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Recent Parolees Participating in an Adult Basic Education and Work Skills Program

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Charles Jenkins Sr.

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Walden University
2019

Abstract

Recent Parolees Participating in an Adult Basic Education and Work Skills Program

by

Charles Jenkins, Sr.

MSET, DeVry University, 2012

MEd, Liberty University, 2009

BS, Southern Illinois University, 1999

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The issue addressed in this study was the increasing number of prisoners in U.S. prisons and the related issue of recidivism after release. The purpose of the study was to examine the experiences of 8 formerly incarcerated adults who were incarcerated for at least 12 months and living in the community for at least 3 to 6 months since their release and are participants in a work skills program titled "Men Transforming Men" (MTM) designed to develop resilience and productive work skills to increase their ability to find a job. The conceptual foundation of this study was based on Bandura's self-efficacy theory and Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development and transformational learning. The research question for this study inquired about how released prisoners perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program. Data were collected from 8 participants in face-to-face interviews. To identify patterns and themes, the data were determined and coded using a web-based software application called Dedoose. The positive social change implications of this research involve formerly incarcerated individuals with regard to reducing the percentage of recidivism in the United States by increasing the number of parolees obtaining employment after release from prison.

Dedication

To Kamara Victoria-Charles and Charles Isaiah-Fitzgerald Jenkins

Acknowledgments

I thank you, God, for allowing me this opportunity. It is because of His grace and mercy that I was able to accomplish this great endeavor in my life. It is because of the grace of God that I stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

To my beautiful children Kamara, and Charles Isaiah, who always asked daddy, when will you be done? I appreciate the time they allowed me to study and work toward my doctoral degree. I promise not to make you all pursue a doctorate (smile).

I am especially grateful for the participants who were willing and eager to be a part of this study. I learned so much from all of you. We share a passion that will bond us, and I am forever grateful and honored for the opportunity to be a part of people who believe in second chances and equality for all mankind.

I like to say thanks to all the beautiful people who have had an influence on my life and educational journey. I would like to thank my DREAM team dissertation committee: program chair, mentor, and methodologist, Dr. Toledo, Dr. Russell, Dr. Lacy, and Danielle Hedegard. Without your willingness, passion, and your continuous encouragement to support me, I wouldn't have made it. A special thanks to Abby Mokhtari for supporting me and providing her "task-oriented skills" when I needed it the most during my final steps of completing my dissertation. Merci!

"How can a student know more than his teacher? But if he works hard, he may learn as much." NLT

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

My purpose in this qualitative research study was to explore the lived experiences of recent parolees in an educational program called "Men Transforming Men" (MTM). MTM is designed to reduce recidivism among prisoners in a county located in the southeastern United States by providing adult basic education, work skills training with counseling, and mentoring through the integration of advanced technologies. The program seeks to equip and prepare formerly incarcerated to become productive and law-abiding members upon their release into society. The participants in MTM used an interactive software program called moral reconation therapy (MRT) that is based on social-emotional learning research to develop new ways to approach and respond to conflict. It also is designed to support positive self-image and leadership abilities.

The current incarceration rate is setting records, with one in 100 U.S. adults sitting behind prison bars (National Research Council, 2014). Released prisoners returning home from prison are faced with the demanding task of reconnecting with society (Durose, Cooper, & Snyder, 2014; Mukamal, Silbert, Taylor, Lindahl, & Van Tassel, 2015). One of the most challenging aspects of reducing recidivism is finding employment for the many persons who are coming out of prison. Individuals with a criminal background face many challenges due to their lack of education, technological skills, social skills, professionalism, and intrapersonal skills needed to obtain viable

work (Atkin & Armstrong, 2013). My purpose in this study was to understand the lived experiences of recent parolees engaging in a work-study educational program to support their success in society once released and to reduce recidivism.

Background

The United States has the highest penitentiary population in the world, incarcerating about 500 people for every 100,000 peoples and many do not have a high school diploma (Glaze & Kaeble, 2014; Kaeble, Glaze, Tsoutis, & Minton, 2016; National Research Council, 2014; Patrick, 2015). The prison system is operating at full capacity, with 2.2 million people currently incarcerated (Enns, 2016). Individuals in the United States become incarcerated more than 11 million times every year, whereas 636,000 people exit the prison gates every year (Carson & Golinelli, 2014; Wagner, & Rabuy, 2016). Corrections, including all prisons, jails, probation, and parole, cost U.S. taxpayers $39 billion in 2015.

The recidivism rate among offenders released from prison is exceptionally high, with 67.8% rearrested with new charges in the course of 3 years (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2015; Cooper et al., 2014; James, 2015; Mukamal et al., 2015). A qualitative study directed by Cooper, Durose, and Snyder (2014) found, among 98 state detainees discharged in 30 states in 2005, 67.8% of discharged detainees were captured for another crime in the course of 3 years, and 76.6% were captured in the course of 5 years. This recidivism affects the county and points to the failure to help formerly incarcerated to readjust into mainstream society, which limits the capability to lessen

imprisonment rates. Educational programs and work programs are needed to meet the needs of formerly incarcerated individuals to increase job skills and obtaining employability upon reentering the community (Atkin, & Armstrong, 2013). Increasing the opportunity for gainful employment for re-entering offenders will decrease recidivism rates (Pettus-Davis, & Epperson, 2015; Schnepel, 2015; Yang, 2016).

Researchers have identified a significant struggle for the parolee to meet even minimal needs for shelter and food without the employment skills that are necessary for the work community (Bennett & Amundson, 2016). The Federal Bureau of Prisons (2015) has found that "the more educational programs completed for every six months confined, the lower the recidivism rate" (p. 11). A review of research on adult education and life skills training programs identified a statistically significant reduction in the recidivism rate among the parolees who engaged in a work-study educational program (Cecil, Drapkin, MacKenzie, & Hickman, 2000).

Without appropriate reentry, programs, or instructive services, many people will end up back in the correctional facility or jail facility. MTM's goal is that by helping inmates to prepare for the transition, they will be better equipped to make better choices and decisions based on needs. Therefore, cultivating reachable goals and understand the importance of financial management as it relates a positive approach to enhance their lifestyle once they re-enter the community.

Problem Statement

A review of research on adult education and life skills training programs have shown a statistically significant reduction in the recidivism rate among the parolees who engaged in a work-study educational program (Cecil et al., 2000). In this study, I examined the critical issue of how recent parolees experience a work-study program. Reid (2016) found that the United States has more people incarcerated than any other nation. The number of people incarcerated is more than 2.4 million people in 1,719 state prisons and 102 federal prisons (2018, p. 2). The population in jail or prison in the United States is the highest percentage of prisoners in the world, with 716 per 100,000 of the national population.

More than 95% of the prison population today will be released in the future. Since 1990, 590,400 prisoners gained their freedom each year from state and federal prisons. The Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has assessed that 75% of released prisoners will be re-arrested within 5 years of their release, and around six in 10 will be reconvicted (James, 2015). The increasing rate of incarceration in the United States through the years has resulted in record numbers of individuals re-entering society upon release and attempting to gain employment (Carson, 2014; Pogrebin et al., 2015). Most released prisoners enter the community carrying a negative stigma associated with a criminal record and find it hard to overcome the barriers related to finding employment (Cundiff, 2016; LeBel, Richie, & Maruna, 2015).

In the state of Georgia, the incarceration rate is 32% above the national average of incarcerated adults. According to a 2012 report by the Georgia Public Policy Foundation,

> . . . the state's recidivism rate—the proportion of inmates who are reconvicted within three years of release—has remained unchanged, hovering just shy of 30 percent throughout the past decade. The Council estimated that if no policy changes are made, the Georgia prison population will grow by 8 percent from 2012-2016, and this will cost the state an extra $264 million in corrections spending. (Georgiapolicy, 2012, p. 1)

Many obstacles exist for an individual who has been released from a correctional institution. However, one of the most difficult challenges for an ex-offender finding work is having the necessary work skills that are required in the workplace. The Federal Bureau of Prisons has found that "the more educational programs completed for each six-month confined, the lower the recidivism rate" (p. 11). Work-study programs add to detainees' emotional accomplishment and self-achievement and routinely give chances to learn new aptitudes (Reid, 2016).

Purpose of the Study

I designed this study to develop new understandings about the lived experiences of parolees in a technology-based work-skills program. The concept of actively providing educational services for parolees is a relatively new concept in the reintegration process. Re-entry programs started after the Second Chance Act of 2004. A review of research on adult education and life skills training programs have shown a statistically significant reduction in the recidivism rate among the parolees who

engaged in a work-study educational program (Cecil et al., 2000). My purpose in this generic qualitative study was to examine the lived experiences of recent parolees in an innovative educational program called MTM.

MTM is designed to reduce recidivism among prisoners in a county located in the southeastern United States by providing adult basic education, work skills training with counseling, and mentoring through the integration of advanced technologies. The MTM program uses innovative technologies in four ways: (a) social media including LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter are created by the learners to develop a social network while looking for a job; (b) the Internet is used for research and collaboration; (c) a software program called MRT based on social-emotional learning research is used to develop new ways to approach and respond to conflict (Burnett, 1997); and (d) the Life Skills software, based on cognitive-behavioral competence enhancement method, is used to increase the parolees' ability to successfully handle challenging situations (Tomar, Tyagi, Rajkumar, & Manikandaprabu, 2016).

The parolees meet weekly to learn life skills and job skills, such as how to interview, resume writing, and to use the Internet to do job searches. The community resource center is equipped with interactive labs, Whiteboard, Internet access, and 10 laptops for online research and job searches for the adult education program. Also, additional resources and devices are available, such as assistive or adaptive technology, to accommodate those who may need additional help or time. The results of this study will provide new understandings of the learning experiences of recent

parolees who participate in a technology-based educational program designed to develop communication, work, and life skills of the last few parolees. My study will provide new understandings on the experiences of parolees participating in a re-entry educational program.

Research Question

The research question for this study was:

1. How do released prisoners experience and perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program?

Conceptual Framework for the Study

The conceptual framework for the design of this study was based on Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), Vygotsky's theory of sociocultural learning (1978), and the concept of resiliency from Meichenbaum (2006). Self-efficacy is a significant conceptual theme for this study. According to Bandura, self-efficacy, the level to which the individual believes he or she can be successful, strongly influences the realization of that success (Bandura, 1997). Vygotsky's theory of sociocultural learning (1986) views learning as a social-cognitive process and stresses how a person can learn from others in a supportive setting.

The MTM program was based on Bandura's concepts of developing self-regulated behavior as part of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1991) to increase the resiliency (Meichenbaum, 2006) of the released prisoners to reduce recidivism. Resiliency is the ability to recover from negative experiences. Essential characteristics of individual

resilience include a strong sense of personal capacity and efficiency, a thorough awareness of the changing conditions, strong problem-solving skills and strong social connections and support systems (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Zautra, 2014; Zautra, Arewasikporn, & Davis, 2010).

Nature of the Study

A generic qualitative study provided new understandings of the experiences of recent parolees who participated in an innovative re-entry program. As the researcher, I have preknowledge about a topic that I want to be able to describe entirely from the perspective of the participant. The data collection is a real-world example of their events (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). My purpose in this study was to examine the perspective of eight formerly incarcerated adults to acquire more about their life experiences as it relates to educational programs, resilience, and the aspect of adjusting to life after incarceration.

The methodology of the study was a generic qualitative (Braun & Clark, 2016). I worked with eight participants with whom I interviewed face to face (Braun & Clark, 2016). I analyzed the data through inductive analysis. After collecting the data, I looked for patterns and themes in each participant's data and across the participants to develop themes (Percy, 2015, p. 80). "[T]hematic analysis involves the searching across a data set – being that a number of interviews or a range of texts – to find repeated patterns of meanings within data" (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 86).

Definitions

The following terms are used throughout the study.

Adversity: A state of misfortune or hardship (Merriam, 2017).

Andragogy: In various countries, there is a creating beginning of "andragogy" as the wise approach to managing the learning of adults. In this undercurrent, andragogy is the craft of understanding (= theory) and supporting (= practice) durable and life-wide preparing of adults. 2. Particularly in the United States, "andragogy" in the tradition of Malcolm Knowles, marks a specific, thoughtful and sensible approach, in perspective of a humanistic start of self-composed and autonomous learners and teachers as facilitators of learning. 3. Comprehensively, an undefined usage of andragogy can be found, with its criticalness changing (even in a comparable appropriation) from "adult direction practice" or "charming qualities" or "specific training methodologies," to "reflections" or "academic instruct" or possibly "reverse to youthful instructional strategy," attesting to be "an alternative that is better" than just "adult education" (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2014).

Ban the Box: Ban the Box is a movement to expel the box from business applications asking a potential candidate whether they have been convicted of a crime (Young & Powell, 2015).

Educational experiences: For this study, educational experiences are the learning activities in the educational context of the MTM program.

Employment: Employment is the instance of providing work for someone (Batastini et al., 2014)

Incarceration: Incarceration refers to inmates housed in a penal institution (Lebel, 2012).

Inmate: A person such as an offender or prisoner is under the authority of the Department of Corrections

Interactive technologies: For this study, interactive technologies include social media that provides the participants with the ability to network and interact with others, including Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

Offender: A person sentenced to time served for the commission of a crime (Seave, 2011).

Parole: The status of a convicted offender who has been conditionally released from prison by a paroling authority before the expiration of his or her sentence and placed under the supervision of a parole agency, and is required to observe the post custody conditions of parole (Herberman, & Bonczar, 2014).

Parolees: Men and women serving a parole sentence (Herberman, & Bonczar, 2014).

Perception: For this study, perceptions are the experiences as described by the participants in response to the interview questions.

Recidivism: The repetition of criminal behavior. In statistical practice, a recidivism rate may be any of the numbers of possible counts or instances of

arrest, reconviction, correctional commitment, or correctional status change related to the repetition of these events within a given period (Mejia, 2016; Schmalleger, 2014). For this research, recidivism is the conviction of a new offense postconviction.

Reentry: The process in which an individual returns to society from jail or prison (Thompson, 2008).

Resilience: The process toward adjusting great notwithstanding hard times, trauma, disaster, dangers, or significant sources of stress (Southwick, Bonanno, Masten, Panter-Brick, & Yehuda, 2014; Southwick, Douglas-Palumberi, & Pietrzak, 2014).

Resiliency: The capacity of a person to withstand and rebound from adversity; and the capacity to remain calm and adapt when faced with adversity (Flocks, Calvin, Chriss, & Prado-Steiman, 2017).

Self-Efficacy: People's feelings about their capacities to make relegated levels of execution that action affects over events that influence their lives. Self-sufficiency feelings choose how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and act. Such feelings make these different effects through four vital systems. They include cognitive, motivational, loaded with emotive feelings, and decision methods (Bandura, 1994).

Transformative learning: The process by which a person transforms his or her taken-for-granted frames of reference (i.e., perspectives, habits of mind,

and mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove truer or justified to guide action (Coates & Gilroy, 2014).

Work skills: For this study, work skills are skills taught by the MTM educational program that increases the parolees' ability to find a job.

Assumptions

Assumptions and qualitative research are necessary to conduct a study but cannot be proven (Simon & Goes, 2013). I assumed that participants would be able to answer my questions honestly; afterward, I explained to them how I would protect their confidentiality. The following assumptions I made about the participants of the research study: (a) the participants cooperated entirely throughout the study; (b) if at whatever point the participants decided not to participate, they would advise me; (c) without any resources or positive social network former offenders would return to prison; and (d) all participants had education training (able to peruse, compose, and communicate in English) and had the mental ability to articulate and answer the interview questions.

Scope and Delimitations

In this study, I designed to understand the lived experiences of eight parolees participating in a work-study program titled MTM, an educational program designed to reduce recidivism. The MTM program develops work skills amongst recent parolees as they transition to the community. Many people are incarcerated and are reducing recidivism aids in social justice. In this study, I examined eight participants who were

released from prison within the last 6 months. Developmental theories that are not part of this study exist but may be an important factor relating to the experience of the participant of this work-study program, including Erikson's and Maslow's theories of human development.

Transferability is the degree in which the outcome that can be transferred to others setting or context (Cope, 2014). In this study, transferability was increased by clearly describing the research context, the assumption essential to this study, and the sample of the participants.

Delimitation

The delimitation alludes to conditions inside the researcher's control and reflects choices about the prohibitions from the study (Maxwell, 2012). My purpose in this study was not to represent the experiences of all parolees who took an interest in the restorative education-training program. Delimitation of the qualitative study was the geographic limitations of parolees in the U.S. southeast. The reason for the sample chosen in subjective research is a researcher's judgment and the motivation behind the research.

Limitations

Limitations of the study are inherent in qualitative research. Finding for this study may not be generalizable to other contexts (Cope, 2014). The first limitation was that the study incorporates the intrigue and mental level of the participants, checking conduct, and time requirements. Even though participants made an application to take

an interest in the research study, it is obscure how inspired every individual would sincerely partake and conform to the interview process. The second limitation of my study reflected conditions beyond my control. It was likewise obscure if the research provided a satisfactory guideline that affected the attention and commitment of the participants. Also, other limitations of this research incorporate the conceivable inaccurate evaluation of the participants' experiences using thematic analysis.

According to Lund (2012), a researcher's biases are unavoidable and must be confronted. I engaged in reflective journaling to reduce biases. During the interview, I used questions as an icebreaker to build a rapport. I have professional experience in interviewing at this level. I have explained to the participants that the involvement is voluntary, and they may withdraw at any time during the interview. In addition, I have explained the steps to protect their confidentially.

Significance

The United States has the highest penitentiary population in the world, and many are undereducated (Glaze & Kaeble, 2014; National Research Council, 2014; Patrick, 2015), the recidivism rate among offenders released from prison is exceptionally high, with 67.8% rearrested with new charges inside of three years (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2015; Cooper et al., 2014; James, 2015; Mukamal et al., 2015). I designed this study to develop new understandings about the educational experiences of parolees in a technology-based program titled MTM. Understanding their educational experiences can highlight the causes of recidivism. This study was

important for social justice as it studies an innovative educational program whose goal was to reduce recidivism and increase the likelihood of the previously incarcerated to find a job and become productive members of U.S. society.

Summary

Based on the research that I have addressed, it was apparent that correctional education programs, employment, and recidivism are a part of society. Demographics and the environment in which parolees live have been identified as reliable indicators of formerly incarcerated who will likely re-offend after being released from prison. A concern remains the parolee's ability to find and retain employment, which contributes to the individual's sense of pride, social status, and self-worth. Former inmates realized the challenge of stopping the vicious cycle of recidivism or rearrest; education and steady employment must be a robust re-entry model and process for success to improve the quality of life. Unfortunately, the lack of attention to formerly incarcerated reintegration places the spotlight on the needs and obstacles that leave researchers searching for an answer to the growing epidemic associated with mass incarceration. Included in Chapter 2 is a review of the literature selected in support of the conceptual framework and methodology. The review includes dialogue of correctional education programs and gaps in the research to substantiate the need for this research study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

My purpose in this generic qualitative study was to examine the lived experiences of recent parolees in an innovative educational program called MTM. MTM is a program designed to reduce recidivism among prisoners in a county located in the southeastern United States by providing adult basic education, work skills training with counseling, and mentoring through the integration of advanced technologies. The research question for this study was: How do released prisoners experience and perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program?

I examined lived experiences of parolees and their previously unheard perspective(s) as it relates to their participation in the MTM work skills educational program. My goal in the review of the literature was to focus on self-efficacy, social learning, and the stages of human development conceptual perspectives, all of which contribute to the conceptual framework of the study. The review also includes research on the educational programs offered for recent parolees. The articles that I reviewed included selection for (a) exploration of the parolee's perspective of the education program, (b) case studies on correctional education provider's experiences, and (c) the parolee's perspective of education programs in general. This approach was significant because it was comparative with the current study. I selected these studies because of the examination of the same phenomenon, using a different methodology, and yielding similar results. The literature that I reviewed in this chapter includes the following

categories: (a) the conceptual framework, (b) parolee's perspective of correctional educational programs, and (c) the parolee's lived experiences and perspectives of correctional programs in general. The concluding summary of the chapter includes the themes that emerged as a result of the conceptual analysis and review of the literature.

Literature Search Strategy

I initiated my work on Chapter 2 by scheduling a meeting with a Walden librarian. The initial search of the literature related to my innovation was limited to the previous 5-year period (2014-2017). The search for research on the conceptual framework was extended to beyond 5 years because of the limited amount of resources available to support the research question. The articles that I selected are seminal, which established a solid foundation and credibility for my study. Terms guiding the search were as follow *recidivism, correctional education, incarceration, parolees, inmates' perspective, reentry, post-release program, reentry programs, resiliency, self-efficacy, social-emotional learning, moral reconation theory, transformative learning, adversity, critical race theory, recidivism,* and *employment*.

The search for related articles led to the inclusion of a variety of journals, books, and articles. References for the literature review were gleaned from sources accessed online through Walden Library primarily. Also, Google Scholar, ERIC, WorldCat, and EBSCOhost I used as sources. The articles selected came from a variety of sources, all with a focus on social issues. Each piece provided significant insight into the complexity of correctional education and the offenders who participate in the

program. Another reason the articles were included in the selection was that of their use of qualitative research methods.

Conceptual Framework

Introduction

The conceptual framework for the design of this study is based on (a) Bandura's concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), (b) Vygotsky's concept of sociocultural learning (1986), and (c) the concept of resiliency from Meichenbaum (2006). Self-efficacy is a significant conceptual theme for this study. According to Bandura, self-efficacy, the level to which the individual believes he or she can be successful, strongly influences the realization of that success (1997). The concept of sociocultural development was based on Vygotsky's theory of sociocultural learning (1986) views learning as a social-cognitive process and stressed how a person could learn from others in a supportive setting. The MTM program was based on Bandura's concepts of developing self-regulated behavior as part of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1991) to increase the resiliency (Meichenbaum, 2006) of the released prisoners to reduce recidivism. Resiliency is the ability to recover from negative experiences.

My purpose in this educational program was to develop a mentoring process based on Vygotsky's theory of scaffolding of learning by interaction with a more knowledgeable other. The educational program was innovative in their goals and their support after the prisoners are released. The educational program develops a spiritual

mentorship with the released prisoners during their education before release and ongoing after their release.

My goal for the program was based on Bandura's concepts of developing self-regulated behavior as part of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1991) to increase the resiliency (Meichenbaum, 2006) of the released prisoners to reduce recidivism. The goal of the MTM conceptual framework is bringing new perspectives to a pre-existing structure of the problem by exploring the possibility of change and adding value. Essential characteristics of individual resilience include a strong sense of personal capacity and efficiency, a thorough awareness of the changing conditions, strong problem-solving skills, and strong social connections and support systems (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Zautra, 2014; Zautra, Arewasikporn, & Davis, 2010).

Bandura Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy was a significant conceptual theme for this study. Self-efficacy is the level to which the individual believes he or she can be successful and strongly influences the realization of that success. Bandura presented that for self-efficacy to develop, the individual must trust that one has the power of control and that the demonstrations he longings to perform can be achieved. Bandura has four building blocks for creating self-efficacy: Successful Performance, Vicarious Experience, and Verbal Persuasion and Emotional Conditions (Bandura, 1977).

The self-efficacy theory is an expansion of the social learning theory in that Bandura (2000) depicted it as a man's ability to defeat life's hindrances. Bandura,

Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (1996) found that self-efficacy played a vital role in the individual transition from middle school to secondary education. Young people who require assurance socially and educationally are at an escalated risk of leaving school (Bandura et al., 1996). Relating this result to the rehabilitated instruction environment, the more significant number of offenders enters the correctional institution lacking essential education and employment abilities (Visher, Knight, Chalfin, & Roman, 2009). Offenders who show signs of literacy deficiency as it relates to self-efficacy are at an increased danger of not finishing correctional instruction programs, subsequently improving the probability of recidivism (Bandura et al., 1996).

An individual's ability to be self-efficient is a critical piece of obtaining personal objectives, which is accomplished with support and reassurance provided by parental figures (Bandura et al., 1996). The determination and dedication are displayed through the individual seeking assistance from others (Bandura et al., 1996). Individuals who struggled with low-efficacy need trust in their abilities along these lines to connect with other people who perform inadequately (Bandura et al., 1996). Also, these individuals often have poor social qualities, lack of motivation, and take part in practices that are damaging to academic achievement (Bandura et al., 1996).

An inmate, for instance, may achieve self-efficacy through contact with other people who have overcome struggles, for example, former prison or jail experience, or volunteers who are ex-offenders and come back to share their stories. By contrast, self-proficiency might be lessened when encompassed by individuals who likewise fail

(Bandura, 2000). People with high self-efficacy have a more profound duty to reaching academic objectives and progress (Bandura et al., 1996).

Bandura's (2000) self-efficacy theory is an increase in the social learning hypothesis. According to Bandura's efficacy expectations, the level to which the individual believes they can be successful strongly influences the realization of that success. The self-efficacy theory is utilized to portray a man's capacity to conquer life's obstructions (Bandura, 2000). The social learning theory on the self-efficacy and eight phases of human development theories concerning the effect of the connection between related involvements, current encounters, and outer components identified with the individual. Self-efficacy was a significant conceptual theme for this study. Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy and self-esteem are understood in this study through the interview analysis through thematic inductive analysis.

Much of the time, the parental figures are a mother and father who educate their children on how to convey on through modeling adult behavior (Bandura, 1977). Bandura (1977) suggested that guardians are excellent underlying examples in a child's life. Kids take in conduct from watching, mimicking, and duplicating the guardian's reaction to different circumstances (James, 2016; Vygotsky, 1978). Parental figures show to kids that they are social individuals suitable for existing in a world outside of the home environment. This is the point at which a teenager's conduct and comprehension of the outside world grows (Bandura, 1977).

As indicated by the U. S. Department of Justice (2007) report, 68% of adult male inmates did not advance from secondary school. Several of these individuals reported behavioral problems while in school. Thirty-five percent of inmates described as having conduct issues, academic difficulties, and educational withdrawal as the fundamental reasons behind not acquiring their high school diploma. More than 2 million young men are now in jail or prison, and high school dropout is more likely to become involved with the correctional system (Bloom, 2010).

Tolbert found that nearly 2.3 million adults are in state prisons, and offenders lack a high school diploma. However, a substantial number of them have earned a GED while incarcerated (Tolbert, 2016). These staggering statistics suggest that issues inside the instructive system add to the overrepresentation of African American males in the United States correctional system. Research recommends that the lopsided number of African American men in the reformatory system begin in the instructional system known as the school-to-prison pipeline. Thus, the school-to-prison pipeline captures the journey from institution to the institution may speak volumes to the greatest socio-educational problem, which is an issue that needs critical attention from researchers of every connected field (Rocque, 2017).

Resiliency

Over previous years, there has been a move in research from a shortage-based approach, which concentrates on components identified with psychopathology and maladaptive behaviors, to an approach that draws attention to qualities and means that

may empower useful working skills and positive results. This attention to strengths-based methodologies has prompted an increase in research on resilience. Resilience has picked up prevalence in administration conveyance and approach, particularly in the wake of the various catastrophic events (The National Strategy for Disaster Resilience, Council of Australian Governments [COAG], 2011). Regardless of this distinction, there has been developing worry among the research and practice groups about the growing significance and usage of resilience (e.g., Vanderbilt-Adriance and Shaw, 2008).

The term has been utilized so frequently and in such a variety of settings to lead some to inquire as to whether despite everything it has esteem. This paper talks about a portion of the definitional and practical issues in adolescence adaptability research as it relates to the development of a lifespan, with an emphasis on the convenience of the idea for researchers. It also highlights a portion of the advance made in the research as the notion has widened and moved towards a more natural perspective, which considers the entire set of the individual. Finally, the paper examines how resilience is being utilized as a part of the meaning of use and best practice.

The foundations of resilience research can be followed back to the start of the 1970s, with pioneering research on positive adjustment among the offspring of people with schizophrenia. While propositions youths as a group are at high risk for psychopathology, Norman Garmezy, Michael Rutter, alongside E. James Anthony and Cyrille Koupernik, found that a subset of them manifested shockingly substantial

modification. Research studies have concentrated on the positive results of these youths mirrored a substantive takeoff from the illness based therapeutic models of the time (Luthar and Zigler, 1991; Masten et al., 1999). Since the 1970s, other developmental researchers such as Norman Garmezy (1974), Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith (1989), and Michael Rutter (1999) has focused on the concept of resilience has gone from being constrained and particular to be a more comprehensive and inclusive developmental skill.

In researching schizophrenia, Garmezy (referred to in Masten and Powell, 2003) found that a few sufferers seemed to show more versatile working than others did. He then explored the offspring of parents with schizophrenia and found that a significant number of these kids were doing great despite being exceptionally at-risk for psychopathology. More recently noticeable researchers, for example, Michael Rutter (1999), Michael Ungar (2004), Michael Resnick (Resnick, Ireland, and Borowsky, 2004) and Suniya Luthar (2006) have added their voices to the scrutinizing and concentrating on areas, such as biological and quality environment impacts, culturally diverse settings and the social development of resilience, and protective factors in the lives of individuals. Resilience is a theory that recognizes the significance of protective factors and skills, and the qualities based approach is to some degree the reasonable utilization of that theory, despite the fact that qualities based practice additionally includes different speculations and more extensive thoughts, for example, empowering,

and recuperating and wellness (Hunter, B. A., Lanza, A. S., Lawlor, M., Dyson, W., & Gordon, D. M., 2016).

Resiliency is the ability to recover after negative experiences. Essential characteristics of individual resilience include a strong sense of personal capacity and efficiency, a thorough awareness of the changing conditions, strong problem-solving skills and strong social connections and support systems (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Zautra, 2014; Zautra, Arewasikporn, & Davis, 2010). Resilience is the ability to adjust well in the face of adversity, injury, catastrophe, dangers, or undue source of stress, for example, family and relationship issues, medical issues, or financial stressors or working environment. It signifies "bouncing back" from challenging encounters.

Besides, these reviews not just recognized the attributes of these "resilient" individual, several types of research documented the qualities of the environments as it relates to schools, groups, and families that cultivate resilience. According to the National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention (2012), report that 26% of children in the United States will experience some form of a traumatic event, and 60% of adults experiencing abuse or difficult situations during childhood. Research supports the fact that early trauma experiences play a significant part in development as it set in motion a course of changes that occurs well into adulthood and influences both the physical and psychological outcomes (Nugent, Goldberg, & Uddin, 2016).

Research has demonstrated that resilience is conventional, not out of the ordinary. Individuals usually show resilience when faced with adversity (Masten, 2001). An example was the response of people to the August 2005 natural disaster hurricane storm and people's endeavors to rebuild their lives. Being resilient does not imply that a man does not encounter trouble or misery. Emotional agony and trouble are noticeable in individuals who have endured significant adversity or trauma in their lives. Truth be told, the path to resilience is probably going to include significant emotional discomfort. The term resilience is both the fortitude of individuals to navigate through the social, cultural, psychological, and physical situations that uphold their well-being, and their ability to maintain a balanced life that is conducive to society.

Sociocultural Learning Concept

Both Vygotsky and Piaget's theories are very relevant as they focused on qualitative changes within a child's cultural development (DeVries, 2008). While Vygotsky examined the thought process of human beings, Piaget's focus in the study was how infants adapt to the world of objects in space and time. To measure the effectiveness of this theory, the learners will demonstrate an understanding and comprehension that will promote peer-to-peer learning. Piaget describes assimilation and accommodation as two components complementary to each other and provides a construction of a person's new information (Fox, 2005). Although it is imperative to

incorporate learning experience and knowledge into the learning, it is crucial to support the learners and the way they view life beyond the learning environment.

Constructivists, including Vygotsky (1979) emphasize the shared, social construction of knowledge, believing that the social and cultural context and the interactions of novices with more expert thinkers (usually adult) facilitate or scaffold the learning process. The teacher mediates between the new material to be learned and the learner's level of readiness, supporting the child's growth through his or her zone of proximal development.

There are many ways to facilitate productive dialogue as it relates to cognitive development. One way of enriching dialogue amongst learners in collaborative discussions; this approach allows the learners the opportunity of thinking aloud, developing socially, and gaining the necessary skills needed in critical thinking (Mercer, 2008). Vygotsky claims that one person's dialogue can influence another person's learning and understanding (Mercer, 2008). Concerning productive dialogue, we can explore many factors associated with the effectiveness of teaching and the teacher/student relationship.

Mercer, N., Stevens-Long, J., Schapiro, S. A., and McClintock, C., (2012) identify dialogue as a critical part of developing individual thinking and transformative learning experience. When the collaborative discussion is active, it provides room for transformative learning experiences to take place — for example, incorporating a 30-minute talk session at the end of class for students to share their thoughts or ask

questions. The question must be in the form of "how does it relate to you?" and "how are you affected by it?" provoking emotional and self-reflection both personally and professionally.

Dewey and Constructivism

John Dewey, the father of modern education, makes a compelling case as it relates to teaching and learning. He mentioned that the principle of continuity is a combination of both the before and after experience and that past experiences affect present situations, and present experiences affect future situations (Knowles, 1973, p. 69). Dewey believed that school and life experiences develop the individual ability to articulate meaning through thought and action in society (Knowles, 1973). How to act in a learning environment, notwithstanding social settings, is affected by outside sources strengthened by community networking. In the learning setting, the atmosphere, along with the social interaction, is impacted by outside sources that are walled by social media and prior experiences. This relates to this study because of the influence connections the parolee approach to engage in any educational programs. These outside influences play a critical role in the way an individual thinks and develops (Bandura, 1977). Television and music industry may even influence individuals' social behavior (Bandura, 1977). What is acceptable and not acceptable is determined early in the learning development phrase.

Individuals vivify themselves and model their behavior by the objectives, desires, and struggles that they set for themselves (Bandura, 1986; Locke & Latham,

1990). Long-range plans set the course of individual transformation; however, in the case that they are too far out of reach to outweigh challenging presents, influences on behavior. Objectives have little effect unless they are transformed into mental ability and strategies for understanding them. The media program, therefore, displays how to envision a desired future into a set of achievable goals that are aligned with another current goal.

Research conducted by Kang (2007) argued that in adult learning, critical reflection limits room for spiritual and emotional development as it relates to the personal development of the emotion of self (p. 182). According to Stevens-Long, Schapiro, and McClintock (2012), to facilitate productive dialogue, you must become aware of the potential barrier. There may be times when a learner feels hesitant to dialogue due to religious views. As a result, the individual experience becomes less valuable due to a lack of participation.

To promote effective communication and collaborative learning, the facilitator, must create an environment where critical reflection and dialogue is a part of transformative learning. Learners often go through a time of uncertainty in life about what they feel and experience and, therefore, experience what is identified as a transformation process of disorientation. Stevens-Long et al. (2012) provide a logical model to describe the process of learning through cognitive development, personal development, and behavioral development stages of transformative outcomes.

When collaborative discussion goes beyond the classroom setting, it encourages the student to develop both socially, emotionally, and academically. This is important because of the potential influence to promote learning, motivate, and build the individual's self-esteem. When an individual's confidence increases, so will their desire to express their thoughts, and thereby develop the whole person. This experience not only addresses the ability to dialogue but also opens the door to self-examination of their learning. It is necessary to understand the term language development as it relates to the obligation and commitment as scholar-practitioners. Stevens-Long et al. (2012) mentioned "interactive and collaborative" and "self-reflective" as part of the whole-person lifespan of learning (p.191). The objective of Stevens-Long's study is to create the connection between transformative learning experience, interpersonal relationship (teacher and learner) supported by community support

According to Stevens-Long et al. (2012), transformative learning experience captures a sequence of perspective changes due to intellectual development. The transformative learning experience comes in an array of learning challenges such as emotional experiences and self-confidence, and more personal and professional development. It is vital to recognize the different levels of emotion as it relates to understanding the process of development. Another aspect of facilitating rich dialogue is community involvement. The community is in the position and can be the catalyst for exploring ways of shaping learner success through mentorship programs, face-to-face interaction, and collaborating. This holistic approach affirms the relationships and

understanding between the teachers, mentors, and students to build a realistic student learning experience.

Erikson's Psychosocial Development

Erik Homberger Erikson is most well-known for his work in improving Freud's theory of stages. He was born on June 15, 1902, in Frankfurt, Germany, to his Jewish mother, Karla Abrahamsen, and to his natural father, who was a Danish man who left before he was born. His mother then married Dr. Theordor Homberger, who was Erikson's pediatrician. During his early years of schooling, he studied different languages and arts. Deciding against college, Erikson set out to become an artist (Santrock, 1996). He obtained a teaching certificate in Montessori education and another from the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. He was actively impacted by Sigmund Freud, who studied three parts of character: the ego identity (self), individual character (the distinct characteristic that recognizes an individual from another, and cultural/social personality (Elliott, 2000).

Anna Freud studied Erikson carefully during her tenure. Erikson published several books that expose his theory. They are written as a collaboration of essays on different subjects. He is known as an ego-psychologist. He is a supporter of Freud's teachings and beliefs. He was more culture-oriented than others were who supported Freud's theories. Erikson was known to be deeply disturbed by social changes in America. He documented these issues in writings about the breach between

generations, racial divides, juvenile delinquency, sexual orientation, and the hazards of nuclear war (Miller, 1983).

Erikson (1968) presented the eight phases of human development, trusting that an individual's environmental, biological makeup, cultural, and social influences influenced individual conduct. Vygotsky (1999) expressed that the individual's development is associated with his or her environment. Social influences additionally play a role in life. The effects of social and societal norms are highlighted by the sociocultural point of view. Advocates contend that the theory focuses on the association between developing individuals and the way of life in which they live. This theory proposes that human learning is a social process through their communications with others (Walker, Holling, Carpenter, & Kinzig, 2004).

Erikson's theory of human development is like the social learning theory, which suggests that conduct is learned through observing others, which implies that a person's condition, situation, environment, and biological and social influences, affect conduct (Bandura, 1973; Erikson, 1968; Ormond, 1999). The eight phases of human development theory apply to the correctional environment setting since conduct is learned (Bandura, 1973). The disposition of the correctional environment setting is fortitude and survival, attained by adapting to the surrounding. With more considerable part of the offender population lacking fundamental instruction (Carson, & Sobel, 2012), the desire to craving to finish correctional institution education programs may find some challenges of receiving support from other inmates or peers.

Erik Erikson (1968) presented the eight phases of life development. Erikson's theory concentrates on the change from birth to death, social setting, and social relations amid each phase of life (McAdams, 2009). Similarly, each phase of life is comprehensible in three levels, for example, the body, sense of self, and family, and culture. The eight phases of life are early stages (trust vs. mistrust), early adolescence (self-sufficiency versus shame), youth (initiative versus guilt), adolescence (industry versus inferiority), youthfulness (ego identity versus role confusion), youthful adulthood (intimacy versus isolation), develop adulthood (generativity versus stagnation), and seniority (ego integrity versus despair) (Sharkey, 1997). These stages are Erikson's contribution to the field of psychology and believed that each phrase presents its challenge that must to address and resolved before one can proceed to the next level of development (Erikson, & Erikson, 1998).

Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development draw attention to the sociocultural determinants of change and shows them as eight phases of psychosocial clashes (also known as Erikson's psychosocial stages) that all individual must overcome or work out efficiently to adjust well to the environment. Every individual has his or her intriguing personality. This character is made of distinctive identity qualities that can be viewed as constructive or destructive. These identity characteristics can likewise be usual or obtained, and they change starting with one individual then onto the following, given the level of influence that the environment has on the person. As individuals, we have many attributes that are sharpened in various perspectives that,

in the long haul, portray our identity. According to Erikson's theory, everyone experiences a particular moment of crisis that contributes to the increase of our psychosocial development at each of the eight phases of psychosocial conflicts. At whatever crossroads we experience such a crisis, we are left with no decision yet to confront it and consider approaches to determine it. Failure to defeat such a crisis may stimulate the necessary consequences for our psychosocial change.

Transformative Learning Concept

Transformational learning is the process of effecting change associated with creativity, honesty, responsibility, adaptability, and commitment are the essential component to change. Transformational learning brings about a reestablishing of one life by encouraging them to take control of their actions, empowering each other or groups within the community (Kegan, & Lahey, 2009). As an aftereffect of such inclusion, the odds of restoration will be extremely heightened. They become encouraged to enhance their present circumstance through their new-grounded social connections to traditional quality frameworks and common interests, and that real change and transforming take time to identify their full potential of achieving a prosperous and healthy life (Kegan, & Lahey, 2009).

Mezirow (2000) defined transformative learning as the process by which a person transforms his or her taken-for-granted frames of reference (i.e., perspectives, habits of mind, and mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and

opinions that will prove truer or justified to guide action. Transformative Learning involves steps by which beliefs are questioned, and new beliefs emerge. Arising out of the earlier work of Mezirow (1990), transformative learning theories developed as a subset within constructivist principles of education. It is built on the understandings of psychoanalytic and critical social theory. Two well-known theorists gave a definition of transformative learning from Mezirow: "learning that is based on reflection and the interpretation of the experiences, ideas, and assumptions gained through prior learning" (Mezirow, 1990, p.1). The goal of transformative learning is to understand why individuals view the world the way they do and to shake off the constraints of the limiting perspectives they have carried with them into the learning experience.

Desistance Concept

In the United States, billions of taxpayer dollars are spent every year to house and rehabilitate individuals that violate the law. Crime and deviance activity can oftentimes create a challenge inside the field of criminology. Many researchers have shared their own finding and framework as it identifies with desistance. Desistance theory is a criminological theory that defines how criminal offenders can stop their culpable conduct. It is especially essential in terms of conceptualizing guilty participant rehabilitation and the profession of a criminal, as well as providing effective practices for parolee re-entering with offenders in the public eye (Jones, 2013; Murray, 1997).

The desistance theory offers specialists the chance to test factors associated with the discontinuance of criminal conduct. It empowers chronicled criminological

methodologies, for example, Lombrosian characteristic positivism (Garland, 2002) to be considered in connection to the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth, which considers approval or negation of traditional methods for considering. This prompts a more exact picture of criminal conduct to be highlighted and empowers criminology, and it's connected to the psychology field of research, legislative issues and social strategy, to work together deliberately keeping in mind the end goal to reduce re-offense rates (Rafter, & Ystehede, 2010).

This leads to a more accurate picture of criminal behavior and enables criminology, and its related field of psychology, politics, and social policy, to collaborate strategically 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.

For all intents and purposes, desistance Theory helps the framework of the criminal justices to recognize potential methods for lessening reoffending (King, 1981).

State discipline and correctional institutions specifically have never honestly been about equity, nor have they at any point genuinely been about restoration. These, alongside debilitation and prevention, are ideals to legitimize an establishment whose official reason has dependably been to secure the property of the rich, maintain a strategic distance from the deviancy and damages of the capable and to strengthen and extend auxiliary imbalances. It is because jail attempts to keep up an unjustifiable society that it ought to be annulled (Moore, 2015).

Researchers have provided the framework for future researchers to advance the study of cognitive development and transformative learning experiences. Mercer and Stevens-Long identify the importance of understanding the role of the vibrant discourse of cognitive development. The role of the facilitator is to reach the whole-person on every level to achieve maximum learning potential. This responsibility extends beyond the traditional way of teaching and learning. If we, as educators, mentors, and students, are to understand transformative learning, then we expect to observe changes at all three developmental domains (Stevens-Long et al., 2012). This was relevant to my study of a collaborative work-study program whose goal is to develop resiliency among the recent parolees through participation in a transformative learning program.

Summary

Research, theory, and practice are part of collected works undertaking for understanding the factors that are associated with behaviors and approaches to change. For individuals to experience a positive, productive, and prosperous life, these fundamental theories mentioned above are a vital part of the study. The theory approach gives evidence-based results and describes the foundational principle and practice for those who have experienced the life of incarceration or trauma. Also, each theory frames the understanding of the need to become better prepared to succeed in their lives and society. The theories included are the building blocks for change: accountability and responsibility, adaptability and flexibility, problem-solving, critical thinking, socialization, human development, and self-efficacy. Recent research and

reviews on resilience, education, and transformation have shown that based on theory and practice are more efficient than those not using theory. However, few studies explain the effects associated with the methods from the perspective of the parolees themselves.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

Introduction

Enormous increases in the U.S. prison population over the last decade have led to the release from prison correspondingly large numbers of people. In 2003 alone, more than 650,000 men and women left the state and federal prisons (Harrison & Beck 2005). At the end of 2003, almost three-quarters of a million American adults were on parole. Many of these formerly incarcerated people, however, quickly return to prison. Statistics from the U.S. Department of Justice suggest that less than half of parolees complete their parole (Glaze & Palla 2004). Recidivism, whether defined as re-arrest, reconviction or return to prison, is also disturbingly high. In fact, a longitudinal study determined that, within three years, 68 percent of a prisoner released in 1994 were arrested for a new offense, 47 percent were reconvicted, and 52 percent returned to prison, either for a new sentence or a parole violation (Langan, & Levin, 2002).

These numbers indicate a severe problem with the nation's criminal justice system. Prison populations continue to increase at an annual cost of nearly 30 billion (Stephan, 2004). Meanwhile, prisoners are serving longer sentences than in the past but are then released without the education or skills necessary to find productive

employment. These formerly incarcerated people return to their communities subjected to areas with the least capacity to provide them with needed assistance-and all too often end up returning to prison. (Travis, Solomon, & Waul, 2001). Without significant attention by policymakers representative to the problem of prisoner re-entry, this situation is likely to intensify, resulting in a continuous cycle of poverty and crime.

Recidivism is essential to my study as it relates to understanding how education programs contribute to the reduction of recidivism. Overcoming life challenges has crossed the minds of many human beings. Hall and Hord (2015) mentioned the six skills that are necessary to leaders learning: core values, confidence, interacting (network), positive image, genuine concern, and risk-takers (p. 227). These skills are essential for formerly incarcerated individuals who may not have the necessary abilities to make a triumphant re-entrance in society. For example, repeated offenders often admit that they lack the skills and the training to maintain a job, and therefore, they retreat to their old behavior of criminal activity. One of the most influential models designed by psychologist Maslow (1954), the hierarchy of needs, defines motivation for individual needs such as belonging, esteem, love, and safety. This was relevant for this study as it communicates the basic needs from physiological to self-actualization (Hall & Hord, 2015).

The MTM program was designed to operate as a conduit to reduce recidivism by providing the needed training and resources that will cultivate positive thinking through creative ways. It also serves as a bridge for hundreds of ex-offenders that might

not otherwise think through everyday life decisions such as employment, continual education, aftercare facility, and assisting housing living. MTM seeks to save the communities and their families' money by providing educational programs while they are transitioning back into society. The MTM program works as a bridge between the correctional system and community by motivating and encouraging the formerly incarcerated individual to seek help after their release from prison.

Nworie and Haughton (2008) stated that failure or overlooking potential issues due to the lack of understanding of the importance of reducing recidivism had cost society tremendously. A formerly incarcerated individual who is transitioning back into the community needs additional support, guided instructions, and accountability to be successful. The MTM approach to reducing recidivism is through the innovation initiative that could aid in restoring the individual's socioeconomic status defined by the individual's income, career status, education, and reputation in society. Bolman and Deal (2013) stated that the structural environment looks behind individuals to examine social architecture. This is also relevant as it relates to those who are incarcerated as they experience challenges due to a lack of skills or attitudes (p. 66).

A randomized control study by Nyamathi, Salem, Farabee, Hall, Zhang, Faucette, and Yadav (2016) of recent parolees found that those who received social support and received substance abuse support, specifically time in a residential drug treatment program, were less likely to be re-arrested within a year of their release. This was related to my study as I studied the learning experiences of parolees in an

educational program that supports recent parolees to reduce recidivism. Research has shown that parolees who return to their community are often faced with some form of adverse circumstances such as drug and alcohol abuse, lack of support, reoffending, homelessness, and other problems (Shonkoff, Garner, Siegel, Dobbins, Earls, McGuinn, & Wood, 2012). However, a randomized control study by Nyamathi, Salem, Farabee, Hall, Zhang, Faucette, and Yadav (2016) of recent parolees found that those who received social support and received substance abuse support, specifically time in a residential drug treatment program, were less likely to be re-arrested within a year of their release.

A considerable amount of literature indicates that correctional education program works to reduce recidivism. However, few studies seek to acquire the perspective of a formerly incarcerated individual. I am committed to researching the impact on recidivism from the formerly incarcerated individuals' point of view. Understanding the perspective of the parolees who have been involved in the correctional education programs can highlight the relationship between educations as it pertains to recidivism. The approach to reducing recidivism is through the innovation initiative of MTM that could aid in restoring the individual's socioeconomic status defined by the individual's income, career status, education, and reputation in society.

Holistic Traits

The ability of parolees to communicate effectively when searching for a job can be the difference between success and failure. Ray, Grommon, and Rydberg (2016), in

a longitudinal study using in-depth interviews, examined the issues influencing the ability of a new parolee's ability to get a job. The researchers found that the participants who expressed a reluctance to use social networks had more difficulty finding a job. Cognitive processes, behavior traits, and active coping skills, among others, contribute to resilience. These qualities also interact with biological aspects to enhance adaptation in the face of trauma, hardship, adversity, and ongoing life stressors. The effectiveness of acceptance with others due to incarceration is life and death in the mind of the parolee.

In one of the few recent studies of the process of prison, release an excellent discussion of material deprivation among 24 prisoners released in Michigan. (see also, Leverentz and Fader 2013). The conclusion of this study was that this research study was essential to my study because it shows the potential stress factors that contribute to positive reconnection with society after a period of incarceration. These areas of development from a holistic viewpoint are vital to understanding the process of being victorious after a traumatic event. In addition, this study aligns with my study to support the concept of incorporating intervention to help parolees maintain the initial motivation attitude association with employment.

Issues Related to Employment

The purpose of my study was to understand how education provides support for employment. Mass incarceration has crippled the American communities as we are faced with experiencing massive populations each year of 600,000 individuals are

released from prison (Solomon, 2012). The correlation between recidivism and employment is complex; however, research has shown that it does play a vital role in the reduction of offender recidivating (Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders & Miles, 2013). Having gainful employment empowers ex-offenders to meet their basic needs of food, clothing, housing, and transportation as a motivator. Ex-offender face the realization that making a living on the outside will be difficult. Evidence showed that between 60 and 75 percent of the prior incarcerated individual remain unemployed for at least two years after being released from prison (Petersilia, 2003). Ex-offenders who retain employment are less likely to re-offend. Research has identified that finding employment is a significant issue related to recidivism, self-worth, and a sense of belonging.

Employment is one of the most influential components in reintegrating back into the community resisting the temptation of crime for offenders rejoining society from prison. It serves as a protective mechanism that can lead formerly incarcerated individuals away from criminal activity and into a pro-social role in society. According to Decker, Ortiz, Spohn, and Hedberg, (2015), employment provides peace of mind and the ability to rejoin society (p. 22). Research has consistently shown a positive correlation between employment on recidivism as it relates to ex-prisoners' future involvement in committing criminal offenses (James, 2011, 2015). Obtaining adequate employment serves as a motivation factor to go despite the challenge that comes with the label of ex-offenders. When ex-offender or parolees feel that they are contributing

to society, taking care of the loved ones, and become productive, they experience a sense of self-importance, improve social skills and strengthen confidence (Decker et al., 2015).

Summary

Regardless of the high rate of penitentiary emancipation and research studies on the impacts of incarceration, there are few in-depth records of the process of reentering the community after incarceration. Many challenges await those who have experienced incarceration before they become members of the communities. Individuals see having a criminal history as a serious obstacle to obtaining employment. Society can no longer ignore the problem that is associated with mass incarceration and recidivism. It plays a role in our economic growth, place of living, workplace, and families; society must find a solution other than housing them.

Employers are hesitant to hire parolees and know the challenges face regarding re-employment for an individual with criminal or arrest records, which is often viewed as untrustworthy or unreliable. However, employment can have a significant effect on the lives of formerly incarcerated individuals, mainly if the occupation pays reasonable salaries and benefits to help the family and offer professional development for advancement opportunities. The voices of the formerly incarcerated "just give me a chance" echo throughout American communities.

Work-Study Programs

Reid (2016) conducted a mixed-method study of work-study programs and found that these educational programs add to detainees' emotional accomplishment and self-achievement and routinely give chances to learn new aptitudes. California's recidivism rates are significant due to its large incarcerated population (Wootton, 2016). As a result, the California Department of Corrections offers an Honor Program (Fuetsch, 2017; Fuetsch, 2016 & Hartman, 2007), that creates an environment or situation of security, concern, and support with the goal that prisoners can do their time in peace while chipping away at a specific range of self-change, rehabilitative targets that can be beneficial to the group. Inmates desiring to apply for the program must focus on restraint from gangs, drugs, and violent activities and must be willing to socially fellowship with each other regardless of race (p. 10). The outcomes demonstrated that by offering instructional classes such as child-rearing, wellbeing training, and proficiency classes, has positive conduct changes, offers detainees an excellent shot at genuine restoration and gives them an inclination that their groups think about their future prosperity. The State of California, confronted with the overcrowding unprecedented high prison rate, created the program to reduce the skyrocketed population and inmates' recidivism rates.

An aspect of work-study programs is financial education for parolees. Austin and Arnott-Hill (2014) found that while existing research supports the connection between money related interventions and enhanced financial education, it does not

show a noteworthy association with changes in budgetary practices. Based on the results, educational tools offered to parolees will enable them to obtain valuable knowledge of financial literacy. The MTM programs incorporated the All My Money pilot program, which helps participants develop financial knowledge from the hands-on approach and experiential learning with group discussion, interactive games, role-playing, and real-life situation demonstration using the Life Skills software.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) includes numerous programs like anger management therapy, MRT, reasoning and rehabilitation, soft skill training, substance abuse training, relapse prevention therapy, etc. are considered as the critical component of the mental health facilities in the prisons, correctional and observation homes with an aim to increase the community re-entry of the offenders.

Brännström, Kaunitz, Andershed, South, and Smedslund (2016) did a meta-analysis of educational programs designed to reduce violence and anti-social behavior through aggression replacement therapy (ART) in parolees. They found that the lack of social skills, the inability to manage anger, and deficit moral reasoning were all factors in the potential of the participants to reintegrate into society. This study is important to my study as the MTM educational program uses a similar program, MRT, to develop anger management and moral reasoning.

Miller and Miller (2015) implemented a quasi-experimental study of a re-entry program for parolees that use MRT, a cognitive-behavioral modality that utilizes a personality-based multi-stage approach, used to effect positive behavioral change

among inmates. The program teaches personal self-management skills, social skills, and other cognitive-behavioral skills needed to reduce substance abuse and violence, successfully handle the challenges of everyday life, and increase overall resilience. They found that the reentry program had a significant adverse effect on the likelihood of re-arrest and probation violations at the bivariate level. This study did not identify the changes in the therapeutic effect from MRT; instead, it identified the number of re-arrests as the defining issue in the therapy. This was relevant to my study as the MTM uses the MRT software program.

Botvin, Griffin, and Williams implemented a quasi-experimental study of the Life Skills Training (LST) program designed to reduce drug use in high school students (2015). They found that using this cognitive-behavioral competency enhancement program prevented daily substance abuse in these students. This was related to my study as the MTM program utilizes the Life Skills Training software to support the development of life skills for parolees. The MTM program teaches personal self-management skills, social skills, and other cognitive-behavioral skills needed to reduce substance abuse and violence, successfully handle the challenges of everyday life, and increase overall resilience. Research suggests that it is effective due to the combination of these elements.

Summary and Conclusions

In an extensive search of work-study programs designed to support parolees from 2014-2016, I found no programs other than the MTM that utilize online, social

media, and interactive media to support the development of work skills. No studies were identified that focused on the development of communication, resiliency, self-efficacy, and the internal motivators that change human behavior.

At the point when inmates are released from prison, they leave with many uncertainties as they move forward to regain some form of normalcy — leaving an organized environment of prison life to a world of unstructured choices as free adults put their chances of survival at a higher risk. This effect is one's ability to concentrate and puts pressure on the areas of the hierarchy of needs, such as where to live, how they will support themselves, and reestablish connections with family and friends. Indeed, it can be one of the many challenges a parolee will face, which can be significant as they look to rejoin society.

Most released offenders often experience the deprivation needs in the early stage of their prison release. Maslow (2013) described the deprivation needs as both physiological needs and psychological, that includes necessities such as food, water, and air. These tend to be satisfactory for most people, but if not met, can change the course of influence. The impact can be life-changing as it relates to obtaining self-actualization, esteem, belongingness, safety toward goal attainment, linger in the minds of many parolees. It is essential that these needs are address because many parolees face the reality of not having what they need to keep them motivated. The lack of satisfaction causes a deficiency that motivates an inmate to meet these needs (Maslow, 1943).

The basic requirements of parole are to check in with their parole officer regularly, seek and maintain employment, stay drugs free, and obtain a place of living that is not associate with other convicted felons, follow the rules and laws, submit to drugs test and searches, and pay restitution. Most released inmates re-enter society without any funds and few work prospects (Schnepel, 2016). A better understanding of the reentry procedure would empower us to assist more parolees in conforming to life outside of the correctional prison system and thereby reducing recidivism rates.

Exactly when recidivism rates are high, the economic capitals that could be spent on the operation of correctional matters are necessary somewhere else. This places a burden on the taxpayers. In the United States, to maintain the increase in prison population cost over 80 billion dollars a year (Kearney, Harris, Jácome, & Parker, 2014). Just in the State of Georgia alone, the cost to incarcerate one individual per year is roughly 21,000, which is more than twice the amount spent toward educating a student for one year. This discovery has caused shaking in the minds of society and now viewed as unacceptable. Society realizes that employment plays a critical role in lowering recidivism and increasing reintegration.

Fetsch (2016) found that formerly incarcerated offenders with employment a year after incarceration has a recidivism success rate of 16 percent. This is a significant improvement compared to a formerly incarcerated individual who reoffends and return to prison within three years (Lee, Guilamo-Ramos, Muñoz-Laboy, Lotz, & Bornheimer, 2016). Also, the impact of imprisonment affects the family as a whole

negatively. The more significant part of males incarcerated is the father of children, and as a result, the child carries the burden of separation and develop their psychological challenges (Lahm, 2016).

Even though there have been many research studies on recidivism, there has been little research on the process of transformation after incarceration. The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of parolees during the six months after their release from prison in a work-study program. The objective is to build our understanding of the reintegration process from the perspective of parolees.

This literature review offers an initial beginning at identifying best practices efforts at reentry education and work-study programs. However, the studies have shortcomings when relying upon non-existent data of post-education successes, which in turn reflects an implied lack of services to facilitate post-release education success for former offenders. Clearly, there are not enough programs developed for formerly incarcerated once they are released to re-enter into society.

There continues to be a gap in implementing effective practices of support for formerly incarcerated participants that began in the early '70s. Studies have shown that budget and new policies play a significant role in effect those who are incarcerated. As a result, the loss of vital programs over three decades paints a picture of the actual revolving door to the prison. Mukamal et al. (2015) confirm that during the 1990s, inmates were no longer able to receive Pell Grant from the Federal government. This

decision caused a ripple effect across the correctional institutions that change how underprivileged individuals perceive their future upon release.

Conclusions

There is an insufficient amount of information about monitoring of such program's cessations, creating the opportunity to spotlight the current lack of proof that support services in a correction educational environment are designed to offset the negative influences such as stigmatization, low self-esteem, and self-image that hinder positive thinking. Finally, there is a lack of education and work-study programs to aid and equip formerly incarcerated people, thereby increasing their self-worth and social wealth.

Cognitive processes, behavior traits, and active coping skills, among others, contribute to resilience. These qualities also interact with biological aspects to enhance adaptation in the face of trauma, hardship, adversity, and ongoing life stressors (Ellis, Bianchi, Griskevicius, and Frankenhuis, 2017). The effectiveness of acceptance with others due to incarceration is life and death in the mind of the parolee. This research study is important to my study because it shows the potential stress factors that contribute to positive reconnection with society after a period of incarceration.

One of the most challenging in reducing recidivism is finding employment for the many persons who are coming out of prison. Individuals with a criminal background face many challenges due to their lack of education, technological, social skills, professionalism, and intrapersonal skills needed to obtain viable work (Atkin &

Armstrong, 2013). A recent study found that prisoners returning home from prison are faced with the demanding task of reconnecting with society and suggest that within three years, half will return to prison (Durose et al., 2014; Mukamal et al., 2015). Educational programs and work programs are needed for formerly incarcerated individuals to increase job skills and be employable upon reentering the community (Atkin, & Armstrong, 2013). In theory, increasing the opportunity for gainful employment for re-entering offenders serves as positive factors affecting recidivism rates (Pettus-Davis, & Epperson, 2015; Schnepel, 2015; Yang, 2016)

Within the United States, the prison population has been steadily increasing over the last three decades. As a result, the Department of Corrections has embarked on implementing educational programs designed to address three phases of reentry: to prepare offenders to rejoin society while they are incarcerated, programs that connect ex-offenders with support services upon the release from prison, and programs that offer long-term aftercare for ex-offenders as they readjust into communities permanently. The objective discussed in the research literature is the association between correctional education and reducing recidivism. My generic qualitative study design adds to new understandings about the experiences of recent parolees participating in an innovative educational program.

Chapter three shows in-depth data about the study's methodology use to conduct a generic qualitative inductive analysis to identify the particular program, practice, and attributes that contribute to the lessening recidivism and criminal conduct.

Chapter three includes the researcher's role, participant population, setting and

sampling, data collection methods and analysis, limitation, establishing trustworthiness,

ethics, and summary.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

My purpose in this qualitative study was to explore how parolees describe their experiences and understanding of correctional education and work-skill programs. Creswell (2009) defined qualitative research as "a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 4). The researcher formulates a comprehensive picture, analyzes words from a particular to general themes, describe in detail the views of participants, and guide the interview study in naturalistic settings (Pietkiewicz, & Smith, 2014). My objective in this chapter is to discuss the methodology approach to address the research question. Using a qualitative approach allows me to explore the experiences of the individuals who are participating in the MTM educational program.

My purpose in this generic qualitative research study was to explore the lived experiences of recent parolees in an educational program called MTM. MTM was designed to reduce recidivism among prisoners in a county located in the southeastern United States by providing adult basic education, work skills training with counseling, and mentoring through the integration of advanced technologies. The program seeks to equip and prepare formerly incarcerated to become productive and law-abiding members upon their prison release in society. The participants in MTM used an interactive software program called MRT, which is based on social-emotional learning

research to develop new ways to approach and respond to conflict. It also is designed to support positive self-image and leadership abilities.

Incorporated in this chapter are an outline of the research question, qualitative methodology, and research design. In addition to the setting, participant population, data collection procedures, and analysis, establishing trustworthiness and limitations are discussed. Chapter 3 finishes with ethical considerations about the treatment of the individuals, the researcher's role, and the summary.

Research Question

The research question for this study was: How do released prisoners perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program? To address the research question, my choice of study is a qualitative research methodology. The conceptual framework structured the basis of the approach for the study. There a story that needs to be told about parolees, their experiences, struggles, and their adventures in the department of corrections education system. The next section focuses on the research design and rationale.

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Research Design and Rationale

</div>

My focus in this study was on the lived experience of a parolee as it relates to prison education and the work-study program. I examined how the correctional education program participants experience in the educational work-study program, MTM. In the field of education, generic qualitative is a common form of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998). The qualitative researcher creates a holistic view,

scrutinizes words, generates themes, describes in detail the views of participants, and guides the interview study in naturalistic settings (Pietkiewicz, & Smith, 2014). The research design includes the perspective position taken by the researcher that gives an essential arrangement of beliefs that guide action (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Yilmaz, 2013).

The research design defines "the world, the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world" (Brennan, Voros & Brady, 2011, p. 103). As indicated by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000), various researchers have a unique way of dealing with what they consider the nature of reality and experience (p. 105). The holistic view allows the researcher to shed light on how they see the world and their conceptual frameworks. "Perspectives can change a great deal among researchers who observe the world through different cultural, philosophical, or professional lenses" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 102). Whether we realize it or not, worldviews are essential and establish the foundation of our principles and action.

A set of assumptions are related to generic qualitative studies (Thorne, Joachim, Paterson, & Canam, 2002; Sandelowski & Barroso, 2002; Sandelowski, 1986, 1993, 2000; 1997a: Thorne, Kirkham, & MacDonald-Emes, 1997; Thorne, 1991). These assumptions include highlighting the process rather than focusing the study on the result: revelatory of significance and understanding of the lives of people and their experiences or event (Caelli, Ray & Mill, 2003).

Rationale

By using a qualitative study methodology, the researcher can examine the experiences and perceptions of parolees who are participating in a work skills program. Another aspect for the study was focusing on and understanding what the potential for gainful employment, re-establishing positive relationships, building a robust social network circle along with other factors, fosters a mindset to offset the stigma of being label as an ex-con, and contribute to the reduction of lowering the recidivism rate. A case study is a qualitative methodology that relies on multiple sources of data, including triangulation that defines the structures of the case (Creswell, 2016; Yin, 2009) expressed the explanation behind conducting a case study gets from the need to gather data to comprehend particular phenomena better. A narrative, a qualitative research study, is a methodology where the researcher collaborates with the individual to recreate stories of their lives. The stories are retold as a narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I looked at and rejected the narrative approach also. Creswell (2016), stated that this approach concentrates on a person's life, which does not provide the particular information expected for this study. I dismissed the ethnographic approach on the ground that, according to Marshall and Rossman (2015), no social concepts existed between the participants.

A generic qualitative research study makes inquire about conceivable in a situation not agreeable with other methods. In exploring the procedure of reintegration

from the viewpoints of those preparing for their journey, the six worldview assumption of qualitative research recorded by Merriam (2016) was fundamental to the research outline (Babchuk, 2017). The qualitative research suspicions are that the researcher is concerned with the process; that it concerned about significance; that it gives a clear description of the research location; that it produces inductive thinking; that it includes hands-on work (fieldwork); and that the researcher is the essential instrument for data collection. Since reintegration is characterized as both a process and an event (Brand, 2016), a qualitative analysis is most appropriate in the investigation of what that involves. Qualitative research is likewise concerned with importance, and that is how individuals understand their lives, their experiences, and their structures of the world.

However, the research approach I chose for this study was a generic qualitative methodology whereby I purposely search for a collaborative understanding of how parolees see their lived experiences as it relates to correctional education programs. Consideration was given to use the phenomenological method, but I believe the generic qualitative approach aligns with my research question. The purpose of a phenomenological depends on the idea that people actively use their state of mind to articulate their surroundings. Thusly, given them the ability to abstract from our experiences to attribute meaningful experiences to construct their behavior and the world in which they lived and influenced by those implications (Palys & Atchison, 2014, p.7). In addition, the philosophy behind the phenomenology research method is to capture these encounters utilizing practical techniques, for example, in-depth

interviewing approach (Palys & Atchison, 2014, p. 24). According to Bernard (2013), a phenomenological approach focused on the understanding of the individual point of view, which would not spotlight the specific data needed for my study. However, this qualitative methodology was considered less appropriate for this study because of the approach. It is important for a researcher to recognize that they cannot stand separate from what is thought to be the real world; instead, they must look to understand how the world's truth is framed, and its meanings are translated.

Corbin and Strauss (2008) defined the qualitative research method about individual lives, lived experiences, emotions, feelings, attitudes, and cultural events. In a phenomenological study approach, the goal is to attempt to gain an understanding of how the participant sees their world. The objective of my study was to understand the individual's point of view. Strauss and Corbin (1998) stated, "It is not the researcher's perception or perspective that matters, but rather how research participants see events or happenings" (p. 47).

Therefore, I believe the research method for a study should balance the research question along with the research problem (Yilmaz, 2013). For the reasons expressed above, I discovered that a generic qualitative approach was the best way to deal with understanding the lived experiences of formerly incarcerated individuals under study. The generic qualitative approach was consistent and aligned with the research question.

In generic qualitative research, the researcher is the primary means of gathering and analyzing data, developing a conducive setting that is favorable to record data,

writing the narratives, and analyzing the concepts that result. These elements of generic qualitative research allow for interpretive description and an explorative account of the experiences of these parolees. In summary, "generic qualitative study is not guided by, or established a set of methodologies," instead, it has the flexibility and structure methodological approach to draw from more than one methodology in order to obtain deep insight into a person of interest (Caelli et al., 2003).

This approach provided me with a better understanding as I explore their perspectives and their worldview on life. I have selected to use the term *worldview* as meaning, "a basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Guba, 1990, p. 17). Other researchers have called them a paradigm as it relates to the nature of the research study (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba, 2011; Mertens, 2010). As an instructor and advocate who are deeply passionate about teaching and learning from an educational perspective desire to explore the educational process from the correctional side at all levels. I chose to utilize the qualitative methodology for my study because of its pertinence to my study and fit with my philosophical principles as the best approach to engulf myself into the experience of the participants.

Role of the Researcher

As an educator, law enforcement officer, former jail chaplain, and advocate who is genuinely passionate about teaching and learning from an educational perspective desire to explore the educational process from the correctional side at all levels. I can experience firsthand the impact of education on the road to success. As a result, my

desire was to explore the best way to empower, equip, and position men and women who are incarcerated with correctional education resources to assist offenders with hope upon their release from prison. To reduce bias, I kept a reflexive journal noting my ideas and responses. Additionally, I memo throughout the research study on my thoughts about the research processes. In this way, I reduced the potential for bias in my interactions with the participants, during data collection and my analysis of the dataset.

The primary instrument for this research study was the researcher (Creswell, 2012; Patton, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 2015). In this role, I planned to learn and extract as much information possible about the parolee's lived experiences by the formerly incarcerated individual (Crowther, Ironside, Spence, & Smythe, 2017; Vagle, 2016). My role as a researcher as it relates to data collection was to be the instrument (Marshall & Rossman, 2015; Seidman, 2013). My role was to obtain consent forms from the participating parolees. Also, I collected information data, analyze, interpret through coding and decoding, and report all data outcomes.

The method of generic qualitative research interviewing invites and nurtures a researcher/participant relationship that is formed on the premises of respect and trust (Robin & Robin, 2012). To establish an excellent rapport to obtain information needed, Rubin and Rubin (2012) stated that the researcher must cultivate a relationship that is meaningful to the participants. I have no prior relationship with any participants. The participant was informed that they could withdraw at any time during the interview

study if they feel that an ethical concern. In addition, the role of the researcher is to

build up one conceivable interpretation of the topic at hand of certain human

experience, a true, thoughtful reflection that renders the experience as significant.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The research question for this generic qualitative study was, "How do released

prisoners perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program?" I used

purposive sampling to recruit and identify the participants. The participants in the study

met the criterion of previously incarcerated male parolees participating in the MTM

educational program that was released in the last six months. Recruitment of

participants will occur through a flyer posted in the parole office where the MTM

educational program is located. After the potential participant contacted me, I asked if

they are participating in MTM and if they have been released from prison within the

lack of six months. If they reply yes, I will then send them an Informed Consent form.

At this time, I scheduled a face-to-face interview in a conference room at the MTM

location. When the participant comes to the interview, I reviewed the Informed Consent

form and asked if they have questions. Then they signed the informed consent form.

After this, the interview began.

There were 8-10 participants recruited. The sample size of 8-10 participants was

enough to answer my research question. The sample size for qualitative studies

represents the development of a perspective, not a population (Pietkiewicz & Smith,

2014). Generic qualitative data collection's purpose is to gain perspectives and experiences from representative   samples of people about real-world events and processes. The goal was to develop a broad range of opinions, ideas, and reflections on the topic of the study (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). Data saturation is defined as new themes are no longer emerging in my data analysis. If I do not attain 8-10 participants from my initial recruitment, I would have attained second group recruitment from the next cohort. There is a six-week space between cohorts in the MTM program. I continued to recruit from differing cohorts until I have recruited 8-10 participants. The researcher reduced bias by collecting both statements of the participants in the interview (Percy, 2015).

Instrumentation

The research question for this study is How do released prisoners experience and perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program? To respond to this question, I engaged in semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the participants to understand the perceptions and experiences of the parolees on the problem being addressed. The interview questions and topics were aligned with the conceptual framework for this study. They provided information on the perception of these parolees related to the MTM program.

Interview Protocol

The data source for my study was face-to-face semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview was organized around predetermined open-ended questions,

with other questions evolving from the dialogue between the interviewer and the participant/s (Anyan, 2013; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). In-depth interviewing was the standard method chosen in generic qualitative research for data collection (Maxwell, 2009; Richards, 2015). Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were a valued data collection procedure as it encourages a shared new understanding among the participant and the researcher (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

In addition, in a face-to-face interview, the presence of the interviewer makes it easier for the participant to either explain answers or ask for an explanation for some of the questions. The semi-structured approach provided the flexibility of the freedom needed to conduct my study (Galletta, 2013; Whiting, 2008). Utilizing the semi-structured interviewing technique gave me the chance to explore the subject informally with probes (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The semi-structured technique also permits unexpectedly arising topics relevant to answering the research question to be introduced and explored during the interviewing process (Patton, 2015; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Whiting, 2008). The face-to-face interview means that the presence of the interviewer makes it easier for the participant to either elucidate answers or ask for an explanation for some of the questions on the survey.

I used face-to-face, semi-structured interviews that I have designed as a source of data. I have designed the interview questions. The location for the interviews was at MTM educational program's location. The interviews were recorded. Audio recordings were used to document the interviews and capture the dialogue between each of the

participants and myself. The recorded information was then transcribed. I used reflexive journaling to document my responses to the interviews. I took notes before and after the interview to capture my responses to the interview. The interview questions below were designed to understand their personal, social, and MTM program experiences aligned with the conceptual framework for my study to understand how they experienced the innovative learning experiences in the MTM program.

Interview Questions

Questions 1 is related to personal issues relevant to their perspectives of the MTM educational program. This is relevant to the conceptual framework of Bandura's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). The concept of efficacy is relevant to how the participants experience their educational experiences.

1. How are you doing since your release?

Questions 2,3,4 were relevant to understanding the conceptual framework of Vygotsky's sociocultural interactions in the MTM educational program (Vygotsky, 1986). These questions defined their experiences interacting in the educational setting.

2. How is the MTM program going?

3. What do you think are the most useful aspects of the program? Why?

4. What do you think are the least useful aspects of the program? Why?

Questions 7 and 8 were meant to understand their experiences in a broader community perspective. This is based on the process of transformational learning (Meichenbaum, 2006), the goal of the MTM educational program.

5. What will you do when you finish the MTM?

6. How will you be successful in the future?

7. What have things changed for you as a result of the MTM program?

8. Is there anything that you would like to tell me about your experiences that we did not talk about?

Face-to-Face Interviews

The face-to-face interview is defined as a procedure that includes a facilitator to engage in a discussion among multiple participants about a specific topic of interest (Setia, 2017). I took field notes for the 45 to 60-minute interview and provide an additional source of participant response that defines their responses to the educational context (Vogt, King, & King, 2004).

The face-to-face interview was useful in understanding the how or why (Patton, 2015) in which a researcher explored a specific phenomenon in its natural environment utilizing multiple and various sources of data (Harling, 2012). Face-to-face interview generates qualitative data that can be used to both enhance and broaden their understanding of the thought being development. This gave me multiple perspectives on a topic to improve the relevance and representativeness of entries (Hoglund, 2017). Another incentive as it allows me to listen more actively to the participants as a listener. A face-to-face is essential because it allowed the researcher to learn about the meaning of a construct from the perspective of the participant under study. After permission is given by every participant in the cohort, I conducted a face-to-face 60 minutes interview session. During the session, I took notes on my iPad.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The purpose of this generic qualitative study was to understand the lived experiences of recent parolees participating in the innovative work-skills educational program. The research context was the MTM educational program that is strongly encouraged by the correctional facility for recent parolees. These parolees go to the courthouse to attend their instructions. The MTM program focuses on building work-related skills, a community mentoring program, and personal awareness through a combination of independent work using specialized computer software, group focus meetings, and developing mentoring programs for the parolees. I obtained site permission for face-to-face recruiting, posting flyers, and onsite interviewing in a popular community designated room. The facility where the participants came for weekly visits served as the location where the interviews took place was one of the many locations in the Southeast region. The building location is part of a 15 acres secure structure complex.

Data Collection

The research question for this study is. How do released prisoners perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program? The information listed below reflects the action steps that are necessary for participant recruitment, participant selection, and data collection.

1. Obtain approval from IRB with the DATE stamp (approval #05-02-18-0410393).

2. Placed and handed out research announcement flyers (See Appendix A) in an accessible area within the local community county offices, on bulletin boards, and around other community settings that appeal followers of the targeted population.

3. Prospective participants contacted me by telephone or directly to convey interest were welcome to go to one of three informational sessions at a county library or one of the nearby meeting offices.

4. Prospective participants that went to an info session and expressed an interest were asked questions to identify if they meet the inclusion criteria.

5. At this time, the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix B) was handed out to potential participants, and a date for the interview was scheduled.

6. The interviews were in the multi-purpose room in the community center. This was a private and secured area.

7. Prior to the interview, the researcher reviewed the detail about the study. Participants were informed about the voluntary nature of participation in this study and their ability to end the process and remove their voluntary involvement status at any time. Participants reviewed and signed the informed consent form. A copy of the form was given to each participant. Before the first question was asked, participants were reminded that the interviewing procedure would encompass digital audio recording.

8. The initial 5-10 minutes of the interview meeting was utilized to establish a friendship with participants, which is vital to energize receptiveness and trust and to ask demographic questions.

9. Interview questions were asked using an interview protocol (see Appendix C) to conduct a semi-structured interview with participants. The whole interview dialog was recorded using a digital audio recording device.

10. The interview procedure consumed 45-60 minutes of time. After the interview, participants were presented with a list of public counseling resources to assist with questioning if discomfort was present or experienced.

11. The recording device was examined after each interview to make sure the process was recorded as planned.

12. Post-interview memos were taken immediately following the interview meeting and after listening to the audio before transcription. Post-interview memos were taken for processing about the interview surroundings, the actual interview, the information received, the manner of the researcher, and any issues observed that required instant modification for follow-up interviews.

13. Participants' interviews session was transcribed within 60 hours after contact was made.

14. The transcription of each interview was reviewed with notes relevant to the information obtained.

15. I uploaded all memos and transcribed interviews into my login protected the personal home computer.

16. The data collected was organized and analyzed using inductive thematic analysis with the aid of a qualitative software program known as Dedoose.

17. After the data collection portion, I thank each participant for the time and participation in the study.

Data Analysis Plan

According to Merrian and Tisdell (2015), basic qualitative inquiry is a qualitative methodology to gain an in-depth understanding of how individual interpreted their experiences and is centered on producing themes. This study used thematic inductive analysis to define and structure the dataset. The research questions were answered by defining the themes resulting from the analysis that define the experiences of these participants. "[T]hematic analysis involves the searching across a data set – be that a number of interviews or a range of texts – to find repeated patterns of meanings within data" (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 86). The thematic inductive analysis takes text information or graphics and puts them in classes by terms based on the real language of the participant (Creswell, 2009, p. 186). According to Patton (2015), generic qualitative data is categorized into themes and sub-themes for comparison. Below are the steps for my analysis:

1. I took memos before and after each interview.

2. I kept a reflexive journal to document my thoughts as the study proceeds.

3. I listened to all the audio recordings of the interviews and took notes during my first review.

4. I used a transcriptionist to ensure that all the interviews are transcribed accurately.

5. After all transcribed interviews were returned, I reviewed the interviews while listening to the audio recordings to ensure accuracy. I continued to memo and journal in my response to the interview.

6. I uploaded all the documents, the transcribed interviews, and my memos into Dedoose.

7. In Dedoose, I defined a unit of meaning as a paragraph. I selected a paragraph in the text and created coding structures.

8. After I identified all codes for each participant's interview, I reviewed and categorized these initial codes through a second analysis combining similar codes into categories.

9. After all the data was analyzed from codes to categories, to patterns, I arranged the themes in a kind of matrix with their corresponding supportive patterns. I included the codes for each pattern.

10. I wrote a detailed abstract analysis describing the scope and substance of each theme, resulting in each participant.

11. Next, I reviewed all themes from all interviews and created a matrix of all coding structures for all participants.

12. I combined the categories across all participants and created patterns. I created a graphic of the patterns across all participants.

13. Finally, I created themes as the final step of my analysis. I reviewed the patterns and combined them into personal, social, and organization themes from the analysis.

14. I created a final report of my findings.

In conclusion, because of a defined process of data structuring and analysis, I was able to develop major themes to answer the research question guiding this study.

Issues of Trustworthiness

The concern for trustworthiness was critical to the research success; for that reason, obtaining access to the participants and the local correctional administrators who work in the organization was crucial. The ability to ensure meaningful data served as a critical component to establishing trustworthiness. The idea of trustworthiness has been extended and adopted as an alternative to the conventional model for assessing the quality of research inquiry (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Siedman, 2013). In generic qualitative research, the standard of judgment is measured by the evidence of internal validity, whether the cause for the conclusions expressed by the researcher is defined fully and in detail (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachimas, 2008; Krefting, 1991).

The language, focus, and strategy of quantitative criteria are commonly applied by statistical control and manipulation methodologies that can restrain probable threats in advance (Creswell, 2014; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachimas, 2008; Guba, 1981;

Maxwell, 2013). On the contrary, the qualitative approach, where detailed descriptions are at the heart of inquiry, maintains an obligation to control for probable threats at every point of the research process (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2009; Patton, 2015). Considering the differences in assumptions and positions when it comes to the scientific and naturalistic paradigms, the language, focus, and strategy used to judge the quality of scientific research has been determining ineffective and inappropriate for qualitative inquiry (Guba, 1981; Marshall & Rossman, 2015; Siedman, 2013). As a replacement, I used the four standards of measure as given in the model presented by Guba (1981; Elo, Kaariainen, Kanste, Polkki, Utriainen, & Kyngas, 2014), the evidence of *credibility, dependability, transferability,* and *confirmability*, to ensure the trustworthiness standards of quality and authentic truthfulness is reached.

Elo, Kaariainen, Kanste, Polkki, Utriainen, and Kyngas (2014) suggest four criteria that should be considered in establishing trustworthiness. These are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Elo et al., 2014). The core of credibility is established on the foundation of pertinent information essential to drawing facts and interpreting the results correctly about the participant's perspectives (Anney, 2014). As a researcher, it is vital to establish principles to evaluate quality for credibility, validity, and reliability in generic qualitative research that links perspectives and improve the believability of generic qualitative research study (Anney, 2014; Leung, 2015).

Appropriate strategies to establish credibility include triangulation, prolonged contact, member checks, saturation, reflexivity, and peer review. As demonstrated in Chapter 3, triangulation would be used to demonstrate credibility. I accomplished this through the merging of information collected from the participant's interviews, reflexive journaling, and notes. The combination of all the information collected substantiated the themes needed for the credibility of this study.

Transferability describes appropriate strategies to establish transferability, such as thick description and variation in participant selection. In order to transfer the information gathered, an iPad AudioNote voice recorder, and a digital audio recorder was used to capture transcripts of all participant interviews. It is essential to use more than one device should technology fail.

Dependability is the qualitative counterpart to reliability that describes appropriate strategies to establish dependability, such as audit trails and triangulation. Dependability was confirmed throughout the research study. The researcher interviewed multiple participants, along with the data, notes, and journals provided triangulation. The research mentor and methodologist feedback, along with the IRB process, confirmed the integrity of the research question.

Confirmability is the qualitative counterpart to objectivity that describes appropriate strategies to establish confirmability, such as reflexivity. This ensured the findings were researcher biases free. The data presented was the data and information

given by the participants. During the data collection process, the researcher maintained precise notes to communicate the finding correctly.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical procedures begin with securing an agreement from executives within the parole office, allowing the research study to take place. A copy of the agreement was provided to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application. The recruitment process includes working with parole supervision officers to provide notification via flyers prior to the research study. None of the potential participants knew me as an officer or anyone in authority. I did not include anyone whom I know personally or professionally to avoid a conflict of interest.

In addition, the treatment of participants was in accordance with the American Psychological Association's Code of Ethics (APA, 2017). Other ethical concerns included ensuring that participants volunteer on their own free will and that they meet the participation eligibility requirements. I received signatures on an Informed Consent Form prior to all interviews. All participants were informed that the study was voluntary. In addition, the participant was informed about the length of time allotted to conduct the interview. I emphasized that they can withdraw from the study at any time without any repercussions.

I established an alphanumeric system, e.g., P1, P2, P3, that will replace the participant's name. I created a master list that included both and stores this list separately from the other data. This de-identify the data set from this point forward.

Only myself, my mentor, and the IRB had access to the data that is received from the participants provided. The data included audio-recorded interviews, field notes, reflexive journaling, and memoing. All paper data and audio recordings were stored in a secure in a locked safe accessible for my use only. All digital data was stored in my home computer, which is password protected. After analysis, the digital data was stored on a USB drive in a locked safe in my home. All data will then be destroyed after 5 years. The USB drive will be destroyed with a hammer. The paper documents will be shredded, and the audio recordings will be burned.

Another ethical concern was the power position difference in working with parolees. To undertake this ethical concern, I initiated all interviews with an overview of the steps I used to ensure the confidentiality of their information. I made sure the participant understand that any information obtained from them would be protected for confidentiality by de-identification, and all data were stored in a locked safe. I did not interview any parolee that I have worked with in my current program. These parolees were from a separate educational program and did not know me or my role in the parole or jail system.

The ethical considerations important to this request included (a) misuse of participants, (b) complete admission and consent of participants, (c) researcher bias due to morals and individual history, (d) privacy and confidentiality, (e) unfortunate behavior toward or debilitation of participants, and (f) thoughtful to the unique needs of participants in the research study process. I included information on counseling in my

informed consent form if participants become upset with the questions. I ensured all participants that they could leave the study at any time if they become distressed.

Summary

This research study was a generic qualitative data analysis and collection. The study aimed to determine if employment and education play a significant part in the life of a parolee's reintegration success as it relates to recidivism and resilience. A more detailed discussion of the results occurs in Chapters 4 and 5. Historically, a steady high rate of prisoners incarcerated and research has resulted in many findings, but few studies on the process of formerly incarcerated individuals reintegrating back into society. Within the United States, the prison population has been steadily increasing over three decades. As a result, Department of Correction has embarked on educational programs designed to address three phases of reentry: to prepare offenders to rejoin society while they are incarcerated, programs that connect ex-offenders with support services upon the release from prison, and programs that offer long-term aftercare for ex-offenders as they readjust into communities permanently. The objective discussed in the research literature was the association between correctional education and reducing recidivism. A qualitative study design was considered necessary for the study. Chapter 3 focused on the research design to provide in-depth data about the study's methodology to include the researcher's role, participant population, setting, data collection methods and analysis strategy, limitation, establishing trustworthiness, and summary used in this study.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

My purpose in this generic qualitative research study was to explore and develop a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of parolee regarding their adult education and work still program as it relates to reducing the rate of recidivism and reintegrating in society. The central research question that led the study was: How do released prisoners experience and perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program? The qualitative data from the semistructured face-to-face interview method I used to collect participants' responses are pertaining to their lived experience in an adult education program setting. The data that I collected was analyzed and redirected back the central research question to depict the lived experiences of parolee regarding education

Chapter 4 includes a detail description of the introduction, setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, and evidence of trustworthiness. In this chapter, I outline the findings obtained from a formerly incarcerated individual regarding their lived experience in an adult education program. The chapter includes a review of the findings that address the research question.

Research Setting

The interviews were conducted in the central community center meeting room at the location of the Adult Drug Court Accountability building, where their work skills educational setting, MTM, also takes place. According to the program coordinator, the

community center where both recruitment and interviews took place was established in 2013 on the principle of helping men and women recently released, and ex-offenders reintegrate into society and become active, productive members within the community. Between the Month of May 2018 and June 2018, recruitment flyers were disseminated to local agency representatives for placement in the community center. The face-to-face interviews took place in the community center in a private room.

The scheduling of these interviews was difficult as several of the participants changed the times. I scheduled eight face-to-face interviews that were approximately 45 minutes in length on Sunday, which they mutually agreed to participate in the study. I thanked each participant for taking the time out of their personal schedule to consent to the interview. Each participant was enthusiastic about participating in the research study; however, individual obligations that influenced the meeting time of the interviews. I overcame these obstacles by scheduling the interviews.

Demographics

The eight participants were at least 18 years of age and had been released from the correctional institution. Of the eight individuals who completed the interview, five were White, and three were Black. Each participant who participated in the study was released from the correctional institution within 1 year prior to the study and had been a part of society for a minimum of 90 days. Table 1 includes detailed of the participants' demographic information at the time they were interviewed.

Table 2

Demographics

Pseudonym	Age (y)	Gender	Ethnicity	Education	Years incarcerated	Employment
P1	20	Male	Black	Diploma	1	Y/Cater
P2	24	Male	White	Diploma	2	Y/Stocking
P3	21	Male	White	GED	4	Y/Crew Ldr.
P4	40	Male	Black	GED	20	Y/Welder
P5	23	Male	Black	NHD	3	N/Assembler
P6	19	Male	White	Diploma	2	Y/Electrician
P7	37	Male	White	GED	17	Y/Maint.
P8	29	Male	White	College	1	Y/QA

Note. Information data collected from the demographic inquiry; NHD = no high school diploma; Y= yes; N= no; GED = general equivalency diploma.

Participants Profile Narratives

The eight former incarcerated participants in this research study provided a range of lived perspectives and experiences for this generic qualitative study. Each participant story was based on their lived experiences as a formerly incarcerated individual. A brief description of everyone's background is provided to allow the readers a glimpse of the situations surrounding the criminal activities of each participant.

Participant 1. Research study Participant 1 was a 20-years-old, single, Black male. This individual experience of incarceration came as a shock to him because he thought that helping a friend in need regardless of the consequences was the right thing to do. He was incarcerated for the first time and did 1 year on a 3-year sentence for selling drugs to get the money I thought I needed. He received his high school diploma and is employed as a caterer for a local business.

Participant 2. Research study Participant 2 was a 24-year-old single white male who had multiple felony charges pending. He spent 2 years in prison for selling drugs. He graduated from high school with a soccer scholarship. He was heading to college but got arrested for drug trafficking. He is currently working two jobs as a stock clerk to make a living and support himself financially.

Participant 3. Research study Participant 3 was a 21-year-old White male. He was released from prison after serving 4 years for a probation violation. He dropped out of high school in the ninth grade but enrolled in youth challenge academy where after the second attempt received his GED. He is now employed and works as a crew leader for a landscaping company. He has two children whom he supports, but they live with the mother.

Participant 4. Research study Participant 4 was a 40-year-old black male married with four children. He earned his GED and worked as a welder. He spent a total of 20 years in and out of prison, with his most extended stay being 8 years. Although he has a professional trade skill job as a welder, he made it a point to mention he is underpaid.

Participant 5. Research study Participant 5 was a 24-year-old black male who grew up in a Christian family home. His upbringing in helping the poor was a regular thing in his life. An incident changed the course of his life forever. He was trying to help a friend, not realizing the act would land him in prison for 2.5 years. This was his first encounter with law enforcement or the correctional system and being away from

home. He does not have a high school diploma but has taken some GED classes while incarcerated and enrolled in some life-skills classes.

Participant 6. Research study Participant 6 was a 19-year-old White young male who found himself on growing up in the prison system due to his drug-related problem. He was incarcerated for 1 year. He received his high school diploma and had a son. While incarcerated, he inquired about educational programs. His present employment is currently a local electrical company as an electrician.

Participant 7. Research study Participant 7 was a 37-year-old White male. After 17 years of incarceration, he wanted to change is life. He caught a methamphetamine charge and along with other offenses. He obtained his GED and is working as a mechanic. During the interview, he put emphasis on not going back to prison. He is a faithful believer who now has a positive network support group.

Participant 8. Research study Participant 8 was a 29-year-old White male. He has a bachelor's degree in accounting. He had several violent charges that led to his incarcerated for 1.5 years but could have received 30 years in prison. While adjusting to the life of incarceration, he went to quite a few classes on a regular basis. He was jailed several times on misdemeanor charges but caught a break from long-term incarceration. He is employed as a quality account analyst.

Data Collection

Semistructured interviews with eight formerly incarcerated individual males from the southeastern region of the United States provided data for this research study.

The eight semistructured interviews included an array of open-ended questions designed to induce an exploration of the lived experiences of a formerly incarcerated individual as it relates to their personal experiences pre-incarceration and post-incarceration. The participants volunteered to participate and share the experiences in this study after responding to the invitation to participate flyer (see Appendix A). The interview time and date were scheduled after each participant reviewed and returned a signed informed consent form (Appendix B). I used the interview protocol (see Appendix C) to guide the interviews. Prior to conducting the interviews, I gave each participant a list of local resource counseling referral numbers (see Appendix D). The data collection process began after the Walden University IRB approved the study. Eight interviews conducted took place over five weeks from May 2018 to June 2018. Prior to conducting the interview, the researcher thanked each participant for their time and willingness to share their experiences. Each interviewee participating in the study received a brief introduction to the research interview questions to explore during the meeting.

The researcher emphasized that (a) the interview would be recorded utilizing a digital voice recorder and iPad voice recorder; (b) they will receive a copy of the transcript to review for accuracy and verification; (c) they have the to right to stop the interview process at any time without consequence, and (d) the duration of the interviews was between 30 to 60 minutes. The researcher coordinated with the program staff and scheduled appropriate times for each participant according to convenience.

The interview was conducted in the central community meeting room at the location of the Adult Drug Court Accountability building. Before the interview began, the researcher explained the format of the interview, the purpose of the study, the confidentially, and requested permission to proceed with recording the interview.

The interview recordings took place utilizing an Olympus digital voice recorder VH-6200PC and Apple iPad AudioNote as a backup to the primary recording device to ensure collection of detailed information of each participant lived experience as formerly incarcerated individuals. The researcher is a volunteer with over 12 years' experience teaching, counseling, mentoring in the correctional and jail facility. While directing the interviews, the researcher evaded personal perspectives and driving questions to stay clear of personal bias and read each question unmistakably to guarantee explicit cognizance. The researcher elucidated a couple of questions with probing and without making leading questions. The face-to-face in-depth interviews lasted roughly 30-60 minutes. None of the participants pulled back from the research study anytime in the interview procedure. There was no interference amid the interview process, and every participant was interviewed once.

The interviews finished up with closing remarks, and the researcher communicated sincere gratefulness to everyone for their interest in the study. Each participant gave the authorization to allow the digital audio recording during their interviews. There was no need to look for elucidation during the transcription process. Therefore, there was no reason to conduct a follow-up interview with the participants.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim into a Microsoft Word document and saved data on a password-protected computer and password-protected backup external flash drive. All the participant's interviews were anonymous, which allowed the participant's involvement to remain confidential throughout the research study.

To protect the participants, each participant was assigned pseudonyms, such as a letter and number, which allowed the participant to remain confidential and protect their identity. The external flash drive, alongside all audio recordings, journaling notes, and informed consents were put away in a secure fireproof resistant cabinet in my home office. I am the only individual with access to the locked file cabinet. There were no changes from the data collection process described in Chapter 3, nor were there any unordinary conditions experienced in the process.

Recruitment of participants occurred through a flyer posted in the parole office where the MTM educational program is located. After the potential participant contacted me, I asked if they were participating in MTM and if they had been released from prison within the lack of six months. If they replied yes, then I will send them an Informed Consent form. At this time, I also scheduled a face-to-face interview in a conference room at the designated location. My recruitment process entailed a diverse approach through local county agencies and transitional homes that have direct contact with formerly incarcerated individuals. A flyer was emailed and hand-delivered to each location, inviting formerly incarcerated individuals to partake in this research study.

Before the initial consent form meeting, I met with the primary program coordinator who provided background information about the program setup, time, meeting room location, and a possible number of participants that would be in attendance. All participants received full disclosure of the type of research study being conducted, the purpose of the study, and the requirements. In compliance with the requirements of Walden's IRB guidelines, each volunteer participant was asked to sign a standard informed consent before participating in the study.

The program coordinator requested that I do a brief presentation about my study and my purpose of being there soliciting potential participants for my study. Once in the meeting room with the participant, I explained in detail the purpose of the study, including risks, benefits, and steps associated with withdrawal before or during the study. The consent form for this research study is located in Appendix B. The participants who decided to participate in the research study signed the consent form, scheduled the interview date and time, was assigned a pseudonyms participant name and were provided a follow-up reminder of the date, time and location of their interview. Following the signed consent form meeting, I met with the program coordinator, indicating the number of participants who volunteered to take part in the study, date, time, and meeting room to help in escorting on the day of their interview.

I received four participants who agreed to take part in the study, but due to unforeseen events, two out of the four failed to keep scheduled interview appointments. The scheduling component was a huge challenge for all the participants because of the

rigor obligation commitment, such as work, school, and support meeting. After re-scheduling interviews several times, I was able to conduct the interviews with the remaining participants finally. A total of eight participants were ultimately interviewed for this study.

All signed consent forms with the participant's name and the date were detached from the interview package to be given to the participant at the start of the interview. This allowed the researcher to organize interview documents while maintaining individual privacy.

Before conducting the interviews, I was able to establish a rapport with each participant to set the atmosphere of privacy and suitable place that was conducive for the participant comfortability to stimulate a meaningful and successful interview. In this form of setting, it ensured that the interviews would not be interrupted or overheard by others. I explained the interview process, including how the data will be utilized, none of the participants selected to withdraw from the study.

Eight interviews conducted took place over five weeks from May 2018 to June 2018. Prior to conducting the interview, the researcher thanked each participant for their time and willingness to share their experiences. Each interviewee participating in the study received a brief introduction to the research interview questions to explore during the meeting.

The researcher emphasized that (a) the interview would be recorded utilizing a digital voice recorder and iPad voice recorder; (b) they will be able to review recording

for accuracy and verification; (c) they have to stop the interview process at any time without consequence right, and (d) the duration of the interviews was between 30 to 60 minutes. Before the interview began, the researcher explained the format of the interview, the purpose of the study, the confidentially, and requested permission to proceed with recording the interview.

The interview recordings device I utilized was an Olympus digital voice recorder VH-6200PC and Apple iPad AudioNote as a backup to the primary recording device to ensure collection of detailed information of each participant lived experience as formerly incarcerated individuals.

The researcher is a volunteer with over 12 years' experience teaching, counseling, mentoring in the correctional and jail facility. While directing the interviews, the researcher avoided personal perspectives and driving questions to stay clear of personal bias and read each question unmistakably to guarantee clear cognizance. The researcher elucidated a couple of questions with probing and without making leading questions. The semi-structured face-to-face, in-depth interviews lasted roughly 30-60 minutes. None of the participants pulled back from the research study anytime in the interview process. There was no interference amid the interview process, and every participant was interviewed once and that the information being recorded was enough.

The interviews finished up with closing remarks, and the researcher communicated sincere gratefulness to everyone for their interest in the study. Each

participant gave the authorization to allow the digital audio recording during their interviews. There was no need to look for elucidation during the transcription process. Therefore, there was no reason to conduct a follow-up interview with the participants.

For the purpose of conducting the interview, I used an iPad's AudioNote, a digital recorder, and took notes on the back of a copy of the interview questions. After each interview, I debriefed the participants. I checked the recording to confirm that everything was captured and clear. I provided each participant with an opportunity to express any questions or concerns pertaining to participation in the research study or if they are experiencing any signs of discomfort or psychological stress because of interviewing in this study before leaving my presence.

The participants volunteered to participate and share the experiences in this study after responding to the invitation to participate flyer (see Appendix A). The interview time and date were scheduled after each participant reviewed and returned a signed informed consent form. I used the interview protocol (see Appendix C) to guide the interviews. Prior to conducting the interviews, I gave each participant a list of local resource counseling referral numbers (see Appendix D). The data collection process began after the Walden University IRB approved the study.

The interview documents consent forms along with the digital recording devices, were contained in a secured bag immediately prior, and after each interview session. Data transcription was conducted by the secondary researcher in her home office, who signed a confidential agreement contract. Each interview was transcribed

within two upon completing the interview with the participant. After each transcription, the data was reviewed for any discrepancies and corrections. All interview documents were then secure in a locked fireproof safe in the researcher's home office. Each individual selected was provided a pseudonym to protect their identity. The participants' names were substituted with an alphabet letter "P" and numeric starting with the number one indicating first participant (P1). The interviews were transcribed verbatim into a Microsoft Word document and saved data on a password-protected computer and password-protected backup external flash drive.

The external flash drive, alongside all audio recordings, journaling notes, and informed consents were put away in a secure fireproof resistant cabinet in my home office. I am the only individual with access to the locked file cabinet. There were no changes from the data collection process described in Chapter 3, nor were there any unordinary conditions experienced in the process.

Attention was put on the single idea of the study. The participants were made aware that I am the only individual that will have access to their identities. Each participant was recognized by pseudonyms with a number. For example, the participant interviewed was identified as P1, P2, P3, P4, etc. The information that could reveal the identity of the participant was eliminated. Participants were not required to provide any pertinent that they believed was uncomfortable sharing and no personal written information required of the participant. There were no unexpected ethical concerns pertaining to the data collection process.

All records, including forms, journals, notes, audiotapes, data transcripts, and external flash drives utilized during the research process, were put away in a locked fireproof safe in my home office. I am the only individual with access to the locked fireproof safe. No information was stored on the laptop computer without password protected in place. In accordance with IRB's, all documents received during the research study process will be kept for five years after the completion of the study. After the five-year retention period, all records associated with this research study will be destroyed. All data paper will be shredded, and all digital audio recordings and flash drive electronically deleted and destroyed.

The purpose of the study is to examine the experiences of 8 formerly incarcerated adults who were incarcerated for at least 12 months and living in the community for at least three to six months since their release and are participants in a program titled MTM designed to develop resilience and productive work skills to increase their ability to get a job. The introduction highlights the importance of the study. The research question that piloted the interview is reiterated in the chapter. The objective of this chapter is to discuss the methodology approach to address the research question. Using a qualitative approach allows me to explore the experiences of the individuals who are participating in the MTM educational program. The strategy used to recruit focused on a population, and the sample size was also explained. The approaches used to help in the trustworthiness of the study were depicted and

discussed. Finally, the ethical procedures and considerations utilized to ensure the participants and the data were incorporated into this chapter.

Chapter 4 gives the setting in which the study was conducted. I discussed the demographics of the 8 participants and the descriptions that are significant to the study. In addition, presented is an intensive record of the data analysis, including the codes, categories, and themes that emerged from the data. Confirmation used to corroborate the trustworthiness of the study will be described.

Data Analysis

The research data were analyzed using the thematic inductive analysis model defined by Braun and Clark (2006) to identify patterns and themes. "[T]hematic analysis involves the searching across a data set – be that a number of interviews or a range of texts – to find repeated patterns of meanings within data" (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 86). The thematic inductive analysis takes text information or graphics and puts them in classes by terms based on the real language of the participant (Creswell, 2009, p. 186). According to Patton (2015), generic qualitative data is categorized into themes and sub-themes for comparison. In generic qualitative research, the researcher is the primary means of gathering and analyzing data, developing a conducive setting that is favorable to record data, writing the narratives, and analyzing the concepts that result. These elements of generic qualitative research allow for interpretive description and an explorative account of the experiences of these parolees.

I used the Braun and Clark thematic analysis model described above to respond to the research question. I listened to the audiotapes while memoing. I hired a professional transcriber to transcribe the audiotapes to ensure accuracy. After receiving the transcribed interview, I uploaded the Word documents into Dedoose. I listened to the audiotapes again to take notes as I reviewed the transcribed interview.

I began defining initial codes for each interview in Dedoose. I selected a paragraph as a unit of meaning. After selecting the paragraph, I created an identifier for each unit of meaning that succinctly described the core meaning in the paragraph. I added memos in Dedoose relating to emerging patterns in the data set. I did this initial coding for each interview.

After this initial coding, I reviewed the interview transcript again. During my second reading of each interview transcript, I recognized and identified the structure of patterns within the initial codes and combined initial codes under larger headings that defined the pattern of multiple codes. Additionally, I am listening to the participants' digital recording during my review of their transcripts. After the second focused coding of each interview, patterns of the participant experience, and perspectives emerged. I did this initial coding and then patterned recognition for each interview. Table 2 identifies the initial code count from my initial coding of all the interviews.

Table 2

Initial Code Count

Word recurrence and phrases organized by count			
Phrases	No. of coded words	Phrases	No. of coded words
Money	9	Jail	58
Structure	4	Change	18
Job	36	Get out of jail	29
Way of thinking	5	Gonna	39
Charges	14	Motivation	11
Recidivism	7	Drugs	36
Incarceration	10	Family	8
Support	14	School	28
Staying clean of drugs	7	Inspiration	3
Childhood	4	To be a better person	16
Counselor	7	My old ways	3
Accountability	12	Mentor	2
No control over life	4	Environment	5
Record	3	Felony	3
Encouragement	5	Children	5
Inmate	5	Attorney	3
Church	4	Friends	3
Lawyer	2	Mom	9
Community	2	Prison	27
Second chance	7	Mental health	5

Patterns

Reviewing the initial codes above, I next combined these codes into patterns of related codes. The patterns resulted in six patterns of responses to the interview questions. These patterns and the initial codes are identified in Table 3.

Table 3

Patterns From All Initial Code Count

Reasons for incarceration	Drugs
	No control over life
	Record
	Inmate
	Mother with felony record
	Mental health
	Environment
	My old self
	Ways of thinking
Motivation for MTM/job	Work skills
	Job
	Money
Motivation for MTM/accountability	Children
	Future plans
	No control over life
Motivation for MTM/reduce the chance of reincarceration	Stay out of jail
	Recidivism
Motivation for MTM/personal development	Encouragement
	Accountability
	Gonna
	To be a better person
Motivation for MTM/socially productive	Second chance
	Counselor
	Church
	Lawyer/attorney
	Friends

Summary of Patterns

The patterns listed above relate to the motivation and goals for these participants. Each is linked to their previous experiences as a result of being in jail and the issues that challenge them as they reenter society. The participants stated similar reasons for incarceration, including access to drugs for using or selling and a need for

money. P1 stated that he started selling drugs, "cause my mom didn't have the money I needed" P5 stated that "I got caught up in the wrong place at the wrong time." P6 and P7 both identified a drug problem and ended up in jail. P3 and P4 were different from the others, although drugs-related, P3, stated that I let somebody ride with me in my car and I got pulled over they found the piece of Xanax. In all cases, participants admitted that committing a crime was due to their drug usage or money problems.

Challenges

The challenge many formerly incarcerated individuals face is centered around the following issues, the offenders' education level, work experience, work skills, and poor social networks as it relates to job opportunities. This pattern was linked to interview question 12: *What are some perceived challenges to successfully reintegrating into the workforce after release*? This theme provided an understanding of the personal challenges and struggles the participants experienced. Most of the participants felt that the challenge was the stigma of being a felon and not getting a job. Participant 8 stated,

> Some of the perceived things are I'm a felon, I'm not going to be able to get a job. Or I've got these charges on my record, whether it be shoplifting or whatever your charges were that criminal history would prevent you from getting a job or you know, your needs or demands of your sobriety would keep you from getting a job. Be honest!

Additionally, the participants who committed a new crime or violated the conditions given by the courts stated that this was due to boredom, being idle, and feeling discouraged. The participants said that making a living was a major factor in going or staying out of prison.

The remaining patterns are relevant to their reasons for engaging in the MTM program. In all cases, the participants understood that their success after incarceration meant that they must change their patterns of behaviors. Differences occurred in how they described their interactions in the MTM program and how this would ultimately support their goals as they re-enter society.

The primary motivating incentives resulting from the educational program were articulated by the participants as (a) saw it as some form of incentive which place value and durability of learning in a unique place in their lives as it relates to getting out of jail, (b) an opportunity to develop new positive behaviors, (c) second chance, (d) contribute to society in a positive way, and (e) reconnect with family. Participants expressed the importance of real-world education in regard to getting a job. Participant 6 noted, "If you're not doing what you're learning then you're not gonna, it's not gonna help

These patterns resulted in one over-arching concept of motivation to change their lives and the sub-categories relating to their motivations for engaging in the MTM program. The themes are (a) personal improvement goals, (b) connecting with family and community, (c) early release from prison, and (d) improving their lives outside of

prison. Each theme is related to how these recently incarcerated male participants described their experiences responding to a new educational program designed to support them as they were reintroduced into the community after incarceration. The results of this study found that inmates who were participating in the educational program believed that education fosters behavioral changes that can lead to a better quality of life as well as lowering the rate of recidivism.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

To ensure credibility, data from each participant's perspective were explored with regard to a rich description of their lived experiences. Triangulation includes applying more than one way to obtaining and analyzing data according to Patton (2015), which occurred by utilizing three forms of data, merging of information collected from the participant's interviews, journaling, and notes. The combination of all the information collected substantiates the themes needed for the credibility of this study.

My recruitment process entailed a diverse approach through local county agencies and transitional homes that have direct contact with formerly incarcerated individuals. A flyer was emailed and hand-delivered to each location, inviting formerly incarcerated individuals to partake in this research study. In addition, credibility was also established by using probing questions to gain a deeper understanding based on the participant comments as it relates to the research question.

Transferability

To increase transferability, the use of the Dedoose, in addition to the digital audio recorder, ensured transcripts of all interviews were precise. Further promoting transferability, I distinguished in detail the steps that directly influence the processes that were outlined in Chapter 3 of this study, so the results of this study can be used for future research.

Dependability

To provide dependability, I identified detailed records of when and how the research study data were collected and safeguarded to allow likely replication of the study. The process of coding the data information provided a way to ensure accountability and sincerity of the data. The committee input and the IRB procedure of Walden University guaranteed the research questions were clear. Holding fast to the coding procedure and affirmed by the committee and IRB guaranteed honesty amid coding.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the qualitative counterpart to objectivity that describes appropriate strategies. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the results of the investigation are not that of the researcher's biases but instead supported by the context of the study. For confirmability, I assured confirmability by presenting the information given by the participants through using open-ended questions, the personal keeping of a

journal, and bracketing to lessen any sign of biases or feelings that materialized during the interview process.

Study Results

After the initial coding of the interviews and developing patterns, I identified the overall concept of the motivations for engaging in the MTM educational program. The themes are (a) personal improvement goals, (b) connecting with family and community, (c) early release from prison, and (d) improving their lives outside of prison. Each theme is related to how these recently incarcerated male participants described their experiences responding to a new educational program designed to support them as they were reintroduced into the community.

Personal Improvement Goals

The participants described the goal of personal improvement as a reason for engaging in the MTM. Participant 8 mentioned,

Well, initially, the motivation as far as right from the beginning, the interview in jail when the opportunity was presented, my motivation was I get to get out of jail, and I get not to have this 30-year sentence hanging over my head. Um yeah, for sure, I can do that. And at that time, I was genuine about it. Because at the time I had been in jail for nearly 7 months, and you know, you kind of find yourself getting close to your God if you have one and you kind of make a life plan. In all honesty, it was an opportunity to escape going to prison, and the second reason for choosing to be in the program is that it allowed me to be the

person that my parents intended to raise, that my daughter deserves, and that my

wife deserves, and that I deserve.

These participants are responding to the potential to change themselves as a

result of the MTM education. Another issue stated by participants 3, 1, 2, and 4 were

changing undesirable ways after re-entry. Participant 7 mentioned the problem of "not

having accountability once you complete the program." Participant 7 described

I was just tired of going back to prison. I wanted something new. I wanted

something new. I've never been, I've been in and out of prison my whole life,

so I don't have good coping skills. So, I wanted something, every time I got in

trouble; they just threw me in prison, let me out. Threw me in prison, let me out.

Threw me in prison, let me out. So, I just wanted something new, something I

could learn from.

Community and Family

Several participants described their goal for the educational program as

engaging with their family and their community. Participant 2 described his motivation

as "Being free and getting out and spending time with family." Participants 3, 4,8,7,

said they no longer focused on the external thing such as cars, houses, girls, and money

anymore but were motivated to succeed to the purpose of becoming family-oriented

and productive citizens in society. P6 stated that "I didn't want to go… I had a son, so I

didn't want to go off to prison, so I decided to do it." He expanded on this,

Um, my son, I had a 10-month-old, so you know, I'm doing it for myself, but

also for him too, you know what I mean. So that's really a big part. You know, I

really needed this to get sober, cuz I don't think I would've done it at home. If I

wouldn't have got in trouble, I would have just kept on keeping on.

Seven of the participants described their relationships with family and friends as

a motivation for engaging in the MTM program. Participants described broken

relationships with children, spouses, siblings, or girlfriends. However, the support

network was identified as beneficial amongst 7 of the 8 participants. Participant 3

indicated that he had no family but considered the church support group to be vital in

his staying sober and free. Participant 8 shared his desire of returning and becoming a

mentor to help others, but most of all, maintaining a healthy support network and be

accountable to people.

Early Release

This theme is a response to the interview question. What is your perception of

education to reduce the recidivism rate? Of the 8 participants, 50% stated that they

were engaging in the program because they did not want to go back to jail or to get out

earlier. Participant 5 spoke about the possibility of reducing time. This way of thinking

set things in motion as a way to prioritize things that affect his life, saying,

They told me I could get out earlier. So, I was like, why not? I'm not doing

anything else. It's not gonna kill me to go sit in this class for thirty minutes. I

don't have anything else to do. Cuz, you even got guys, you know, they know it thirty minutes, they know they gonna get out early now.

Well, uh, a series of poor choices, stemming from childhood, I was a people pleaser, a child who seeks, sought rather, instant gratification for things. The need for instant gratification kind of turned into the usage of mind-altering substances, like alcohol, cigarettes, and pot. So, those choices led to some arrests and some charges, and ultimately my last arrest resulted in a sentence where I would have either had to go do 30 years in prison and fortunately, my higher help saw fit to let the authorities also give me the opportunity to write my life, and that was through this program (MTM program). So, that's how I got here.

Participant 5, when asked about the motivation to participate in the MTM program, was, "To be honest with you, cuz they told me I could get out earlier. So, I was like, why not? I'm not doing anything else. It's not gonna kill me to go sit in this class for thirty minutes. I don't have anything else to do."

Improved Quality of Living

This theme recognized the participant's learning development and the ability to apply the skills to be successful. This theme connected to interview questions: How will you apply what you learn as you reenter society? Has your outlook changed as a result of participating in the program? If so, how? What are some of the benefits you

perceive as a result of the educational learning experience? and What steps will you take to be successful in the future?

The responses from the participants pertaining to education and personal development in a correctional learning setting showed a similarity. Participants articulated the importance of education was to improve their quality of living. Participant 2, 8, and 6 shared their enthusiasm about being better prepared to rejoin the workforce and contribute to society. Participant 8 stated, "So, it just sets you up for success" and Participant 5 stated

> I got locked up at 19, so I didn't really have a job or anything. So, it helped me prepared for when I got out. I got to be working; it definitely makes me want to get my education. It is just important to have an education.

Another phenomenon that was revealed was how they viewed the MTM program as an opportunity to land job opportunities, strengthen family involvement, and personal benefits pertaining to post-release. This theme recognized employment and the effect it has on the formerly incarcerated individual as they reintegrate into society and their prospective communities. The participants described a motive for engaging in the MTM program as related to staying sober and free from re-arrest after returning to society. The inability to find positive and safe housing is a challenge for these participants, and education was a way to improve their lives by finding a job. As they all expressed, the level of education plays a factor in their ability to obtaining

employment that pays above the minimum wages or poverty line. A successful re-entry into the community after incarceration depends on having a good job.

Summary

The primary research question for this generic qualitative study was How do released prisoners experience and perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program? My purpose with this study was to provide a deeper understanding of how formerly incarcerated individuals perceive the challenges and barriers associated with their reintegrating into society. The objective was to capture the lived experiences of formerly incarcerated individual and the impact that help to cultivate and mold their perspectives, abilities, attitudes, and resiliency as it relates to education, employment, housing, and recidivism.

Based on the research question that guided the study, there were four themes identified related to their perceptions and experiences as they engaged in the MTM educational program. These participants' response to the educational program was linked to their challenges as recently incarcerated men who are re-entering society and their reasons for participation in the MTM program. These motivational themes are (a) personal improvement goals, (b) connecting with family and community, (c) early release from prison, and (d) improving their lives outside of prison. The themes are all related to both goals for personal achievement to overcome challenges and their ability to benefit from the MTM program to implement change in their lives. Each participant stated that their initial motivation to engage in MTM came from the pressure of the

court. However, they all spoke with gratitude for the opportunity of getting a second chance.

In Chapter 5, the aim of the study is iterated, in light of the need to broaden the current understanding of the reintegration lived experiences of the formerly incarcerated individual after being released from prison. Also presented is an interpretation of the significance and findings of the data as compared to previous peer-reviewed literature mentioned in Chapter 2. I discussed the limitations regarding trustworthiness, alongside with recommendations for further research within the boundaries of the study. Also explored are social change and implications. Chapter 5 closes with a conclusion of the research study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Introduction

My purpose in this generic qualitative study was to understand and describe the lived experiences of formerly incarcerated individuals, 1 year or less, after being released from prison. The primary research question for this qualitative study was the following: How do released prisoners experience and perceive their educational experiences in the MTM program? I collected the data for the qualitative study through semi-structured face-to-face interviews.

The MTM program gives an integrated program designed to address the need to reduce recidivism and prepare men for their rejoining to society. MTM provides a practical approach to educational programming. Mainly, the program provides social-emotional learning (SEL), education and vocational knowledge, and life-skills to support and promote successful reentering in the society. The goals are to achieve the parolee's triumphant return into the community and the family while providing an instructional tool, resources, skills, and knowledge that will reduce the chance of reoffending as it relates to recidivism.

As a result of initial coding, then combining codes into patterns across all interviews, I defined four major themes in the responses of these participants to the MTM program. These themes are (a) personal improvement goals, (b) connecting with family and community, (c) early release from prison, and (d) improving their lives outside of prison. Each theme is related to how these recently incarcerated male

participants described their experiences responding to a new educational program designed to support them as they were reintroduced into the community. These themes are related to the goals of these participants for engaging in an educational program designed to support their transition into society.

Interpretation of the Findings

Challenges

The results of this study define the correlational aspects of these participants' common experience as the challenges of successful reintegration into society and their engagement in an educational program designed to support them as they re-enter society. The challenges defined by these participants were extensive. It is difficult to find a job, change habitual behaviors that led to their incarceration, the restrictions of probation, poverty, and a lack of social support systems in their lives. Having limited work-related skills and a lack of work experience associated with incarceration creates many challenges for a recently incarcerated individual who are reintegrating into society (Nally, Lockwood, Knutson, & Ho, 2013; Walker, Hempel, Unnithan, & Pogrebin, 2014).

Themes

Their motivations to engage in the educational program that structured the themes resulting from the analysis were to break out of this cycle of jail and recidivism ultimately. However, this type of transformative educational experiences designed to change personal attitudes, provide real-world skills and knowledge, and support

services to these recently incarcerated prisoners is a challenging educational proposition. These factors influence other approaches of program efficacy, such as pro-active against rearrest and reduced alcohol and substance abuse.

The findings further discovered the perception of each participant pertaining to the program overwhelmingly voiced their feelings about getting another chance for them to change. The participants believe that to influence society in a positive way, they must seek to embrace the thought of being transformed by the renewing of the mind and not conformed by the patterns of criminal deeds. Noted obstacles for parolees wanted to obtain sustainable employment were challenged with having a criminal record, lack of work history, and lack of education to compete or be considered a qualified candidate. Although all participants seek to escape prison time, they were all motivated to change as a person.

For men, the accountability aspects of the peer group, counselor, mentoring, sponsoring, and continuity of tailored care that offers individuals the opportunity to deal with drug-related issues as well as educate those who are leaning towards the path of addictive or destructive behavior. Where possible recovery is refined, this can be transformative, resulting in reintegration into society, cessation from substance use, and negative behavior and wrongdoing enhanced the mental state of mind (Gilbert and Elley, 2015). As a result of the complexity of responding to the unique challenges and stressors of the recently incarcerated as they re-enter society, the educational programs

designed to support these participants are a critical aspect of successful re-entry to reduce recidivism.

The experiences of these participants in the MTM educational program were viewed through a conceptual framework consisting of Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, Vygotsky's (1986) sociocultural learning and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological of human development systems theory was used to shape an understanding of formerly incarcerated individuals' experiences as it relates to education as a transformative educational process associated with the unique obstacles and challenges of these participants' re-entry into society.

Personal Improvement Goals

The participants described experiences and perceptions related to their response to the educational program that was based on the goal of improving them personally. This theme is related to the participants' goal of personal awareness and development to break the cycle of bad decision-making or to take control of their lives. Obstacles to reentry happen in conjunction with every individual's environment regardless of where they lived and are perceived differently within each context (Velez-Agosto et al., 2017). Understanding the manner in which individual perceive their response to these obstacles were informed by Bandura's (1997) development of self-efficacy.

Being able to take care of self is significant in achieving personal goals, which influence, encourage, support, and empower them to do better (Bankkdura, 2000). An offender, for example, may reach a high level of self-efficacy through interaction with

others who have overcome difficulties. In contrast, the debility in self-efficacy occurs when the offender experience repeated failures. However, occasional failures, which are overcome by determination, can produce and strengthen the will to fight through the difficult times of sustained perseverance. (Bandura, 1977).

The basis of efficacy evidence is intrinsically powerful because it is based on individual experiences of mastery, which affect both beginning and continuance of performance as it relates to behavior (Bandura et al., 1975). To embrace successes, the offender must first see that their level of mastery expectations has increased; chronic failures lesser those, especially if the ordeals present itself early on in the course of change. Once resilient efficacy desires are established through repeated accomplishment, the undesirable influence of unacceptable failures is likely to be lowered.

The commonality the offenders share during their incarceration is the ability to interact with one another as a way of learning. The form of interaction is related to self-efficacy and social learning because inmates primarily communicate with other inmates. The resilience of an individual's beliefs is more likely to determine if they will attempt to cope with situations. This early stage of self-efficacy impacts the behavior in response to challenges (Bandura & Adams, 1977). Participants 4, 5, and 6 expressed the struggle of dealing with situations that they believe challenges their coping skills ability. For example, they contemplated whether to become involved is based on judging and reassuring themselves capable of dealing with the situation that presents

itself as a threat. Likewise, correctional education and work skills programs give the offenders an opportunity to meet other positive people like themselves while learning the necessary skills that will empower and be beneficial in the future upon their release from prison.

Failures that are eventually overcome by determination have the potential to activate the tenacity to bounce back from a traumatic experience (Bandura et al., in press; Bandura et al., 1975). Another aspect of efficacy that parolees experience after leaving prisons is limited support systems. Bandura's (1977) philosophy of vicarious modeling links an increase of efficacy when the parolee, in this case, experiences an ongoing support system that models a success in the community, in the correctional system, and in society.

Connecting With Family and Community

Another theme resulting from this research was the participants' goal in gaining work skills and knowledge to leave prison ready to re-connect with their family and community. These participants described a critical juncture in their lives where their desire to re-engage with family and community motivated their desire to benefit from the educational program. MTM is built around the concept of desistance theory (Maruna and Toch, 2005), which offer tools to address the turning point occurring in the individual life. It is the process by which offenders relinquish the life of crime on their own (Maruna, 2001, p.12). For those who have been involved in criminal activity for a lengthy time, the road to change will be challenging. It may take several setbacks

before obtaining success. Lengthy periods of desistance is defined as a process of human development that is a social and personal connection that involves a shift in identity and self-concept (McNeill, 2012). In similarity, transformative learning, the individuals transformed by their experiences may also be capable of desisting from criminal activity in the longer-term.

For example, education can provide a structure and opportunities for the individual to move away from the life of crime. A desistance educational goal is to encourage the individual to continue towards a positive direction that cultivates change in their lives. In other words, the process of desistance education involves a cognitive shift (Szifris & Bradbury, 2018). Researchers have found that desistance is not an event that takes place but rather a process during the transition (Szifris & Bradbury, 2018).

A related perspective is the concept of stages of human development and how to change from stage to stage is developed. According to Erikson's (1968) theory of the eight stages of human development. He believed that an individual's environmental, cultural influences, biological impact on individual behavior. The stage theory is based on the individual's ability to adapt to their surroundings to accept what is considered their norm or reality of existence. Participant 8 and P7 mentioned that due to their environment, biological, and cultural existence, their perspective about society plays a role of influences (Erikson, 1968). Erikson's philosophy is similar to Bandura's theory of social learning theory, which believes that behavior is learned through observing others (Bandura, 1973).

According to Bandura (1999), formerly incarcerated individuals might obtain self-efficiency by identifying with knowing who you are and interacting with others who have gone through and overcame a daily obstacle. In contrast, low self-efficacy happens when the individual finds himself in the company of individuals who exhibit failure and harmful behavior (Bandura, 1999).

Understanding the processes of reintegration is an essential element to the outlook of a formerly incarcerated individual who ponders the barriers that can hinder the opportunity of long-term success out of prison. The challenges of reintegration are both an internal and external struggle that parolees experience. To it is vital to reduce recidivism through transitional educational programs to identify ways to increase the self-image of their potential for positive change.

Early Release from Prison

A significant number of responses to the educational program were concerning gaining an early release from prison. These participants were using their interactions to develop the requisite skills and concepts needed to gain a release and attempt to succeed outside of prison. Work skills to gain employment are a core curriculum for the MTM and the major learning goal for the educational program. The social learning theory to the self-efficacy. Research has identified four major self-efficacy elements a) prior experience of mastering, b) observing others, c) persuasion from others, and d) emotion that is related to stress and discomfort (Lent et al., 2017). So, they are motivated to do a program or get an education. All eight participants shared the same

sentiment "I did it to get out of jail" don't want to do it, but they don't want to go to jail or prison, which serves as a motivational factor.

Participant 5 stated that he just watched others, and he did to survive. The commonality the offenders share during their incarceration is the ability to interact with one another as a way of learning. The form of interaction is related to self-efficacy and social learning because inmates primarily communicate with other inmates. The resilience of an individual's beliefs is more likely to determine if they will attempt to cope with situations. This early stage of self-efficacy impacts the selected behavior (Bandura & Adams, 1977).

Participant 4,5, and 6 expressed the struggle of dealing with situations that they believe challenges their coping skills ability. Fear is more grounded indicators than either restriction or earlier chargeable of the situation means to offend (Kim, Pratt, & Wallace, 2014). In addition, self-efficacy empowers the prediction of risk by and fear from a problem (Bandura, 1997), which can lower the individual's level effect of self-efficacy and produce more stress (Moradi, 2017). They want an education because they know that education is going to move them forward in their life where they want to participate in programs that help them to become a productive member of society and those programs could include programs that help you to build your social skills, problem-solving skills, critical thinking and creativity skills, phone etiquette, job etiquette, computer skill, etc.

P8 stated, So I got immersed in that "jail culture," which really means, if you don't find yourself in jail, the negative influence of people in there will find you. You have had everything stripped from you, as far as control. So, a lot of people just try to find control. Participant 5 stated that he just watched others and made the adjustment to survive. Each participant thought what others like them thought within the correctional system across the United States, getting caught was not on my mind at the time of my destructive behavior. People learn about negative conduct by experiencing the reward or discipline in view of that behavior. Bandura, (1997; Bandura, Freeman & Lightsey, 1999) suggested that we do not need to be specifically included yet instead can observe the behavior and following consequences all together to encourage learning, which is named observational or social learning theory (Kelder, Hielscher, & Perry, 2015).

Erikson's theory of human development is like the social learning theory, which suggests that conduct is learned through observing others, which implies that a person's condition, situation, environment, and biological and social influences, affect conduct (Bandura, 1973; Erikson, 1968; Ormond, 1999). Learning by direct experience is considered a way of survival. In a prison community, you must learn the system quickly; a new pattern of learning can be acquired through direct experience or by observing the action of others (Bandura, 1978). All of the participants mentioned that by regulating how they act towards a particular situation can produce insight and foresight.

According to social cognitive theory indicated that self-control does not rely upon a person's "self-discipline" but rather on his acquisition of solid abilities for managing himself (Glanz, Rimer, & Viswanath, 2008, p. 174). The essential thought is that it can influence our very own behavior in a way that we would influence someone else, that is, through the process of compensating and aiding environmental changes that we plan and create for ourselves. Bandura (1997) identifies six ways in which self-regulation is achieved, which is a significant contributor to self-learning: (1) self-monitoring is a person's precise perception of his own behavior; (2) goal-setting is the recognizable evidence of increase and long-term changes that can be gained; (3) feedback is information about the quality of action and how it may be enhanced; (4) self-reward is an individual's game plan of tangible or intangible rewards for himself; (5) self-direction happens when individuals converse to themselves beforehand and in the midst of the performance of a complex behavior, and (6) enlistment of social support is accomplished when a person discovers people who empower his endeavors to exert self-control (Glanz, Rimer, & Viswanath, 2008).

Most of the behaviors that an individual display is considered learned, either deliberately, or inadvertently through the influence of others. In the MTM program, the participants are encouraged to lead by example. I believe that practical application must be supported by an environment that is conducive to learning. The prison setting has its own culture with its own language. It has the potential to draw others through the power of influence and demonstrates evidence of changing the living climate. On the

other hand, Northouse (2013) stated an environment that is cultivated with professionalism possesses essential qualities to transformation when it is linking theory to practice (p. 234).

In a transformational educational program designed to provide the learners' insight into how to deal with difficult situations and make better decisions that participants would engage in reflective dialogs to address negative situations. A person in this learning setting can revisit both negative and positive moments in an individual's life. Together with self-awareness and triggers moments in one's life sequence of events, these moments -help build a person's ability to self-awareness that leads to self-regulation (Covelli & Mason, 2017).

There are many ways to facilitate productive dialogue as it relates to cognitive development. One way of enriching dialogue amongst learners in collaborative discussions; this approach allows the learners the opportunity of thinking out loud, developing socially, and gaining the necessary skills needed in critical thinking (Mercer, 2008). Vygotsky claims that one-person's dialogue can influence another person's learning and understanding (Mercer, 2008). According to Mercer and Steven-Long, both authors identify dialogue as a critical part of developing individual thinking and transformative learning experience.

Engaging offenders in activities that foster self-efficacy is importantly imperative, as they can nurture cognitive transformation by which recently incarcerated individuals begin to see themselves as accepted and respect. Problem-solving exercises

can increase individual creativity and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Also, research has shown that problem-solving and self-efficacy have an indirect effect on mental health by mediating the efficient and inefficient coping (Parto, & Besharat, 2011).

Improving Their Lives Outside of Prison

The theme of improving their lives outside of prison provided insight into how these participants considered the educational program as a manner of gaining a better life outside of prison. This type of experience is the goal of the MTM educational program to prepare the recently incarcerated to transform their lives. Promoting participation in the educational learning environment allows parolees to develop a sense of belonging and common bond with each other's serving as a good example as well as embracing the required socially respected interaction that served positively in both the prison environment and society upon release. At the point when the parolees developed social bonds, they were liable to create a connection to an association in a different program offered.

As a result of such involvement, the transformation begins to take shape within the individual. Transformational learning is the process of effecting change associated with creativity, honesty, responsibility, adaptability, and commitment are the essential component to change. Transformational learning brings about a reestablishing of one life by encouraging them to take control of their actions, empowering each other or groups within the community (Kegan, & Lahey, 2009). As an aftereffect of such inclusion, "their odds of restoration will be extraordinarily enhanced on the grounds

that they turn out to be more inspired to enhance their present circumstance through their more grounded social connections to traditional quality frameworks and ordinary interests" and that real change and transforming takes time to recognize their full potential of achieving a successful and healthy life (Kegan, & Lahey, 2009).

Transformational learning is the process of effecting change associated with creativity, honesty, responsibility, adaptability, and commitment are the essential component to change. Transformational learning is the type of learning that brings about a reestablishing of one's life by encouraging them to take control of their actions, empowering each other or groups within the community (Kegan, & Lahey, 2009). As an aftereffect of such inclusion and that real change and transforming take time to recognize their full potential of achieving a successful and healthy life (Kegan, & Lahey, 2009).

Mezirow (2000) defined transformative learning as the process by which a person transform his or her taken-for-granted frames of reference (i.e., perspectives, habits of mind, and mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove truer or justified to guide action. Transformative Learning involves steps by which beliefs are questioned, and new beliefs emerge.

Arising out of the earlier work of Mezirow (1990), transformative learning theories developed as a subset within constructivist principles of education. It is built on the understandings of psychoanalytic and critical social theory. Two well-known

theorists gave a definition of transformative learning from Mezirow: "learning that is based on reflection and the interpretation of the experiences, ideas, and assumptions gained through prior learning" (Mezirow, 1990). The goal of transformative learning is to understand why individuals view the world the way they do and to shake off the constraints of the limiting perspectives they have carried with them into the learning experience.

Vygotsky defined socio-cultural theory as the idea that learning (of language and other cultural tools) leads to an intricate component of the proximal developmental process (Vélez-Agosto, Soto-Crespo, Vizcarrondo-Oppenheimer, Vega-Molina, & García, 2017, p. 901). He is best recognized for the research and theory concerning the development of and relationship between thought and speech. Vygotsky suggested that development of ways of gaining control over the environment by adaptations to the environment (Vygotsky, 1930,1993, p. 41). Culture is a unique concept in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, despite the fact that it is not well developed by Vygotsky and his followers (Wertsch & Tulviste, 1992).

The sociocultural theory depends on how the culture intervenes in human experiences and transform human action. One of its fundamental premises is that external utilization of socially characterized tools and signs is later internalized in higher psychological capacities. From the perspective of Vygotsky, social types of behavior emerge in the middle early stages: particularly in the usage of instruments and the change of human dialogue. The suggestions are that change is, from the earliest

beginning, a socially media-process in light of the fact that utilization of instruments and human discussion are portrayed and acquired practices (Vygotsky, 1930-1934/1978, p. 34).

The sole purpose of Vygotsky's stance was with cultural and social influences on development. Therefore, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory places culture in regular daily activity since every form of human interactive activity is a cultural form of behavior, which is developed and enacted, then later internalized by the individual (Vélez-Agosto, Soto-Crespo, Vizcarrondo-Oppenheimer, Vega-Molina, & García, 2017, p. 904).

Education to Improve Themselves

The lack of educational qualification and workforce skills among prisoners was an important factor to consider because 95% of the prisoners imprisoned in the United States were in the end discharge (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Bearing in mind a report from the Department of Justice, the average take-home income was less than $1,000 per month, confirming a failure to manage a stable job (Wade, 2007, p. 27). Parolees with low skills or no skills face a more significant challenge because of the demand companies place on education degrees or certificates (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

Over the years, prison institutions have embraced education and committed to providing educational opportunities such as career and technical education (CTE), employment readiness/pre-release, and academic classes, which can improve parolees'

basic skills in preparation for reentering society. One essential aspect of being literate in our society is the ability to transfer the knowledge and skills required to adapt to the process of re-entry (Kirsch & Mosenthal, 1990). For example, technical and soft skill capabilities are critical to gaining and maintaining employment.

This study identified the stressors on recent parolees. To reduce the problem of recidivism rate, a transitional educational program needs to develop the students' ability to be resilient. Resilience refers to a process toward adjusting great notwithstanding hard times, trauma, disaster, dangers, or significant sources of stress (Southwick, Bonanno, Masten, Panter-Brick, & Yehuda, 2014; Southwick, Douglas-Palumberi, & Pietrzak, 2014). Essential characteristics of individual resilience include a strong sense of personal capacity and efficiency, a thorough awareness of the changing conditions, strong problem-solving skills and strong social connections and support systems (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Zautra, 2014; Zautra, Arewasikporn, & Davis, 2010).

Another term of resilience refers to a process of adaptation within the realm of adversity. Researchers suggested two component that is relevant (1) exposure to significant threat or severe adversity; and (2) overcoming with positive adapting regardless of the attacks on the developmental process (Keck, M., & Sakdapolrak, P., 2013). The objective is to help in boosting the rehabilitation and adjustment in the community so that these individuals who have experienced incarceration can continue

their lives in a productive fashion and become self-regulated toward themselves, community and family in order to experience the full benefit of liberty.

Society recognizes that education has made a significant gain but realized the many challenges parolee are faced with on a daily basis within the communities. Besides, society acknowledges that lack of education will present a challenge for community development and weakens those who are unable to meet the requirements due to the lack of educational training while incarcerated. Many parolees struggle with readjusting to society and finding companies that will take a chance on them.

Limitations of the Study

This qualitative study was not without limitations. As a novice researcher, I considered myself the main limitation. As with any qualitative research study within the conceptual framework, it is imperative to understand that the information gathered is not intended to be generalized, but rather to capture a portrait of a phenomenon as depicted by participants. The themes of this study are not proposed to be generalizable. It is not conceivable to, for various reasons, to conclude that the detailed outcomes would be the same from a different individual who took an interest in the program. It ought to likewise be noticed that the information gathered for this research study was qualitative in nature. While participants' reactions and responses seemed, by all accounts, to be straightforward and thorough, there were no outside measures, for example, interviews with jail administrators or the utilization of standardized devices used to accumulate as well as check the information gathered from participants.

A limitation of the study was the number of participants. This generic qualitative research was limited to a sample size of eight formerly incarcerated individual males. However, the sample size and the methodology selected did not cause for large sample size (Patton, 2015). The interviews were conducted with eight formerly incarcerated males only residing in a specific region of the United States.

The parolees who participated in this study were selected because they were formerly incarcerated individuals. Currently, incarcerated individuals were excluded from the research study. The inclusion of these participants would add more understanding of lived experiences as it relates to correction educational program's advantages and disadvantages. Because the participants included, this may limit the transferability of the data.

Recommendations

The purpose of the qualitative study was to probe the parolee's lived experiences and perceptions of correctional education and work-skills programs in general. The research study consisted of eight formerly incarcerated individuals who had been involved in education and work-skill programs while incarcerated. The participants provided information about their perceptions and experiences engaging in a non-traditional transitional work skill educational program.

A recommendation for future research within the area of study would be to interview prisoners in a correctional education program. A qualitative study of education inside the correctional education program may advance understanding of a

transitional educational program and the perceptions of aspects of education related to behavioral, social, psychological, health and well-being, and cognitive experiences. This approach would assist in assessing the influence of correctional education and work-skill programs inside correctional facilities.

Implications

This generic qualitative study provided the perspective of the formerly incarcerated individual regarding their experiences and perceptions engaging in an educational program designed to provide them with work skills and knowledge to successfully reintegrate into society. The study results focused on the challenges faced by the parolees and their goals for overcoming these challenges through education to re-enter society successfully and not go back to jail. Moreover, these results may provide formerly incarcerated individuals with a deeper understanding and awareness of how to overcome barriers that are associated with incarceration that impeded their reentry experiences. Additionally, educational programs established to develop transformative concepts and knowledge needed for these students to be successful overcoming overwhelming challenges may understand how the personal concepts of efficacy, is linked to motive and the development of an effective, transformative educational program.

Social Change

This study identified the many challenges that released prisoners face at every level. These challenges come in various forms as it relates to reintegrating into society.

Studies have shown that a successful reentry depends on critical basic life elements such as employment, housing, transportation, family, health, and social reconnections. Many parolees have limited work experience and education, which makes it hard for them to secure a job after being incarcerated.

This study results define the potential for social change to reduce recidivism would be in the development of a supportive network for formerly incarcerated individual parolees. Formerly incarcerated individuals (FII) could come together, either face-to-face or online, to share ideas and improve their critical thinking, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills to promote positive collaborative experiences as it relates to reintegration in society for released prisoners.

One of the most pivotal periods for an inmate leaving prison institution is framed around the first six months of reintegration. While many programs and services have been improved, there remains a desperate need for more in terms of assistance. Inmates who are returning to society after serving their prison sentence are faced with future challenges of attaining the basic necessitates being successful. They must have a clear representation of a place to be a resident, a job, or promising job opportunities.

Many formerly incarcerated individuals (FII) experience the following: offenders' education level, work and experience, skills; poor social networks as it relates to job opportunities; and companies who are apprehensive about hiring ex-offenders. One of the most important aspects that FII faces is the stigmas associated with incarcerated. Companies' reluctance to employ is based on legal concerns,

ongoing economic obstacles, competences, financial obligations, credibility, and social involvement. Regardless of the fear that surrounds companies, more companies need to be prepared to employ formerly incarcerated individuals that promote the opportunity for them have a chance to be successful or be unsuccessful, and to consider them as productive, law-abiding members of society.

The implication for social change extends into advocacy for a formerly incarcerated individual who is re-entering society. By developing and maintaining a holistic life-skill approach, community, the correctional institution can address prisoners' need for gaining employment, education, and housing upon their release from prison to society. Another area to be considered is the local religious organizations, which are very helpful to a formerly incarcerated individual from the perspective of moral support. Churches within the community play a vital role and need to step to the plate and offer help. The Parole Board, Department of Community Supervision, and the DOC have a duty to not only oppose punishment on those who violate the law, but they are responsible for reform through vocational training, treatment, and educations. This must be done by regular review and improve policies and guidelines to ensure equality and consistency within the justice system.

Serving time in prison has come with a hefty price tag for many released offenders with severe and long-lasting monetary and social struggles that often prevent them from being successful. Three challenges are paramount for formerly incarcerated individuals: education, housing, and employment. These three have the potential to

impact the timing of recidivating, as well as increase their self-confidence are the turning point for most ex-offenders. Although some FII is able to develop strategies to obtain employment, it's only for a short time, which affects the ability to maintain housing. As a result, they are eventually forced to return to the life of committing a crime.

This recidivism is related to the need for an educational program that supports the development of the skills to get a job quickly and to respond to the pressures resulting from incarceration. As participant 7 stated:

I was just tired of going back to prison. I wanted something new. I wanted something new. I've never been. I've been in and out of prison my whole life, so I don't have good coping skills. So, I wanted something. Every time I got in trouble, they just threw me in prison, let me out. Threw me in prison, let me out. Threw me in prison, let me out. So, I just wanted something new, something I could learn from.

He further stated, "I am learning coping skills, something I never had. I think it's going to help a lot. A lot of the people I see that's in the program don't go back."

Conclusion

With more than 2.2 million people currently incarcerated, the United States has the largest prison population in the world. The population in jail or in prison in the US is the highest percentage of prisoners in the world, with 716 per 100,000 of the national population (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2015). Research has shown that over 20

percent of the U.S. adult population of having some form of involvement in the correctional justice system, and that the number of individuals returning to society from prison and/or jail is recorded to be in the range of 850,000 in 2013 (Taxman & Kras, 2016).

The cost of corrections, including all prisons, jails, probation, and parole, cost US taxpayers $74 billion in 2007. The average cost of an inmate is estimated in the U.S. is $31,286 each year (Henrichson and Delaney, 2012). These statistics are particularly striking in a period when governments, communities, schools, groups, and organizations are encountering budget challenges and limited funding from accessible taxpayer contribution commitments.

Wagner and Rabuy (2016) reported that 641,000 people are released from prison every year, but at the same time, 11 million people go to and from jail each year due to both probation violations and new charges. Once released, 67.8 % of prisoners return to prison within 3 years, while 76.6% were rearrested inside 5 years. As a result, the issues of recidivism among prisoners is a critical issue in the US.

A parolee who returns to his community is faced with adverse circumstances such as drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, extreme poverty, hunger, absence of parents due to incarceration, and other problems (Shonkoff, & Garner, 2012). One of the most critical aspects that formerly incarcerated individuals (FII) face is the stigmas associated with incarcerated. Employers are reluctance to hire is based on legal issues, skills, financial liabilities, reliability, and social interaction. The inability to get a job

makes it more likely that the parolee cannot succeed throughout their probation with fees required to stay out of jail. These stress factors play a role in a parolee's ability to reintegrate successfully.

An often disregarded part of mass incarceration and the criminal justice system in the United States is the unpleasant picture of illiteracy rates in prisons all over the United States (Alexander, 2012). Researchers have found that three out of five people in U.S. prisons can't read, and 85 percent of juvenile offenders have difficulty reading (Styslinger, Gavigan, & Albright, 2017; Wass, McGuire, & Friss, 2017, pg. 51). Other research has estimated that illiteracy rates in prisons are as high as 75 percent of the prison population.

This lack of attention regarding the problems in the United States' prison system is jointly related to high recidivism rates. This issue is spread throughout the prisons across the nation. When comparing the cost to incarcerate versus the cost to educate, it's evident that education is far more cost-effective as it relates to reintegration and reducing the recidivism rate. One of the significant factors in achieving successful reentry and avoiding re-offending is determined by their level of literacy and education achievement. Studies have shown that equipping offenders with the necessary educational tools is one of the encouraging ways of reducing the likelihood of recidivating after released from the correctional system. (Erickson, 2018). Although much thought has been given to the fact that vocational and educational programs can reduce recidivism amongst offenders who are being released from prison

to rejoin society. In a recent study conducted by Sainato (2017), a former inmate shared

his experience of trials and success.

> "When Clifford "Spud" Johnson was sentenced to 210 months in prison for a first time non-violent drug offense, he realized that illiteracy was reinforcing the captivity of his fellow inmates who were already frequently subjected to harsh treatment in a racist criminal justice system designed to perpetuate profits through prison labor. As a way of coping with a long-term prison sentence, Johnson turned to writing and has pitched books to various publishers. Since his release from prison, Johnson continues advocacy efforts to try to help inmates learn to read and educate themselves" (Sainato, 2017).

The procedure of education, particularly a transformative educational program

developed to transform perspectives and give useful holistic approaches needed to be

constructive, can change the correctional facility system and produce the hope for

formerly incarcerated individuals to be profitable citizens in society.

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Appendix A: Invitation to Participate Flyer

INTRODUCING A RESEARCH STUDY
FOR FORMERLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS
WHO ARE LEARNING ABOUT WORK AND LIFE SKILLS IN THE
MEN TRANSFORMING MEN!

WHAT IS YOUR STORY?

If you were incarcerated and had been released from prison within the last six months and are now participating in the Men Transforming Men educational program, you are invited to join a confidential research study conducted by Charles Jenkins, a doctoral student at Walden University.

The goal of this study is to gain an understanding of your experiences as it relates to the Men Transforming Men educational program to develop work-study skills.

In other words, this study will provide you with the opportunity to share your challenges and experiences.

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL AND USED ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPERIENCES ABOUT THIS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.

You will be asked questions in a face-to-face interview about your ideas about the educational program.

If you are interested, you can contact me via email or telephone number below.

I am very interested in hearing your ideas, opinions, and experiences!

Charles Jenkins

- Telephone: 678-360-0559
- Email: charles.jenkins2@waldenu.edu

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study about understanding the perspective of formerly incarcerated adults to understand your experiences in the Men Transforming Men educational program. This study is being conducted by Charles Jenkins who is a doctoral student at Walden University

The researcher is inviting you to participate in this research study.

You were selected as a possible participant because you are participating in the Men Transforming Men program, and you were released within the last six months.

This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

Background Information:
I am attempting to understand more about your perceptive and ideas as they relate to your experiences in the Men Transforming Men educational program. I will ask you questions in a face-to-face interview.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

Reply to interview questions for about 60 minutes in a conference room at the Men Transforming Men educational program.

Below are two examples of interview questions:

How did you come to be involved in the program?

What got you motivated to participate in the program?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
- This study is voluntary.
- You are free to accept or turn down the invitation.
- If you decide to be in the study now, you can still change your mind later.
- You may stop at any time.
- You are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.
- I will not use any of the data collected about you should you decide to withdraw from the study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as stories you tell may be recognizable by others.
I will use pseudonyms for you such a P1, P2, P3.

All recording interviews and journal recordings will be locked in a file cabinet in my home office for your protection.
Any risk to you will be minimal as you are only disclosing personal information that you wish to disclose.

You may withdraw from the study at any time and have your data destroyed.
Being in this study would not pose a risk to your safety or wellbeing.

Payment:
There will be no payment to participate in this study.

Privacy:
- Reports coming out of this study will not be shared.
- Details that might identify participants, such as the location of the study, also will not be shared.
- The researcher will not use your personal information for any purpose outside of this research project.
- Data will be kept secure by a locked file cabinet in my home office.
- Digital audio-recordings will be computer password-protected and backed up on a secure external hard drive.
- Pseudonyms will be used throughout this research to help protect the anonymity of participants.
- Confidential information will not be shared with anyone outside of the dissertation committee.
- Data will be kept for five years, as required by the university, and then destroyed.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via email: Charles.jenkins2@waldenu.edu; or cell (678) 360-0559.

If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call the Research Participant Advocate at my university at 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **IRB will enter approval number here,** and it expires on **IRB will enter an expiration date.**

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your record.

Obtaining Your Consent

If you feel you understand the study well enough about it, please indicate your consent by signing below.

Printed Name of Participant

                                          _____

Date of consent

                                          _____

Participant's Signature

                                          _____

Researcher's Signature

                                          _____

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

I would like to thank you for taking part in my research study. This interview will be audio recording and then transcribed. Do you have any questions thus far about what I have just explained to you? If at any time during the interview you need to take a break or stop, please do not hesitate to let me know. Are there any other questions? Please let me know if it is okay for us to begin the interview.

The research question for this study is How do released prisoners perceive their educational experiences in the Men Transforming Men program?

Interview Questions

1. How did you come to be involved in the program?

2. What got you motivated to participate in the program?

3. What can you tell me about your educational background experiences?

4. How did you hear about the education program?

5. Why did you decide to enroll in the correctional education program?

6. Why did you start taking classes while incarcerated? How did you find out about available classes and programs?

7. What type of assistance did you receive to prepare you for class?

8. What do you think are the most useful aspects of the program? Why?

9. What do you think are the least useful aspects of the program? Why?

10. Has your outlook changed as a result of participating in the program? If so, how?

11. How will you apply what you learn as you reenter society?

12. What are some perceived challenges to successfully reintegrating into the workforce after release?

13. What is your perception of education to reduce the recidivism rate?

14. What will you do when you finish the program?

15. What are some of the benefits you perceive as a result of the educational learning experience?

16. What steps will you take to be successful in the future?

17. Is there anything that you would like to tell me about your experiences that we did not talk about as it relates to this subject?

Closing Statement:

Again, thank you for taking part in my study. You have provided me with the ability to document your perspective on your life experiences as it relates to educational programs, resilience, and the aspect of adjusting to life after incarceration. As soon as I am able, I will give you a written copy of your interview. Please review the transcripts and give me your feedback.

Again, thanks.

Charles Jenkins

Appendix D: Resource Counseling Contact Numbers

Information made available to all participants at the end of their interview.

NATIONAL CRISIS HOTLINE NUMBERS	
National Parole Resource Center	1-301-589-9383
NAMI Georgia	770-234-0855
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill	1-800-950-NAMI
National Call Center for Homeless Veterans	1-877-4243838
SAMHSA's National Helpline	1-800-662-4357
United Way of Metro Atlanta	2-1-1
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-8255
Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL)	1-800-715-4225
DEKALB COUNTY	
DeKalb Community Service Board	404-508-7963
Positive Change Counseling	404-298-0888
Department of Community Supervision	770-388-5011
FULTON COUNTY	
Georgia Department of Behavioral Health	404-657-2252
Fulton County DBHDD	404-613-3675
Department of Community Supervision	404-656-4661
HENRY COUNTY	
Henry County Counseling Center	404-358-5252
Georgia Center for Resources and Support	678-964-2326
NEWTON COUNTY	
View Point Health	678-209-2601
Ray of Hope Counseling Services	678-974-0838
Newton County Community Partnership	770-918-5003
ROCKDALE COUNTY	
Rockdale Professional Counseling	770-860-8549