now, to no avail; when he finally showed up and I marched him through the chilling bureaucracy that is CUNY registration, there was a hold on his account and we couldn't get through the red tape.

Tony and Daniel are home and I've spoken to both of them. They sound happy and hopeful. But so it seems to go. The honeymoon period immediately following release eventually gets soured by the reality of life in the new Jim Crow.

August 30, 2012

“Can I call you back? I'm in school.” I could cry at the sound of those words, delivered by William. That evening, he sends me his schedule for the Fall semester. I say Hosannas.

Tony meets me on campus wearing a Kansas City blue cap and matching jersey. It's freshman orientation day, which is convenient. We walk from booth to booth and at every turn he's handed flyers for this club or that major. Tony is confused but I'm not. “He'll be starting in February,” I tell them. At lunch, we talk for some two hours about his complex life outside. His main concern is his son, 17—in prison.

Still no word from Daniel.

September 3, 2012

The highs and the lows of this work are jolting. I step onto campus and there's William, beaming, in his hoodie and backpack—a regular college student. Like James, he tells me his classes are easy.

“And I'm the only one who talks in my sociology class,” he says.

But then Daniel brings me back to earth. He's receiving every form of public assistance imaginable, housed in a

shelter and attending programs day in, day out. He's practically living in governmental offices; I tell him he'll have a Ph.D. in bureaucracy by the time this is all over. He's miraculously managing to stay positive, but—"I'm not saying I want to go back to prison, Baz, but sometimes *I want to go back to prison.*" He asks me if he can get me permission to go back to Otisville, just for a visit, to see the guys.

Robert, meanwhile, updates me by phone. He's at a halfway house for men with alcohol addiction. He's never had a problem with alcohol but this was the house he happened to be placed in, so he has to attend their workshops twice a week. The other day he almost landed a job at a bakery in downtown Brooklyn, but he'd be required to be there on the two mornings he has programs at the halfway house. No can do—he couldn't take the job. Because if he misses the programs—which he doesn't actually need—he'll get kicked out of the house. Double sigh.

Later, texts from William: "It feels so good to be in school, Baz."

A second later: "Sharing my knowledge."

September 6, 2012

William is applying for a CUNY internship aimed at fighting for social and economic justice. The big question: Does he tell them about being formerly incarcerated? Ah, the dilemma du jour. The first generation of the new Jim Crow have it the hardest, because it's incumbent on them, whether they like it or not, to change people's minds about what "formerly incarcerated" looks like. Like undocumented immigrants, we don't really know how many of them there are; like the undocumented, too, they live in fear and grapple with the implications of "coming out." All conversations about rights for the formerly incarcerated should be about civil rights and equal citizenship, not safety and recidivism. If the state deems someone safe, and we allegedly believe in that state and its government, then how can that same someone be deemed unsafe for a campus or a jobsite? This is the hypocritical universe into which my students—free yet still very much unfree—have been thrust.

September 5, 2012

Full circle: the first school day of the second full year of the Prison-to-College Pipeline. I accompany this semester's faculty members up to prison for their volunteer orientation. After getting fingerprinted—again; there was apparently a problem with my ones on file—we're made to watch an orientation video that the staff is excited about, as it's newly produced. *Games Inmates Play* details, in portentous tones, exactly what the hyper-manipulative species known as "in-mate" will do to unwitting volunteers and COs, if given the chance. Words are splashed ominously across the screen—*manipulate, consequences*—and the whole thing ends with Feds swooping down on errant officers and volunteers, then shipping them behind bars, where they belong. My new professor looks at me nervously when it's done. When it comes to this population, I wonder, isn't there a way to humanize without hagiographing?

We walk into the classroom. So many students! Looking out at the nervous faces of the newbies, I feel excited but anxious: the program is now full-fledged. Rowland, newly rejected for parole, gives me a stunning thank-you card. "Thank you for having faith and trust in me from the beginning," he writes. "I will never misplace them."

Somehow, some way, these men trod on against the tide, books in hand.

This journey was not solely about me fulfilling a personal quest. It was a group of men coming together...we would stand by each other during our journey of higher learning, pushing each other toward excellence. Ultimately, this experience has become one of life's lessons that will guide me throughout life. Here I stand, a student enrolled in John Jay's Prison-to-College Pipeline, with a 3.75 GPA. Yes, I have earned the right to be here. —Rowland Davis, inside student

At one time college was further from my mind than Pluto is from the Earth. But now it feels closer to me than some of my own thoughts. —Marcus Chandler, inside student

Four findings in her testimony on the benefits of college in prison: reincarceration rates are reduced; there are considerable government savings due to fewer commitments and the reduction in the associated costs of incarcerating people; prisons are more peaceful and disciplined; and, the children of prisoners participating in in-prison college programs are encouraged to pursue education more seriously. —Fine et al.

Correctional education is almost twice as cost effective as incarceration. —Bazos & Hausman

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PRACTITIONER PAPER

Your True Freedom

JENA RAUSCH

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Abstract: *Your True Freedom is about my journey teaching inmates the fundamental truths of self worth, self acceptance and self love--through writing, mindfulness meditation and emotional healing. It is a journey that continues to enlighten me and to heal and free the inmates with whom I work.*

Keywords: *Prison education; recidivism; meditation; creative writing*

The bars and barbed-wire fences no longer alarm me. I am used to the routines of prisons, waiting at every entrance for an invisible sentinel to unlock it and let me through, the sound of heavy doors clanging behind me, being frisked by guards after setting off a metal detector. I have been teaching creative writing in jails and prisons for about nine years. This year I also began teaching a class based on a program called Houses of Healing, a mindfulness/emotional healing/self awareness course designed specifically for the incarcerated.

I became involved with former prisoners through my volunteer work at a men's homeless shelter in Alexandria, Virginia. I mentored the men in employment related matters: writing a resume, interview skills, and how to search for open positions. Besides being homeless and unemployed, many of the men had the added stigma of being convicted felons. I would visit the shelter each week and inevitably the conversations with the men would turn to more personal matters: their hopes, their fears and their regrets. I saw them ultimately wanting the same things every human craves: the desire to be seen, heard, accepted, and loved. I also saw them struggling with what I have since discovered most prisoners lack: a sense of belonging, of self-awareness, of self-worth and of self-love.

That same year I helped facilitate a four-day retreat in a Virginia prison. The prisoners, as with the homeless men, were eager for recognition and acceptance. I came away from that experience wanting to work with the incarcerated. When one of the women on the retreat team told me about the volunteer work she was doing at our county jail and suggested I teach a class there, I readily agreed.

Not being a teacher by training, or even prepared with a curriculum, I entered the jail on my first day of class to a room full of men in blue jumpsuits staring back at me. Fortunately for me, that first class was talkative and engaging. I was surprised by the prisoners' love of poetry, and was impressed by their insightfulness and eagerness to write and share their work.

Why did I decide to teach writing to prisoners? Writing is scary because it makes you vulnerable. In correctional facilities, where prisoners struggle daily to survive--mentally, emotionally and physically-- being vulnerable is taboo. Writing class makes it acceptable. Writing is also cathartic. It is like baring your soul, intimidating but very liberating. The way you phrase your words, what you decide to include and to omit, all reveal a piece of who you are. I felt this would be therapeutic for the prisoners.

"There's a lot in me," one prisoner said in a recent class, "but I've only shown my real self to one person in my life." Prisoners find, through writing and sharing their work, that they can reveal parts of themselves they were too afraid to show others, or even themselves.

I enjoy taking prisoners through the writing process and encouraging them to go beyond their comfortable limits, to show them the healing power of writing. I prompt prisoners to examine their lives critically, and to write, to get all of that "stuff" out of their heads. Talking about it, thinking about it (endlessly...) is not the same, does not have the same impact as putting it down on paper for all to read, to scrutinize and to appreciate. Once something is on paper, once it is in print,



it lessens its ability to hurt you and its power to control you. That is liberating for any individual, especially so for the institutionalized. We are all looking for our voice to be heard, our selves to be seen, even for an instant—just hear me!

In past years, my creative writing classes focused on a combination of poetry, essays and short stories. I saw that the prisoners consistently wrote about their own lives, so last year I centered the classes on memoir. I also worked with women for the first time. Once again, I wasn't prepared.

The men, I knew, would cautiously write around the edges of their true selves, revealing careful pieces, bit by bit, shrouded in machismo, but revealing nonetheless. After so many years of teaching incarcerated men, I was used to their behavior.

The women were eager to get it all out at once, in all its detail, to have someone know, listen, hear, and remember. All of them had stories of rape and abuse, which they shared on my first day with them, but their stories were not *about* rape and abuse; sadly, that was almost a given. Sometimes, they would cry; the men never cried.

The women's memoirs revolved around many things you would hear from any young woman: boys, pregnancy tests, cheerleading tryouts. And, they revolved around many things you would only hear from young women in prison: trying to hang yourself in your cell with your bra, the struggles of dealing with breast cancer while incarcerated, being restrained to a bed while giving birth.

I give all of my students a composition book on the first day of class. I tell them they need to write three pages every day. I let them know I will not be collecting their journals; they are free to write about anything they want. The only stipulation I have is that they include ten affirmations every day. They think this is silly. I explain that the exercise is designed to stop the endless loop of negative messages with which we constantly bombard ourselves, and replace it with kinder, more compassionate thoughts.

They wonder what this is about, what this has to do with writing. I started to wonder too. I have heard a lot of stories, seen a lot of pain during my years of teaching in correctional facilities. I have never asked a prisoner what they did to land themselves in prison or jail.

I do not want to know. I may be the only one in that person's life who does not see him as a murderer, a rapist, a drug dealer, or a thief. I look at my classrooms and see only other human beings. I realized that what I was really doing was trying to get the prisoners to feel good about themselves, to see their self worth. That is what prompted me to start teaching a course based on the Houses of Healing program.¹

The basic premise of the course is that each of us, whether clothed in a tuxedo or a prison jump suit, or born into wealth or poverty, harbors an inner core that is intrinsically good and worthy of love and belonging, respect and acceptance.

Every *body* has a soul.

The course focuses on a number of personal growth issues:

--Practicing mindfulness meditation, self-regulation and stress management

--Learning cognitive reframing and attitudinal healing

--Acknowledging, working with, and healing childhood trauma

--Understanding the roots of anger

--Transforming anger, resentment and unhealthy guilt and shame into positive emotional health

--Working with forgiveness, of others and of self

--Acknowledging and working with grief, the silenced emotion

--Emotional health and control

--Knowing the true self, and believing its worth

"What do you hope to get out of this course?" I asked my first class of about 40 men. "Freedom," one said. "Peace," said another. "I want to know myself better;" and, "I just want something different."

Once again, I was standing in front of a room full of prisoners in blue jump suits, feeling unprepared to teach a new class. Some of the men looked at me eager-

¹ Houses of Healing is a book/curriculum/program created by Robin Casarjian, M.A. designed to foster emotional literacy. For more information, visit <http://lionheart.org>.

ly, hoping I would be able to deliver on what the program description promised, that I would be able to give them what they felt was missing in themselves. Others were disinterested, acting the part of a macho prisoner who needs nothing and no one. By the end of the 13-week course, I had more of the former than the latter.

But initially, I had to get over my apprehension and to put the prisoners at ease. Writing, I knew, but who was I to counsel prisoners on emotional health and healing? I found that, just as I could draw on my experience as a writer to teach writing, I could draw on my own journey of emotional awareness and healing to help guide the prisoners. The more open I was, the more I exposed of myself, the more the prisoners engaged and wanted to share. Creating an environment where the prisoners felt safe to be vulnerable was the key to making this class successful.

“Who we believe we are affects every aspect of our life,” I tell the prisoners on the first day of class. “It dictates how we feel about ourselves, how we treat others, who we gravitate towards as friends, how we use our time, what kind of goals we reach for, and what kind of choices we make.” They nod.

We work on the concept of seeing good in ourselves, which is more acceptable to them than the idea I introduce next: seeing good in others.

“What would it feel like if you treated everyone you met with honor and respect?” I ask, “regardless of their position in life or personal history.”

“Everyone doesn’t deserve respect,” one prisoner offers. “Yeah,” a chorus of agreements follows. “Some people just aren’t good,” another prisoner says.

“People say that to me all of the time,” I say, “about prisoners.” They get quiet. “As long as there are ‘those people,’” I tell them, “you aren’t getting this.”

There is a lot of work to do. Jim Liske, CEO of Prison

Fellowship,² recently wrote: “At the core of senseless violence is a soul that doubts its worth and is willing to walk on others.”

This is not a class about religion—it is about the intrinsic potential, dignity and value of all human beings. The course encourages responsibility and accountability in oneself and towards others. Prisoners learn to have more control over their thoughts, emotions and actions, to know that no one can *make* them feel disrespected or angry or useless: it is a choice.

Ninety-five percent of prisoners will be released at some point in their life. Recidivism rates show that prisoners are returning to society as emotionally scarred as when they entered the system, and are reoffending. Most prisoners go into prison as angry, hurt, damaged individuals who have little sense of self worth. This program has been highly successful in giving prisoners the opportunity to participate in the healing process that is fundamental to any significant rehabilitation and lasting change.

I have witnessed that change with numerous individuals in just the one year I have been teaching this new course. I am hoping to be able to continue teaching in even more jails and prisons. I believe in the power of this program and ones like it to transform prisoners so there is less violence inside correctional facilities and in the communities where prisoners are released. Those looking at criminal justice reform should look to funding and proliferating more programs such as this.

² Prison Fellowship is America’s largest Christian ministry to prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their families. For more information, visit <http://www.prisonfellowship.org>.

Inside the Institution of the Prison: A Researcher's Perspective

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Ironically, my memory of first entering a prison, as a novice researcher, is one of brilliant sunshine and blue skies. Access to the largest committal prison in Ireland, during the month of June in 2005, was relatively stress free. I was with a national health organization on a Master's work placement programme, my supervisor was with me and beyond waiting at gates for entry, within what seemed minutes, we were in.

The project we were working on sought to investigate drug policies in prisons from a security and health care perspective. I had a prison officer accompany me at all times and the work itself was interesting and eye-opening. I got to interview prison nurses (who were at the time a relatively new addition to the Irish prison service) and prison officers, and also talk to medical orderlies (prison officers with medical training) who were anxious and concerned about their job conditions. The project taught me some valuable research (and life!) lessons: not everyone welcomes researchers; institutions are curious places with a life and rhythm of their own; and people can always surprise you with their opinions and narratives. Most important of all however, thanks to that project, I got the experience of seeing inside a prison, and from it, a desire to learn more about the people within it. Four years later, my PhD research, which sought to collate the educational life histories of prisoners attending education classes within the Irish prison system, provided me with the opportunity to undertake research in three prison sites in Ireland. Almost 10 years since I first entered the prison as a naïve researcher, and having reflected on what I've learnt, there are five pieces of advice I would like to offer future prison researchers.

1. Read as much as you can about prisons and life within prisons

Foucault (1977) makes the point that prisons, though relatively modern inventions, are so ingrained in our

understanding of how a society must function that life without them is probably unimaginable. Until I entered a prison, much of my knowledge of prisons, or as Foucault termed, "complete and austere institutions" (p. 235), had been based on popular culture with films such as *The Shawshank Redemption*. Goffman (1961) and others, including Christie (2000) and Becker (1963), have argued that in the criminal justice system of a modern society an offender is "symbolically forced outside the normal life of the social group" (p. 192) so that he becomes an outsider, or "other". The idea of the prisoner as 'other' was, in hindsight, already in my consciousness. What startled me most about my time in the prison during that summer of 2005 was how ordinary things quickly became, how I had to adjust to what is an extraordinary situation and how, from my glimpses of prisoners as I made my way through the prison, how very ordinary, rather than 'other', they appeared.

While nothing quite prepares you for prison research, reading descriptions of prison life and prison experiences certainly helps. When I returned to prison research in 2009, this time as a lone PhD student, I found entry to prison more challenging. It involved negotiating with a number of stakeholders from national organisations such as the Irish Prison Service to individual prisons. It took time and effort to secure access, a point which was illustrated in Schlosser's (2008) observation that "often, however, gaining ultimate access to the prison requires significant tenacity and persistence" (p. 1509). The entry procedures were intimidating at first and served to cause anxiety rather than soothe it. The repetition to various prison officers on gate duty of who I was and what I was doing was at times irritating (and sometimes intimidating) although the longer the research lasted in each site, the less this occurred. I thought my experiences were unique to me until I read Marsha Hunt's (1999) wonderful account of teaching creative writing in Mountjoy Prison in Dublin and the difficulties she sometimes encountered with prison



officers when she tried to get access to her classroom in the prison. Her words resonated strongly with me, provided reassurance that my feelings and experience were not unique, and encouraged me to keep going.

Many other non-academic accounts of prison life helped me too. Later on I discovered an article by Jewkes (2012) who identified an absence of emotion in prison studies in general. She argues that this absence could be because of an academic environment in which the researchers emphasize objectivity and rationality, leading her to state “in informal conversations, all prison researchers will relate stories about moments (or prolonged periods) of empathy, embarrassment, fear, nervousness, dilemma, and so on, but they rarely admit to these feelings in their published narratives” (p. 64). These words also helped and provided a reminder of just how valuable it is to realise that there can be gaps in the academic literature.

2. Understand prison as a site of contested identity

Who am I? I’m not sure I can think of a more profound question. Prison, and perhaps all institutions, forces you to confront that question. While a focus on who we are and how we define ourselves is a feature of contemporary life, this focus on identity is intensified within the confines of a total institution where the existence of a consumer culture is limited and people’s desire to distinguish themselves through their preference for particular products (e.g. clothes, piercings, cosmetic surgery, physical exercise, to name but a few) may be severely curtailed. Apart from the impact on researchers and staff who work within institutions, it is clear that imprisonment affects inmates’ sense of identity. Earlier works about imprisonment by the famous Irish author Brendan Behan (1970) served as an illustration of how prison is a site of contested identity or as Giddens (1984) termed it “a site of struggle and resistance” (p. 154). Behan, for example, tells of his attack on another prisoner, which is presented as an act of self-protection, so as to ultimately avoid his being attacked later on. This need to develop a *hard-man* persona is not a new development. Another Irish man, Mahon-Smith, who wrote about his experience of imprisonment in the 1940s in Ireland, reported the boasts prisoners would make regarding the violent crimes they had committed and then his surprise on discovering that their offences were as relatively innocuous as begging or small scale theft by deceit.

The criteria for which people are judged on the outside (e.g. clothes, job, material wealth) cease in the prison context to provide effective means for judging other inmates. Yet individuals do strive to maintain

their sense of who they are. I was reminded of Alan*, aged 35 at the time of being interviewed for my doctoral research, who was serving a four year sentence for a drugs offence. He maintained his love of keeping busy through his engagement with the prison school and reported spending time writing greeting cards for a fellow prisoner who could not read or write. Alan’s belief that this fellow prisoner did not attend school because of a desire not to appear weak to others illustrates the importance given to maintaining a particular image while incarcerated.

Goffman (1961) argued that strong religious and political convictions could help insulate inmates from the effect of an institution on their sense of identity and although, in some specific contexts, imprisonment can be viewed positively (as in a rite of passage or in a political struggle) in general, as Goffman (1961) observes, those who do emerge from confinement within a total institution are often stigmatised. The impact of a total institution on a person is illustrated in Goffman’s observations that many inmates will suffer anxiety over release from a total institution.

Nick* was 20 years of age at the time I met him. He told me of how he learnt to read and write in prison and spoke of being incarcerated in various institutions from the age of 11. He estimated that he had only known about eight months of freedom in all that time. The physical scars on his body bore testament to his violent history. He was an imposing and, in many ways, frightening figure while also someone who seemed so vulnerable too. His observation that people looked at him as if he was a “scumbag” echoed Goffman’s (1968) view of the existence of a tendency to view a person with a stigma as “not quite human” (p. 15). He recounted to me that in the prison he was known as a bully and a troublemaker and that to survive in prison “you have to become a bully to not be bullied”. Nick’s comment illustrated to me the world in which many prisoners live and survive and recognition of this world has implications for researchers, educators and prison staff. Nick was due to be released within a few weeks of my interview with him. Until I met him, I had never thought of being released from prison in a negative way, but Nick was worried. Prison was where his friends were and he understood its rules and could survive there. This young man, angry and vocal with prison staff and some fellow prisoners, and who intimidated me in many respects, doubted whether he would survive outside the prison. I doubted it too.

3. Appreciate Prison as a Contradictory Space

Nellis (2002), in an account of how the genre of pris-

oner autobiographies has developed in a British context in the later part of the twentieth century, has argued that these works serve as a reminder that prison incarcerates individuals with life experiences, rather than simply prisoners who all think and act the same. In prisoners' accounts of life within the prison, the prison itself appears to be a contradictory space, where instances of violence and terror alongside examples of friendships, helpfulness and qualities such as trust can be found. In writing about his imprisonment, Brendan Behan (1970), for example, revealed the threatening atmosphere and the potential for violence among prisoners, while also describing in detail the friendships and support that were also present among them. Jewkes' (2012) assessment that prison research can be emotive and harrowing at times but also positive and life affirming was born witness to in my doctoral research; these two opposite features seemed to illustrate the contradictory space of the prison environment.

As part of my research, I talked to prisoners who were attending the prison school. When I analysed the transcripts later I was amazed at how often the word 'freedom' appeared in prisoners' description of the school and how this concept could be evoked in an institution that was created to deny it. For the men I met, the school represented an escape from the prison regime, a sanctuary of sorts. In interviewing, at one stage of the research, young men who were under the age of 21, three of them reported having learnt to read and write within the environment of the prison. Acts of kindness were in evidence, in and outside of the prison school environment, and often existed in parallel with the harsh reality of often hostile relationships within the prison. One learner spoke of his appreciation of a prison officer, who gave him advice on his work when he was back in the cell and the school had closed for the day. Another man I interviewed spoke of having joined the prison listener scheme in the prison and having undergone a six week training course as part of it. He described how, following his training, he would be 'on call' on certain nights and prison officers would knock on his cell door if another prisoner needed to talk. I also met prison officers who spoke with pride about the prison school and the work that was going on there and others who were openly dismissive of it. I met teachers who were thoroughly inspirational and amazing and some who were not. Prison can definitely challenge stereotypes.

4. Know the political and social context in which the prison operates

When I went back to prison research for my PhD

research, only four years had passed since I had first entered a prison site, and yet it was if I was in another world. The political environment had changed in Ireland and conditions for entry into the prison had become much stricter. I was, as the researcher, subjected to airport style security x-ray machines and sniffer dogs upon entry. Dates of when I was entering the prison had to be forwarded to security due to the fact that I was bringing a digital voice recorder into the prison. The presence of the recorder and its similarity in appearance to a mobile phone, the use of which had become a criminal offence within the prison, caused difficulties. What struck me, when I reflect back on this period, was how quickly I became used to such conditions. What seemed strange, extraordinary and almost frightening at the beginning seemed to become normalised and ordinary within a relatively quick period of time.

One of Foucault's (1977) arguments is that the prison is not a standalone entity but rather is influenced and influences wider society. This idea was underscored in Forster's (1998) work and his seemingly contradictory identification of the prison as both powerful and vulnerable. It is clear that prisons do not exist in a vacuum. Munoz (2009), UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, has highlighted the role the media, through its influence on public opinion, has in impacting on prison education, and he argues that this influence, combined with politicians' willingness at times to reflect fears generated regarding crime and punishment has resulted in a reluctance to embed prisoners' right to education in legislation.

Schooling in a prison occupies a precarious position within the prison system due to its reliance on the prison (which as Foucault acknowledged is in itself vulnerable to economic, political and social conditions) and susceptible to outside influences. Irwin (2003) too acknowledges how the prison classroom is embedded within the confines of a prison system and that this context is both influential and limiting in the sense that although the prison is authoritarian and independent within its walls it is also vulnerable to shifts in public policy as the government responds to public feelings about crime and punishment. Researchers need to be aware of the political and social context in which the prison and the prison school operate in and to think about its implications for doing good research.

5. Make Connections

This is my last nugget of advice to prison researchers, but by no means least! David and Sutton's (2011) helpful book on research methods had advised budding researchers to seek guidance from experts who have

knowledge of how particular organisations work and my wise PhD supervisor had encouraged me to join groups, attend meetings and in many ways simply get out there. I took this advice seriously and I found personal connections made during the proposal, throughout the research process, and even afterwards, to be invaluable to me both as a researcher working on a particular project and also as a person. I learnt and gained so much from meeting people who worked and taught in prisons, who had researched in prisons, or who had worked with other marginalised groups and were prepared to share advice and offer guidance. All of this sustained and supported me during the journey, particularly at inevitable times when doubts crept in, or when decisions did not go as I expected and the end seemed very far away.

I went to conferences and presented at them, meeting more experienced researchers who gave advice and encouragement, and meeting other researchers who were interested in what I was doing and who asked questions that made me think and reflect. I joined relevant associations (such as the Irish Prison Education Association), went to meetings, volunteered for working groups, followed up suggestions on who to contact, and talked to as many relevant people as I could. I was particularly indebted to two prison educators, both of whom had many years of experience teaching in a prison school, and who had both undertaken prison research, for their help in the initial stage of the project and their advice on the most effective means of negotiating access to a prison site.

Research in a prison can be an emotionally draining experience; it can make you reflect on your life, its unfairness at times, and often forces you to address concepts such as freedom and rights. While there are of course moments of happiness and laughter in any research project, there are also moments that make you sad and angry. I found it really helpful in carrying out the research to build in a de-briefing session with another researcher who was undertaking sensitive research at the same time albeit in an institutional, rather than prison setting. We both understood the ethical sensitivities of our work but having the space to reflect and discuss events with a supportive person meant we could in effect help each other.

There are some things that books or journal articles cannot tell you – what your first moment in prison will feel like, who will help you with your research and who will attempt to hinder you, or why the particular institution you're in works in that particular way- but by reading as much as you can, understanding the prison for what it is, knowing the context in which it operates

and in particular by making connections with others, you hopefully will be able to negotiate the journey ahead and be in a position to help others too.

* Names are replaced by pseudonyms

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Have You Paid Your Rent? Servant Leadership in Correctional Education

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Correctional educators shoulder great responsibility as they prepare their students for academic or vocational completion (Mageehon, 2006) and to accomplish that task, educators should be able to explore and employ best practices and 21st century learning tools that are apropos for their student population. Prison classrooms also necessitate that staff familiarize themselves with security-related concepts such as identifying contraband and recognizing offender manipulation. Thus, teaching in a correctional classroom is a unique experience as educators must be equipped to separate the “student” from the “criminal”. The need to incorporate a philosophy that correctional educators could use as a guide to how they interact with their students while recognizing boundaries established for the safety and security of offenders is substantial. Our goal was to uncover a leadership model that could address these needs and we agreed on servant leadership.

What is Servant Leadership?

The basis of our inquiry into the relationship between servant leadership and correctional education rests with this quote delivered by The Honorable Shirley Chisholm: “Service is the price we pay for the privilege of living on this earth.” Essentially our argument is that leaders must be willing to serve in order to create change (Udani & Lorenzo-Molo, 2013). Adult educators, specifically correctional educators, often face the challenge of establishing and maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning and personal growth while ensuring the safety of themselves and their learners. It is because of this unique environment that correctional educators have the opportunity to implement and exhibit the traits of a servant leader¹.

On the surface, we perceived that there was a relationship between servant leadership and adult educa-

¹ Servant leadership found its beginnings through Robert Greenleaf, who served as the Director of AT&T’s Organization and Management training program. For Greenleaf, leaders are not effective unless they are concerned about their followers.

tion in general and correctional education in particular. For us, these philosophies complemented each other. Similar to adult education in the United States, servant leadership is a relatively new area of study and we were confident that the nature of adult/correctional education would be an obvious link to servant leadership and that the literature would be inundated simply because of the needs of the student population. Disappointment would be an understatement.

If you conduct an online search for “servant leadership,” your search would yield results stemming from both business and religious studies. This is not surprising; after all, a businessman coined this term. From a religious viewpoint, scholars often regard a key religious figure as a servant. This is why religious communities have adopted the concept of servant leadership as much as the business world. However, as we have stated, we were surprised that it seems to have failed to impact very much on any field of education. We would contend that regardless of one’s religious beliefs, or lack of beliefs, or one’s involvement in business, the concept of servant leadership has much to offer correctional educators.

Through educational programming, correctional educators can bring about change in their students’ lives, and in our opinion incorporating the traits of servant leadership into their classroom practices can enhance any such efforts. This is why we had expected to discover that much had been written on the role servant leadership can play in the prison classroom and its incorporation into teacher training programs. While the gap in the literature could have been a roadblock, it was instead an opportunity to prime ourselves and embark on a journey that would delve into the relationship between correctional education and servant leadership. By doing so, we believe that establishing a link between these disciplines would demonstrate how the two complement each other and it could compel teachers to pursue a deeper connection that can be realized and measured in the correctional classroom.



The 10 principles of servant leadership

In his writings, Greenleaf (1977) discovered that there were ten characteristics that every servant leader must possess; a description follows of each of the ten characteristics along with our ideas on the relevance of each to correctional education:

1.) Empathy affords the servant leader to recognize and appreciate the diversity of the learner. Correctional educators recognize that they have non-traditional students, usually those who were not successful in the public school system. Similarly, correctional educators are aware that they teach within two cultures – the culture of the prison environment and the classroom culture itself. This knowledge and empathy allows them to appreciate the diversity within the learning environment and better combine their conflicting roles.

2.) Healing serves as a powerful force in the learning environment. It is not uncommon for offenders to receive bad news while incarcerated, such as the death of a loved one or learning that parole has been denied. Even though correctional educators are not responsible for delivering such news, they encounter the after effects in the classroom. Sometimes, it is not the message, but the delivery that can cause the most damage. The manner in which we address and communicate with our students is vitally important and knowing this can make a difference in any healing process.

3.) Listening involves the leader being able to listen to what is being said and unsaid. To do this, the leader must listen receptively while being aware of their inner voice. While this seems pretty simple, think about the times that you may have tuned out to what someone was telling you only to prepare your response. To quote modern servant leader, Stephen Covey, *“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand, they listen with the intent to reply.”* It happens more often than you think. If we listen, process, and reflect, then we can have a greater impact on our students particularly in terms of modeling positive behavior.

4.) Persuasion deals with the ability to build consensus within an organization, rather than using a system of sanctions and rewards. This is very important in the correctional environment. We want the learner to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do, not because they will be subjected to punishment. Persuasion through consensus building leads to long-lasting change. We must begin to encourage our learners to think differently, which Greenleaf suggests is a usually a slow, deliberate and painstaking process (Black, 2010).

5.) Awareness helps us understand issues involving ethics, power and values. It allows the servant leader

to view situations from a more integrated, holistic perspective. This trait is very significant in the correctional classroom because our goal is to help our students become productive citizens upon release. We need to model awareness so that they, in turn, can see it in action and learn to make better and more informed decisions.

6.) Stewardship involves the productive use of time, energy, and other resources. In correctional education, stewardship directly affects the learner. Even though the type and quantity of resources may be limited, educators are ultimately responsible for making use of the resources they have within their command to make a positive impact on the learner. As leaders in their classroom communities, educators manage their resources with the goal of serving the needs of the learner.

7.) Through the **conceptualization** trait of the servant leader, the adult educator is able to visualize the “whole”, non-traditional learner. We, as adult/correctional educators, have a keen awareness of the history, past, and present state of the learners we serve. We use this awareness to establish goals, adjust implementation, and evaluate the effectiveness of our programs, using this foreknowledge to predict contingencies, which may lie ahead.

8.) Foresight is a characteristic closely linked to conceptualization. Greenleaf (1977) defines foresight as the ability to foresee or know the likely outcome of a situation. He explains it as “the lead that a leader has.” Correctional educators possess the ability to handle daily tasks and events that come from working in a correctional setting, while simultaneously predicting future events. Foresight allows the correctional educator the ability to be more proactive in the classroom, rather than reactive.

9.) Correctional educators believe that their learners have value and are committed to the growth of each and every student under their influence. Educators take on the responsibility to do whatever is in their power to assist in the **growth of the learner**. As correctional educators we ask ourselves if we are assisting our students in becoming more productive, reaching their full potential, learning and growing as individuals and in return serving society for the good rather than bad.

10.) Educators know that in order for learning to take place, one must establish an environment that is conducive to learning. This is done by **building community**. The prison classroom community is based on the ethics of hard work, collaboration, respect and growth. This encompasses growth of the individual and growth of the members of the classroom community. We have an awareness of and respect for the diversity in our

learning communities and utilize this diversity to our advantage by focusing on the individual strengths of each learner and how each can positively contribute to the learning process and foster the classroom community spirit.

These ten traits of servant leadership are interconnected; they are rarely executed in isolation. We believe that successful implementation by the teacher can help the learner develop the character traits of responsibility and integrity. As we know, correctional educators are not merely concerned with the academic growth of the learner, but the overall development of the learner. Modeling the traits of servant leadership is a powerful way to enhance the holistic development of our learners. We not only address their academic needs but we also strive to support their cognitive, social and psychological development while simultaneously safeguarding their physical and emotional safety. To successfully accomplish this broad and complex task we, as correctional educators, must be able to balance the affective and technical domains of our discipline. In essence, this is why we feel that servant leadership has much to offer any correctional educator.

Why Servant Leadership?

Correctional educators work with a population of learners that possess numerous and varying challenges. We believe that adult educators, specifically those in the field of correctional education, have an innate will to meet the needs of the aforementioned learner. One of the most notable challenges among our colleagues is engaging with learners who lack trust and therefore, are opposed to the traditional, authoritative style of teaching. With this in mind, the servant leadership model, like that of adult education, presents an opportunity for a shift from the teacher as the authority figure to the teacher as servant leader who facilitates the learning process.

To test if we have made the shift to servant leader, correctional educators can ask themselves the four-part question which Greenleaf (1977) believed lay at the heart of professionalism: (1) Do those served grow as persons? (2) While being served, do those person become healthier, wiser, more autonomous and more likely themselves to become servants? (3) What is the effect of servant leadership on the least privileged of society? (4) Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived? For correctional educators, these are fundamental questions that should also lie at the heart of our efforts. We should be able to answer these questions in the affirmative. Ultimately, we see the direct result of our actions when our students complete an adult

basic education (ABE) level, when they have successfully passed the GED² or have mastered a vocational trade, and even when they reach their release date. All of these steps may be minute to a novice, but to a correctional educator, we recognize that the aggregate of these steps means that we have reached our students and have helped to make a difference. We have prepared our students to become productive citizens in their communities. It is through this lens that correctional educators can see the value in their work.

Servant Leadership Teacher-Training— Moving Forward

As evidenced from teachers' responses in a recent conference at which we presented a workshop, and that of fellow colleagues in the field, there has been increased interest in servant leadership as it relates to correctional education programs. The challenge lies in motivating correctional educators to view the philosophy of servant leadership as a value system. Effective educators, by nature, should possess the character traits of empathy and healing. Servant leadership traits, such as building community and listening, lend themselves more easily to the teacher-training process. Developing skills of awareness, foresight, and conceptualization could be addressed in planning professional development for educators. In spite of the difficulties that may arise, with strategic planning, implementation, and monitoring of targeted professional development activities, correctional educators will have the opportunity to practice and enhance these servant leadership traits.

Finally, as stated already, we content that correctional educators should possess the innate will to serve. Therefore, understanding and adhering to the principles of Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership philosophy is advantageous in all fields of correctional education. Servant leadership provides the promise of effective and efficient correctional education programming, it can equip correctional educators with the ability to serve learners as unique individuals with diverse backgrounds and challenges within a learning environment predicated on the values of connectivity, service, hope and building community. In relation to Shirley Chisholm's quote, we can thus see that correctional educators pay their "rent" as they choose to serve.

² The Adult Basic Education (ABE) and the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) are two commonly offered programs in the adult education field in the United States. ABE instructional classes are for adult learners who wish to improve their reading, writing, and math skills. The GED is a battery of standardized tests that focuses on the areas of RLA (Reasoning through Language Arts), social studies, science and mathematics.



Photo by Alana Simmons

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