A study of perceived preparation and self-efficacy among offenders in the department of correction and rehabilitation who are incarcerated at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and participants of the reentry program

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ABSTRACT

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

HUGGINS, VERONICA CLAREASE B.A. JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY, 2002
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A STUDY OF PERCEIVED PREPARATION AND SELF-EFFICACY AMONG OFFENDERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION AND REHABILITATION WHO ARE INCARCERATED AT THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY AND PARTICIPANTS OF THE REENTRY PROGRAM

Committee Chair: Richard Lyle, Ph.D.

Dissertation dated May 2015

This study examines the perceived preparation and self-efficacy among offenders in the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation who are incarcerated at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility in Montgomery County, Maryland and are participants of the reentry program. Eighty-nine (89) participants were selected for the probability sampling. The 89 survey participants were sentenced inmates who were within the last 90 to 120 days of incarceration. The respondents were males and females over the age of 18. Findings of the study revealed that there was a statistically significant
relationship between perceived preparation and successful release of the offenders in the reentry program.
A STUDY OF PERCEIVED PREPARATION AND SELF-EFFICACY AMONG
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REHABILITATION WHO ARE INCARCERATED AT THE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY
AND PARTICIPANTS OF THE REENTRY PROGRAM

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of this study, recidivism is defined as the propensity toward chronic criminal behavior resulting in frequent arrest and re-imprisonment. Recently studies of the yearly intake of prisons, reformatories, and jails in the United States and Europe found that one-half to two-thirds of those imprisoned have served previous sentences in the same or in other institutions. It is believed that the criminal population is largely composed of individuals who are habitual offenders; moreover, penal institutions appear to do little to change their basic behavior patterns ("Recidivism," 2015).

Attorney General Eric Holder believes that support for the reentry initiatives is an "economic imperative" and a "moral obligation." Holder also supports funding for reentry research. In 2012, The Obama Administration proposed $187 million toward reentry and jail diversion programs (Gottschall & Armour, 2011, p. 34).

The number of prisoners has quadrupled since the 1970s as a result of "tough on crime policies" enacted to combat the war on drugs. According to McGrath (2012), public policy has placed an emphasis on punishment and deterrence through confinement rather than rehabilitation. Considerable effort has been placed on developing reentry programs nationwide. The programs have been designed to help ex-offenders meet their
needs as well as assist them with a smoother transition from prison into the community (Wikoff, Linhorst, & Morani, 2013).

Empirical evidence provides that several risk factors increase the likelihood that ex-offenders will re-offend and return to prison on new charges. Several risk factors include: race, gang members, antisocial behavior, low social achievement, negative peer relations, length of prior criminal history, socioeconomic statues and the length of prior sentences before release (Wikoff, Linhorst, & Morani, 2013).

One central goal for social workers, policymakers and prison services is to assist prisoners with returning to their communities without re-offending. According to Wikoff, Linhorst, and Morani (2013), in order to obtain a law-abiding life, one has to establish a routine as well as secure employment as a legitimate source of income. Over the last 30 years, the United States prison population has expanded by 475%, reaching 1,518,559. In 2008, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics in (2010), longer sentencing has been the result of policy changes because many states adopted mandatory sentencing guidelines (Wikoff, Linhorst, & Morani, 2013).

The rate of imprisonment within the United States is alarming. In the United States, there are 2.3 million people in prisons and jails. One out of every 100 American is incarcerated. Families and communities are affected when an individual is incarcerated. Approximately two million children, within our nation, have a parent in jail or within prison (Gottschall & Armour, 2011).

In 2010, the Bureau of Prison and contract facilities managed over 218,000 prisoners; about 9,000 prisoners were confined in halfway houses. On an annual basis, 5,800 inmates were incarcerated within the federal correctional system. Approximately
40% of inmates were serving sentences of 10 years or more. About 93% of the prison populations were males with drug offenses. On average, taxpayers paid $28,284.34 to cover the expenses of one federal inmate (Albanes, 2012).

Nearly 700,000 people are released from prison and return to their communities each year. Some individuals leave prison with expectations of leading a productive and law-abiding lives. Many ex-offenders experience frustration because they are unable to meet their expectations after their release into the communities. Often times, the ex-offenders return to the communities poorly educated, with substance and or mental health concerns. Most offenders lack a positive support system, and they do not have access to housing or cash. Along with the barriers, many are faced with the stigma of having a criminal record as they seek employment. Usually the ex-offenders faced various barriers with limited access to resources (Gottschall & Armour, 2011).

In 2000, more than half of federal inmates were serving a sentence for a drug offense (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2004). Despite the alarming numbers, drug rehabilitation programs have suffered a significant cut. As a result of deinstitutionalization, the number of mentally ill inmates is a growing concern. Petersilla (2000) provided that nearly one in five inmates in the United States prisons reported having a mental illness.

In 2011, it was estimated that 11.5 million Americans over the age of 18 were diagnosed with a serious mental illness (SMI). Many factors contribute to the SMI population having a higher criminal justice involvement than the general population. The rates of individuals with SMI(s) are consistently higher in jails, prisons and community corrections (Matejkowski & Ostermann, 2014).
Senator Claire McCaskill supports reentry and advocates for ex-offenders. She noted that 53% of State and 45% of Federal prisoners met the DSM-IV criteria for drug dependence abuse. Despite the alarming percentages, only 15% of state prisoners and 17% of federal prisoners received treatment while they were imprisoned (Gottschall & Armour, 2011).

In order to reduce recidivism among the mentally ill, researchers have been motivated to evaluate the reasons behind the overrepresentation of people with SMI in the correctional system. Recently, researchers have examined the relationship among recidivism and criminal risk to determine if parole supervision can decrease recidivism within the SMI population (Matejkowski & Ostermann, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

The problems of mass incarceration are prevalent across the social spectrum, but are especially acute in certain segments of society. In 2000, the incarceration rate for young African-American men was nearly 10%, compared to just over 1% for Caucasian men in the same age group. Young African-American high school dropouts have a 60% chance of being imprisoned during their lifetimes. When asked what he would do about inner-city youth and violence, a 2008 presidential candidate remarked “[w]e cannot build enough prisons to solve this problem. And the idea that we can keep incarcerating and keep incarcerating—pretty soon we’re not going to have a young African-American male population in America. They’re all going to be in prison or dead.” (Burt, 2010, p. 1). Comments as such undeniably reflect the broader social imperative to take steps to stop
re-incarcerating individuals, regardless of their race, and aid in the successful reentry efforts of those recently released from prison (Burt, 2010).

This record three-decade increase in imprisonment has resulted in an average annual prison population rate of more than 2,000,000 people behind bars, in United States jails and prisons, that figure increases exponentially each year. During this 30-year period, the number of prison inmates has increased over 600%. In 2002, over 7,000,000 people were incarcerated in federal, state, or local jails or prisons nationwide. One in every 37 adults, nearly six million people, has spent time in prison (Burt, 2010).

Federal legislators have begun to realize that a job is pivotal to ex-offender rehabilitation. In his speech, during the Congressional debate on the Second Chance Act, Representative Charles Rangel stated that the Second Chance Act of 2007 is a Congressional attempt to provide transition services that will increase the chances that ex-offenders gain re-entry. It will also find work after release from prison (Burt, 2010).

As enacted, the Second Chance Act will allocate funding to provide a broad array of programs and services that would make the transition for ex-offenders easier. In turn, recidivism will be reduced. Nearly $360 million will be allocated for programs that deliver transitional services such as job training, education assistance, substance abuse counseling and treatment, and mentoring programs to help ex-offenders adjust to their new environment upon release from prison. The Second Chance Act funds programs that provide ex-offenders a “coordinated continuum” of employment, housing, health, and other essential services (Burt, 2010).
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore and explain self-efficacy among the offenders in the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation who are incarcerated at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and participants in the Re-Entry Program. Exploring self-efficacy and the offender's perception towards their release will allow one to identify factors that may minimize recidivism.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are as follows:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between perceived preparation and the offender's successful release to the community?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender's successful release to the community?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender's preparation upon release to the community?

Hypotheses

The null hypotheses for the study are as follows:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between perceived preparation and the offender's successful release to the community.
2. There is no statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender's successful release to the community.
3. There is no statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender's preparation upon release.
Significance of the Study

This study emphasizes barriers that ex-offenders face when they are released from prison. Ex-offenders are in need of resourceful programs that could assist them with successful reintegration. If additional programs are created it could assist offenders with increasing their self-efficacy that will, in turn, reduce recidivism rate.

The reentry movement has seen remarkable advances within the past decade. Former President Georgia W. Bush signed The Second Chance Act of 2007 into law on April 9, 2008. The Second Chance Act authorizes federal grants to government and nonprofit agencies to provide employment assistance, substance abuse treatment, housing, family programming, mentoring, victims support, and other services to help realize the three main goals of the legislation: to reduce recidivism; to increase public safety; and to help the government better address ex-offenders returning to the community (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).

On June 16, 2009, the House of Representatives approved a Department of Justice appropriations bill for 2010 that included $114 million for prisoner reentry. It also included $100 million for Second Chance Act programs, and approximately $14 million for other Bureau of Prisons reentry initiatives (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of presenting this review of literature is to lay a scholarly foundation to determine a need for the study. This chapter is a review of the current literature and the progress made among various countries and state to support the Second Chance Act for ex-offenders. The literature provides strategies that various correctional agencies and communities are implementing to assist ex-offenders as they reintegrate back into society.

Recidivism

According to Ryan, Abrams, and Huang (2014), the increasing cost of recidivism has challenged the social and economic value of secure confinement for juvenile offenders; however, current empirical evidence is inconclusive concerning the value of placing violent youth offenders in secure settings to deter them from future involvement in crime. The authors utilized a propensity score matching a survival analysis to examine the risk of recidivism for first-time violent juvenile offenders assigned to one of three juridical dispositions in Los Angeles County: in-home probation, group home placement or probation camp (secured setting). It was concluded that approximately 48% of first time violent offenders experience a subsequent arrest. Youths who were placed in secure settings were 2.12 times greater than youth assigned to probation camps and 1.28 times
greater for youths assigned to group homes. Youths who were involved with an open welfare case were also at an increased risk to recidivism. The findings from the study revealed that in-home probation was more of a deterrent and sensible approach to minimizing recidivism among teens compared to out-of-home placements (Ryan, Abrams, & Huang, 2014).

The recidivism rate among the mentally ill is a major concern within our society. Many assume that offenders with mental illnesses are prone to criminal justice involvement. To test this belief, 221 parolees with and without mental illnesses were studied for over one year to track recidivism. Offenders with mental illnesses (OMI) were equally likely to be rearrested, but they were more likely to return to prison custody. OMI faced more general risk factors for recidivism such as antisocial patterns than offenders without mental illness (Skeem, Winter, Kennealy, Louden, & Tatar, 2014).

Today, the majority of individuals with a serious mental illness end up homeless, cycling through emergency room, short-term hospital, jail, and prison stays. Many individuals get arrested for the first time after committing a petty crime such as urinating in public. Often times, the individuals quickly become repeated offenders, after repeated felonies for reacting aggressively to police officers or fighting with other inmates. Michael Biasotti, a past president of the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police says he understands how complicated the issue can be since he has daughter who suffers from schizophrenia (Edwards, 2014).

Individuals with serious mental illnesses make up only 4% of the United States population, but they account for 15% of state prisoners and 24% of jail inmates, according to government records. According to a 2010 report, people with a serious
mental illness are nearly 12 times likely than the average person to be the victim of a violent crime, like rape, and they are eight times likely to commit suicide (Edwards, 2014).

There is a lack of empirical data relating to the expenses among the mental ill. When people with mental illnesses repeatedly go to the emergency room and the correctional system, it gets costly. Tax payers have found that it costs roughly twice as much to incarcerate an inmate with a mental illness, as one without, and can run states up to $100,000 per inmate per year (Edwards, 2014).

A widely cited 2005 study based on NIMH data found a violent-crime rate of 8.3% among those with a “major mental disorder,” compared with 2.1% among those without disorders. A 2008 peer-reviewed analysis that surveyed 31 academic studies found that 12% to 22% of inpatients and outpatients with serious mental illnesses “had perpetrated violence in the past six to 18 months” (Edwards, 2014, p. 57).

Law-enforcement officials and prison guards, who in many cities have the most interaction with the seriously mentally ill, have joined the fray as well. “Officers spend so much of their time responding to the same five or 10 people in a community who are seriously mentally ill,” says former Police Chief Biasotti (Edwards, 2014, p. 57). “It’s hard to put a dollar amount on that, but it’s significant” (p. 57). Many argue that no matter how well funded the community programs are for voluntary treatment, they will never reach those with the most serious illnesses for the simple reason that the sickest of the sick-those suffering from psychosis and delusion-often don’t realize they need help (Edwards, 2014).
Evidence revealed that offenders with major mental illnesses experience higher levels of criminogenic need than non-MMI offenders. In 2008, Skeem, Nicholson and Kregg identified increased levels of criminal thinking, antisocial personality patterns, substance abuse, family/martial problems, decreased levels of education, employment, and prosocial leisure-time activities in offenders with major mental health problems compared to offenders without major mental health problems (Walters & Crawford, 2014).

It may be beneficial if correctional professionals consider MMI a factor when it occurs in the presence of significant prior violence, and any relationship that may exist between the two. Those conducting intake screening should inquire about mental health, symptomatology. Draine and Soloman (1994) stated that offenders who have been identified with mental health symptoms, in conjunction with a prior history of violence, should receive the most critical treatment and supervision, given the relationship that has been observed between program intensity and subsequent adjustment in MMI offenders (Walters & Crawford, 2014).

Walters and Crawford (2014) suggested that the result from the study implicated that various correctional facilities have widely divergent effects on inmates with MMI. Facilities that are well organized and competently ran tend to have a calming effect on mentally ill inmates. Facilities that are chaotic and poorly ran tend to aggravate offenders with mental health problems. Psychotropic medication is perhaps the most common management tool for offenders with MMI (Walters & Crawford, 2014).

In order to prevent recidivism, it is critical that prisoners are linked with treatment following their release. A recent study compared the engagement process in two model
programs, each representing an evidence-based practice for mental health, which has been adapted to the context of prison reentry. One model, Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT), emphasizes a long-term wrap-around approach that seeks to maximize continuity of care by concentrating all services within one interdisciplinary team. The other model, Critical Time Intervention (CTI), is a time-limited intervention that promotes linkages to outside services and bolsters natural support systems. To compare engagement practices, the authors analyzed data from two qualitative studies, each conducted in a newly developed treatment program serving prisoners with mental illness being discharged from prisons to urban communities (Angell, Barrenger, Draine, Matthews, & Watson, 2014).

Findings show that the working relationship in reentry services exhibits unique features and is furthered in both programs by the use of practitioner strategies of engagement, including tangible assistance, methods of interacting with consumers, and encouragement of service use via third parties such as families and parole officers. Nevertheless, each program exhibited distinct cultures and rituals of reentry that were associated with fundamental differences in philosophy and differences in resources available to each program (Angell et al., 2014).

Research provides that adults with SMI who are released from prison tend to recidivate more quickly and at higher rates than similarly situated adults who do not have SMI. Matejkowski and Ostermann (2014) examined the relationship with recidivism by criminal risk level and whether adequate parole supervision can enhance the effects of SMI on recidivism. The findings provided that individuals with SMI did exhibit a significant indirect effect with recidivism when considering its relationship with
actuarially assessed risk. The direct effects of SMI on recidivism were found to be conditioned upon release status. The researchers did not find a relationship between SMI and recidivism for parolees and a negative relationship between SMI and recidivism among nonparolees. The finding from the study indicated a need for paroling authorities to find more effective ways of reducing criminal risk that can decrease subsequent recidivism among the individuals they supervise (Matejkowski & Ostermann, 2014).

Former inmates with mental health problems have had minimal success reintegrating back into the community compared to other offenders without mental health problems. Baillargeon and colleagues (2009) utilized a six-year retrospective study of the prior incarcerations of inmates housed within Texas prisons. Researchers found the presence of a psychiatric disorder to be associated with an increased number of prior incarcerations. It was determined that after release those with SMI returned to prison nearly a year sooner than those without SMI (385 vs. 743 days, respectively) (Matejkowski & Ostermann, 2014).

Langan and Levin (2002) found that the recidivism patterns of prisoners released from prison across 15 states in 1994 indicated that, within three years, 68% of former prisoners were rearrested for new crimes. Of those rearrested, 47% were reconvicted, and about 52% returned to custody for either a new crime or a technical violation of the terms and conditions of their parole supervision. Individuals with mental illnesses who were released to parole supervision were associated with a decreased re-arrest likelihood of 29% and an identical decreased reconviction likelihood of 29%, relative to being released unconditionally without parole supervision.
The relationships among mental illness, criminal risk, recidivism, and parole release status are complex. The purpose of the study was to attempt to disentangle the relationships by conducting a conditional process analysis of data reflecting the recidivistic patterns of those with and without SMI who were released from prison with and without parole supervision. Our findings indicate that SMI did exhibit a significant relationship with recidivism when considering their relationships with actuarially assessed risk. Those with SMI had significantly higher risk levels than those without SMI, and increased risk level was significantly associated (Matejkowski & Ostermann, 2014).

Individuals with serious mental health illnesses such as major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia are vastly overrepresented in the criminal justice system. Many investigators believe that individuals with serious mental health illnesses get caught in a “revolving prison door” because the mental health system has failed them. It is believed that the recidivism rate among individuals with serious mental health concerns could be minimized if they receive the appropriate psychiatric services they needed (Skeem et al., 2014).

Recidivism rates among offenders with learning disabilities are high. Many offenders are faced with mental illnesses, inadequate accommodation, unemployment, and substance misuse. Lorizzo London (2012), a learning disability nurse from Haringey, explores how the recidivism among the aforementioned population could be reduced. Prisoners with learning disabilities face the exact concerns as the general prison population, but they are more socially excluded. American Professor of Psychology,
Abraham Maslow, provided in 1943 that everyone can reach their full potential once their basic needs have been met (Lorizzo, 2012).

In 2012, a quasi-experimental study examined whether participating in reentry programming was associated with reducing recidivism among offenders who were no longer under criminal justice supervision. Ex-offenders were invited to participate in Project Re-Connect (PRC), a six-month, voluntary prisoner reentry program. Once the participants were released from prison, PRC provided case management and direct monetary support for up to six months. Survival analysis was used to compare recidivism rates between 122 PRC participants and 158 eligible non-participants. The study concluded that program participation and having a high school diploma were associated with reducing the likelihood of new convictions (Wikoff, Linhorst, & Morani, 2013).

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) has placed an emphasis on two fundamental missions: to reduce crime in Ohio and to reduce recidivism among those who are supervised. There are 50,000 inmates within the DRC and more than 40,000 offenders are participating in various programs. DRC believes that in order for effective programming individuals must feel safe around each other. It is believed that both staff and the inmates must feel safe in order for there to be a positive impact on the inmates. DRC also believes that their staff has to be competent and trained to work towards violence and recidivism reduction. Correctional staff must have the belief that inmates within the facilities are capable of change. DRC emphasis that in order to operate a system committed to rehabilitation, inmates must be treated and respected as human beings (Mohr, 2013).
Recidivism within the Mental Health Court was examined among arrestees. Criminal recidivism was investigated one-year post exit from a Mental Health Court. The participants were assigned a specialized supervision unit to provide supervision and services. The finding concluded the MHC participants arrests were significantly lower in the year after MHC exit and significantly lower than that of the comparison group. The participant averaged fewer rearrests and had a long time to rearrests. This study supported the empirical evident of the effectiveness of MHCs in reducing recidivism among offenders with severe mental illness (Hiday, Wales, & Ray, 2013).

Substance abuse, in general, has shown to increase criminal behavior that often resulted in recidivism. A study was conducted to examine potential predictors of criminal recidivism, including substance abusers. Cohorts of 4,152 prisoners were assessed with the Addiction Severity Index (ASI) in Swedish criminal justice system. The clients were followed for an average of 2.7 years. During follow-up, 69% returned to the criminal justice system. Recidivism was associated with amphetamine and heroin use, with an additive risk for injectors, and with polysubstance use. These findings have implications for the need for substance abuse treatment after release from prison (Håkansson & Berglund, 2012).

In Boston, Massachusetts, the use of bibliotherapy was utilized to enhance probation and reduce recidivism. The examiners believed that efforts to change cognitive orientations and social patterns could enhance the effectiveness of bibliotherapy. Changing Lives Through Literature (CLTL) was created in 1991. The program is offered in several Massachusetts jurisdictions and several other states. The CLTL group consists
of 25 probationers. The participants read works of fiction, memoir and social history that are relevant to their lives (Schutt, Deng, & Stoehr, 2013).

The readings are discussed among panels that may include probation officers, judges, a teacher-facilitator and community volunteers. CLTL seeks to redirect negative thoughts and assist the participants with enhancing self-conceptions and social orientations. A limited study of the program provided that changes did occur in participants' cognitive orientation and social styles. The hypothesis was supported that the rate of recidivism and offense severity declined more than those in the comparison group (Schutt, Deng, & Stoehr, 2013).

An Australian employment assistance program was examined to study the recidivism rate outcome over a two-year post-release period. The 12-month voluntary program operated from 17 Victorian correctional locations, seven prisons and 10 community corrections locations. The program targeted participants who were considered moderate to high risk of reoffending. A random sample included 600 program participants and 600 nonparticipants. The finding provided that a very low rate of reoffending (7.46%) for the entire program while they participated in the program. The study supported that long-term post release employment support are benefitting in terms of reducing recidivism (Graffam, Shinkfield, & Lavelle, 2014).

In 2013, Gordon found that, as of 2005, about 80,000 prisoners were housed in solitary confinement in jails and in the state and federal prisons in the United States. Solitary confinement requires an inmate to remain in their cell for 22 to 24 hours a day. Solitary confinement provides very little human contact or interaction. Solitary confinement has been described as inhumane, but the number of prisoners held in solitary
confinement increased 40% between 1995 and 2000. Supporters of solitary confinement argue that it decreases recidivism by deterring prisoners from committing future crimes. Gordon found that two studies, which matched prisoners held in solitary confinement with those held in the general population, found that solitary confinement increased recidivism (Gordon, 2013).

The Virgin Island is ranked fifth place in the world leading the Caribbean Islands regarding prison populations. The typical inmate in the USVI has similar characteristics of the described inmates in the USA. The USVI inmate was described as a black male, under the age of 26, without a high school diploma. The study investigated the relationship between recidivism and the level of education of inmates in the United States Virgin Islands Prison System. The study found that inmates, who leave the educational system at an early age, are more likely to recidivate (Harney & Ferrol-Hawley, 2012).

Criminological theories have suggested that family relationships influence criminal behavior. There is little recidivism research that focuses on in-prison social ties. Researchers have found that evidence that social ties are more important for woman, despite that most research is focused on men. This study seeks to build on existing research by examining the relationship between female-in-prison contact, post release support and recidivism. The result from this study suggests that in prison family contact and post-release family support contributes to minimizing recidivism (Barrick, Lattimore, & Visher, 2014).

Recent findings have highlighted the potential implications of in-prison experiences for prisoner reentry and, in particular, recidivism. Researchers have found that there may be a connection with inmate misconduct, and recidivism. The results
indicate that inmates who engage in misconduct, violent misconduct in particular, are more likely to recidivate (Cochran, Mears, Bales, & Stewart, 2014).

McCoy and Miller (2013) examined whether gender differences existed in the rate, type, and general predictors of recidivism for nonviolent offenders. A total of 328 male and female participants within the Texas state jail were observed for the study. The participants were matched on current offenses, total number of arrest, age, and race. Contrary to previous findings, the result concluded that there were no significant gender differences for recidivism rate, although significant gender differences were found for those who had reoffended with property and prostitution offenses. Substance abuse was predictive for male offenders only (McCoy & Miller, 2013).

Tella and Schargrodsky (2013) completed a criminal recidivism study in Argentina. They focused on the rearrests of two groups. They observed individuals who were released from prison as well as individuals who were released from electronic monitoring. The participants were randomly assigned to judges. According to the observation from the Argentine setting, it was concluded that there is a negative causal effect on criminal when individuals are placed on electronic monitoring than prison (Tella & Schargrodsky, 2013).

From 2003 to 2006, a sample was observed in Norwegian prisons. The researchers followed 7,476 prisoners on a monthly basis. The majority of the former inmates were employed at some point within the data window, but took approximately 30 months for 30% of the participants to gain employment. The findings from the study supported theories that employment reduces the risk of recidivism (Tella & Schargrodsky, 2013).
A five year follow-up study of released offenders was observed to explore the post-release employment and recidivism among the various types of offenders before, during and after the economic recession of 2008. The study examined a cohort of 6,561 offenders who were released from the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) throughout 2005. The study concluded that an offender’s education and post-release employment were significantly and statistically correlated with recidivism, regardless of the offender’s classification. The study provided that the unemployment rates were high among released offenders with the first year. Nearly half of the recidivist offenders were re-incarcerated within 12 months of their initial release (Nally, Lockwood, Knutson, & Taiping, 2012).

It is rare that a study is conducted on Hong Kong juveniles. The purpose of the study was to explore the six-month short-term recidivism rate of 92 male juvenile probationers (aged 14-20 years), with and without controlling for their index crime. The study found that, generally, 30% of the juveniles reoffended within the six-month follow-up period (82 and 18% were adjudicated of a nonviolent and violent offense respectively). Self-esteem, life satisfaction, social bond, positive and negative affect, impulsivity, pro-offending attitudes, and self-perceived life problems were assessed in both Wave 1 and Wave 2 periods. Only three properties (negative affect, self-perceived life problems, and self-esteem) yielded significant changes within the six-month period.

This study identified significant predictors of recidivism in these rarely sampled juvenile probationers. The findings indicated that the type of crime, onset age of delinquent behavior, frequency of delinquency involvement in the past year, social bond,
negative affect, impulsivity, and pro-offending attitudes were significant risk factors for recidivism (Chui & Chan, 2012).

In Detroit, Michigan, Wayne County officials have invested in a program that focuses low cost services and treatment for juvenile offenders. The program aims to reduce recidivism among juveniles. The post arrest diversion program included: rapid, standardized assessment of psychosocial functioning with the Juvenile Inventory for Functioning, an individualized plan for addressing needs, engagement of caregivers. Service provision by youth assistance programs in the youth’s Community and access to mental health and substance use services as needed. The programs have been successful. The adjudication rate for new offenses one-year post services was 7.7%, for a program that costs $1,500 per youth. Significant Improvement in functioning was observed for youth with an exit assessment (Hodges, Martin, Smith, & Cooper, 2011).

Burke and Mulmat (2013) expounded on the effectiveness of the evidence-based practices through the Senate Bill 618 program to reduce recidivism in San Diego California. The district attorney’s office in San Diego developed the concept. The purpose of the bill was to evaluate presentences and establish services to assist offenders as they reintegrated back into the communities. The program was successful at motivating the offenders to participant in reentry program as well as address barriers to employment. The findings determined that Senate Bill 618 improved outcomes for participants. The program was cost-efficient and it assisted the ex-offenders with engaging in the community, acquire stable housing and employment assistance (Burke & Mulmat, 2013).
Incarcerated men are disproportionately black. Researchers often report on the disparity of ex-inmates from prison, but little is known about the racial disparity in recidivism rates among jail-ex-inmates. This study examined recidivism rates and survival time (period from release date to re-arrest) among male ex-inmates released from the Allegheny County Jail in Pennsylvania during 2003 who were tracked for three years (N = 12,545). Recidivism rates were compared across race using chi-square tests. Survival time was analyzed using survival analysis including Kaplan-Meier estimation with log-rank test and Cox's proportional hazard model. The results indicated that the overall three-year recidivism rate was 55.9%, and black men recidivated at a significantly higher rate than white men. Survival analysis also attested to racial disparity in recidivism, and black men recidivated in a shorter time frame than their white peers with the covariates age at release and length of stay in jail controlled (Jung, Spjeldnes, & Yamatani, 2010).

Rocque, Bierie, Posick, and Mackenzie (2013) examined a study at the Maryland Correctional Boot Camp Evaluation, which began in 2001. The participants were random assignments of low to moderate risk male offenders to either a correction boot camp or a traditional prison. The participants were given a pretest and posttest survey. Over the period of two years, data was collected on released inmates for both groups. Social bonds and demographic information were the independent variables. The survival time was the independent variable. The demographics and social bonds were measured using self-reports and recidivism and arrest data were collected through official reports (Rocque, Bierie, Posick, & Mackenzie, 2013).
The study found that changes in the participants' beliefs did not predict recidivism, the level of belief at release did. The study suggested that individuals who have more faith in the law or feel that the law is legitimate are less likely to recidivate and also are able to remain crime-free on the outside for longer periods. This study supports the relatively consistent findings from other work showing that prosocial beliefs are inversely related to crime. This study suggested that cognitive behavioral therapy is a promising method for reducing recidivism. Future work should continue to explore how to impact antisocial attitudes or beliefs, especially in programs of short duration (Rocque, Bierie, Posick, & Mackenzie, 2013).

In 1970s, leading criminologist Robert Martinson release his influential review of correctional programs. His reviews created the “low point” in correctional programming declaring that “nothing works” when it comes to offender. During this “low point,” a number of researchers, such as Ted Palmer, Pau, Gendreau and Don Andrew disagreed with the idea that “nothing works.” Palmer reanalyzed the exact data as Martinson and concluded that “some things do work.” Palmer gained support and began the rebirth of rehabilitative efforts spawning additional empirical research and evaluation concerning the implementation of effective offenders programming (Castleberry & Jones, 2013, p. 44).

The Oklahoma Department of Corrections (ODOC) has placed an emphasis to partner with concerned citizens, volunteers and state agencies to maximize available resources in an effort to provide effective programs and services to address the risk factors and needs of the offender population. ODOC has three reentry projects that focus on transitional services for specific populations. The programs have been designed to
help encourage other work towards developing practices that could contribute to the reduction of recidivism and increase public safety (Castleberry & Jones, 2013).

In 2007, The Oklahoma Department of Corrections and The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services implemented a Collaborative Mental Health Reentry Program. The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services have placed staff within correctional facilities that have the greatest number of offenders with serious mental illnesses. The program is staffed by integrated services discharge managers (ISDM), co-occurring treatment specialists and a program coordinator. The ISDMs serve as part of the ODOC institutional mental health treatment team to create and implement an individualized treatment plan, including reentry planning for offenders with serious mental illnesses. The program includes community-based Reentry Intensive Care Coordination Teams (RICCT) to improve the transition of reentering offenders with serious mental illnesses. RICCT staffs meet with offenders a minimum of 90 days before their projected release dates from prison and work with the offender in the community until he or she has adjusted to life following incarceration (Castleberry & Jones, 2013).

Most recently, ODOC has directed its attention towards the reentry needs of veterans. Major General Rita Aragon, The Oklahoma Secretary of Military and Veteran Affairs has developed a reentry system of support for incarcerated veterans while they are incarcerated and upon reintegration in the community. Under the leadership of Aragon, a focus group of wardens, security officers and members of veterans’ organizations met and designed a program very similar to the veterans’ court, called the “Battle Buddies” program. Battle Buddies is staffed completely by volunteer veterans.
Their service is provided at no cost to the state or citizens of Oklahoma. The program assigns a veteran volunteer who will be a “battle buddy” to the offender veteran. Through the combined efforts of all involved parties, successful reentry of offenders is achieved and greater public safety is ensured (Castleberry & Jones, 2013).

The primary goal for the juvenile justice system is to reduce the likelihood that juvenile offender will commit future offenses. In 2006, Snyder and Sickmund reported that the state-level juvenile recidivism rate were as high as 55%. In 2003, more than 92,000 juveniles were held in public and private juvenile facilities. Grunwald, Lockwood, Harris, and Mennis (2010) examined if neighborhoods influences the likelihood of reoffending for juveniles. There is an extensive body of literature regarding the impact of environmental factors on delinquency. Minimal information is known about the effects of factors on juvenile recidivism (Grunwald, Lockwood, Harris, & Mennis, 2010).

The sample examined included 7,061 delinquent male juveniles committed to community-based programs in Philadelphia, of which 74% were Black, 13% Hispanic, and 11% White. Since sample youths were nested in neighborhoods, a hierarchical generalized linear model was employed to predict recidivism across three general categories of recidivism offenses: drug, violent, and property. Results indicate that predictors varied across the types of offenses and that drug offending differed from property and violent offending. Neighborhood-level factors were found to influence drug offense recidivism, but were not significant predictors of violent offenses, property offenses, or an aggregated recidivism measure, despite contrary expectations (Grunwald, Lockwood, Harris, & Mennis, 2010).
There is much literature in the United States to provide and explanation on the perception of how offenders view programs and reentry challenges. There is little information on the needs of offenders within the Trinidad and Tobago Prison System (TTPS). Sumter and Turner (2009) examined a study to explore the perceived reentry needs in the TTPS. Fifty offenders were asked about how they perceive current services provided by TTPS. They questioned about what programs they believe were necessary for successful reintegration. They were also asked about their anxiety level about (release) returning to the community in order to gauge their perceptions about anticipated reentry needs. Over all, respondents’ identified employment, life skills, and access to educational programs as major reentry need (Sumter, Turner, & Rougier, 2013).

Approximately 100,000 youths under the age of 18 are released from juvenile facilities, jails and prisons. There are many obstacles to successful reentry for juveniles. Many youths within the juvenile system struggle with educational deficiencies, mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders. The juveniles then return to communities with poorly performing school and high rates of crime and poverty. Research provides that ex-juveniles offenders are more likely to succeed if they have access to education and vocational programs, substance use and mental health treatment, housing assistance and family and pro-social development. There can be a reduction in recidivism among juveniles with appropriate case management and as well as risk and need assessments (Bilchik, 2010).

The National Reentry Resource Center’s Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee focuses on the barriers ex-juvenile offenders face when the return home. The committee utilizing and ecological approach to assist the youth with focusing on family, community,
school, peer group and self. The resource center is working diligently with advisory committee to develop publications, online tools and distance-learning opportunities to help practitioners and policymakers advance programs and policies that will help reduce recidivism and improve public safety (Bilchik, 2010).

**Second Chance Act**

In the 1990s, reentry programs were established in the state and federal criminal justice system to address the needs of ex-offenders. The programs originated in state drug courts and other problem-solving courts. On April 9, 2008, former President George W. Bush signed into law the Second Chance Act. The bipartisan effort was intended to minimize the increasing recidivism rates by creating and funding programs for offenders returning to the community (Gottschall & Armour, 2011).

The programs would assist the ex-offenders with smoother transitions and skill-building. President Barack Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder supported the importance of reentry programs in order to reduce recidivism and successfully assist ex-offenders with reintegrating into the communities and the job market. In 2011, a bipartisan team of Senators introduced the Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2011. The act was intended to resurrect the Second Chance Act that expired in 2010 (Gottschall & Armour, 2011).

The United States Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs launched the Reentry Court Initiative (RCI), in 2000. The initiative supported pilot reentry programs modeled after the drug court in various states. The purpose of the program was to help
develop strategies to assist ex-offenders as they reintegrated back into the communities (Gottschall & Armour, 2011).

The reentry model is new and it has grown amazingly quickly within the federal court system. In 2002, the Eastern District of New York began the first reentry program followed by the District of Oregon in 2005. By 2007, there were seven federal reentry courts. Today, there are 45. The federal reentry programs are still considered fairly new. There is limited empirical research as on the success of the federal drug courts (Gottschall & Armour, 2011).

Often times, the reintegration process for a mother can be frustrating and demanding. Once a mother is release from jail of prison, it is expected that she reunites with her children. The mother must meet the requirement of her parole to remain free. The mother is faced with multiple tasks with regaining custody of her children. She is expected to secure house and employment to support her family. The mandates from the state and federal policies can complicate the reentry process for woman. The recidivism rate is 65% among incarcerated mothers. Many times, the mother who are able to maintain their freedom are unable to reunite with their children because of the lack of resources (McGrath, 2012).

In March of 2010, the first nationwide study on recidivism was conducted at the Center for Court Innovation. The report analyzed the effectiveness of the Harlem Reentry Court in reducing recidivism. The study found a 10% reduction in recidivism rates among the participants within the first three years (McGrath, 2012).

Within two years of operation, a study was completed in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The study showed a 30% reduction in recidivism among the participants of the Reentry
Court. The reduction is recidivism saved the city $1,753,787 within two years. The study was indicative that Reentry Courts are a cost effective approach to reducing recidivism. The study provided that the cost for rehabilitating the participant only was half of what it would cost to house an inmate (McGrath, 2012).

September 2012, The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center’s National Reentry Resource Center reported that several states have reported significant reduction in recidivism. The study tracked individuals released from prison in 2005 and 2007. Ohio and Texas reported an 11% reduction in recidivism. Michigan’s recidivism was reduced 18%, and Kansas reported a 15% reduction. The Second Chance Act has been instrumental in reducing recidivism (“New Report Shows Significant Reduction in Recidivism,” 2012).

A study on juveniles examined Juvenile Reentry and Desistance. The researchers utilized qualitative cases of juveniles released from secure confinement to examine the desistance process as juveniles return to the community. The study found that juveniles admitted that they have to make the decision to make better choice on their own before they accept the motivation from external sources. The juveniles resisted support until they were ready to make the necessary transformation in the lives (Panuccio, Christian, Martinez, & Sullivan, 2012).

James M. Cole is a Deputy Attorney General for the Department of Justice. Cole (2012) has placed an emphasis on addressing reentry within the United States. He provided that high security facilities are 51% overpopulated and 48% at medium security facilities. In response to the crowding, the Bureau of Prison (BOP) has resulted to
inmates double and triple-bunking. Cole believes that in order for inmates to be rehabilitated, preparation must begin the day that an inmate is incarcerated (Cole, 2012).

Cole (2012) affirmed that inmates are receiving services ranging from mental health, substance abuse treatment, education, vocational training and work programs. Within (BOP) they have implemented several programs; 16% of participants within the Residential Drug Abuse Program (RDAP) are less likely to recidivate compared to nonparticipating inmates. The inmates that participated in the vocation training are 33% less likely to recidivate compared to non-participating inmates. Cole was a part of a new launch called “What Works in Reentry Clearinghouse” (p. 21). The program will aid practitioners seeking guidance as they work to establish effective programs and practices for offenders and ex-offenders (Cole, 2012).

The Second Chance Act is a necessity and it is vastly beneficial be for individuals dealing with mental health, substance abuse and physical problems. Offenders are more likely to have barriers than the general population. In 2008, the state prison data showed that 73% of women and 55% of men self-reported mental illness. Individuals who do not receive treatment for mental instability are more likely to re-offend. Spjeldnes and Goodkind (2009) explained that historically men have been incarcerated at higher rates than women. As a result, reentry and reintegration programs have focused on how they could assist men.

The Second Chance Act of 2007 authorized funding for reentry programs and research on special populations. Spjeldnes and Goodkind (2009) reviewed the demographics, incarceration statistics as well as barriers to reintegration. They believe
that it is important to identify the needs of every population in order to design effective reentry programs (Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009).

Goldkind (2011) explored the increased need for social work involvement when youths return to school from being confined within the juvenile justice system. School social workers should be given a vital role in the readmission and reentry process when formerly incarcerated youths are discharged from the justice system. Youths are faced with various challenges regarding their families, in the community as well as returning to school. School social workers have been trained in ecological approaches, problem solving, and advocacy strategies and youth development. Trained and competent social workers have the required skills to assist the youth reengage in schools, in the communities and with their families (Goldkind, 2011).

Educational and juvenile justice scholars believe that returning to school may be the most accessible and reliable pathway for youths that are released from secured custody. Without a high school diploma, particularly those of African American descent, faces a challenging future. In 2000, a federal report found that only 39% of black high school dropouts were employed at age 19, compared with 60% of white dropouts ("Bureau of Labor Statistics," 2007).

When youths return to school from the justice system, they are faced with challenges because most schools operate under the traditional calendar and school staffs are unable to issue partial or transfer credits. Youths may also face embarrassment from peers. School social worker could be a catalyst for change among youths returning to the community because they are able to assist them with adapting during the change process (Goldkind, 2011).
The influx in the incarceration rate since the mid-1970s has resulted in the vast numbers of inmates being released from prison annually. Americans have placed a greater emphasis on reentry initiatives. Few empirical studies have been done to poll the public’s attitude towards reentry. A randomly selected state-wide sample in Missouri found that citizens support the mission of reentry programs. Eight out of 10 Americans support the Second Chance Act (Garland, Wodahl, & Schuhmann, 2012).

Krisberg and Marchionna found, in 2006, that 70% of Americans support reentry services both in prison and following release. The respondent from the study believes that it is important that reentry programs are designed to assist participants with job training, drug treatment, mental health services, and family support (Krisberg & Marchionna, 2006).

Researchers funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) have found what they are calling a “cultural shift” among probation and parole officers in some of the Second Chance Act demonstration sites they are evaluating. The NIJ have selected 10 demonstration sites to determine the impact of the Second Chance Act. Dr. Ron D’Amico is a senior social scientist and the lead researcher on the study (Ritter, 2014).

D’Amico announced that agencies were placing less of an emphasis on compliance and monitoring and more on a holistic rehabilitative philosophy. The facilities have placed a focus on the offender’s needs and how they could implement programs to assist them with successful reintegration back into the communities. The finding from the first phase of the study is called “an implementation evaluation” (Ritter, 2014, p. 18). The findings from the second phase will be called an “outcome evaluation” because it will examine if the Second Chance Act is effective (p. 18).
The SCA demonstration grants have identified that as a result of the grant partnerships are growing. Services are becoming more holistic, and there has been a cultural shift about the way services should be rendered to offenders. D’Amico admitted that we cannot determine if the changes will be long-term but as for now the changes are worth implementing and emulating (Ritter, 2014).  

In 2013, Patterson described the barriers that released prisoners experience when they reintegrate back into communities. Patterson defined social justice issues that the practice of social work practice could address. The literature provided recommendations for enhancing the reentry process. Patterson described how effective reentry programs could significantly reduce recidivism rates. There is a need for increased evidence-based services where larger numbers of prisoners are released because public health and public safety are more significant (Patterson, 2013).  

Patterson (2013) described a cohort study of prisoners release from the Washington State Department of Corrections. The study was conducted from July 1999 through December 2003. The study concluded that 443 prisoners died during the first 1.9 years out of the 30,237 released prisoners. During their first two weeks after release, the risk of death among former prisoners was 12.7 times that of other state residents, with a higher risk of death from drug overdose. The leading causes of death among former prisoners were drug overdose, cardiovascular disease, homicide, and suicide (Binswanger et al., 2007).  

Prisoners often experience more mental and medical health problems than the general population. As a result of prisoners living in crowded conditions, poverty and area of intravenous drug use, many emotions may rise out of the tensions. In 1989, a
A major outbreak of Tuberculosis developed in New York City and over 80% were traced to jails and prisoners (Petersilia, 2000).

Prisoners with chronic diseases, mental health problems and drug abuse often return to low-income communities were these health concerns are intensified as a result of health care inequality and ineffective reentry policies. In 1991, Rikers Island jail had the highest TB rates in the United States. In Los Angeles meningitis was spread into the community when a large number of prisoners were released (Freudenberg, Daniels, Crum, Perkins, & Richie, 2005).

A few studies have been conducted on how parolees experience participation in community college reentry programs. Eleven one-on-one interviews were conducted parolee college students. The findings interviews concluded that the parolee enjoys the college environment and they are now role models for the families because they are able to share their college experiences. Most participants of the study believe that they have minimized their chances of recidivism since they have enrolled in college. The research provides that more community colleges should develop transitional program for ex-offenders as a part of their public good mission. Many colleges have begun to explore how they could support the efforts of the Second Chance Act that have authorized funds for federal grants to provide parolees with education and other services to reduce recidivism (Potts & Palmer, 2014).

California releases approximately 120,000 prisoners under mandatory parole supervision back into the community. Within three years, approximately two-thirds of the parolees return to California prisons. The increased rates of recidivism are a representation of the failed parole system and the current correctional crisis in California.
Successful reintegration of prisoners would be the catalyst in rectifying the correctional crisis. Often times, prisoners enter the correctional institutions with unmet mental health or substance abuse issues and most times they are left untreated. According to research, there is limited rehabilitative programming during incarceration. The ex-offender is then expected to have a successful return to their community where they will face legal and social challenges. The spiking rates of recidivism increases government expenditures, jeopardizes the offender's rehabilitation, presents public safety concerns and it negatively impacts communities (Lee, 2010).

Sickmund and Snyder (2006) found that between 1985 and 2002 the number of cases in which adjudicated youth were sentenced to various types of residential placement rose 44% from 100,400 to 144,000. Sabol and West (2009) found that in 2007 more than 725,000 individuals under the age of 24 were released from state and federal detention facilities. Qualitative case studies were examined of juvenile parolees in an exploratory attempt to describe the processes by which subjective states and social circumstances evolve and interact with social support during the period following release from secure confinement (Panuccio, Christian, Martinez, & Sullivan, 2012).

The researchers modeled the work of Cullen (1994) and Burnett, Bushway, LeBel, and Marun (2008) to suggest a social support model to describe the possible factors that influence the desistance process for young individuals. Social support from families and social programs were the two main sources considered relevant to the juvenile reentry process. Juveniles encounter numerous challenges when they return from juvenile facilities. Most individuals are dependent on parents or older relatives.
Many of the individuals may have never had their own place of residence of steady full-time employment (Panuccio, Christian, Martinez, & Sullivan, 2012).

It is vital that one seek comprehensive solutions to address crimes in our communities. To create safer communities, we must be addressed crimes in the very first instance and ex-offenders must receive the tools they need for successful reentry. The Department of Justice, advocates, members of bench and bar across the country has an understanding the recidivism represents one of the most complex criminal justice challenges of the 21st century. The impact or unacceptably high recidivism rates cannot be overstated. The cost associated with the reentry phenomena is significant. In order to advance the work of reentry, every participant in our criminal justice system has a distinct and important role. Every investigator, prosecutor, defense attorney, and judge, members of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, prison officials, probation and parole officers, workforce specialists, treatment providers, and local faith-based institutions - has a responsibility to help maximize public safety and promote justice in the course of their daily efforts (Cole, 2012).

Cole (2012) provided that The National Institute of Justice’s (NIJ’s) Multisite Adult Drug Court Evaluation and other studies have confirmed that state and local adult drug courts reduce both recidivism and public safety costs. Specifically, the studies show that these courts significantly reduce drug use and criminal offending. During and after program participation, courts are more cost-efficient than traditional case processing and supervision, netting benefits of $5,680 to $6,208 per participant on average. Reentry courts are established on similar principles and pillars that are utilized by drug courts. They both leverage the monitoring power of the judicial system to hold individuals
accountable, ensure close supervision, and address behaviors that lead to criminal conduct. Similar to drug court, some reentry courts places an emphasis on individuals with substance abuse problems (Cole, 2012).

Thus far, limited research and evaluations have been conducted for reentry courts, but some small studies have shown early results that are promising and positive. In the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, an 18-month study was conducted on the first 60 participants in the Supervision to Aid Reentry (STAR). The study concluded that only 10% of these STAR program graduates were rearrested during the study period, compared to 31% of a similar control group (Cole, 2012).

The effectiveness of federal reentry courts are currently being conducted by the Federal Judicial Center. According to Cole (2012),

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is also conducting a rigorous evaluation of reentry courts funded by the Second Chance Act (SCA), with the goal of assessing the impact of these programs; determining how they’re affecting rearrests and returns to prison and jail; discovering whether they’re reducing the number of new convictions and parole violations; and evaluating whether they’re cost-effective. (p. 21)

Often times, ex-offenders are no strangers to the criminal justice system. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (1999), 56% of released state prisoners had one or more prior incarcerations, and 25% had at least three prior incarcerations. Many of the released prisoners did not have a high school diploma, limited employment skills but they were affected by mental health and or substance abuse issues (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).
The Bureau of Justice Statistics (1999) reported that African American individual have an 18.6% chance of being incarcerated in their lifetime, compared to 3.4% for Caucasian individuals. African American offenders serve 23% more time under mandatory release and they experience a nearly doubled recidivism rate. Researchers provided that the disparity in higher incarceration rates results in a disproportionately negative impact on black families and communities. The Second Chance Act of 2007 has provided funding for development, implementation and that analysis of reentry initiatives at system and community levels. The need to place an emphasis on reentry has triggered unprecedented collaboration to address the issue. Many believed that a major shift will evolve in prisons and sentencing reform. It is believed that a concrete plan has to be developed in order for an ex-offender to experience success upon reentry. Our current reentry crisis has been triggered by the “tough on crime” era of the past few decades (Focht-Perlberg, 2009, p. 221). The three key has contributed to the alarming recidivism rates are: increased incarceration rates, the shift from indeterminate sentencing and discretionary release to determinate sentencing and mandatory release, and the shift from a rehabilitative to a punitive focus in corrections (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).

Collateral consequences are the indirect social and civil restrictions that emanate from a criminal conviction. The consequences are legally distinctive from the conviction and the sentence. Common consequences include employment discrimination, bans on certain types of professional licensing, housing discrimination, ineligibility for public housing and other benefits, ineligibility for federal financial aid and voting restrictions. A collateral consequence has direct effect on recidivism (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).
Substance abuse and mental health illnesses are recurrent themes within recidivism research. The most effective treatment modalities for offenders have included a combination of longer in-prison treatment services, followed by a community-based treatment component during community supervision. The continued community supervision could possibly reduce the chances of relapsing (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).

According to Focht-Perlberg (2009), Lyles-Chockley wrote about the plight of African American ex-offenders. She explained that African Americans faces a “double stigma” related to race and their status as an ex-offender (Focht-Perlberg, 2009, p. 231). She wrote that this stigma is related to stereotypical characteristics of being “dangerous, aggressive, dishonest and untrustworthy” and asserts these individuals are automatically “met with suspicion upon release” (p. 231).

Joan Petersilia (2000) characterizes reentry as a process or “a philosophy, not a program” (p. 2). The primary objectives of reentry response are twofold. Petersilia explained that the initial goal is to break the cycle of recidivism by reducing new crimes and improving public safety. Secondly, reentry aims to increase the successfully return of ex-offenders. Petersilia provided that there are two phases to reentry. The first is institutional and occurs during the incarceration, and the second phase is structured reentry. It starts six months before an offender is released through the first 30 days of post release, and the third phase is community integration, after the first month of release. The theory starts from the working assumption that to maximize the efficacy of reentry programming, the offender must be actively involved in the decision-making and reentry planning, to encourage offender accountability through proactive participation in reentry. Taxman argues this approach promotes offender initialization of plan, as opposed to the
offender viewing reentry planning as merely another aspect of State control and coercion (Petersilia, 2000).

Ohio’s Plan for Productive Offender Reentry and Recidivism Reduction provides a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary reentry court program. Focht-Perlberg (2009) noted that the “Ohio Plan” focuses on several components of reentry, including: tailored offender assessment and reentry planning, treatment programming, promoting family and community involvement, and community supervision focused on both the offender’s needs in transition, and on facilitating victim and community reparations (p. 240). Many of these elements appear in other reentry models, such as therapeutic jurisprudence. Therapeutic jurisprudence, “a collective term for holistic public defense, prosecution and community supervision, is another contemporary reentry innovation” (Focht-Perlberg, 2009, p. 240). Therapeutic jurisprudence is characterized as going beyond traditional legal advocacy and considers clients’ broader needs in sentencing, regarding the barriers of reentry, with aim to break the cycle of recidivism. These approaches share restorative values and goals “to stabilize communities using the legal process as opposed to destabilizing communities caused by recurring social ills, increased arrests, and high incarceration rates” (p. 240).

Joan Petersilia (2000) suggests that in order to maintain a successful reentry program, the program must be primarily community based, maintain a rehabilitative focuses, intensive and individually tailored. The program will only be effective if they program begin in jail or prison. It must include an aftercare component to provide seamless transitional reentry support (Petersilia, 2000).
According to Focht-Perlberg (2009), researchers have found that every state has some type of pre-release programming, but they vary widely in terms of quality, capacity and participation. Only about one-third of prisoners reported participating in any type of prison vocational or educational program. Another study of inmates found that only 18% of those with substance abuse problems reported getting treatment in prison, and only 12% of prisoners participated in any sort of “pre-release” programs (Focht-Perlberg, 2009, p. 244). In addition to the issue of inadequate program availability, questions about inconsistent programmatic quality and efficacy also remain.

A Vermont Department of Corrections study found that community members wanted offenders to accept responsibility for their wrongdoing and repair the harm done to victims and the community but the citizens expressed a willingness in community justice to assist the offender reintegrate back into the community. Noted scholar Gordon Bazemore suggested that in a Restorative Justice intervention, the community acts as both an “agent” and a “target” of reintegration (Focht-Perlberg, 2009, p. 246). Bazemore described the relationship between the returning offender and the community as: one based on reciprocity. According to Bazemore, civic engagement through Restorative Justice seeks both to mend the offender’s bond with community, as well as to reestablish community acceptance of the offender (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).

Focht-Perlberg (2009) pointed out that Hawaii Restorative Circles, a novel 2005 pilot program through the state’s Department of Corrections, utilized the peacemaking circle model as an institutional reentry initiative. The Hawaii Restorative Circles program involves an offender, prison support staff, as well as family or natural support of the offender. The objectives of the Circle are to reconcile harm caused by crime and to
promote the offender’s accountability. The support team identifies the necessary resources to develop a reentry plan for the offender by creating a “blueprint” for a post-incarceration employment and housing plan (Focht-Perlberg, 2009, p. 254). Facilitators provide a written plan to all Circle participants, and the group may schedule “re-circles” to provide follow-up support to the offender after release (p. 254). The Program outcomes are measured with non-controlled participant satisfaction surveys of a relatively small sample, but the survey yielded very strongly positive satisfaction outcomes. The program’s achievements have resulted in increased support and funding from the Hawaii legislature to expand the programs to both men and women inmates at all Hawaii prison facilities (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).

“Bridges to Life” is a nonprofit program in conjunction with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (Focht-Perlberg, 2009, p. 254). Like the Hawaii Restorative Circles program, BTL is a Restorative Justice program designed to impact reentry success for returning offenders. Unlike the Hawaii program, which uses the Circles model, BTL utilizes Victim Offender Mediated Dialogue (VOM/D), a facilitator-mediated restorative process involving offenders, victim surrogates, and trained volunteer facilitators. Focht-Perlberg (2009) explained that, also unlike the Hawaii program, BTL is in the process of being objectively evaluated to measure comparative three-year recidivism rates, in addition to a participant satisfaction survey measure. Although the recidivism study is still in process, BTL has shown some very promising results to date. BTL is a pre-release, faith-based, in-prison Victim Offender Mediated Dialogue program that focuses on offender rehabilitation through reparation to the victim (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).
The structure of the BTL program is a 12-week, two-hour, volunteer-facilitated group session with offenders and surrogate victims. BTL uses a combination of victim impact panels and a curriculum focusing on reparations, healing and accountability. The program has two key goals: to reduce recidivism, and to promote reparation between victims and offenders. BTL currently operates in 25 Texas prisons, and has served over 8,136 offenders since 2000. The outcome of the preliminary, ongoing recidivism study reveals that since the program's inception in 2000, there has been just a 17% recidivism rate among post-release BTL participants. Of the recidivating offenses, only 1.3% are new violent. By comparison, the three-year recidivism rate for the general population of released Texas state prison inmates during the same period was 31.4%. During that same time, the national three-year recidivism rate was 67.5%. BTL has established remarkable objective success through demonstrating measurable achievements in both offender support and public safety outcomes. In addition to the promising and considerable drop in recidivism, BTL has also garnered consistently positive responses on program participants' anonymous satisfaction surveys (Focht-Perlberg, 2009).

Michele Banks (2010) is the Second Chance Reentry Program Manager at the Richmond City Sheriff's Office. The Richmond City Jail's total daily inmate population averages 1,400 or more, but the facility was built to hold less than 900. Banks reported that The Second Chance Act has allowed their team to effectively address the root causes of a high recidivism rate and overcrowding among the disproportionate number of offenders that are returning to the Richmond community (Miranda, 2007).

Banks (2010) explained that in their, pilot program, they focused on 30-year-old male and female inmates. She believed that there is a correlation with poverty and
separated families; their program has focused on treatment of the whole person. The approach has made a much wider impact, not only reducing recidivism and improving quality of life among the inmates, but also among their family members, and, consequently, the larger community. The City of Richmond has been able to effectively partner with local government agencies, community based service providers to assist ex-offenders with issues surrounding substance abuse, homelessness, mental and physical health, unemployment, educational challenges and family instability. Their three pronged approach of Getting Ready, Going Home and Staying Home consist of integrated pre and post release services that include substance abuse treatment, transitional housing options, connections to mental and physical health services, GED and vocational education, responsible financial management and job readiness skills training as well as mentoring and family reunification services (Miranda, 2007).

Banks (2010) stated that through the funding of the Second Chance Act the Richmond Jail and close community partners have been able to collaborate and implement a comprehensive reentry model. The model uses risk and need assessments to link returning citizens to much needed services at each of the various stages of reentry. Bank provided that her team is confident that the reauthorization of the Second Chance Act will enable the production of increased positive outcomes among this disadvantaged and high risk population. With reauthorization lies the ability to replicate this model into other areas of Virginia with similar demographics and risk profile (Miranda, 2007).

In 2007, a study was conducted by California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) of the Prisoner Reentry Employment Program (PREP). Second Chance seeks to uphold a promise to reduce recidivism and improve mental health among the reentry
population. Second Chance is a non-profit agency based in San Diego that creates opportunities for self-sufficiency by providing job readiness training, employment placement, and affordable housing and life skills for homeless and unemployed adults and youth (Miranda, 2007).

Scott Silverman is the executive director who founded the organization in 1993. In 2006, almost 10,000 clients were served through a variety of programs. All focused on improving the vocational and economic prospects of clients served. A total of 2,565 parolees were studied including a control group that did not receive PREP services. The study found that ex-offenders who graduated from the PREP program were significantly less likely to return to prison (recidivate) than ex-offenders who did not participate in PREP (Miranda, 2007).

Miranda (2007) asserted that approximately 30% of PREP graduates recidivated within two years, compared to nearly 70% for those who did not participate in PREP. The recidivism rate of the study’s control group (non-PREP participants) matched the overall recidivism rate of California parolees. PREP increases confidence and motivation among Parolees. The percentage of participants who felt that “they were very or extremely prepared to find a job” more than doubled over the course of the program PREP Reduces Depression among Parolees (Miranda, 2007, p. 5). The percentage of PREP clients with clinical levels of depression was reduced by more than 50%.

Miranda (2007) emphasized that Second Chance has developed a program that reduces recidivism. The average starting wage for PREP graduates of $10.41 per hour is significantly below the average personal income for the region ($16.53 per hour). It is well above California’s minimum wage of $6.75 per hour. To gain employment,
previously incarcerated people must overcome significant obstacles such as the social stigma associated with being an ex-convict. Many also wrestle with their own barriers, including drug/alcohol abuse and mental health issues. PREP equips ex-offenders with the tools, attitude and motivation necessary to overcome these obstacles and successfully re-enter the community. The employment rate for PREP participants surpassed 80% (Miranda, 2007).

The Tulsa Community Women’s Reentry Project was created by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections Division of Female Offender Operations and Resonance Center for Women Incorporated (Tulsa-based substance –abuse treatment facility). The purpose of the project is to help female offenders find jobs within the 30 days of their prison by assisting woman when they are still incarcerated. The group started preparing to serve women in July 2010, and the project began April 15, 2011. The program seeks eligible participants who are nonviolent women with children who are returning to Tulsa and have a parole officer to ensure compliance with the program. The women must have maintained their rights at the time of incarceration. “It is our hope that (the women) have jobs by the time they are out for 30 days,” said Pam Richardson, Resonance executive director (Laney, 2011, p. 1).

“We’ve started on that process before they ever re-enter. That’s the beauty of [the program]” (Laney, 2011, p. 1). Project leaders begin meeting with the offenders three to six months prior to their release to develop a relationship. They help the women create what Richardson calls re-entry action portfolios, which include basic documents such as a Social Security card, driver’s license and voter registration card. Upon re-entry, the women are provided baskets of necessities such as sheets, laundry detergent
and undergarments, which are all donated. They begin work-readiness classes where they are taught workplace skills such as time management, and they receive help finding child care and other community resources. Participants also have access to the substance-abuse treatment center. They graduate six months post-release into an alumni association that provides them with professional mentors with whom they will connect on at least a monthly basis. “We know that life will happen and relapse is a possibility, so we want to be here for the long term,” Richardson said (Laney, 2011, p. 1).

The project will accept 100 women its first year. Richardson noted that 16 women from an early group are already eligible for employment. “It’s an incredible opportunity to see lives rebuilt, families brought back together,” she said (Laney, 2011, p. 1). Richardson said the project will save Oklahoma money by ensuring issues are treated rather than simply warehousing people and then releasing them back into the community unprepared. The project could also lower Oklahoma’s female incarceration rate, which is the highest in the nation. “Any woman who re-enters and has a job within the first 30 days, is clean and sober and has safe housing, is more likely to maintain her freedom,” Richardson said (Laney, 2011, p. 1). The project is funded by a $250,000 federal grant with a $100,000 match from the Oklahoma Department of Corrections and a $150,000 match from the George Kaiser Family Foundation, said Laura Pitman, Deputy Director of the Division of Female Offender Operation (Laney, 2011).

Offenders in the Release Program

The Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF) is located at 22880 Whelan Lane in Boyds, Maryland. Arthur Wallenstein is the Director of the Montgomery
County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation. Robert Green is the Warden of Detention Services and Gale Starkey is the Deputy Warden of Inmate Services. The mission of the management of staff of the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and Montgomery County Detention Center is to protect and serve the residents of Montgomery County and the general public by providing progressive and comprehensive correctional and rehabilitative services (Kaufman, Starkey, Wallenstein, & Green, 2014). Figure 1 outlines the goals of MCCF.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals of MCCF</th>
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<tr>
<td>To maintain a safe and secure correctional environment for all staff inmates,</td>
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<td>interfacing agencies, and general public</td>
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<tr>
<td>To operate in compliance with all federal, state, and county laws, while strictly adhering to the highest of professional standards and ethical behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>To practice the principle of true collaboration through the involvement of staff in the formulation and implementation of polices procedures and facilities operating guidelines</td>
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<td>To adhere to the principles of direct supervision in the operation of the facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>To provide inmates with opportunity for self-improvement by offering a large range of therapeutic and rehabilitative programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>To aid in facilitating successful community reintegration, to achieve excellence, efficiency, and effective management by utilizing the best training, technology, and innovations available</td>
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<tr>
<td>To work in partnership with the community to develop additional strategies to reduce recidivism, expand current alternatives to incarceration, and continue to increase opportunities for all inmates</td>
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<tr>
<td>To develop and maintain positive and mutually advantageous working relationships with all professional organizations and public safety agencies</td>
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Figure 1. Goals of MCCF
The (MCCF) Reentry for All provides reentry services to sentenced inmates who are within the last 90 to 120 days of incarceration. A Collaborative Case Management Meeting (CCM) is held twice a month and community partners from a variety of settings such as Parole and Probation; Health and Human Services; jail based social worker and case managers as well as service providers from state, county, and local private non-profit organizations. The purpose of the Collaborative Case Management Meeting is to share information on the needs of the Reentry participants and to assign inmates to work with the appropriate community partners. The inmates discussed at each meeting are prescreened by the correctional social worker and a summary of the inmate's history and Reentry needs are outlined so that the appropriate referrals can be coordinated directly at the meeting (Kaufman et al., 2014).

Reentry participants are eligible for linkages to treatment for substance abuse and Mental Health disorders, coordination of medical care in the community by providing access to medical benefits such as Medicaid and/or Primary Adult Care (PAC). The participants receive referrals for food and clothing banks as well as other participants receive referrals to other state and federal benefits such as Food Stamps and SSI/SSDI. Participants may also be referred to homeless shelters and other halfway house setting. The participants receive referrals for food and clothing banks as well as other community based social services. Referrals can also be made to programs such as Identity and Casa De Maryland which are specifically for Latino inmates. The program also offers services coordinated for domestic violence, anger management, and victim services. The participants receive referrals to GED programs and other educational programs such as ESOL and Montgomery College (Kaufman et al., 2014).
The sentenced inmates are also eligible for a Community Reentry identification Card upon release from incarceration. The ID card is considered a legal government issued photo identification card. The ID card is valid for 60 days upon release and can also be used as a temporary Ride On bus pass to enable ex-offenders access to transportation. The ID card is accepted at all Montgomery County Public libraries to enable internet access for job searches and online application processes (Kaufman et al., 2014).

The Montgomery County Correction Facility’s “Reentry for All” initiative was established by the County’s Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) and called for enhancement to the offender’s employment services (Kaufman et al., 2014, p. 22). The One Stop Career Center at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF) is uniquely embedded in a correctional setting. The OneStop is one of the first in the country to be located in a correctional facility. A partnership was formed between the Montgomery County Department of Economic Development, Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation and Workforce Solutions Group of Montgomery County, Inc. to create the OneStop Career Center at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility established in 2005 (Kaufman et al., 2014).

The MCCF OneStop program prepares the inmate prior to release by capturing the inmate 8 months prior to release. As a program participant, there is time to prepare and practice mock interviews, perfect their explanations of their charges to a potential employer, and prepare tools for their job search such as resume, cover letters, etc. Inmates receive comprehensive services covering job readiness, job search strategies, and personal development. Services are customized to fit an individual’s special situation
including the basic parole/probation, improving one’s self image, and the importance of financial literacy. The program also encompasses life skill topics including the importance of taking responsibility, time management, career planning and volunteerism. The MCCF OneStop Program also captures those individuals who are within 30 days of their release by participating in the Montgomery Works “Welcome Home” session held as MCCF. The “Welcome Home” program helps that individuals receive comprehensive post-release services on the outside and creates a bridge to the community OneStop center (Kaufman et al., 2014, p. 32).

The MCCF OneStop creates valuable linkages between inmates and providers for non-employment needs including housing, substance abuse treatment referrals, food/clothing referrals, etc, since many inmates lack family or community support. The OneStop acts as a key partner and works in conjunction with MCCF to assist the inmate with the resources needed to be effective and productive on the outside. The inmates also receive services such as computer skills training utilizing a state of the art compute center, the use of a statewide job search database called the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE), assistance from community, volunteers, and the “Building Winners” video series (Kaufman et al., 2014, p. 23). Inmates who utilize the OneStop Center receive employment assistance to prepare them for the world of work before running to the community. When the chances of offender’s post release employment success are increased, their families will benefit as well as the community at large through a reduction in crime, substance abuse, and the taxes spend to fight crime (Kaufman et al., 2014).
Within the MCCF, they offer a program called Jail Addiction Services (JAS). JAS is a comprehensive jail-based treatment program designed to provide intensive addictions treatment to eligible inmates of the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. JAS is a collaborative effort between the Montgomery County Department of Correction and the Department of Health and Human Services. JAS offers addiction treatment and education. The participant resides in therapeutic housing units separated from the general population at MCCF. Treatment involves an eight week education phase and an ongoing aftercare phase for as long as the inmates are incarcerated at MCCF. The inmates are offered therapeutic activities including community meetings, task, education and therapy groups, peer counseling, self-help meetings and cognitive behavior skill-building. The program is designed to: encourage and increase the offender’s willingness to participate in addictions treatment while incarcerated and in the community, provide assessment of drug/alcohol use and criminal thinking, increase access to community based addiction treatment services to offenders released from MCCF, reduce recidivism rate of program participants and lastly promote permanent abstinence from alcohol and other drugs (Kaufman et al., 2014).

The Choices for Change program is one of the primary programs offered at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. The program is conducted in a therapeutic community setting within three housing pods, one for female offenders, one for adult male offenders and one for male youthful offenders age 21 and under. The Choices for Chance program is based upon the Carey Guides. It utilizes evidence-based practices. The Carey Guides were developed by correctional professionals working with offenders under various levels of criminal justice supervision. The Carey Guide provides a method
for staff to assist offenders in identifying their criminogenic needs. The process enables offenders to recognize and begin to understand both personal and environmental factors which have contributed to their criminal and anti-social behavior. The various tools can expose the offenders to learning the skills they need in order to make positive change in the future (Kaufman et al., 2014).

The Montgomery County Correctional Facility has provided an adult education program to inmates since 1978. Initially, the focus of the program was General Education Diploma instruction. Over the past 30 years, the program has evolved to meet the needs of the changing demographic of the offender population. The program offers: GED classes/Maryland GED Test, College Certificate and Credit Courses, ESOL, College Transitional and Testing Services, Occupation Math, Small Business, Keyboarding, Salesmanship, MS Word, Conflict Resolution Skills and Digital Literacy. The Model Learning Center is an integral part of the department wide-services provided to a disadvantaged population. In the past year, the department has taken the initiative and increased the quality of services provided to inmates as part of the reentry process. The Model Learning Center as restricted its curriculum to support the services offered to inmates through the Workforce, OneStop and JAS programs (Kaufman et al., 2014).

The Pre-Release and Reentry Services (PRRS) Division provides residential and non-residential reentry services to convicted and sentenced individuals who are within 12 month of release and who have been incarcerated in the County's correctional system. The Division is contracted by the Maryland State Division of Correction and the Federal Bureau of Prisons to serve prisoners in state and federal custody who are within six months of release and who are returning to Montgomery County and the Greater
Washington Metropolitan area. The program carefully screens and accepts only those individuals that is assess can be safely managed in a community setting. The division advances the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation’s mission to improve public safety, reduce victimization, and relies on a considerable body of research that demonstrates the cost-benefits advantages of releasing incarcerated individuals through a highly structured community base program (Kaufman et al., 2014).

The nationally-recognized program has served over 15,000 individuals since its inception in the late 1960s. It is a modern correctional complex made up of four separately operated units housing up to 177 male and female residents. It requires program participants to work, pay room and board, file state and federal taxes, address restitution and support obligations. Each client works with several staff members including a case manager to develop an individualized reentry plan that addresses their specific transitional needs including employment, housing, treatment and medical services. Family members are encouraged to participate in the development of the plan. The programs hold clients accountable for their location at all times, and clients only access the community with pre-approval (Kaufman et al., 2014).

The program relies on electronic monitoring for substance abuse testing, and by utilizing mobile teams of staff, clients are held to high standards of conduct and compliance. There is a zero-tolerance policy with regard to engaging in criminal activity, using drugs and alcohol, as well as accessing the community at locations and times that have not been approved. Individuals found in violation of such policies are immediately returned to secure detention. In a given year, the program serves over 700 clients and 85% successfully complete the program (Kaufman et al., 2014).
Barriers to Reentry

The majority of the prisoners being released today were incarcerated during the 1990s with extended sentences. They are expected to return to their communities they left a year ago. More than seven million individuals are under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system in the United States. Each year around 735,000 ex-offenders return to their communities (Clunis, 2011).

There is a shortage of programs in our communities to provide resources and reentry services to the ex-offenders. The incarcerated rates for black males are seven times that of white males. As a result of the unequal numbers, more black males are ex-offenders. Employment is one of the biggest obstacles for ex-offenders. It is difficult for ex-offenders to secure employment and make enough money to have their basic needs met. When an ex-offender is able to gain access to housing and a support system, it increases the chance of successful reintegration for ex-offenders (Clunis, 2011).

Clunis (2011) focused on the influence of race, human capital investment and social networks on the outcomes for ex-offender returning home each year. The author utilized critical race theory, meritocracy, human capital and social capital to complete the study. The study concluded that participants of the study had successful reintegration if they had access to diverse social network when seeking employment and they were able to work towards reintegration during incarceration rather than post release (Clunis, 2011).

Due to the large percentage of released inmates in the United States on an annual basis, there is a need for a valid and reliable instrument to measure the needs of ex-offenders as they prepare for reentry. A valid and reliable instrument could be beneficial
with assessing the inmate’s needs and it could reduce recidivism within the United States (Liptak, 2008). “The focus on self-efficacy is particularly important and has been linked to the prediction of vocational behavior, job interview confidence, and job readiness” (Armstrong & Vogel, 2010, p. 241).

Shivy et al. (2007) conducted a study and found that ex-offenders are faced with 11 domains that they are worried about. Their most important concerns are: the lack of adequate education, navigation the system, stigma associated with ex-offenders status, and substance abuse (Shivy et al., 2007).

The Offender Reintegration Scale (ORS) is a 60 items self-report instrument. The instrument has been designed to assess reentry concerns and barriers of offenders and ex-offenders. The ORS assist the offenders and individuals working with them to determine how addressing their needs could result in a successful reintegration. The ORS assessed the inmates and ex-offenders on career development, family support, general life skills, employment search and basic needs. The author of the test suggested that offenders could be given the test during the intake process, on probation or parole, during post release situations or in work release programs. It is uncertain about the impact of ORS because of limited data (Liptak, 2008).

A qualitative research study was done in South Africa to explore the experiences and perception of male ex-offenders in regards to their participation in skills development and training. The information for the study was gathered through focus groups and face to face interviews (Soeker, Carriem, Hendricks, Joynt, & Naidoo, 2013).

There were six participants in the study: five male ex-offenders and one female. The three vocational themes that reflected the vocational experiences of ex-offenders
were: a sense of distrust, a sense of support and giving back to the community through learning and doing as well as working towards change through capacity building. The study suggested that there is a void in literature locally and internationally. It was concluded that correction services personnel or anyone who provided services to offenders and ex-offenders should strive to create programs that could assist them with eliminating barriers as they return to the community and gain employment (Carriem et al., 2013).

Kurlychek and Kempinen (2006) provided that incarceration result to a disruption of informal social bonds to family, community, and work. When individuals are incarcerated they lose their stability and jobs. Upon release, it is difficult to secure employment (Kurlychek & Kempinen, 2006).

An 18-month qualitative study was conducted from mid-2004 to late 2005. The study examined the process of maintaining abstinence among 25 former heroin users. Most of the participants were Latino and African American ex-offenders within New York City (Tiburcio, 2008).

The participants reported that they were free from opioids for five years or longer. The participants attested that a positive support system, motivational stools, exercise and mediation. Skills enhancements were all salient in maintaining recovery. The study suggested that reentry programs, and policies can help ex-offenders sustain abstinence by creating programs to assist them with developing coping strategies (Tiburcio, 2008).

Research provides that when an ex-offender secures employment, it reduces the changes or recidivism. Many experiences frustration because they lack the education and skill sets needed to secure and maintain employment. In Hong Kong, the Society of
Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention offers various services to assist ex-offenders with securing employment. Many offenders have benefitted from the services. Several offenders find it hard to overcome the difficulties without the support of the government. The purpose of the study was to explore a multi-disciplinary approach to increase the involvement of the government among ex-offenders as they reentry the communities in Hong Kong (Lo, 2014).

Connor and Tewksbury (2012) completed an exploratory study to examined criminology and criminal justice doctoral program admission and requirements. They placed an emphasis on identifying barriers for applicants with criminal records. The findings provided that all doctoral programs in criminology and criminal justice expect applicants to take the GRE, submit letters of recommendation and provide personal statements. The data provided that many academic institutions with criminology majors made a conscience effort to screen and identify ex-offender applicants, particularly sex offenders. The study provided additional information concerning equal and equitable educational access for ex-offenders. For many ex-offenders they are unable to meet the requirement in order to enroll within a graduate program. Many graduates who completed their undergraduate degree prior to incarceration may experience barriers as they try to reconnect with individual who could have written them a letter of recommendation (Connor & Tewksbury, 2012).

In the 1990s, many ex-convicts academics within the field of criminology and criminal justice joined forces with an informal collective of scholars to share their past. They asserted that they wanted to work towards transforming the study of incarceration and criminal justice. Richard and Ross (2001) provided that the collective effort created
by the ex-convicts became known as convict criminology. Currently, a member of the group consists of current prisoners, critical criminologist and other non-convicts with a shared desire of improving the justice system and enhancing the critical research in criminology and criminal justice (Newbold et al., 2010).

John Irwin’s academic research, The Felon (1970), Prisons in Turmoil (1980), and The Jail (1985), have been noted as shaping the genesis of convict criminology. Irwin connected the ex-convict professor and graduate student. As a result of the collaboration, these individuals have published a great deal. “They have challenged the accuracy of prison and inmate descriptions found in criminology and criminal justice literature” (Richards et al., 2010, p. 345).

The District court for the District of New Jersey and Rutgers University School of Law (Camden) has combined a joint effort to provide legal services for ex-offenders to assist them eliminate barriers when they reintegrate back into the community. Many of the services that the Law students provide are child support-related matters, suspended license as due to outstanding fines, unresolved traffic offenses, difficulty obtaining professional licenses due to criminal conviction and impediment relating to receiving federal financial aid. Eighty percent of the poor’s civil legal needs are not met. While the efforts of the many attorneys who provide legal services to ex-offenders should be commended. There are far more ex-offenders in need of legal services than there are pro-bono attorneys available to handle their cases (Berger & DaGrossa, 2013).

The United States Court Judge Noel L. Hillman, the Rugters School of Law (Camden), the U.S, District Court and Probation Office in the District of New Jersey collaborated to create the Rutgers Federal Prisoner Reentry Project (RFPRP) in 2010.
The RTFRP was created to address the legal services gap within the reentry arena. Probation officers are assigned to offenders before they are released from custody during the reentry planning. The initial meeting includes a review and an explanation to discuss the conditions of supervision for the offenders. Lastly, offenders are screened to determine if they have any legal concerns that could be addressed through a referral to the RFPRP (Berger & DaGrossa, 2013).

Offenders are assigned to second or third law students and the students are supervised under the program’s managing attorney. The law students are exposed to the complexities of conducting legal research and they learn how to litigate the cases at hand. RFPRP allows law students to provide reentry legal services. Reentry legal services have been embraced by legal observers and reentry advocates (Berger & DaGrossa, 2013).

The Rutgers Federal Prisoner Reentry Project (RFPRP) is beneficial to the law student and the ex-offenders. Throughout the process, law students gain an understanding of their client’s realities as well as administrative and policy hurdles ex-offenders will face once they reenter their communities. RFPRP services are beneficial to the ex-offenders because they receive free legal assistance that assist them with minimize barriers as they reintegrate back into society. Davis and Pearson (2001) conducted a similar study in Colorado that found that the average incarcerated parent owes $11,738 for child support when they enter prison and leaves owing approximately $16,000 in support (Berger & DaGrossa, 2013).

In the state of New Jersey, ex-offenders are subject to wage garnishment up to the federally allowed maximum of 65% of their income. If they are required by law to support another child besides the child who is the subject of the court order the 65% is
reduced to 55%. Income is a significant barrier that could affect an ex-offender’s successful reintegration. They offenders my secure employment but they he is faced with having is wages garnished (Berger & DaGrossa, 2013).

Atkins and Armstrong (2011) described the reentry process as daunting for ex-offenders. Atkins and Armstrong explored employer’s willingness to hire ex-offenders as well as determined if the offender’s geographical community determined the employer’s attitudes. A random sample of businesses that typically employed ex-offenders within 12 Texas zip-codes was conducted. Six high parolee concentrations and six low parolee concentrations were studied. The findings provided that respondents were generally willing to hire ex-offenders but they type of conviction that the offender had was evaluated (Atkin & Armstrong, 2012).

Atkinson, Fenster, and Blumberg (1976) found that the majority (69%) of potential employers expressed a willingness to hire ex-offenders, but they were least likely to hire offenders who had committed a crime of murder, rape, or mugging. They were willing to hire car thieves, burglars, drug addicts, and embezzlers (Atkinson, Fenster, & Blumberg, 1976).

Pager and Quillian (2005) conducted a study in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to examine practices and attitudes towards ex-offenders of different races. In phase one of the study two Caucasian and two African American indicated that they had a criminal record. They applied for 350 randomly selected job openings (Pager & Quillian, 2005). They measured the employers willingness to hire each applicants based on the number of call backs each applicant received. For the second phase of the study, the participants utilized telephone surveys to have the same 350 employers read a vignette and described
an applicant's whose characteristic matched the profile of the person who had applied for
the job in phase one. Sixty percent of employers reported some amount of willingness to
hire an ex offender in the attitude surveys, but the audit portion of the experiment
revealed that the White "ex-offender" was called back in 17% of the cases (White ex-
offender was called back 34% of the time) (Pager & Quillian, 2005, p. 362), whereas the
African American applicant who indicated a criminal record was only called back in 5%
of the cases (African American applicant with no criminal record was called back 14% of
the time). This study demonstrates that although an employer may express a willingness
to hire ex-offenders, other contextual factors and biases may play a critical role (Pager &
Quillian, 2005).

Galgano (2009) studied the impact of a criminal record and race for obtaining
employment for women ex-offenders in Illinois. Galgano disseminated fictitious resume
to employers for entry-level jobs. The studied found that race and a prior criminal
history do not affect employer response rates for woman. The analysis of chi square
presented that there was no significant difference in employer response to woman
applicants by race. The study concluded that woman may face fewer obstacles than men
when seeking employment as an ex-offender (Galgano, 2009).

Devah Pager (2009) completed one of the most influential audit studies to explain
how race and offender status impacts individuals entering the job market. Pager found
that Caucasian males with a criminal record received twice as many callbacks from
employers than African American males without a criminal record. Pager found that race
may still be a prominent factor with employer responses. African Americans without a
criminal history received three times the number of call backs than African Americans with a criminal background (Pager, 2009).

Many have suggested that the removal of collateral consequences may be necessary to help reduce recidivism rates. Recidivism statistics are indeed sobering and have been identified as an important factor for “policy makers seeking better results from their correctional systems” (“PEW Center on the States,” 2011, p. 2). In 2011, one in 31 American adults were incarcerated. The total state spending on corrections exceeded $50 billion. The majority of the money is spent on prisons (“PEW Center on the States,” 2011).

The National Administration of Prison releases about 12,000 inmates from Romanian detention facilities each year. Some of the released offenders are first time offenders and some have experienced multiple incarceration. Among the ex-detainee are individuals who have been violent, committed murders, rapes and robberies. Each ex-detainee returns to their communities with various concerns, social and psychological needs. If the individuals are unable to address their needs and concerns, it could result in them re-offending (Antonescu & Damboeanu, 2012).

Antonescu and Damboeanu (2012) explored obstacles and barriers within the social reintegration process, evaluated how the prison prepares the inmates for release and identified the role and responsibility of various institutions in the process of social reintegration. The author provided that reintegration for ex-prisoners should not stop at the prison gate. Antonescu and Damboeanu believed that local authorities could manage the flow of ex-offenders from detention centers. It was concluded that the ex-offenders
are unable to reenter the community without a combination of social and institutional support to help them over barriers (Antonescu & Damboeanu, 2012).

In order to be considered for employment with Blue Sky Development and Regeneration, a criminal background is required. The social enterprise was founded almost nine years ago and it provides work for former offenders in sectors such as parks, maintenance, recycling, catering and distribution. The organization has a charitable status but it is described as a social enterprise because of its income comes from commercial activities (“Getting a Social Enterprise off the Ground,” 2014).

Blue Sky Development employs about 100 ex-offenders a year, the contracts usually last about six months. The ex-offenders are then assisted with moving on to a variety of jobs. The organization strives to assist 40% of their employees on to further employment, last year Blue Sky Development achieved 45%. One of the employees with Blue Sky Development shared how Blue Sky impacted his life:

I could get housing and support, but I couldn’t get any employment. No one would give me a chance. I’d get through to the interview stage, but as soon as I was CRB-checked they’d say ‘we’re not happy with you.’ I was frustrated to the point that I was considering going back to criminal activity! The fact I’ve got work has helped with other aspects of my life. I’ve got engaged to my girlfriend and I now feel that I have a purpose. (“Getting a Social Enterprise off the Ground,” 2014, p. 1)

In the American Criminal Justice System, an individual is convicted of a crime and then he is ordered to punishment by the courts. In addition to the court ordered punishment, ex-offenders are faced with collateral consequences, which can be referred
to as invisible punishment. Reentry literature defines collateral consequences as "burdens that follow an ex-offender from conviction, in addition to any prison sentence, probation, or fine imposed by a court" (Krell, 2012, p. 46). Some of the most common collateral consequences includes: barriers to receiving welfare benefits, public housing and employment (Schneider, 2010).

Employing ex-offenders is a complex topic. In 2012, the National Employment Law Project provided that one in four adults have an arrest or conviction that appear on a routine background check. The hiring processes for ex-offenders have been under evaluation by the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC). It is likely that the EEOC will implement changes to govern how employers are able to access information during the hiring process (Krell, 2012).

Mark Washington is the human resources director for the City of Austin in Texas. He expressed that “[w]e don’t hire people because they are offenders. We hire people because they’re the most qualified” (Krell, 2012, p. 46). Mr. Washington believes that the city is obligated to support ex-offenders as they transition back into the communities. Mr. Washington believes that the ex-offenders can be just as productive as individuals who do not have criminal records (Krell, 2012).

Washington emphasized that around 2008 the City of Austin decided to remove criminal conviction questions from job applications. Since they “ban the box” ex-offenders with criminal records who may have neglected to apply for certain positions have applied and accepted positions (Krell, 2012, p. 46). Mark Washington expressed that “[t]he workers are extremely talented and qualified people who happened to be ex-offenders” (p. 46).
In Washington, DC, DC Central Kitchen hires ex-offenders. The company's mission is to assist ex-offenders as they transition to civic life by training them so that they could gain employment. DC Central kitchen delivers more than 6,000 meals to shelters, transitional homes, halfway houses, senior centers, after school programs for children and other clients daily. The offenders are trained and they are paid. Each year, as many as 100 employees have graduated from the company and have accepted jobs in the hospitality industry (Krell, 2012).

Micheal Curtin, the chief executive of DC Central Kitchen expressed in July 2011 that employing ex-offenders “made approximately $2 million in wages, which contributed to $100,000 in payroll taxes alone” (Krell, 2012, p. 46). Curtin provided that 38% of his 115 employees are ex-offenders, and many of them are in management roles (Krell, 2012).

Maruna (2001) argues that “to desist from crime, ex-offenders need to develop a coherent, pro-social identity for themselves. As such, they need to understand their criminal pasts (why they did what they did), and they also need to understand why they are now not like that anymore” (p. 125). Maruna describes the necessary process of transformation as one of “therapeutic rebiographing” (p. 125). During this process, the ex-offenders is able to identify what he has done wrong in order to embark towards a positive journey. Maruna found that successful reintegration were among ex-offenders who did not deny or hide their past experiences. The ex-offenders worked toward turning their negative into something positive (Maruna, 2001).

Kenemore and Roldan (2006) recruited ex-offenders who were judged as stable and willing to participate in a ten hour-long audio taped open ended interviews. The
male participants were referred from reporting centers and the females were recruited from half-way houses. The participants were referred to the Prison Action Committee (PAC) to be evaluated as potential participants. The participants were offered $100 for completing the interviews and compensation for transportation to and from the interview site. The sample consisted of 12 people. Most of the participants had been released from incarceration one year or less (Kenemore & Roldan, 2006).

The purpose of the study was to probe the subjects about their experience during incarceration and reintegration back into a free society. They were also asked how they believe engaging in counseling could assist them and to describe what they considered effective counseling. The subjects provided their personal stories, feelings and barriers during the interview. One participant expressed that:

Getting out of prison was described as a traumatic, overwhelming experience. Coping with a varied and confusing range of internal experiences and feelings was an immediate assignment. ‘I was afraid to get on the ‘El’ [elevated train] and the bus myself. I was afraid of people. It took me awhile.’ ‘Cause when I first came out it was like I was shell-shocked. I was like I was in another foreign country.’ ‘When I got out of jail I had a hard time going in a store or a restaurant—being around people that were, what they say, in society so to speak. I didn’t feel like I fit in.’ (Kenemore & Roldan, 2006, p. 14)

The authors concluded that ex-offenders needs assistance with dealing with the stigma and social realities as they transition back into society. The ex-offenders are often denied basic needs such as food, clothes, and shelter. The author also found clinicians
must be willing to be flexible, created and prepared to address the case management needs of offenders (Kenemore & Roldan, 2006).

Lisa Lundmark, the Strategic Advancement Manager at AccessAbility, Incorporated in Minneapolis, owns a nonprofit organization that helps people with multiple barriers find high-quality jobs. According to Wascalus (2013), Lundmark provided that “if the public is not willing to give ex-offenders a second chance, what do we believe the natural results will be?” (p. 1). AccessAbility and similar organization in Minnesota has recognized the barriers that ex-offenders encounter as they seek employment. The companies works together to assist ex-offenders obtain and maintain the best living-wages jobs they can find AccessAbility offers career training services for ex-offenders through a three-step program that focuses on the progression of responsibility and independence (Wascalus, 2013).

Lundmark expressed that her program is different from other programs because ex-offender began earning a paycheck the first day that they enroll in the program. More than 250 ex-offenders have graduated from the program and have obtained jobs. After one year, 91% of those placed had retained their jobs (Wascalus, 2013). Lundmark and her counterparts believe that when the society is able to contribute to reintegration, it has positive secondary effects such as: reduced incarceration costs. Also, increased income and payroll tax receipts become advantages. It also lessens the need of the offender to apply for food stamps and Medicaid (Wascalus, 2013).

In general, it has been found that offenders who participate in programs targeting employability skills are more successful at finding work after release. Research provided that offenders who participated in vocational training in prison were more likely to gain
employment. The ex-offenders need the assistance to assist manage personal and legal barriers when they reintegrate in the community (Bottos et al., 2007).

Research has found that gaining employment is the key component for successful reintegration among offender. Employment is an immense hurdle for many ex-offenders. If an ex-offender is able to get a job, he can then secure housing, but without a permanent address, it is difficult to secure employment (Scott, 2010).

Lichtenberger (2006) provided that based on the results from the earning records of ex-offenders released from Virginia Correctional Institutions from fiscal year 1999 to 2003 most ex-offender are only able to find employment in low-level occupations, with low rates of job retention, and limited customer contact. The data relating to ex-offenders and their respective employers were categorized using the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). The research provided that his data could be utilize by correctional education administrators to allocate resources to the vocational areas where ex-offenders are more likely to find employment, cultivate relationships with employers most likely to hire ex-offenders and influence major employers who do not have histories of hiring ex-offender to change their human resource practices (Lichtenberger, 2006).

Lichtenberger (2006) pointed out that ex-offenders are less likely to work in industries composed of occupations that are professional, or require stringent licensing or mandatory background checks, provide needed services to the public, or require significant educational achievement. In the first fiscal quarter of 2003, the two professional industries within Virginia with the greatest number of workers on their payroll were health care (10.01%) and public administration (9.36%). It would be
reasonable to conclude these same industries would employ the greatest number of ex-offenders; however, the public administration and the health care industries employed only 0.28% and 1.82% of the ex-offenders included in this study, respectively (Lichtenberger, 2006).

According to Lichtenberger (2006), the US Bureau of Labor Statistics revealed that the services provided by the health care industry are delivered by trained professionals and many of the occupations are defined based on the educational degree held by the practitioners included in the industry. Due to the low number of ex-offenders with the necessary educational backgrounds and the state licensing requirements, the employment opportunities for ex-offenders within the health care industry are limited. Since the enterprises involved in public administration deliver needed services to the public and require background checks for applicants and at least some post-secondary education, ex-offenders have few opportunities within this industry. Furthermore, public administration agencies set policy, create laws, adjudicate civil and criminal legal cases, provide for public safety and national defense; responsibilities for which this population are not likely to be entrusted (Lichtenberger, 2006).

Lichtenberger (2006) discussed that ex-offenders were also employed in limited numbers in mining, utilities, and agriculture and these industries include occupations typically considered low or semi-skilled: however, when comparing the percentage of ex-offenders within these industries and each industry’s percentage of the total workforce, the percentages were more similar than those of the professional industries. The author explained that the mining industry employed 0.27% of Virginia’s workforce, and an almost identical 0.30% of employed ex-offenders. The utilities industry employed 0.66%
of Virginia’s workforce, and 0.15% of employed ex-offenders. The agriculture industry employed 0.34% of Virginia’s workforce and 0.45% of employed ex-offenders (Lichtenberger, 2006).

The prisoner provisions under the Northern Ireland Peace Agreement emphasized the importance of the reintegration and civic inclusion of “politically motivated” former prisoners (Dwyer, 2013, p. 1); however, numerous barriers to full reintegration remain. Notwithstanding the fact that these prisoners were released as part of a peace process, based on principles of conflict transformation and reconciliation, there were still numerous conditions placed upon them as part of their release process and they continued to hold a “criminal” record upon release. As with “ordinary” ex-prisoners, these “politically motivated” former prisoners have subsequently faced numerous obstacles in their attempts to reintegrate back into society (Dwyer, 2013, p. 1), particularly in the area of employment.

Recognizing that they needed to deal with the consequences of imprisonment, “politically motivated” former prisoners formed numerous self-help organizations to assist in the reintegration process and have mobilized to lobby for protection against the discrimination and unequal treatment experienced by ex-prisoners seeking employment (Dwyer, 2013, p. 1). This article explores the remaining barriers to employment for “politically motivated” former prisoners and the consequences of these barriers (Dwyer, 2013, p. 1). The article moves to assess how prisoner groups have subsequently used a “rights based” discourse to engage local government in their struggle to overcome existing obstacles before finally concluding that any piecemeal attempt to remove
barriers to full reintegration will only impede the longer term conflict transformation process in Northern Ireland (Dwyer, 2013, p. 1).

Dwyer (2013) reviewed federal and state court decisions that have determined whether an employer made a sufficient determination regarding the risk posed by someone it hired or retained who later caused harm to others. Specifically, court decisions would be examined for guidance as to how an employer can (or cannot) rely on the information it has gained during the application process to first, make a determination about whether to hire the applicant and second, avoid liability if that employee later causes harm to another. Negligent retention claims provide additional guidance as to when such harm is foreseeable (Dwyer, 2013).

Professor Foreman suggested that there should be “guidelines, policies, and statutes that provide incentives for those with criminal background histories to rehabilitate and prepare themselves for re-entry into the job market while rewarding employers who hire them” (Dwyer, 2013, p. 1). He advised focusing on “the nature of the crime, the time since it occurred, the effort of the ex-convict to rehabilitate, and the nature of the job” to make a determination in the job hiring process (Dwyer, 2013, p. 1).

Employers have genuine concerns about potential liability for harm caused by their employees. These concerns may increase substantially if an employee has a criminal record. Under state doctrines of negligent hiring and retention, employers have been liable to victims injured by an employee if the employer knew or should have known that its employee might render harm to another. This knowledge sometimes can be established by the fact that the employee who caused the injury had a criminal conviction. An employer may be liable if the injury was foreseeable because that
employee had a conviction. This raises the question of when the harm is foreseeable, which state courts approach in a variety of ways (Dwyer, 2013)?

The United States Attorney General’s Report on Criminal History Background Checks recognized that employers could be held liable under negligent hiring doctrines if that employer fails to determine “whether placement of the individual in the position would create an unreasonable risk to other employees or the public” (Petersilia, 2000, p. 1). This potential liability raises the question of how will an employer makes risk determinations at the time of hire? This determination is made much more difficult, given the variety of methods and factors that courts consider when reviewing a negligent hiring claim. An employer that receives applications from ex-offenders is faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, employers lack specific guidance from the courts as to how they could avoid liability for negligent hiring if an ex-offender who they hired subsequently causes harm. Under the different standards used by state courts, it may matter what crime the employee committed, how long ago it happened, and how the employee has behaved in the interim (Petersilia, 2000).

On the other hand, employers cannot adopt outright bans on hiring ex-offenders without the strong possibility of liability for adversely impacting applicants of color or applicants with disabilities. The rates of incarceration for different racial and ethnic groups and persons with disabilities can easily establish an adverse impact caused by an employer’s blanket refusal to hire an applicant with a criminal record. If an employer’s hiring practice or criteria has an adverse impact on members of a protected class. Title VII requires “some level of empirical proof that challenged hiring criteria accurately predicted job performance” (Hickox, 2011, p. 1003).
With the number of U.S. job seekers outnumbering openings almost three to one, it’s easy for employers to pass over sullied résumés, but state and local lawmakers and several major retailers are supporting efforts to increase the hiring of ex-offenders and to ensure that employers do not discriminate on the basis of criminal records. One barrier that’s drawn attention and criticism is the box on job applications asking prospective employees if they’ve ever been arrested or charged with a crime. The “current-day scarlet letter,” as Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop recently described it, has led to a “ban the box” movement (Simialek, 2014, para. 4). Five states outlawed the question last year, bringing the total to 10. Another 56 local governments have similar prohibitions in place, according to data from the National Employment Law Project, an advocacy group in New York (Simialek, 2014).

Simialek (2014) noted that some companies have already begun removing questions about criminal history from their job applications, to avoid immediately disqualifying job candidates who have criminal records. Target will ask the question later in the interview process and will run background checks after it makes a conditional job offer. Wal-Mart Stores has a similar policy. “The removal does not eliminate the background check or drug test, but it offers those who’ve been previously incarcerated a chance to get their foot in the door,” says spokeswoman Tara Raddohl (Simialek, 2014, para. 4).

Federal labor laws do not explicitly prohibit companies from discriminating against ex-offenders. “There is not one specific statute [an employer] can go to,” says Indianapolis labor lawyer Mark Waterfill (Simialek, 2014, para. 6). Most of the rules spelling out what an employer can and can’t do come from the U.S. Equal Employment
Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which is stepping up scrutiny of employer hiring practices. Corporate policies that immediately screen former criminals can disadvantage minorities and violate the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the agency says (Simialek, 2014).

In April 2012, the EEOC issued “guidance” - a set of rules for companies to follow in evaluating job applications of released prisoners (Simialek, 2014, para. 6). The guidelines “create a burden on the employer to do a more individualized assessment at the start of the hiring process” (para. 4), says Andria Lure Ryan, a labor lawyer in Atlanta, and not simply weed out ex-offenders from the start. The agency acknowledges there are valid reasons why some employers - a day care center, for instance - might not want to hire someone who has committed certain kinds of crimes. In such cases, the guidance says rejecting those applicants is permissible. And there are federal regulations against hiring people convicted of violent crimes for jobs in airport security, among other fields (Simialek, 2014).

The announcement in summer 2012 that the number of Americans behind bars had increased for the 37th consecutive year in 2009 provoked a fresh round of grim editorializing and national soul searching. With its prisons and jails now holding more than 2.4 million inmates—roughly one in every 100 adults—the United States has the highest incarceration rate of any free Nation. As a proportion of its population, the United States incarcertes five times more people than Britain, nine times more than Germany, and 12 times more than Japan. “No other rich country is nearly as punitive as the Land of the Free,” The Economist has declared (Petersilia, 2012, p. 1).

From 1960 to 1990, the overall U.S. crime rate increased more than fivefold. The frequency of violent crime nearly quadrupled, and the murder rate doubled. Drug use
increased. The upsurge was widely blamed on lenient punishment, particularly for violent repeat offenders. Almost everyone who goes to prison ultimately returns home, about 93% of all offenders. (A relative handful die in jail; the rest have life sentences or are on death row.) Although the average offender now spends 2.5 years behind bars, many terms are shorter, with the result that 44% of all those now housed in State prisons are expected to be released within the year. Drug offenders now ace for about 20% of all State prison inmates, up from only 6% in 1980. The average prisoner serves 2.5 years. About 38% are African-American and 20% are Hispanic. About two-thirds lack a high school diploma or possess only a GED. Women are still a small minority (7%) of those behind bars but their numbers have grown rapidly (Petersilia, 2012).

Restoring people with mental illnesses to community life after detention in jail is troubled with significant challenges. Many of these challenges mirror those faced by anyone else who has been detained in jail. Among these is the particular challenge of seeking gainful employment and financial support for day-to-day life. This challenge is intensified when individuals return from jail to impoverished communities where employment prospects are already limited for residents and where either a criminal record or a mental illness creates still additional barriers to work (Baron, Draine, & Salzer, 2013).

To understand these barriers more fully, this study examined the process of seeking employment among people with mental illness leaving jail. Seventeen individuals with a history of mental health problems and with recent jail incarceration were recruited from either a community based employment program or a mental health
service setting. The informants were interviewed using life history interview techniques (Baron, Draine, & Salzer, 2013).

Results show that connections to the paid workforce were tenuous at best for these respondents, both before and after their jail detention. Although psychiatric symptoms, addiction, and the lack of productive social connections were individual-level factors that affected employment, the most pernicious impediments were rooted in policy, community structures, stigma, and other social and economic realities. If employment interventions are to have any traction at all in these settings, interventionists need to dig for innovative ways to address these factors, which are not complications, but bedrock realities that undergird all else (Baron, Draine, & Salzer, 2013).

Researchers interviewed individuals that made little progress in stabilizing their incomes or finding steady jobs in the weeks, months, and in some cases years since their release. Either of those interviewed appeared to have settled into a long-term, even minimally financially rewarding role in the region’s competitive labor market. Much of what the respondents talked about when asked to share their experiences with work and money since their release was not encouraging with regard to their prospects for attaining employment stability. In fact, what was noticeable about the tone and content of responses was the lack of surprise or immediate frustration about the process. Whereas this level of economic instability is unsettling in terms of its economic and social implications, it was also an ordinary part of life for these respondents. The 10 themes that emerged—described in greater detail below—suggest the multiple barriers that stand between these individuals and the productive and financially self-sustaining work roles they indicate they want for themselves (Baron, Draine, & Salzer, 2013).
Theoretical Framework

The United States spends billions of dollars each year to punish individuals that break the law. Crime and deviance can often create mystery for within the field of criminology. Many believe that “nothing works” and “prison works” (Hearn, 2010, p. 2). Within criminology, there is no single theory to explain desistance from crime, many theorist have pointed to their own frameworks in explanations of crime to account for desistance. Desistance Theory is a criminological phenomenon which describes how criminal offenders stop their offending behavior. It is particularly pertinent in terms of conceptualizing offender rehabilitation and the career of a criminal, as well as having practical applications for probation workers working with convicted criminals in the community (Hearn, 2010).

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the Desistance Theory. The Desistance Theory offers researchers the opportunity to test specific variables connected with the cessation of criminal behavior. It enables historical criminological approaches, such as Lombrosian biological positivism, to be considered in relation to modern day society, which allows for validation or refutation of classical ways of thinking. This leads to a more accurate picture of criminal behavior to be painted, and enables criminology, and it's related fields of psychology, politics and social policy, to collaborate strategically in order to reduce reoffending rates. Practically, desistance theory helps the criminal justice system (CJS) to identify potential ways of reducing reoffending in the community through the adoption of community-based sentences. This has the potential to reduce the number of people detained within HM Prison Service establishments for short periods (Harper, 2013).
The second theoretical framework for this study is Bandura’s Theory of Self-Efficacy. In Bandura (1997), self-efficacy was defined as beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given attainments theory. Bandura provided that in order for self-efficacy to develop, the individual must believe that one is in control and that the acts he desires to perform can be accomplished. Bandura has four fundamental elements in developing self-efficacy: Successful Performance, Vicarious Experience, and Verbal Persuasion and Emotional Arousal (Sohail, 2012).
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter III presents the methods and procedures that were utilized to conduct the study. The following are described: research design, description of the site, sample and population; instrumentation; treatment of data and limitations of the study.

Research Design

A descriptive and exploratory research design was utilized in this study. The study was designed to explore data in order to explicate the perceived preparation and self-efficacy among offenders within the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation who are incarcerated at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and are participants of the reentry program.

The descriptive and explanatory research design allowed for the descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. This research design provided an explanation of the statistical relationship between perceived preparation and self-efficacy among offenders within the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation who are incarcerated at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and are participants of the reentry program.
**Description of the Site**

The Montgomery County Correctional Facility is located at 22880 Whelan Lane in Boyds, Maryland. Arthur Wallenstein is the Director of the Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation. Robert Green is the Warden of Detention Services and Gale Starkey is the Deputy Warden of Inmate Services. The mission of the management of staff of the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and Montgomery County Detention Center is to protect and serve the residents of Montgomery County and the general public by providing more than six progressive and comprehensive correctional and rehabilitative services (Kaufman, Starkey, Wallenstein, & Green, 2014).

**Sample Population**

The target population for the research will consist of offenders at The Department of Correction and Rehabilitation within the Pre-Release and Reentry Department in Montgomery County, Maryland. The target population were 89 sentenced inmates who are within the last 90 to 120 days of incarceration. The respondents are male and female over the age of 18. The respondents were selected by random sampling to complete the surveys.

**Instrumentation**

The research study employed a survey questionnaire entitled *Perceived Preparation and Self Efficacy*. The survey questionnaire consisted of two sections with a total of 21 questions. Section I solicited demographics information about the characteristics of the respondents. Section II employed the Likert scale to measure the
respondent’s feeling towards the variables. Section I of the survey questionnaire
consisted of nine questions (1-9). Of the nine questions, selected questions were used as
independent variables for the study. The questions in Section I were concerned with
gender, marital status, parental, age group, education, racial category, sentence length,
family criminality, and positivity about returning to the community.

Section II consisted of 11 questions regarding feelings towards participation in
the reentry program. The respondents were asked about their Self Efficacy, Preparation
and the Release Program. Items on the Perceived Preparation and Self Efficacy in
Section II were responded to a four point continuum Likert scale. The scale was as
follows:

1 = Strongly Disagree  2 = Disagree  3 = Agree  4 = Strongly Agree

Treatment of Data

Statistical treatment of the data employed descriptive statistics, which included
measures of central tendency, frequency distribution, and cross tabulations. The test
statistics for the study were phi and chi square. Each variables of the study were analyze
by the Frequency distribution in order to summarize the basic measurement. A
frequency distribution of independent variables was used to develop a demographic
profile and to gain insight about the respondents of the study.

Cross tabulations were utilized to demonstrate the statistical relationship between
independent variables and the dependent variable. Cross tabulations were conducted
between efficacy and preparation and release and preparation were conducted among
offenders within the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation who are incarcerated at

Two test statistics were employed. The first test was Phi (Φ) which is a symmetric
measures of association that is used to demonstrate the strength of relationship between
two or more variables. The following are the values associated with phi (Φ):

.00 to .24    " no relationship"
.25 to .49    " weak relationship"
.50 to .74    " moderate relationship"
the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and are participants of the reentry program.

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- .00 to .24 "no relationship"
- .25 to .49 "weak relationship"
- .50 to .74 "moderate relationship"
- .75 to 1.00 "strong relationship"

The second test statistics employed in the research study was chi squared. Chi Square was used to test rather there was a significant statistical significance at the .05 level of probability among the variables within the study.

**Limitations of the Study**

There were three limitations of the study. The first limitation is that the offender’s success will not be measured when they return to the community. The second limitation is that the respondents could have evaluated the program according to their feelings on the day that they completed the survey. The third limitation is that the respondent’s sentence and the length of time within reentry programed varied.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter was to present the findings of the study in order to describe and explain the reentry satisfaction among offenders within the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation who are incarcerated at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and are participants in the Reentry program. This chapter presents the findings of the study. The findings are organized into two sections: demographics data and research questions and hypotheses.

Demographic Data

This section provides a profile of the study respondents. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the following: gender, marital status, children, age group, education, racial group, sentence length and their knowledge of criminality among family members.

A target population for this research was composed of eighty-nine sentenced inmates, over the age of 18 who were within the last 90 to 120 days of incarceration. The respondents were selected utilizing non-probability convenience sampling from among the participants of the selected site.
Table 1

*Demographic Profile of Study Respondents (N = 89)*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Married</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>68.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School/GED</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racial Group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American/Black</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 6 months</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 9 months</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 months or more</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

*Have other members of your family ever been arrested*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 1.21  Std. Dev. .412

Table 2 indicated that 78.7% of the respondents have family members who have been arrested.

Table 3

*I have a more positive attitude about my return to the community*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 1.04  Std. Dev. .208

Table 3 indicated that 95.5% of the respondents have a more positive attitude about their return to the community.
Table 4

*I am aware of my capabilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.94  Std. Dev. .233

Table 4 indicated that 94.3% of the respondents agreed that they were aware of their capabilities.

Table 5

*I have reached all of my goals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.11  Std. Dev. .319

Table 5 indicated that 88.6% of the respondents disagreed that they have reached all of their goals.
Table 6

*I don't know how to pursue my dreams*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>77.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.23  Std. Dev. .412

Table 6 indicated that 77.3% of the respondents disagreed that they did not know how to pursue their dreams.

Table 7

*I need a life coach*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.60  Std. Dev. .492

Table 7 indicated that 60.2% of the respondents agreed that they needed a life coach.
Table 8

*I have a support team when I am released*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.82 Std. Dev. .388

Table 8 indicated that 81.8% of the respondents agreed that they have a support team upon release.

Table 9

*I have individuals that will encourage me*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.89 Std. Dev. .319

Table 9 indicated that 88.6% of the respondents agreed that they have individuals that will encourage them upon release.
Table 10

*I have regular contact with my supporters*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.78  Std. Dev. .414

Table 10 indicated that 78.4% of respondents agreed that they have regular contact with their supporters.

Table 11

*I am confident about a successful future*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.86  Std. Dev. .345

Table 11 indicated that 86.4% of respondents are confident about a successful future.
Table 12

*I am able to avoid risky situations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.82  Std. Dev. .388

Table 12 indicated that 81.8% of respondents agreed that they are able to avoid risky situations upon their release.

Table 13

*I have a plan for my future*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.93  Std. Dev. .255

Table 13 indicated that 93.1% of the respondents agreed that they have a plan for their future.
Table 14

*I know how I can reach out for help*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.86  Std. Dev. .345

Table 14 indicated that 86.4% of the respondents agreed that they knew how they could reach out for help.

Table 15

*I feel like I have been given a second chance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>82.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.83  Std. Dev. .380

Table 15 indicated that 82.8% of the respondents agreed that they felt like they have been given a second chance.
Table 16

Computed Variable: Perceived Preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>76.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.7614  Std. Dev. .42869

Table 16 is a computed variable for perceived preparation that was computed from four variables, which include SUPPORT, ENCOURAGE, CONTACT, and CONFIDENT. As indicated in Table 16, 76.1% of the respondents agreed that they perceived that they are prepared for a successful release.

In sum, the majority of the respondents perceived that they will be able to successfully reintegrate back into society upon their release. The majority of the respondents had a family member who had been arrested, but they were positive about their return to the community, aware of their capabilities, willing to work towards their goals, knew how to pursue their dreams, needed a life coach, had a support team upon release, had individuals to encourage them, had regular contact with their supporters, were confident about their successful future, were able to avoid risky situations, had a plan for their future, knew how they could reach out for help and felt like they were given another chance.
Table 17

*Computed Variable: Successful Release*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.8256  Std. Dev. .38169

Table 17 is a computed variable for successful release that was computed from four variables, which include RISKY, FUTURE, REACH and CHANCE. As indicated in Table 17, 82.6% of the respondents agreed that they are hopeful about a successful release. Table 17 indicates that 82.6% of the respondents perceived a successful release upon reentry.

Table 18

*Computed Variable: Self-Efficacy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>82.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.1705  Std. Dev. .37819
Table 18 is a computed variable for self-efficacy that was computed from four variables, which include CAPABIL, GOALS, and DREAMS AND COACH. As indicated in Table 18, 82.0% of the respondents disagreed that they did not approve that they did not recognize self-efficacy.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

Research Question 1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between perceived preparation and the offender’s successful release to the community?

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant relationship between perceived preparation and the offender’s successful release to the community.

Table 19 is a cross tabulation between perceived preparation and the offender’s successful release back into the community. It shows the association and the statistically significant relationship between the two variables.
As indicated in Table 19, the statistical measurement phi was employed to test for the strength of association between the perceived preparation and successful release. There was a weak relationship of phi (.381) between the two variables. When chi square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was rejected (p=.000) indicating that there was a statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Successful Release</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phi = .381  df 1  Chi-Square = .000
Research Question 2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender’s successful release to the community?

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender’s successful release to the community.

Table 20

Successful Release by Self-Efficacy - Cross tabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Efficacy</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phi = .120    df 1     Chi-Square = .267

Table 20 is a cross tabulation between self-efficacy and the offender’s successful release back into the community. It shows the association and the statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

As indicated in Table 20, the statistical measurement phi was employed to test for the strength of association between self-efficacy and successful release. There was a weak relationship of phi (.120) between the two variables. When the chi square statistical
test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was not rejected (p=..267), indicating that there is not a statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability.

Research Question 3: Is there a statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender's perceived preparation for release to the community?

Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender's perceived preparation for release to the community.

Table 21

Perceived Preparation by Self-Efficacy - Cross tabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Efficacy</th>
<th>Perceived Participation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td># 16</td>
<td># 57</td>
<td># 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 18.2</td>
<td>% 64.8</td>
<td>% 83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td># 5</td>
<td># 10</td>
<td># 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 5.7</td>
<td>% 11.4</td>
<td>% 17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td># 21</td>
<td># 67</td>
<td># 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 23.9</td>
<td>% 76.1</td>
<td>% 100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phi = .101  df 1  Chi-Square = .345
Table 21 is a cross tabulation between self-efficacy and perceived preparation. It shows the association and the statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

As indicated in Table 21, the statistical measurement phi was employed to test for the strength of association between the perceived preparation and self-efficacy. There was a weak relationship of phi (.101) between the two variables. When chi square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was not rejected (p=.345) indicating that there was not a statically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level of probability.

In sum, the participants responded to the survey by indicating that they were satisfied with the components that made up the structure of the reentry program. When these sub-facets were combined to compute an overall score for the offender’s perceptions upon release, the statistical measurement phi was employed to test for the strength of association between the perceived preparation and successful release. As indicated, there was a weak relationship of phi (.381) between the two variables. When chi square statistical test for significance was applied, the null hypothesis was rejected (p=.000), indicating that there was a statistically significant relationship between perceived preparation and successful release at the .05 level of probability.

The null hypothesis was not rejected between the cross tabulation of self-efficacy, perceived preparation and release indicating that there was not a statistical significant relationship between these variables at the .05 level of probability.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research study was designed to answer three questions concerning perceived preparation, successful release and self-efficacy among the offenders in the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and participants in the reentry program. The Montgomery County Correctional Facility is within the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (DOCR) in Montgomery, Maryland.

The conclusions and recommendations of the research findings are presented in this chapter. Recommendations are proposed for future discussions for policy makers, the Department of Corrections, rehabilitation personnel, researchers, social workers, practitioners, and administrators. Each research question is presented in order to summarize the significant findings.

The research questions of the study were as follows:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between perceived preparation and the offender’s successful release to the community?

2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender’s successful release to the community?

3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and the offender’s preparation upon release to the community?
Recommendations

There is a critical need for the ongoing study of empirical data on the effectiveness of Pre-release and Reentry program for offenders and ex-offenders. Incarceration rates have consistently increased with the United States. In September 2014, The Second Chance Reauthorization Act was sent to the Senate for full consideration. The Second Chance Act has been identified as the catalyst toward changes within the Criminal Justice System. It is vastly important for the government and the Department of Corrections to place an emphasis on rehabilitation and successful reintegration in order to decrease recidivism rates and increase safer communities.

As a result of the findings of this study, the researcher is recommending the following:

1. The government should continue to endorse funding that could assist with longitudinal studies to measure the effectiveness of the Second Chance Act among drug courts and reentry programs.

2. Additional programs should be developed to assist with creating more rehabilitation programs for offenders within mental health and substance abuse concerns.

3. Social Workers and other helping professionals should receive ongoing training to render competent services to offenders and ex-offenders to help them prepare for reintegration.

4. Citizens are encouraged to advocate for programs that could assist ex-offenders with methods to minimize collateral consequences upon release.
5. The Department of Corrections is encouraged to continue training staff to assist them with understanding the importance of rehabilitative services in the penal system in order to minimize recidivism with the criminal justice system.
APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

"Letter to Participants"

A STUDY OF PERCEIVED PREPARATION AND SELF-EFFICACY AMONG OFFENDERS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION AND REHABILITATION WHO ARE INCARCERATED AT THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY AND ARE PARTICIPANTS OF THE REENTRY PROGRAM

You are invited to participate in a study that seeks to explore A Study of Perceived Preparation and Self-Efficacy among Offenders within The Department of Correction And Rehabilitation who are incarcerated at The Montgomery County Correctional Facility and Are Participants of the Reentry Program.

This study consists of an anonymous questionnaire. The findings will be used in an analysis for my dissertation. There are no known risks to participants who agree to take part in this research. There are no known personal benefits to participants who agree to take part in this research. However, it is anticipated that those who participate in this study will contribute to the scholarly research in the field of social work education, the professional development of the school social work, and criminal justice as a specialty area in the United States. I would appreciate your cooperation. Since all of the responses are confidential, please do not put your name on the questionnaire. Choose only one answer for each question. Please respond to all questions. The questionnaire will take less than five minutes to complete.

Participation in this study is voluntary. If participants have questions about the study, they can contact the principal investigator-Veronica C. Huggins by email at veronica.huggins@students.cau.edu. Participants may also contact Dr. Richard Lyle, Advisor in the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University at 404 880 8006. Please note: by participating in this questionnaire, you are giving consent to the principal investigator to analyze your responses for the investigator’s dissertation research.

Thank you,
Veronica C. Huggins, MSW
APPENDIX B
ELECTRONIC SURVEY

Questionnaire
Perceived Preparation and Self Efficacy
School of Social Work Ph.D. Program
Veronica C. Huggins- 2014
Clark Atlanta University

Section I: Demographic Information
Instructions: Circle the appropriate answer below. Choose only one answer for each question

1. My gender: 1) ___ Male  2) ___ Female
2. My marital status: 1) ___ Married  2) ___ Never Married  3) ___ Divorced
   4) ___ Separated  5) ___ Widowed
3. I have children: 1) ___ Yes  2) ___ No
4. My age group: 1) ___ 18-20  2) ___ 21-30  3) ___ 31-40  4) ___ 41-50  5) ___ 51 & up
5. My education: 1) ___ Less than High School  2) ___ High School/GED
   3) ___ Some College  4) ___ College Graduate
6. The one racial category that best describes me: 1) ___ Black  2) ___ White  3) ___ Hispanic
   4) ___ Asian  5) ___ Other
7. Sentence Length 1) 3 to 6 months ______ 2) 6 to 9 months  3) 9 months or more __________
8. Have other members of your family ever been arrested? 1) yes ______  2) no ________
9. I have more positive attitude about my return to the community. 1) yes ______  2) no ________

Questionnaire continues on back page. Please go to back page -→
Section II: How much do you agree with the following statements?

Instructions: Write the number indicating your answer (1 thru 4) in the blank space in front of each statement on the questionnaire. Choose only one answer for each item and respond to all of the statements.

1 = Strongly Disagree  2 = Disagree  3 = Agree  4 = Strongly Agree

Self-Efficacy

___ 10. I am aware of my capabilities.
___ 11. I have reached all of my goals.
___ 12. I don't know how to pursue my dreams.
___ 13. I need a life coach.

Preparation

___ 14. I have a support team when I am released.
___ 15. I have individuals that will encourage me.
___ 16. I have regular contact with my supporters.
___ 17. I am confident about a successful future.

Release Program

___ 18. I am able to avoid risky situations.
___ 19. I have a plan for my future.
___ 20. I know how I can reach out for help.
___ 21. I feel like I have been given a second chance.

Thank you for your cooperation  

The End
APPENDIX C

SPSS PROGRAM ANALYSIS

TITLE 'PERCEIVED PREPARATION AND SELF EFFICACY'.
SUBTITLE 'Veronica C Huggins'.

DATA LIST FIXED/
ID 1-3
GENDER 4
MARITAL 5
CHILDREN 6
AGEGRP 7
EDUCAT 8
RACE 9
SENTENCE 10
ARREST 11
ATTITUDE 12
CAPABIL 13
GOALS 14
DREAMS 15
COACH 16
SUPPORT 17
ENCOURAGE 18
CONTACT 19
CONFIDENT 20
RISKY 21
FUTURE 22
REACH 23
CHANCE 24.

VARIABLE LABELS
ID 'Questionnaire number'
GENDER 'Q1 MY gender'
MARITAL 'Q2 Martial status'
CHILDREN 'Q3 Children'
AGEGRP 'Q4 MY age group'
EDUCAT 'Q5 Education'
RACE 'Q6 My racial group'
SENTENCE 'Q7 Sentence'
ARREST 'Q8 Have other members of your family ever been arrested'
ATTITUDE 'Q9 I have a more positive attitude about my return to the community'
CAPABIL 'Q10 I am aware of my capabilities'
GOALS 'Q11 I have reached all of my goals'
APPENDIX C

(continued)

DREAMS 'Q12 I don’t know how to pursue my dreams'
COACH 'Q13 I need a life coach'
SUPPORT 'Q14 I have a support team when I am released'
ENCOURAGE 'Q15 I have individuals that will encourage me'
CONTACT 'Q16 I have regular contact with my supporters'
CONFIDENT 'Q17 I am confident about a successful future'
RISKY 'Q18 I am able to avoid risky situations'
FUTURE 'Q19 I have a plan for my future'
REACH 'Q20 I know how I can reach out for help'
CHANCE 'Q21 I feel like I have been given a second chance'.

VALUE LABELS
GENDER
1 'Male'
2 'Female'/
MARITAL
1 'Married'
2 'Never Married'
3 'Divorced'
4. 'Separated'
5 'Widowed'/
CHILDREN
1 'Yes'
2 'No'/
AGEGRP
1 '18-20'
2 '21-30'
3 '31-40'
4 '41-50'
5 'Over 50'/
EDUCAT
1 'Less than High School'
2 'High School/GED'
3 'Some College'
4 'College Graduate'/
RACE
1 'Afro-American-Black'
2 'White'
3 'Hispanic'
4 'Asian'
5 'Other'/
SENTENCE
1 '3 to 6 months'
2 '6 to 9 months'
3 '9 months or more'/
APPENDIX C
(continued)

ARREST
1 'Yes'
2 'No'/
ATTITUDE
1 'Yes'
2 'No'/
CAPABIL
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
GOALS
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
DREAMS
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
COACH
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
SUPPORT
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
ENCOURAGE
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
CONTACT
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
CONFIDENT
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
APPENDIX C

(continued)

RISKY
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/

FUTURE
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/

REACH
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/

CHANCE
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/.

MISSING VALUES
GENDER MARITAL CHILDREN AGEGRP EDUCAT RACE SENTENCE ARREST
ATTITUDE
CAPABIL GOALS DREAMS COACH SUPPORT ENCOURAGE CONTACT

CONFIDENT RISKY FUTURE REACH CHANCE (0).

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APPENDIX C

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077211431011423344444444
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086121325211422133433333
0871315211213232333334
0881221131144144444434
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END DATA.

FREQUENCIES
/VARIABLES GENDER MARITAL CHILDREN AGEGRP EDUCAT RACE
SENTENCE ARREST ATTITUDE
CAPABIL GOALS DREAMS COACH SUPPORT ENCOURAGE CONTACT
CONFIDENT RISKY FUTURE REACH CHANCE
/STATISTICS= DEFAULT.
REFERENCES


Getting a social enterprise off the ground. (2014). *Third Sector*, 68.


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