THE QUEST FOR GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT:

FORMER PRISONER EXPERIENCES MANAGING A SOCIALLY STIGMATIZED

INVISIBLE IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

The former prisoner identity can be described as a socially devalued identity that is not visible or readily apparent to others (i.e. Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Employment is an essential means through which former prisoners can be successfully reintegrated into society (Visher, Winterfield, & Coggeshall, 2005). However, former prisoners are faced with the challenge of navigating through a labor market filled with numerous barriers and social stigmas. Former prisoners represent a population whose voices are typically left unheard in organizational practice and in the management literature.

The purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of the psychological mechanisms that inform identity management post-release and the associated employment effects. To address this purpose, this study employed an explanatory mixed methods design. This involved the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative inquiry found significant relationships between internalized stigma and disclosure and concealment such that those who engaged in disclosure strategies were less likely to engage in concealment strategies. The results suggest that individuals do internalize stigma post-release, and that this affects their employment outcomes. However, contrary to the theorized expectations, identity management does not appear to explain this link. In light of the limited knowledge pertaining to managing an invisible stigmatized identity throughout the employment process, I was prompted to further explore the depth of individual experiences with employment post-incarceration.
In the qualitative portion of this study, I reflect on interviews with twenty-two formerly federally incarcerated men, released on parole, to understand how their self-identification is shaped within and across their experiences of employment seeking or attaining after prison. Specifically, I explore developments in the identity management experiences and practices releasees engage in as they navigate the pre-employment and later employment processes as well as the interplay between the effects of pre-and post-incarceration experiences on releasee interpretations of self and of work. This study contributes to our understanding of identity sensemaking as well as to our understanding of the experiences of social stigma and identity invisibility through the employment reintegration process.

This dissertation is dedicated to God, my children, my husband,
Mom Mom and my parents.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The successful reintegration of individuals who were formerly incarcerated into society post-release is an age-old concern. In Canada, between 2010-2011 there were on average 163,000 adult prisoners in the correctional system on any given day (Dauvergne, 2012). Most of these individuals (approximately seventy-seven percent) were released into the community while about one-quarter (approximately twenty-three percent) of them were still incarcerated. Similarly, the reintegration of former prisoners post-release is one of the most pressing issues in the United States of America (Travis, 2005). Although several prisoners serve extensive sentences in US penitentiaries, a large proportion of individuals are incarcerated for relatively short periods of time, cycling in and out of correctional institutions over the course of their adult lives (Raphael, 2011).

Recognizing employment as an essential means through which former prisoners can be successfully reintegrated into society (Visher, Winterfield, & Coggeshall, 2005), a more encompassing perspective considers equal employment opportunities for former prisoners as a matter of social justice. From this perspective, it is socially unjust for an individual's personal information, such as one's criminal history, to interfere with their ability to obtain employment. Despite recent efforts to encourage considering former prisoners for employment (e.g. Society for Human Resource Management, 2012; Society for Human Resource Management and the Charles Koch Institute, 2018), former prisoners continue to face several challenges obtaining employment post-incarceration (Scott, 2010; Visher, Debus, & Yahner, 2008). For instance, former prisoners are faced with the challenge of navigating through a labor market filled with numerous barriers and social stigmas. Since they are particularly aware of the social stigmas held towards individuals with a criminal past, obtaining gainful employment might largely depend on

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how they manage their former prisoner identity within the employment context. This chapter is organized into several integrated sections. First, I outline the adult correctional services landscape as this shapes the context for understanding the former prisoner experience. Following this, I review the former prisoner identity and in particular the experience of males in the criminal justice system. Next, I outline the employment landscape for former prisoners by outlining the benefits of employing former prisoners as well as the realities of their employment experience. I also layout some of they key barriers that affect former prisoner employment reintegration. Employment developments for former prisoner employment reintegration are then reviewed. At the end of this chapter each of these components of former prisoner employment post-release inform the impetus for the present research, which explores the psychological implications of bearing the former prisoner and how this may influence identity management decisions and in turn employment outcomes. Anticipated contributions to theory and practice are considered.

Adult correctional services

The limits and experiences that former prisoners face once they have been released is shaped by the correctional service landscape. In Canada, when an adult (18 years and over) is convicted of a criminal offence, correctional services are administered accordingly. Offences are either categorized as a summary offence (i.e. less serious), or an indictable offence (i.e. more serious). The administration of adult correctional services includes serving time in custody (i.e. incarceration) and/or community supervision (i.e. parole or probation). The federal and provincial/territorial governments share responsibility in managing correctional services. The federal system typically has authority over adults who are incarcerated for two years or more as well as those on conditional release in the community (i.e. parole or statutory release)

(Dauvergne, 2012). In general, the provincial/territorial system has jurisdiction over adults serving custody sentences that are two years less a day, those who are being held while awaiting trial or sentencing (remand), as well as those serving community-based sentences (i.e. probation) (Dauvergne, 2012). Whether serving a federal or provincial sentence, many of those convicted of an offence are released back into the community before their sentence is complete. This is to allow individuals to transition back into the community while under supervision. Once an individual has served their full sentence, their release cannot be conditional with community supervision unless specifically ordered by a court (e.g. long-term offender status). With respect to corrections services administered within the community or persons on probation (i.e. those provincially sentenced), the Parole Board of Canada oversees decisions for day parole and full parole, which are under federal jurisdiction and carried out with the supervision and assistance of a parole officer. Statutory release is a separate option, governed by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) that is offered to most individuals serving a federal sentence (with the exception of those serving life or indeterminate sentences). Specifically it allows individuals who have served two-thirds of their prison sentence and have not yet been released on parole (of which they become eligible after serving one third of a sentence), to be released into the community so long as they adhere to specific conditions (Parole Board of Canada, 2008b). Each type of release provides former prisoners with an opportunity to serve a portion of their federal sentence while supervised in the community, as long as they adhere to specific conditions of release (Parole Board of Canada, 2008a). Another type of release, probation, is under provincial jurisdiction and applies when an individual has been convicted of an offence and is released into the community under supervision. Whether an individual has been released subsequent to or as a component of

their federal or provincial sentence, their successful reintegration into the community is the primary objective from the perspective of the parole board.

In comparison, in the United States more people are incarcerated than in any other nation in the world (Viano, 2006). In the U.S., criminal offences are classified either as a *misdemeanor* or a *felony* (Ruddell & Winfree, 2006). When an individual is convicted, the type of criminal offence and length of the associated sentence, will typically determine within which correctional institution they will serve their sentence. There, an individual can serve a sentence of up to one year in jail for being convicted of committing a misdemeanor. On the other hand, individuals serving long-term sentences (greater than one year) are sent to one of many different types of prisons (e.g. county, federal). This typically applies to individuals who have been convicted of committing a serious crime (i.e. felony) (Viano, 2006). For some individuals convicted of an offence, they may be ordered by the court to be under correctional supervision in the community for a specified period of time. While this is typically given as an alternative to incarceration, there are instances where a combination of incarceration and probation may be applied (Maruschak & Bonczar, 2013). On the other hand, parole is granted following time served incarcerated in prison. Parole is a conditional, supervised release and applies to those who have been granted this type of release from prison, those who have been released through a conditional supervision following their prison term sentence, as well as those who have been sentenced to supervised release for a specified period of time (Maruschak & Bonczar, 2013).

In both the Canadian and American contexts, the reality is that most people who have been incarcerated will eventually return to the community (Andress, Wildes, Rechtine, & Moritsugu, 2004; Travis, 2005; Visher & Travis, 2003). In this study, I considered the experiences of formerly incarcerated persons in Canada. In understanding the experience and

outcomes associated with the post-incarcerated identity, it is important to recognize the key terms that have influenced our understanding of this population.

The Former Prisoner Identity

There has been an ongoing debate in the literature related to how to refer to individuals with a criminal history. A variety of terms have been used to refer to this population for varying reasons. For instance, the term "ex-con" has been associated with perpetuating the existing negative stereotypes associated with this population (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008) and appears less regularly in the literature. Some definitions have been suggested within the literature to describe the social experiences of "ex-offenders". In particular, ex-offenders have been conceptualized as a *marginalized population* and the *vulnerability* associated with the ex-offender identity has been duly noted in the literature (Harley, Cabe, Woolums, & Turner-Whittaker, 2014; Kenemore & Roldan, 2005). Ex-offenders have also been described in the literature as *underserved* (Brown, 2011; Kenemore & Roldan, 2005). As there is both agreement and divergence on how individuals with a history of incarceration have been defined and labelled, consistent with guidance from the United States Commission on Civil Rights (2013), in this dissertation I refer to individuals with one or more arrests that resulted in a conviction and prison time, and who have since been released from a Canadian federal institution as "former prisoners".

We can better understand the employment experiences of former prisoners by considering how their identity is experienced within and shaped by social context. Social identity is informed by the groups, statuses, or categories of which an individual is a socially recognized member of (Tajfel, 1974). Social identities and differences are typically formed based on the visibility of a social identity, which is true for a number of minority groups (i.e. women, physically disabled, racial and ethnic minorities). Individuals that are socially identified as apart

of one or more of these groups may be stigmatized (Goffman, 1963) and experience social sanctions in turn. Recognizing the challenges that visible minorities face, scholars have also begun to consider how many individuals bear social identities that are invisible but can be associated with severe social implications. Examples of these invisible social identities include sexual orientation (Collins & Callahan, 2012; Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Ragins, 2008; Ragins, Singh, & Cornwell, 2007; Rumens & Broomfield, 2012); chronic illness (Vickers, 2012), HIV (Goss & Adam-Smith, 1996), mental illness (Dingle, Brander, Ballantyne, & Baker, 2013), disabilities (Matthews & Harrington, 2000), weight and appearance issues (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010), illiteracy (Skilton-Sylvester, 2002), infertility (Miall, 1986; Schaffer & Diamond, 1993), deafness (Hétu, 1996; Higgins, 1980), social class (Granfield, 1991), abortion (Major & Gramzow, 1999), abuse (Croghan & Miell, 1999), and religion (Reeves & Azam, 2012). Although the experiences, effects, and social costs associated with each of these invisible identities vary considerably, their concealable nature and the choice of whether to disclose or conceal is implicit across (Goffman, 1963).

A concealable stigmatized identity refers to "personal information that is socially devalued but is not readily apparent to others" (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010, p.236). The terms "concealable" and "invisible" have been used interchangeably throughout the literature to describe this type of identity. For the purposes of this dissertation, the former prisoner identity is referred to as an invisible social identity, in order to separate the nature of this identity from the individual choice to conceal or disclose it. The choice to disclose (or conceal) one's hidden status is met with several unique challenges including: anxious anticipation of the possibility of being found out, isolation from similarly stigmatized others, and a potential detachment from one's true self. Each of these challenges collectively speaks to the greater distress experienced by

individuals possessing an invisible stigmatized identity in comparison to individuals possessing a visible stigmatized identity (Frable, Platt, & Hoey, 1998; Pachankis, 2007; Ragins, 2008; Sedlovskaya et al., 2013). For former prisoners, an ongoing struggle may exist as they attempt to search for employment while being associated with such an identity. Considering this, it is relevant to consider the effect that certain characteristics, such as gender, may have on one's criminal justice and re-entry experiences.

Male former prisoners

In Canada in 2010/2011, adults serving custody sentences under provincial and federal jurisdictions were typically young (under 25 years of age), single, males (Dauvergne, 2012). Research suggests that while most individuals exiting prison face similar challenges upon release, the criminal justice and reentry experiences for women and men are vastly different from one another. For instance, gender differences have been found between male and female propensity to internalize personal problems (Zahn-Waxler, 2000). In comparison to males, a disproportionate number of women in the criminal justice system have likely experienced physical and sexual abuse (Harlow, 1999; Smith, 2005) and are more likely to be affected by custody battles for their children and/or leaving their children behind while they are incarcerated (Belknap, 1996; Covington, 1998). In general, men tend to be more likely to secure income-generating employment post-release than women (Visher, La Vigne, & Travis, 2004). Some have argued that there is a concentration of poverty among women that may also affect their ability to successfully reintegrate (Holtfreter, Reisig, & Morash, 2004). Each of these gender differences suggests that we can expect qualitatively different re-entry and labor market experiences for former male prisoners than for former female prisoners. Given the wide range of differences associated with the labor market post-release based on gender, focusing on a particular gender

will speak more directly to the employment experiences of individuals that fit into that group. Further to this, in light of the large representation of males in the correctional system, for the purposes of this study, I explicitly focus on the labor market experiences of former male prisoners.

Benefits of Employing Former Prisoners
Past research has shown that most prisoners who have been released are fully aware of the importance of finding a job (Harding, 2003) and legitimate employment is crucial to their long term success (Scott, 2010). In particular, a wealth of research has shown that employment provides former prisoners with a sense of self-esteem, independence, financial stability, responsibility and contributes to desistance from crime (Laub & Sampson, 2001; Rahill-Beuler & Kretzer, 1997; Rosenfeld, Petersilia, & Visher, 2008; Uggen, 2000). There are many unrecognized benefits associated with employing former prisoners for organizations and for former prisoners themselves. Each of these benefits should be carefully considered in order to work towards overcoming the often-misleading perspectives associated with employing former prisoners.

Some suggestions have been offered to encourage employers to hire former prisoners. For instance, based on a literature review of barriers to employment for former prisoners across Europe, Gill (1997) points out that from a legal standpoint, individuals do not have to disclose their criminal history. Thus, with the exception of organizations that conduct pre-employment screening, many organizations without any type of background check may employ former prisoners unknowingly (Gill, 1997). In light of this, Gill (1997) notes that discrimination towards former prisoners is illogical and suggests that employers should work towards fostering an inclusive environment where individuals are encouraged to be open about their diverse experiences (e.g. incarceration history).

Another aspect to consider is that former prisoners provide skilled labor, or are at least representative of a large pool of potentially skilled labor. In particular, the Society for Human Resource Management and the Charles Koch Institute (2018) identified individuals with a criminal history as an untapped labour pool. As captured in reports from the U.S. and England, most former prisoners are especially keen to improve themselves and their image; therefore, former prisoners typically exude a high level of commitment, loyalty, honesty, and reliability, more so than the average person (Devaney, 2011; Gardiner, 2012; Gill, 1997; Jolson, 1975). Organizations that employ individuals with a criminal history may be considered as fulfilling a unique aspect of corporate social responsibility – giving individuals a second chance. Furthermore, organizations engaging in this practice may be more cognizant of a respect for individual privacy, especially when it comes to personal information that is not work-related. It is important to recognize, however, that this outcome may be influenced by how receptive and supportive the social and political environment is of this aim.

An additional incentive for employers to hire former prisoners may be the availability of financial incentives associated with hiring former prisoners (Gill, 1997). Outside organizations (i.e. social enterprises, not-for-profit organizations) may offer expert guidance and/or training to prepare former prisoners for the workforce. In turn, these organizations may absorb some of the hiring costs associated with hiring former prisoners such that these training and development services may equip these individuals with knowledge and skills that may be beneficial to the employer. Government funded incentives are another financial resource or incentive that may be available to organizations that employ former prisoners.

Past research has supported the notion that employment is of great importance for former prisoners as they transition from prison into to the community (Arditti & Parkman, 2011; Visher

et al., 2008; Visher, Debus-Sherrill, & Yahner, 2011; Visher & Travis, 2003). For example, based on semi-structured interviews conducted with formerly incarcerated men between 18-24 years old, Arditti and Parkman (2011) found that criminal justice involvement limited individuals' ability to obtain employment and in turn their ability to be independent. Relatedly, based on a questionnaire completed by an Australian sample of employers, employment service workers, corrections workers, prisoners and individuals with a criminal record, Graffam, Shinkfield, and Hardcastle (2008) found that most former prisoners who manage to find employment are better able to provide financial assistance to their family members and have an increasing likelihood of remaining employed. Despite the aforementioned importance and potential benefits of employment for employers and former prisoners, several individuals face many challenges in their efforts to find and secure employment post-release (Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2003; Maton, 2012; Travis, Solomon, & Waul, 2001).

Former Prisoner Employment Experiences

Numerous barriers to employment exist which impede the ability of former prisoners to obtain and maintain employment (Graffam et al., 2008; Laub & Sampson, 2001; Visher & Travis, 2003). Individuals who have been labeled as "offenders" because of their criminal record will likely experience negative employment effects as a direct result of their involvement in the criminal justice system (Waldfogel, 1994; Western, 2002, 2007; Western & Pettit, 2005). In other words, irrespective of their work-related experiences and availability of resources, when an individual is released from prison, the most defining aspect of their employability is their identity as a former prisoner. The former prisoner identity is enduring and is commonly seen as deviant or abnormal, and this perspective often dominates social perceptions of their behaviors and/or characteristics (Rosenhan, 1973). Ultimately, individuals are impeded by their criminal label

which is often accompanied by social stigmatization and discrimination in work and non-work settings (LeBel, 2012).

There are heightened concerns and effects for individuals that have been convicted of an offence and incarcerated in comparison to those that have not been incarcerated. More specifically, past research suggests that individuals who have been incarcerated have reduced access to steady jobs and in turn a limited increase in earnings over time (Western, 2002). Based on an administrative record of pre-conviction and post-conviction data of individuals incarcerated in federal institutions in the U.S., Western (2002) found that effects on income are especially large for individuals who have been imprisoned in comparison to the effects for those who have solely been convicted of a crime. The author notes that an individual who has been incarcerated could experience a reduction in income or a reduced probability of obtaining employment in comparison to someone without a conviction (Waldfogel, 1994). Graffam et al. (2008) conducted a study with employers, employment service workers, corrections workers, and prisoners in Australia, which assessed their perceptions of former prisoners, and the general workforce abilities to exhibit the necessary skills and characteristics to obtain and maintain employment. The authors found that their sample of employment service workers and corrections workers shared a low level of confidence in former prisoners' abilities to display the relevant skills and characteristics that are generally required to perform well. More specifically, apart from any challenges, intellectual abilities or mental health, the participants believed that former prisoners were less likely than other disadvantaged groups to obtain employment. In spite of these views, subsequent research suggests that some individuals may be able to obtain employment post-release, however it is their ability to maintain employment that is affected. In a qualitative study which explored the employment experiences of 24 male parolees in two US

states, Harding (2003) found that most of the male parolee participants in their study had been

employed either through long-term employment or through employment in a series of short-term

jobs. More specifically, an individual in this study specified that their identity as an "ex-convict"

had never affected his/her ability to get a job but that it had limited the type and duration of

employment this person would be able to hold (Harding, 2003). Collectively, each of these

studies illustrate that former prisoners are disadvantaged in employment contexts based on their

incarceration history. Given the importance of employment in facilitating their successful

reintegration into society, it is important to acknowledge the individual and social barriers that

may affect former prisoner success in obtaining and maintain employment post-incarceration.

Barriers to Employment for Former Prisoners
Further to the inherent disadvantage of bearing an identity as a former prisoner, once

former prisoners are released they also typically face personal, interpersonal, broad social

obstacles, and practical concerns which present challenges for their successful reintegration

(Borzycki & Baldry, 2003; Gillis & Andrews, 2005; Visher et al., 2005). While some

employment challenges occur as a result of their past experience, other challenges are directly

correlated with the many consequences of incarceration and the relatedly arduous transition into

the community (Borzycki, 2005).

Personal and Interpersonal Factors
As they reintegrate, former prisoners have to focus on adjusting and making continuous

lifestyle changes while facing obstacles that will ultimately assess whether they are committed to

community living (Scott, 2010). Many former prisoners may have difficulty overcoming the

negative effects of imprisonment and coping with the realities of everyday experiences (Gill,

1997). While in prison, these individuals typically become accustomed to everyday routines,

having everything planned and done in a timely manner, and they also may have become

accustomed to the differing context and informal rules associated with the prison environment (i.e. prisoners vs. others) in an environment where there is little room for individual decision (Lee, 1979). Furthermore, over the course of several years negative perceptions of self are demonstrated and perpetuated in a prison environment and this typically may have a profound impact on formerly incarcerated individuals. Adapting to a new way of life, as well as battling with internalizing and overcoming ingrained perceptions that they had become accustomed to, are some of the additional challenges former prisoners face as they seek employment.

Personal challenges that former prisoners are faced with include: physical and mental health concerns (Dwyer, 2013; Griffiths, Dandurand, & Murdoch, 2007; Hammett, Roberts, & Kennedy, 2001; Scanlon, 2001), health issues related to substance abuse and addiction (Griffiths et al., 2007), poor behavioral problems (Fletcher, 2001), and negative or naïve self-perceptions (Atkin & Armstrong, 2013; Fletcher, 2001; Maton, 2012). Practical challenges are also a concern, these include: finding suitable accommodation, managing limited finances, and accessing everyday necessities and services (Waldfogel, 1994). Interpersonally, former prisoners may be especially concerned with the stability of interpersonal relationships, support from peers and/or family members, financial resources, as each of these elements can greatly affect their adjustment post-release (Griffiths et al., 2007; Maton, 2012; Nelson, Deess, & Allen, 2011; Travis et al., 2001). Additionally, certain groups of individuals tend to be more susceptible to incarceration and therefore disproportionately negatively affected by the social barriers that come with bearing the former prisoner identity. For instance, in the United States, "lesser-educated men", especially those that are minorities, are more likely to have served prison time (Raphael, 2011). In light of the social stigmas held towards former prisoners, Raphael (2011b) suggests that in an attempt to avoid hiring former prisoners, employers in the U.S. may be more

apt to discriminate against men from high-incarceration demographic groups irrespective of their

actual criminal record history (or absence thereof). In essence, numerous factors and personal

difficulties have been cited as restricting the employment outcomes for former prisoners (Luther,

Reichert, Holloway, Roth, & Aalsma, 2011). In spite of this, past research seems to suggest that

one's criminal record in itself, rather than any personal skill deficits, is the main constraint for

their ability to obtain employment (Graffam et al., 2004; Pager, 2007; Visher et al., 2008;

Waldfogel, 1994).

Employability

A past record of incarceration will typically have a negative impact on how an individual

is viewed by employers (Williams & Hawkins, 1986). In turn, the labor market experiences of

former prisoners are typically characterized by low participation in employment, low wages,

weak social network and job connections, and an erosion of employment skills (Visher et al.,

2011). However, there have been inconsistent findings concerning employers' willingness to hire

former prisoners (Lam & Harcourt, 2003; Pager & Quillian, 2005; Swanson, Langfitt-Reese, &

Bond, 2012).

Some employers have specified that government incentives may entice them to hire more

individuals that have been released from prison (Albright & Denq, 1996). Yet, former prisoners

typically find it difficult to find permanent, unsubsidized employment after release because they

lack the necessary skills and abilities for employment (Waldfogel, 1994). Some of the primary

concerns related to skills and abilities include: education, level of numeracy and literacy, as well

as occupational and interpersonal experience and skills (Fletcher, 2001; Graffam, Shinkfield,

Lavelle, & McPherson, 2004; Maton, 2012; Nally, Lockwood, & Ho, 2011; Nelson et al., 2011;

Waldfogel, 1994). These barriers make it especially challenging for them to obtain legitimate

employment since a majority of employment requires at least a high school diploma, relevant

skills, and experience (Holzer, 1996). Based on a study of the employment experiences of 740

males post-release in Illinois, Texas, and Ohio, Visher et al. (2011) found that consistent work

experience prior to incarceration, connecting with employers before release, and support from

family members tends to improve employment outcomes after release. Relatedly, Albright and

Denq (1996) assessed the perspectives held by employers in Dallas and Houston, Texas, and

found that former prisoners who have completed a college degree, or training program associated

with a vocational trade would be more likely to be hired by an employer.

Overall, research suggests that many employers seem to be reluctant to trust individuals

who have essentially been labeled as untrustworthy by the penal system (Finn, 1998; Giguere &

Dundes, 2002; Graffam et al., 2008; Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2004; Pager, 2003, 2007; Pager &

Quillian, 2005). Employer apprehensions typically surround the perceived risks for the

organizational environment including a concern for the genuineness of a former prisoner's search

for employment, the safety of their workforce, the integrity of their products/services, a loss of

potential and/or loyal customers, as well as an overall perception that former prisoners lack in

their social skills and that this may be disruptive in a work environment (Giguere & Dundes,

2002; Gill, 1997; Harris & Keller, 2005). Holzer (1996) found that the majority of employers

studied reported their reluctance to hire an individual who is known to have a record of offences.

The employers specified that welfare recipients and persons with limited work experience would

be more likely to be considered for employment over an individual with a criminal record.

Notably, some specific offending backgrounds (e.g. sex offence, robbery, murder) may

pose significant risks for employers and can have a major impact on the suitability for some

occupations (Maton, 2012). In particular, those who have been deemed "high-risk offenders"

(Griffiths et al., 2007) are particularly disadvantaged. Thus, conviction offence can be highly

influential for hiring decisions (Atkin & Armstrong, 2013). In a study which examined employer willingness to hire former prisoners within Texas, Atkin & Armstrong (2013) found that most employers were generally willing to hire former prisoners, however this willingness varied depending on the conviction offence(s). Similarly, Waldfogel (1994) found that employment effects vary depending on the type and nature of the crime committed. In this study, Waldfogel (1994) noted that the effects of first-time conviction for individuals who commit fraud, are college-educated, or who breach trust are greater than the effects for individuals for which these characteristics do not apply. In a study conducted later by Albright and Denq (1996) employers identified that they were reluctant to hire former prisoners that had been incarcerated for a violent offence or convicted of a crime against children. Further to this, studies conducted by the Society of Human Resource Management (2012) as well as the Society of Human Resource Management and the Charles Koch Institute (2018) confirm that employers are more apprehensive when it comes to individuals with a criminal history that involves violence. For example, based on a survey administered to randomly selected HR professions, representative of 386 organizations (largely US-based), the Society for Human Resource Management (2012), a US-based HR membership organization, reported that ninety-six percent of the organizations included in their study identified violent offences as very influential in deterring them from offering an individual employment, while non-violent offences were a deterrent for seventy-four percent of employers. Similarly, in the Society of Human Resource Management and the Charles Koch Institute (2018) study of managers, executives, and HR professionals, reflecting on their organization's experience hirig individuals with a criminal history, less than thirty-percent were aware of hires that had violent, financial, or sexual crimes on their record.

Some research, however, has found that potential employers do not hire former prisoners, once they discover they have a criminal record, despite the nature of their conviction (Harris & Keller, 2005). Based on semi-structured in-depth interviews with 16 formerly incarcerated Chinese young men post-release, Chui & Cheng (2013) found that in their experience, while some employers may not reject applications from former prisoners outright, when they discover that an individual is a former prisoner they may find different ways to terminate their employment without directly stating that it is because of their incarceration history (e.g. suitability of the job, poor performance).

Some employers have expressed fears that they will be found liable for negligent hiring if they willing hire an individual that has a criminal record and that person engages in a criminal act while at work (Adler, 1993; Connerley, Arvey, & Bernardy, 2001) or who may become harmful to others while at work (Gill, 1997; Wang & Kleiner, 2000). In the U.S. and Canada, employers are increasingly being held liable based on policy standards which stipulate that employers may be held liable for the behavior of their employees if the employer knew or ought to have known that the employee was likely to behave in a particular manner (Lam & Harcourt, 2003). A criminal record can be seen as indicative of likely behavior depending on the offence which may make employers increasingly uneasy about hiring former prisoners (Lam & Harcourt, 2003). While a significant concern for employers has been the perceived risk that employing former prisoners poses for employees and consumers, workplace violence research has found that workers are more apt to experience assault from a stranger or within personal relationships (e.g. partner/spouse, family members) than from their coworkers (Duhart, 2001; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2001). In fact, no research to date has found that there is an increased likelihood of victimization for an organization, coworker, or client who has been exposed to an individual with

history of criminal offences (Harris & Keller, 2005). Instead, employing former prisoners correlates with several community and social justice benefits such as: less crime, greater public safety, and reduced costs for the government and taxpayers and improved community attitudes toward former prisoners (Graffam et al., 2008). Overall, research suggests that it is best for communities to provide resources that empower former prisoners with the ability to successfully transition back into their communities as valuable, productive, and contributing members of society (Andress et al., 2004). In turn, easing former prisoner reintegration may contribute to increased safety within communities by reducing recidivism (Griffiths et al., 2007; Ruddell & Winfree, 2006).

Industry Implications

The employment effects associated with incarceration often marginalize former prisoners from the mainstream economy to work in secondary markets and informal economies where they are more vulnerable to reoffend (Western, 2002). In light of this, career development is largely inaccessible to former prisoners (Vernick & Reardon, 2001). Past research has examined which industries are most willing to hire former prisoners post-release. Lichtenberger (2006) examined the earnings records of former prisoners in Virginia, USA over the course of a five-year period (1999-2003). Lichtenberger (2006) found that, the industries that had hired the greatest number of former prisoners during this time period were manufacturing, construction, and mining. These were followed by the accommodation and food services, administrative and support services (which included temporary employment agencies), as well as the transportation and warehousing industries. The industries that were least likely to hire former prisoners were the finance and insurance industry, the scientific and technical services industries, the public administration industry, and the health care industry (Lichtenberger, 2006). In their study which looked at employment opportunities for former prisoners in Indiana, U.S., Nally et al. (2011) found similar

trends and five major sectors were identified as typically employers of released prisoners, which were temporary help services, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trades, construction, and lodging and food services.

Industry trends seem to support the presumption that former prisoners typically face limited job prospects compared to those without a criminal record (Holzer et al., 2003). This translates into many former prisoners having found themselves settling for temporary, low-skill, low-income employment (Harding, 2003). Essentially, by limiting earning opportunities, conviction may provide 'market sanctions' such that former prisoners become more likely to be hired for unskilled and exploitative labor (Atkin & Armstrong, 2013). With a lack of opportunities and potentially low paying work, over time there may be little incentive for former prisoners to remain employed as they may be enticed to return to the perceived benefits of crime (Gill, 1997; Waldfogel, 1994). In spite of the low participation of former prisoners across various industries, academics, policy makers, and practitioners have expressed disagreement over the extent to which one's involvement in the criminal justice system, in itself, leads to harmful consequences for subsequent employment. To address this disagreement, Pager (2003) used an experimental audit design to assess the hiring process of former prisoners across a range of entry-level employment opportunities in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (U.S.). The authors isolated the effect of a criminal record on employment outcomes by having matched pairs of individuals apply for real entry-level jobs, each using four distinct conditions. Three of the conditions included a history with the criminal justice system while under one condition that applicant would have no criminal record. In each condition, the individuals were assigned favorable work histories, in that they reported steady work experience in entry-level jobs and nearly continual employment. The authors found that all three criminal justice conditions were associated with

less consideration by employers relative to the noncriminal control. Relatedly, based on a sample of male former prisoners who had served in federal institutions in the U.S., Nagin & Waldfogel (1998) looked at the effect of incarceration on employment outcomes by considering how the impact of incarceration on one's income varies over the course of one's life cycle. Nagin & Waldfogel (1998) found that first-time conviction was positively related to income for individuals under 25, and negatively related to income for individuals over 30. Yet, subsequent convictions (i.e. 2 or more) were found to have negative effects on income for all age groups. In a later study, Graffam et al. (2004) conducted semi-structured interviews in Australia with convicted former prisoners and correctional service professionals and found that for individuals who have a criminal record, employers were often more concerned with this than what training or education they may have. Ultimately, the stigma of being a former prisoner not only impacts employer perceptions of an individual's employability, but also the choice of pursuable occupations and job opportunities.

Pre-employment Screening

The job application process typically involves an assessment of the suitability of eligible candidates through methods that include employment tests, interviews, and background screening (Cavoukian, 2007). Organizations are also increasingly using pre-employment screening tools to avoid poor hiring decisions (Adler, 1993; Wang & Kleiner, 2000). Pre-employment screening is conducted to verify the accuracy of information provided by the applicant and to uncover any information that may be of concern. Pre-employment screening tools include: interviews, skills test screening, reference checks, criminal record checks, bureau investigations, and education verifications (Wang & Kleiner, 2000). For former prisoners, each of these screening tools can significantly limit their ability to obtain employment. For one, being honest about their past could mean appearing extremely under qualified, uneducated and deviant

based on their criminal record. On the other hand, being dishonest may have future implications since any inaccuracies or critical information that the applicant does not provide may lead others to question their integrity and suitability for employment if/when discovered (Adler, 1993). These challenges are heightened if employers conduct cross-referencing, a process whereby various screening tools are used simultaneously for comparison and to uncover various negative aspects of an individual's history (Bonanni, Drysdale, Hughes, & Doyle, 2011). Rosen (2002) identified specific reasons why organizations should be enticed to conduct pre-employment screening which include: to limit uncertainty about potential candidates, to demonstrate that an organization has to exercise due diligence, and to deter applications from individuals with a questionable past. Next, I will review some of the primary employment screening methods, and I will identify how each of these relate to former prisoner employment reintegration experiences.

Reference check

Recognizing that a former prisoner's formal credentials are typically insufficient, social networks and environment have important implications for an former prisoner's ability to find stable employment (Graffam et al., 2004). While some individuals may have reference prior work experience or experienced gained while incarcerated, others may have a limited or nonexistent employment experience. Thus, former prisoners may find it especially difficult to provide suitable references for employers. In particular, having served time in prison can lead to the loss of the social networks that can help in finding employment, and in turn affect employer willingness to hire former prisoners (Moore, Stuewig, & Tangney, 2013). However, for individuals on parole, they may have access to personal support staff at a halfway house, day reporting center, or other correctional support services that may be willing to provide a reference to prospective employers. For those who have completed their sentence, it may be more difficult to obtain any, let alone a single, suitable reference.

Social capital is especially beneficial for job-seekers who are at a relative disadvantage in terms of their marketable qualification (i.e. work history, education) and reputation (Lin, 2001). Lin (2001) identified four distinct ways through which social capital promotes the likelihood of job attainment. First, information flow denotes that former prisoners may learn about employment opportunities from their social connections. Second, social capital may be able to influence key decision makers within an organization. Third, the quality of an individual's resources offered through an individual's social network may outweigh any deficits in the personal qualifications or reputation as confirmed by their social ties. Finally, a former prisoner's association with particular social groups may serve to enhance others' perceptions of their reputation.

Criminal records check

The criminal records check is designed to enable employers to assess the suitability of a job candidate informed by any past criminal conduct. It is often referenced to inform an employer's perception of an individual's honesty, integrity, and any potential associated safety risks for its staff and clients. In general, it is progressively challenging for former prisoners to conceal their criminal record in light of the many technological advancements which grant employers increased access to this information (Atkin & Armstrong, 2013). Employers may be interested in conducting a criminal background check for several reasons including: legal requirements; relevance to an applicant's ability to do a job, aims to provide/maintain a safe work environment (Clay & Stephens, 1995; Giguere & Dundes, 2002). Furthermore, employers are encouraged to focus their efforts on any offence that could have an impact on an individual's ability to fulfill the fundamental responsibilities of a particular job, or that could impede the safety of others in the work environment (Raphael, 2011).

It is estimated that the largest proportion of criminal background checks are conducted by organizations in the United States. A survey in several US metropolitan areas revealed that 32% of employers always perform criminal background checks and 17% of them do so (Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2002). Furthermore, based on the study employed by the Society for Human Resource Management (2012), nearly two-thirds of the represented organizations employ criminal background checks as a component of their pre-screening process. Just over half of the employers surveyed reported that they let job candidates explain criminal background check results before making a final hiring decision.

Legal Requirements

According to the "Human Rights Code, RSO 1990, c H.19," (2012) (Ontario, Canada), employers should not discriminate against individuals with respect to a prior criminal offence for which a pardon has been granted or for an offence for which the respective sentence is under the jurisdiction of the provincial government (Freedom from Discrimination, Employment, para. 7). Australia, Britain, and the U.S. have also passed legislation which prohibits discrimination based on criminal history (Lam & Harcourt, 2003). However, in Canada, individuals who have served a federal sentence are not offered the same protection when they have been released on parole and are seeking employment as each province has its own legal requirements. For instance, criminal background checks are required in Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, and Ontario for all government workers (HR Insider, 2013). In British Columbia, criminal background checks are required for those who work with or have unsupervised access to youth (HR Insider, 2013). Depending on the occupation and service provided, an organization may have the right to discontinue consideration of an individual's application if that person refuses to personally obtain a criminal record check or to give consent for an organization to do so.

In the United States, several federal and state policies exist which restrict individuals with certain criminal convictions from obtaining employment licenses or from working in organizations serving vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly (Harris & Keller, 2005; Western, Kling, & Weiman, 2001; Wheelock, Uggen, & Hlavka, 2011). More specifically, employment restrictions tend to constrain former prisoners from several fields including health care, law enforcement, and child care (Harrison & Schehr, 2004). While there are logical explanations for why former prisoners cannot work with individuals that are considered vulnerable, there are several occupations in which incarceration history should have little or no relevance to employment decisions (e.g. manufacturing, skilled trades, landscaping) (Blessett & Pryor, 2013). Reintegration challenges for former prisoners in the U.S. include the suspension of certain rights and privileges which can lead an individual to experience a sense of incomplete citizenship and/or membership within a community (Uggen, Manza, & Thompson, 2006). In some U.S. states, occupational licensing requirements may restrict an employer's ability to consider applicants with criminal convictions (and in some cases arrest records) for employment (Harris & Keller, 2005). Further to this, former prisoners are constrained in several ways including restricted access to housing, public assistance, voting, student loans, and driver's licenses (Hoskins, 2014; Luther et al., 2011).

For those individuals who are considered for employment, they may be asked at some point during the hiring process to indicate whether they have ever been convicted of a crime. A former prisoner who is faced with this question has three potentially difficult choices. By answering 'No' a former prisoner would be being dishonest. This may be undesirable for an individual trying to disassociate from their criminal identity because conviction is often associated with untrustworthiness and dishonesty (Waldfogel, 1994). Yet, by saying 'yes' they are exposing

themselves to possibly losing a job opportunity due to their stigmatized criminal identity. The last option would be not to answer – yet this would likely be seen as suspicious and an employer may just assume that by not answering an individual is admitting to their criminal history.

For certain institutions, an additional requirement may be conducting a credit bureau investigation, which may pose as a barrier to employment for former prisoners. For instance, some financial institutions conduct credit bureau investigations as apart of their pre-employment screening. While incarcerated, individuals have no opportunities to build their credit, so when they get out of jail this limits their ability to obtain any assets (i.e. house, car) and to get employment. Overall, a credit check can contribute to revealing gaps in employment history (Bonanni et al., 2011) and unaccounted periods of time in society (i.e. incarceration period).

Employment Developments for Former Prisoners
Despite the various barriers that may inhibit the employment experience for many former prisoners, some progress has been made through employment and training opportunities during and post-incarceration to enhance their chances of being able to secure viable employment post-release. Notably, not every intervention will work for every individual. However, successful outcomes are more likely when individuals participate in programs that are suited to their individual needs (Rosenfeld et al., 2008). Employment interventions can take place at three different stages of the corrections process: during the intake process, throughout incarceration, and following release into the community.

Intake employment interventions
In Canada, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is responsible for the supervision and reintegration of individuals serving a federal sentence. Recognizing the importance of employment for positive reintegration outcomes, CORCAN operates within the CSC as a special agency to deliver its Employment and Employability Program (EEP) (Nolan, Wilton, Cousineau,

& Stewart, 2014). In Canada, an estimated 60% of the individuals taken into federal custody have employment needs at the time of their intake (Nolan et al., 2014). Recognizing this, certain interventions are offered during incarceration to aid in facilitating post-release adjustment (Griffiths et al., 2007). CORCAN provides individuals within the federal justice system, with employment and employability skills training while they are incarcerated as well as post-release. Their efforts are focused on four main industries: manufacturing, textiles, construction, and services. Overall, effective programming is an important aspect of the successful reintegration as it enables skills development and offers an opportunity for work experience (Gillis & Andrews, 2005).

Pre-release employment interventions

Past research has demonstrated that individuals who have furthered their education or skill-based training during incarceration had a greater chance of securing employment post-release (Nally et al., 2011). In Canada, programs are voluntary, and many prisoners choose not to participate, which means that several individuals are released into the community with little preparation for adjusting post-release (Griffiths et al., 2007).

Education and Training Certification

While incarcerated, individuals can choose to complete diploma and/or degree requirements. Furthermore, in Canada, based on labor market needs, CSC offers prisoners the opportunity to receive certification in field for which there is demand for labor (Nolan et al., 2014). These industries include: construction, safety, food industry, cleaning and maintenance, horticulture, transport/operator and equipment, and textile (Nolan et al., 2014).

Work Assignments

Work assignments are work opportunities within the correctional institution. In Canada, these work assignments are referred to as CORCAN work assignments, while similar

arrangements are otherwise known within the literature as "prison industries" (Nolan et al., 2014). These can either be related to specific business lines in the community (e.g. textiles, manufacturing, construction) or maintenance-oriented for use by the correctional institution (e.g. laundry, cooking, cleaning). Federal institutions in Canada also offer CSC work assignments that occur within the institution. However, the associated jobs are typically maintenance-oriented, which includes the delivery of services that are essential within the prison environment. In a study conducted by (Nolan et al., 2014), federal prisoners who were employed through either CORCAN or CSC were compared with those who were not employed by either program while incarcerated. Based on this comparison, the authors found that on their release, when compared with individuals who were either CSC-employed or not-employed during incarceration, a larger proportion of individuals who had been CORCAN-employed obtained employment within 90 days of their release. In the United States, The Prison Industry enhancement program focuses on providing employment and earnings for prisoners so that they will have savings when released (Griffiths et al., 2007). Griffiths et al. (2007) found that participants in this program did better than other prisoners in terms of finding employment upon release, staying employed, and recidivism. Unfortunately, these programs have been found to be exploitative (Atkin & Armstrong, 2013), and the availability of work placements and vocational opportunities inside correctional institutions is often limited and does not meet the demand.

Post-release employment interventions

Employment training and mentoring programs
Employment training and mentoring programs have also produced promising outcomes (Rosenfeld et al., 2008). In particular, research in recent years has begun to shed light on the benefits of social enterprise initiatives. A social enterprise is a business operated by a non-profit entity that provides a product or service to consumers in a socially innovative way (Luke & Chu,

2013). Social enterprises aim to contribute to establishing healthy communities through various social, environmental and human justice initiatives (Kerlin, 2006). In particular, in Europe social enterprises have been utilized as a means to integrate individuals that are typically excluded from the labor market by providing them with employment opportunities (Defourny & Nyssens, 2001). Social enterprise initiatives are recognized as well positioned to assist former prisoners on the path to employment because of their approach to both enterprise and creating social value (Maton, 2012). As an example, Blue Sky Development and Regeneration (Blue Sky) is a social enterprise that was founded in the UK to provide former prisoners with the necessary experience to obtain employment post-release. Blue Sky approaches organisations in several work areas (i.e. parks maintenance, recycling, catering and distribution) and then recruits the appropriate number of former prisoners needed to fill the roles. Once individuals have completed their work term with an organization, Blue Sky helps these individuals to find further employment and has been relatively successful in doing so. For instance, in 2013, 45% of the former prisoners in the program successfully obtained further employment.

In addition to employment training and mentoring, programs have been developed to meet more specific needs for individuals. Researchers have suggested that programs geared to the specific needs of individuals tend to be more effective than programs made for the general population (Griffiths et al., 2007; Rosenfeld et al., 2008). With respect to finding suitable accommodation, halfway houses may be helpful to parolees as a starting point once they have been released from prison. Following their release, individuals on parole have the option of serving a portion of their sentence in treatment centers or halfway houses to help with their reintegration back into their community. Halfway houses have been especially helpful for those

former prisoners that have been convicted of minor offences and have sought to obtain

employment post-release (Seiter & Kadela, 2003).

The Present Research

Organizations have consistently advocated for diversity management initiatives to be

implemented and supported by top management for the benefit of the overall workforce

(Riccucci, 2002). Diversity management initiatives essentially advocate for the rights of

marginalized groups as well as a workforce that is representative of the general population,

however this aim has not recognized the marginality associated with invisible socially identified

groups such as former prisoners (Blessett & Pryor, 2013). The widespread lack of implemented

legal protections for former prisoners in the workplace (Lam & Harcourt, 2003) as well as their

exclusion as a group from diversity management literature and initiatives (Blessett & Pryor,

2013) underscores the need to examine the employment reintegration experiences of former

prisoners following their release from incarceration.

As reviewed, although employment is essential for former prisoner reintegration success,

numerous aspects of the realities of release both shape and impede their ability to successfully

obtain and maintain gainful employment post-release. Former prisoners are an underrepresented

group within the workplace and more specifically, their experiences during the employment

process have been understudied in the management and criminal justice literatures. Past research

has examined the social benefits associated with the employment of former prisoners (Bowler,

Halbesleben, & Paul, 2010; Finn, 1998; Harrison & Schehr, 2004), barriers to employment

(Harris & Keller, 2005; Shivy et al., 2007), as well as employer perspectives and practices (Atkin

& Armstrong, 2013; Giguere & Dundes, 2002; Gill, 1997; Pati, 1973). Further to this, the

employment experiences of former prisoners have recently grabbed the attention and intrigue of

a number of management scholars and has led to important contributions to management

scholarship (Ali, Lyons, & Ryan, 2017; Brown & Toyoki, 2013; Griffith & Jones Young, 2017; Jones Young & Powell, 2015; Rogers, Corley, & Ashforth, 2017; Toyoki & Brown, 2014). Although human resource management research has recognized the difficulty former prisoners face in seeking employment, the majority of this research has focused on employer outcomes and perspectives (Giguere & Dundes, 2002; Gill, 1997; Lam & Harcourt, 2003). There is a limited understanding of the employment experience from the perspective of the former prisoners. Past research has called for a focus on actions that will promote positive changes and greater workforce participation for former prisoners (Graffam et al., 2008). With the exception of a few studies (e.g. Clair, Beatty, & MacLean, 2005; Harding, 2003), research has been limited in exploring the psychological aspects that may affect former prisoners as they navigate through employment. Recognizing that the former prisoner identity is an invisible stigmatized identity, and that such an identity is like associated with psychological costs, it is pertinent to consider the psychological implications of bearing the former prisoner identity and how identity management, namely the concomitant roles of disclosure and concealment may have implications for employment.

Disclosure and Concealment Processes

Invisible social identities have been theorized to influence and complicate workplace interactions (Clair et al., 2005). Most often, it is assumed that a person does not have a criminal record or incarceration history until this identity is disclosed. For former prisoners, the challenges do not subside even if and when they are able to overcome the many barriers that impede their entry/re-entry into the labor market. Even when an individual is successful in obtaining gainful employment, the security of that employment is often uncertain since their criminal record may be used against them at any time over the course of their employment.

Disclosure is defined as a verbal, interpersonal expression or revelation of self-relevant information (i.e. invisible stigmatized identity) (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010; Derlega, Metts, Petronio, & Margulis, 1993). Individual self-concealment is described as engaging in one or more strategies to hide self-relevant information within an interpersonal relationship (Larson & Chastain, 1990). Concealment has been found to have negative effects on one's mental and physical health (Larson & Chastain, 1990). Conversely, disclosure has been associated with positive psychological effects (Corrigan & Matthews, 2003). Since former prisoners can pass as non-stigmatized individuals, they typically have a unique awareness of the stereotypes others hold towards individuals that have been to prison (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). They generally also have a choice for how they will manage their identity, essentially whether, when, how and to whom they conceal or disclose that identity to others (Button, 2004; Pachankis, 2007). The literature which addresses disclosure and concealment within the criminal justice system has typically focused on these processes in relation to victims of criminal acts, crimes against children (Thomas, 2010), confession post-arrest (Lippert, Cross, Jones, & Walsh, 2010; Vileikiene, 2000), disclosure as a component of rehabilitation (Waldram, 2008), disclosure while incarcerated (Braithwaite, 1973). Although disclosure and concealment are co-referenced in their respective literatures (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010), with the exception of a limited number of studies (Clair et al., 2005; Kahn & Hessling, 2001) disclosure and concealment are typically examined as separate processes. Disclosure in and of itself is a complex process that includes multiple components (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). By looking at concealment and disclosure as two distinct, yet interrelated process, this will lend insight into the complexity of related experiences for individuals with invisible stigmatized identities.

In some instances an individual's identity may be involuntarily disclosed. For example, colleagues involved in the employment process (i.e. direct manager, HR representative) may be aware of an individual's criminal record and have some control over whether that information is disclosed to others in the work environment. The uncertainty surrounding the disclosure and concealment of one's criminal record translates to their ongoing awareness that their criminal record may be used by an employer to disadvantage them or to terminate their employment at any time (Gill, 1997). This instability may permeate all aspects of life post-incarceration since this translates to instability in several additional areas in life. For instance, one's ability to purchase a home may be limited by the instability of employment because the precarious nature of their employment can limit their confidence that they can commit to remaining in a particular location. Institutional barriers also present themselves as financial institutions lack confidence in their ability to repay their mortgage. Given the challenges associated with obtaining employment as well as the instability of maintaining employment for former prisoners, it is relevant for individuals to consider how they will manage others' impressions of their identity (see Ali, Lyons, and Ryan, 2017).

As they navigate employment, strong social demands for a collective identity tend to be present within organization. At the same time, one's criminal record and experience as a former prisoner tend to permeate within the work environment. Former prisoners constantly face the choice of whether they should disclose or conceal their identity as a former prisoner within each social interaction, thereby consistently negotiating stigmatized invisible identity. Rooted in social identity theory and stigma theory, and drawing on the theoretical literature and empirical findings from previous studies that investigated the experiences of employment experiences of former prisoners the present research integrated insights from management and criminal justice

literatures. The goal of this study is to examine the social (e.g. social identity and stigmatization) and psychological (e.g. internalized stigma and perception of stigma) aspects, as well as the institutional effects (e.g. obtaining employment) that former prisoners experience post-release. This study employed quantitative and qualitative methods to examine the identity management strategies employed by former prisoners while striving to secure employment and the associated employment outcomes.

Theoretical and Practical Contributons

Theoretical Contributions

An individual's incarceration history is recognized by society as an element of their social identity. Unlike many social identities linked to discrimination (i.e. gender, race/ethnicity, physical disability), the former prisoner identity is invisible but can be discovered by others at any time. Given the concealable nature of this identity, across social contexts former prisoners face a re-occurring decision whether to disclose or conceal their 'former prisoner' identity from others. Their decision can impact whether they are successful in securing employment, which will have both individual and social implications. For former prisoners, the constant choice to disclose or conceal can have significant psychological and social implications. Societal concerns for failed re-entry can have financial implications (i.e. incarceration costs) as well as implications for public safety (i.e. recidivism) (Griffiths et al., 2007).

Stigma management has been studied within several populations, however there has been limited work on stigma and the entry of former prisoners into the labor market post-release (Harding, 2003). Furthermore, there is little research that has considered re-entry from the perspective of the individuals who have been released from prison (Moore et al., 2013). This includes our limited knowledge of what individuals expect to experience and what re-integration strategies they will engage in post-release (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). Some studies have

attempted to understand this relationship by looking at stigma management using identity theory and labelling theory (i.e. Lee & Craft, 2002; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008, 2009). These studies have been particularly useful in understanding dynamics within interpersonal situations (Brown, 2000). Social Identity theory enables us to expand our understanding of former prisoner perceptions and outcomes by enabling us to explore former prisoners' identity as it is experienced within a specific context, in which specific social categories apply (Brown, 2000).

The present research contributes to the identity management literature by focusing on the management of an invisible spoiled identity in an employment context. This research empirically tested the psychological implications for those that were managing their stigmatized identity by adopting disclosure or concealment strategies. This will lend insight into individual experiences managing a spoiled identity - particularly, in a context where they are encouraged to be aligned with organizational norms which are in general misaligned with the stigmas associated with the criminal identity. Given the concealable nature of this stigmatized identity, this research lends insight into one's management of the choice to disclose (or to not disclose) an undesirable identity within a particular social context.

Practical Contributions
Individual identities are devalued in society to varying degrees (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010; Quinn & Chaudoir, 2009) and this difference may affect individual experiences bearing an invisible stigmatized identity. Chaudoir and colleagues have focused on the common experiences associated with bearing concealable stigmatized identities for a variety of interest groups (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010; Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010). Despite individual efforts to overcome social devaluation, individuals with identities that are strongly devalued tend to be fully aware of the prejudice and discrimination society typically directs towards them (Chaudoir & Fisher,

2010). In line with this notion, Clair et al. (2005) suggest that it may be beneficial to draw from certain interest groups.

A focus on former prisoners is particularly insightful for building our knowledge about invisible social identities as well as the disclosure and concealment processes that are inherently experienced by individuals, particularly those with socially devalued concealable stigmatized identities. In general, former prisoners are treated as inferior to other members of society, and discriminated against in institutional settings (e.g. the employment context). In the employment context, navigating through each of these challenges may translate to a lack of confidence and trust in building and maintaining working relationships with others as well as feelings of isolation and lack of social acceptance. In the face of these obstacles, former prisoners especially require material, psychological, and social support, otherwise they may have an especially difficult experience reintegrating into society (Griffiths et al., 2007). In the workplace, this support may be found in mentorship opportunities, employee resource groups, coaching, personal counseling, and supportive supervisor(s) and/or colleagues.

The present research lends further insight into our understanding of diversity in the workplace by focusing on former prisoners as an understudied marginalized group. Insights about this group may have implications for various human resource practices within an organization including the recruitment, selection, and diversity training. Three organizational objectives that are typically associated with diversity training are: to adhere to legal requirements/standards, to enable a harmonious work environment, to capitalize on beneficial organizational outcomes associated with diversity (Scanlon, 2001). Overall, diversity training aims to enhance awareness of and sensitivity towards cultural variety and service. Yet, current models for diversity training largely do not incorporate an awareness for or acceptance of

individuals who have been incarcerated and it is likely that it was never intended to do so

(Blessett & Pryor, 2013; Scanlon, 2001). A consideration for the interests of invisibly

stigmatized individuals such as former prisoners can have several progressive implications for

diversity initiatives in organization. For instance, this may enable diversity training to be

inclusive of an overarching respect for maintaining privacy over any personal information that

does not affect one's ability to perform at work. Considering former prisoners as a unique group

within diversity initiatives may also have implications for organizational policies. Maton (2012)

suggests that in-work support and encouragement may contribute to improving employment

outcomes further. As a vulnerable group of individuals who are often involved in precarious

employment, policies that acknowledge the well-being of vulnerable employees, such as former

prisoners may be progressive in addressing the challenges they face in terms of areas such as

untimely terminations, counseling, and mentorship. Such developments apply to a number of

interest groups and will foster a more inclusive, diverse, and less discriminatory workforce.

Employees will benefit from an inclusive work environment that accepts and values the diverse

perspectives of individuals with invisible social identities including one's identity as a former

prisoner. Nishii (2013) notes that in inclusive climates, fairly implemented employment practices

that do not bias a particular social group, a lack of stigmas associated with a particular social

identity, and a propensity to value the perspectives of all individuals equally signals to

employees that one's social identity is not associated with having a disproportionately small

share of social value.

Social Benefits and Policy Implications
Some have argued that criminal justice policies have been designed to emphasize

punishment and separation from society rather than to facilitate rehabilitation (Dhami & Cruise,

2013; Kenemore & Roldan, 2005). Former prisoners often suffer from invisible consequences of

imprisonment such as disenfranchisement (i.e. when voting rights are taken away while in prison) (Dhami & Cruise, 2013). This leads to a disconnect between the expectations for former prisoners to reintegrate successfully into society and the policies that impede their ability to do so (Demleitner, 2002). This contradiction has profound consequences for dynamics within society and the workplace, including discrimination against former prisoners seeking employment, social and structural biases, as well as perpetuating stereotypes and divisions.

By shedding light on the employment experiences of former prisoners, the present research aims to encourage more inclusive, anti-discrimination social and organization policies for former prisoners. As we have learned from the experiences of LGBT research nondiscrimination policies can be powerful in terms of encouraging individuals to feel comfortable revealing their invisible identity, increasing their satisfaction with employment, and by reducing the stress they feel at work (Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Green, Payne, & Green, 2011; Mulé et al., 2009). However, these policies can be limited as an approach to workplace equality and cannot be relied on solely for social change within work environments. Perhaps, the suggestion made by Kollen (2013) for thorough public education regarding employment rights, a focus on occupational cultures, as well as a recognition of broader cultural factors can significantly impact an individual's confidence in disclosing an invisible identity. Additionally, developing knowledge about the employment experiences of former prisoners may have important implications for understanding the employment experiences of many other groups of individuals who can also be identified as invisibly stigmatized (e.g. mentally and physically disabled, persons with chronic illness). It is my hope that the present research will contribute to constructing more inclusive working environments that include considerations for invisible minority groups, such as former prisoners who are typically excluded from diversity initiatives.

Inclusive work environments have been associated with lower levels of conflict, higher job satisfaction, and lower overall turnover (Holvino, Ferdman, & Merrill-Sands, 2004; Nishii, 2013). As Nishii (2013) points out (p.1754):

"The implementation of diversity practices that are targeted specifically at improving the employment outcomes of historically disadvantaged groups such as women and ethnic minorities may, in and of itself, fail to foster true inclusion." In order to truly managing the benefits and costs associated with diversity, organizations will need to create environments that are inclusive of all employees (Davidson & Ferdman, 2001; Shore et al., 2011) including former prisoners.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

For former prisoners, like most adult members of society, gainful employment is an important source of identity (Luyckx, Schwartz, Goossens, & Pollock, 2008; Uggen, 2000). Employment can be seen as a positive way for individuals to contribute to society, and have a sense of purpose and meaning. In particular, stable employment has been identified as an important factor successful reintegration post-release as it enables one to provide for themselves and for their family (Petersilia, 2007). However, individual and societal constraints continue to limit employment prospects and security post-release (Henry & Jacobs, 2007). For example, individual constraints include the adjustments individuals make as they transition from a correctional institution to society. Overcoming any negative self-perceptions that have been internalized while incarcerated can also be seen as an individual constraint to reintegration into society, and more specifically the workplace. Legal and corporate constraints exist within society and will vary across social and cultural contexts. Legal barriers post-release include a lack of access to housing, access to public assistance (e.g. disability, welfare), inability to vote, difficulty obtaining student loans, and revocation of a driver's license (Hoskins, 2014; Luther, Reichert, Holloway, Roth, & Aalsma, 2011). Furthermore, occupational requirements and corporate policies may exclude former prisoner entry into particular occupations (Harris & Keller, 2005). Depending on the occupation and service provided, organizations may request a criminal background check (Connerley, Arvey, & Bernardy, 2001; Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2006) and/or a credit bureau investigation (Bonanni, Drysdale, Hughes, & Doyle, 2011), which may pose as a barrier to employment for former prisoners. Acknowledging the array of limitations that they face; many former prisoners have the unique challenge and ability to decide how they will manage their former prisoner identity in a way that will enable them to have access to the work

environment. For example, will they disclose their identity? Thus, leaving themselves exposed and open to stigmatization, or, will they conceal it, in turn protecting themselves from judgment and other potential disadvantages. Each of these choices is shaped by several internal and external influences. Considering the ensuing psychological and social effects of identity disclosure and concealment lends insight to our understanding of the implications for the employment of individuals post-release.

Drawing from identity disclosure and concealment literatures, social identity theory and stigma theory will be applied to shape an understanding of how the former prisoner identity impacts one's decision to disclose or conceal their identity and in turn their ability to obtain employment. Social identity theory purports that within social contexts, individuals are categorized into socially relevant groups, equipping individuals with various social identities. Complementing this view, stigma theory denotes that certain social identities are socially stigmatized such that individuals who bear a socially stigmatized identity are devalued within a given social context. Social identity theory contributes to our understanding of the social relevance of and perceptions accompanying the former prisoner identity in an employment context, while stigma theory shapes our understanding of the inherent discrediting nature of this identity. Recognizing that individuals are typically aware of the social stigmas held towards their former prisoner identity (Pachankis, 2007), they are faced with the choice to manage that identity accordingly. Disclosure and concealment will be explored as distinct identity management strategies. Various psychological benefits and costs associated with concealment and disclosure will be considered as well as an exploration of the effects of one's self-concept and ensuing employment implications.

This chapter is organized into several integrated sections that will present a review of the literature and the hypotheses for the present study. This chapter will also shape an understanding of how former prisoner perceptions and expectations may influence invisible stigmatized identity management strategies and in turn employment outcomes. The literature review will begin by framing the former prisoner identity within a social identity perspective as a relevant social category in the employment context. Next, stigma theory will be reviewed in consideration of the discrediting nature of the former prisoner identity. Following this theoretical framing, a review of various means to manage the socially stigmatized former prisoner identity will be presented specifically focusing on outlining two key strategies: identity disclosure and concealment. The literature review will then elucidate findings from previous studies on the antecedents and outcomes of concealment and disclosure throughout the employment process, to lay a foundation for the hypotheses. This will be followed by a review of the effects of individual perceptions and internalization of stigma and the resulting employment effects. Overall hypotheses will be presented which outline the mediating role of disclosure and concealment in linking individual perceptions and internalized stigma with employment as well as the moderating role of self-efficacy in influencing this mediation.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1985) is a social psychological theory that can be used to shape our understanding of how an identity is structured and functions within a social setting. Social identity theory purports that individuals typically classify themselves and others into several social categories (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). This perspective suggests that this social classification enables individuals to locate or define themselves within their social environment. A social identity is an individual's awareness of being classified as a member of a

particular social category or group (Abrams & Hogg, 1988). More specifically, SIT views the group and intergroup relations as the primary basis for identity (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Stets & Burke, 2000). From this perspective, relations and processes within a group setting take effect as the socially constructed, multifaceted and dynamic social self interacts with others (Hogg et al., 1995).

Given the conceptual link between social structure and individual outcomes (Hogg et al., 1995) there may also be social and relational consequences associated with bearing any given identity (Lane & Wegner, 1995; Smart & Wegner, 1999). Social identity theorists emphasize the significance of the underlying sociocognitive processes that influence an individual's responsiveness to their immediate context (Hogg et al., 1995). *Categorization* describes the sociocognitive process whereby intergroup boundaries are sharpened as group-distinctive stereotypical and normative perceptions and actions are produced. The contextually relevant categories into which individuals are placed are assigned within a particular context (Hogg et al., 1995). From this perspective, social identities are relational and comparative such that individuals are defined relative to individuals in other categories (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). For instance, the category of "deviant" is meaningful as it relates to the category of "non-deviant". Thus, a social category describes a set of individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category, all in contrast to members of outgroups (Stets & Burke, 2000).

According to SIT, social categories precede individuals as individuals are born into an already structured society and exist only in relation to other contrasting categories (e,g. male vs. female; tall vs. short, deviant vs. non-deviant) (Stets & Burke, 2000). As a result, perceived similarities between the self and other in-group members are highlighted, which contributes to a

perception of differences between the self and out-group members (Stets & Burke, 2000).

Through this social comparison process individuals identify as members of one group/category –

the "in-group" in comparison with other persons who differ – the "out-group" (Stets & Burke,

2000). For former prisoners, their incarceration and reintegration experiences as well as the

criminal label imposed by their criminal record, indicate their belongingness to a social category

(i.e., former prisoner) that is separate from the accepted (i.e., non-former prisoner) "norm" in

society. Devalued social identities have been referenced in the literature as: *negative,*

subordinate, unequal/low status, unsatisfactory. This social distinction may be especially

relevant for former prisoners in the work contexts where social deviants from the norm may be

less socially acceptable. This may be true for a variety of stigmatized groups, (i.e. those socially

categorically different in terms of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and religious beliefs).

However, in the workplace stigmatized individuals increasingly have access to claim a positive

social identity through their interactions with like-others (i.e. those in their in-group) through

socially supported forums (i.e., affinity groups, social events). For former prisoners, many are

prohibited from associating with other former prisoners by the conditions of their parole

(Harding, 2003). In this way, many of these individuals are not able to seek social support among

those who are similarly stigmatized and in turn they may have a more limited ability to claim a

positive social identity in the work environment (Harding, 2003). As a greatly socially

stigmatized group (Moore et al., 2013), this limited ability to identify positively with like-others

further exacerbates their experiences as stigmatized individuals in the workplace.

Stigma Theory

Goffman (1963) conceptualized a stigma as a trait or characteristic that causes an

individual to lose prestige in the eyes of others. Furthermore, stigma is said to discount one's

credibility and to be associated with undesirable characteristics within certain contexts (Chui &

Cheng, 2013; Link & Phelan, 2001). This discrediting attribute tends to develop into the dominant identities by which an individual is perceived (Goffman, 1963). In other words, certain individuals bear a stigmatized social identity due to the nature of a particular social or organizational context rather than based on any self-discrediting features (DeJordy, 2008). As such, stigma may be best understood in a particular social context as it functions as a process of social rejection, devaluation and/or discrimination (Goffman, 1963; Jones et al., 1984). A socially stigmatized identity can be described as a social identity that is devalued in a particular social context (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998). Socially stigmatized identities are typically less socially acceptable in comparison to other social identities and regarded as deviant from the social norm (Crocker et al., 1998; Hebl & Dovidio, 2005). Here, the workplace is the focal social context. In many work environments, a criminal past and history of incarceration is regarded as deviant from the norm, and is in turn stigmatized.

Stigma is a multifaceted construct that impacts individual behavior and may limit individual outcomes in the employment context (Moore et al., 2013). Structural, social, and individual barriers often shape an individual's experiences of stigma. Given these limitations, Link & Phelan (2001) note three specific aspects of stigma that should be considered in understanding experiences of stigmatization in social settings: structural discrimination, health and personal relationships, and coping strategies. Here, each of these components will be applied in their relevance to the work environment.

First, stigma may evolve into *structural discrimination*, which can produce negative outcomes that are unrelated to stereotyped beliefs associated with the stigmatized group. While some individuals are privileged within social power structures, others are discounted (Ahrens, 2006) and stigma may be imposed on an individual or group by a more powerful group (i.e.

community, government, employers) (Link & Phelan, 2001). Structural discrimination includes governing laws and organizational policies, which ultimately restrict certain individuals from participating in an organization or society (Corrigan, 2005). For example, former prisoners face barriers to obtaining and securing employment although their incarceration and past criminal activities may have nothing to do with their ability as workers.

Suspension of certain rights and privileges vary across local and national contexts. Depending on the location, some of the limitations that former prisoners may face that can affect employment include: legal restrictions (e.g. housing, public assistance, student loans, and driver's licenses), occupational licensing requirements, mandatory criminal records checks, and credit bureau investigations (see Chapter 1). In this way, the stigma associated with incarceration comes as a collateral cost (Dominguez Alvarez & Loureiro, 2012). The economic costs that former prisoners endure post-release include lower wages (Rasmusen, 1996) or unemployment (Furuya, 2002). Former prisoners may also be more likely to be taken advantage of by employers such that they are overworked (Purser, 2012) and are left dissatisfied with their pay (Visher et al., 2008). In certain occupations, employers may take advantage of them knowing that that they are vulnerable and that their employment opportunities are limited (Atkin & Armstrong, 2013). For instance, Purser (2012) conducted an ethnographic study of the day labour industry in Maryland, U.S. where former prisoners are actively recruited. Purser (2012) found that these employers consistently take advantage of the fact that former prisoners are a vulnerable, stigmatized, pliable, and in turn easily exploitable source of labor. Although the former prisoners in this study were trying to make an honest living, instead they experienced a perilous employment relationship characterized by them as entrapping, as an extended incarceration and as an enduring form of punishment.

Second, the social status loss associated with bearing a stigmatized identity that can have implications for many life domains including *health and personal relationships.* According to social stress theory (Meyer, 2003), the circumstances within a social environment are sources of stress that may lead to mental and physical health concerns. Using meta-analyses, Meyer (2003) found that lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals are more likely to have mental health problems than heterosexuals as a result of their experiences of minority stress. The concept of minority stress suggests that their experiences of stigma, prejudice, and discrimination produce hostility and stress within a social environment that can cause mental disorders. Similar effects have been found within the former prisoner population. For instance, Turney, Lee, & Comfort (2013) studied a sample of men in California who were recently released from prison and found that they experienced psychological distress based on the criminal record discrimination they faced post-release. Gausel & Thørrisen (2014) proposed that former inmates might experience *multiple stigmas* where an individual faces social stigmatization based on multiple stigmatized associations (i.e. former prisoner and intellectual disability). Gausel and Thørrisen (2014) note that individuals experiencing multiple stigma may be more susceptible to ostracism which may increase their risk for depression, anxiety, and sense of alienation. Considering the possible interaction between visible and invisible sitgmatized identities, for individuals experiencing this, experiences of bias related to visible stigmatizing attributes or identities (e.g. racial minority) may be associated with apprehension towards revealing an invisible identity (Clair, Beatty & MacLean, 2005).

In the criminology literature, a labeling theory perspective lends insight into the structural and social stigmas that ostracize former prisoners, potentially influencing their withdrawal from the community (Moore et al., 2013). Social stigmas represent the collective stigmatizing attitudes

and discrimination held towards a group of people (Corrigan, Larson, & Kuwabara, 2010). Social stigmas tend to create an extensive social distance that leads individuals to experience discrimination (Link, Cullen, Frank, & Wozniak, 1987). In particular, Maruna (2001) purports that an individual's experiences of conviction and subsequent incarceration often fuel their negative views of and detachment from society. From this point of view, it is clear that stigma may have negative implications, for those whose perceptions or anticipated stigma lead to negative emotions such as shame, discouragement, or anger (Moore et al., 2013). However, individual experiences will vary - stigma can also have positive implications, for those whose perceptions of their expected experiences of stigma fuel their preparation to overcome any anticipated challenges they may encounter (Moore et al., 2013).

Social sanctions are especially prevalent in an environment in which a stigmatized identity or characteristic is particularly relevant (Moran, 2012). From this perspective, a key component in understanding the devaluing nature of bearing a stigmatized identity is to consider the context in which an individual experiences that stigmatized identity. Stigmatization has been associated with various social sanctions that are experienced and portrayed through individual outcomes and social cues, differentiation, labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss and discrimination (Link & Phelan, 2001), unemployment and income loss (Visher et al., 2008). Social cues portrayed through interactions with others and various forms of media may inform individual perceptions of their social identity. The consequences of these individual experiences of stigma include depression (Staring, Van der Gaag, Van den Berge, Duivenvoorden, & Mulder, 2009) and poor social functioning (Yanos et al., 2012). Link & Phelan (2001) note that the *strategies used to cope* with stigma may also have consequences for individuals. Individual responses to stigma (i.e. identity management) tend to be influenced by their experiences post-

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release, their perceptions of the social stigma held toward their social identity (i.e. perceived stigma) (Corrigan et al., 2010), as well as the extent to which they accept the stereotypes associated with the former prisoner identity and consequently feel devalued (i.e. internalized stigma) (Vogel, Bitman, Hammer, & Wade, 2013).

Perceptions of Social Stigmas

Stigma theory suggests that perceptions of stigma precede anticipation of rejection (Link et al., 1989). In accordance with this view, Moore et al. (2013) draw from data collected from a larger longitudinal study (Tangney, Mashek & Stuewig, 2007) from an urban adult detention center. Moore et al. (2013) found that the incarcerated individuals studied, perceived that the public held a high level of stigma towards them. Similarly, LeBel (2012) measured 229 former prisoners' perceived stigma toward ex-offenders and found that participants perceived that society would have overall negative stigmatizing attitudes towards ex-offenders and would discriminate against them accordingly. Winnick and Bodkin (2008) examined male offenders perceptions of how people in society would react to the label of ''ex-con''. The authors found that the participants expected a great deal of stigma and reported perceiving greater stigma tied to items in the domains of employment and childcare. In their study of the embodiment of the prison experience for female prisoners in the Russian penal system, Moran (2012) conducted interviews that revealed that former prisoners' perception of stigma was felt to be visible to others, so much so that they felt as though they were inherently marked as 'disadvantaged' in comparison to others as they reintegrated. Each of these studies demonstrates former prisoner expectations and perceptions of stigma towards them as a result of having been incarcerated.

Negative perceptions of stigma are prevalent amongst individuals post-release and can play an important role in determining how they will manage their stigmatized identity (Harding, 2003). Moore et al. (2013) suggest that although individuals respond differently to experience

and perceptions of stigma, mere awareness and perception of social stigma are associated with poor psychological and social functioning and this will affect the consequences they experience. On the other hand, some stigmatized individuals may choose to be empowered by their stigmatized identity. In a study of women with long-term mental health problems, Camp, Finlay, & Lyons (2002) found that in spite of their awareness of the negative stereotypes and stigma of mental illness, the participants did not endorse those perceptions. Rather, the sample of women felt that they were not responsible for the stigma perceptions of others, and that instead stigma perceptions were merely a flaw of individuals who hold these stigmatizing perceptions. Positive effects of perceived stigma have also been found for former prisoners. Moore et al. (2013) found that for African American former prisoners, perceived stigma positively predicted their employment status and length of employment post-release.

Various individual differences may influence perceptions of and reactions to stigma. For instance, number of convictions may impact individual perceptions of stigma. Winnick and Bodkin (2008) found that individuals with several prior convictions perceive significantly less stigma towards individuals with a criminal history. From another perspective, individuals from a variety of ethnic backgrounds experience having a criminal record as a major disadvantage in obtaining employment (Eley, 2007), yet there has been some evidence of differing effects. For instance, Harris (1976) found that amongst their sample of black and white male inmates in New Jersey, the white males were more susceptible to the labeling effects of incarceration as compared to the black males. Harris (1976) postulated that blacks and whites experience differing social reactions to their deviance, which may impact their experiences of stigma. As an example, the general population may expect social deviance from blacks based on racial stereotypes, whereas this expectation may not be as pronounced for whites. Similarly, Winnick

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& Bodkin (2008) African-American prisoners perceived less stigma towards ex-convicts than white prisoners.

As individuals manage their socially stigmatized identity, they may try to overcome that identity by trying to leave the stigmatized social category with which they are associated or to find ways of achieving more positive distinctiveness for it (Brown, 2000). SIT is guided by the assumption that people have a desire to see themselves in a positive light in comparison to relevant others (Brown, 2000; Hogg et al., 1995) and that everyone seeks to experience social acceptance through peer relations (Abrams, Anderson-Nathe, & Aguilar, 2008). Professional image construction (Roberts, 2005) is a relevant consideration when considering how the former prisoner identity functions in the employment context. For instance, according to self-monitoring theory (Snyder, 1987) individuals consider whether they believe they are meeting social expectations in a particular environment. Depending on their self-appraisals, individuals observe, regulate, and control their behaviour in that context which may inform their approach to identity management (Clair, Beatty, & MacLean, 2005). From this perspective, Clair, Beatty, and MacLean (2005) suggest that high self-monitors may be more effective at tailoring their image. Social identity theorists suggest that a positive identity derives largely from favorable comparisons that can be made between the ingroup and relevant outgroups (Hogg et al., 1995). In this way, when an individual socially identifies with a particular group we can expect that they will at least attempt to enhance social evaluation of that group in an effort to enhance their own self-evaluation as group members (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). This process has been referred to as enhancement of self-esteem (Stets & Burke, 2000). Thus, enhancement guides the social categorization process such that people may show intergroup differentiation (Brown, 2000) and develop norms and stereotypes that largely favor the in-group

(Hogg et al., 1995) in an effort to feel good about their group and themselves. In a social environment where one's social identity is inherently devalued, an individual may have a stronger drive to overcome those negative perceptions by overcoming negative expectations (i.e. by obtaining employment). Given the link between positive self perceptions and individual actions to enhance self-esteem, I expect that as individuals hold more positive views of their identity, or at least have a positive outlook, their ability to obtain employment will also be positively affected.

H1: Former prisoner perceptions of social stigmas held towards their former prisoner identity will be positively related to their ability to obtain employment

Internalization of Stigma

In order for an individual to understand how they fit into and are likely perceived within a given context, it is useful to be aware of how they are perceived in comparison to others in that context. According to SIT, this aim can be achieved in social contexts through *social classification*, which creates and defines an individual's place within a context (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) by way of two primary functions. First, social classification enables the social environment to be segmented, which provides individuals with a systematic means of defining others. Secondly, social classification enables individuals to locate or define themselves within a social environment (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) by way of social identification. *Social identification* describes the perception of oneness with or belongingness to a particular social group (category). Once individuals have defined themselves in terms of a particular category they may begin to feel like an actual or symbolic member of that category and in turn expect the associated outcomes to apply to them as well (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

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For instance, Winnick and Bodkin (2008) studied 450 adult incarcerated men in a medium-minimum security correctional institution in Ohio and found that they appeared to keenly anticipate rejection from others. These perceptions were especially pronounced for white respondents and tied significantly to their concerns about employment. In this way, when an individual socially identifies with a group, this may affect the outcomes that individual experiences in a particular context. Relatedly, individual perceptions of the relevance of the social context may inform how they manage impressions of that identity. In a study of individuals with an eating disorder, Smart and Wegner (1999) found that in social contexts where this stigmatized identity was perceived to be relevant, individuals became preoccupied with controlling stigma-related thoughts which were expressed as they concealed, suppressed, and projected their experience of instrusive thoughts onto an individual who did not bear the same stigmatized identity.

It is important to note that social identification does not mean that an individual is actively trying to behave in accordance with or achieve any of the negative stereotypical expectations associated with a stigmatized social identity. Rather, when an individual identifies with a group, they merely feel as though their own experiences and outcomes are intertwined with the fate of the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Therefore, for former prisoners bearing an identity, as a former prisoner does not entail that an individual will attempt to act in accordance with societal expectations or perceptions of this group. In addition, an individual will continue to socially identify with a particular social category so long as they are actively experiencing any expected outcomes associated with identifying with that social category (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Thus, for a former prisoner experiencing social identification, this may mean that if they are under the impression that former prisoners typically fail to secure employment, and when

that becomes their own experience, this is likely to fuel how they socially identify, such that they are likely to feel as though they will continue experiencing the prospects associated with bearing an identity as a former prisoner.

Former prisoners may experience differing outcomes based on the degree to which they internalize these feelings (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). 'Self-stigma' has been used synonymously with 'internalized stigma' to reflect an individual's internalization of stigma (Corrigan & Shapiro, 2010; Mak & Cheung, 2010). Individuals who are labeled as deviants within a social setting tend to be set apart, which may lead to internalization of that label (Harding, 2003). Internalized stigma has been conceptualized as a mental state in which a stigmatized individual accepts their experiences of discrimination and stigmatization and come to consider these negative social experiences and opinions as a true reflection of who they are (Moore et al., 2013).

Internalization of stigma affects one's responses to their felt stigma (Moran, 2012). For instance, an individual may be influenced to have self-stigmatizing beliefs about themselves as internalization has been linked to low self-esteem, depression, and social isolation (Corrigan & Shapiro, 2010; Corrigan, Watson, & Barr, 2006). Furthermore, Campbell and Deacon (2006) argued that even if individuals are not exposed to overt discrimination, they may still internalize negative representations of their stigmatized identity, which may lower their self-confidence and self-esteem and influence whether they challenge or address their devalued status. The implications of stigma internalization are concerning since this may hinder one's ability to successfully reintegrate into society post-release (Chui & Cheng, 2013). Labeling theory (Scheff, 1974) purports that individuals internalize the stigmas associated with being labeled as a criminal, which in turn affects their behavioral outcomes (i.e. employment). Ultimately, one's

internalization of social stigmas can be expected to negatively impact their employment prospects post-release.

H2: Former prisoner stigma internalization will be negatively related to their ability to obtain employment

Managing the Former Prisoner Identity

In social settings, there are shared social norms that are generally accepted by the majority of the populace, and any deviations from these social norms tend to have negative consequences for those considered as social deviants. Those who are stigmatized bear at least one trait or characteristic that deviates from this norm and this will influence their choice of management strategy (Harding, 2003). Former prisoners may engage in identity management strategies (e.g. disclosure or concealment) as a means of coping with their experiences and perceptions of stigma post-release. For some former prisoners, these challenges tend to make them want to disassociate the former prisoner identity – "to escape the consequences of the label and to find a new sense of self" (Dwyer, 2013, p. 438).

When they are released former prisoners may encounter employers who are not receptive to employing individuals with a history of incarceration (Albright & Denq, 1996; Pager & Quillian, 2005). Thus, individual reactions to disclosure within the work environment may be affected by this overarching perception. For former prisoners, disclosure and concealment decisions in an employment context typically entail choosing a willingness to potentially be exposed to stigmatization or to possibly forfeit an employment opportunity (Chui & Cheng, 2013). When an invisible stigmatized identity is discovered in an organization, the stigmatized individual may be denied employment or if already employed, this revelation could lead to their loss of employment (Pachankis, 2007). In this way, the stigma attributed to former prisoners not

only impacts their prospects for becoming employed, it also affects the choices and opportunities they have in selecting their occupation as many are relegated to short-term, temporary, low-skill, low-wage employment (Harding, 2003). Several former prisoners also struggle under restrictive parole guidelines that complicate successful reintegration (Richards & Jones, 2004) such that the area/parameter they can work within is limited, further limiting their access to employment opportunities.

Past research on stigmatized minority identities has generally focused on individual characteristics that are associated with a genetic or biological component (e.g. racial minorities or sexual minorities) (Plante, Roberts, Reysen, & Gerbasi, 2013). Instead, for former prisoners, belonging to the group may be assumed to be a matter of choice. This perception of choice may lead others to trivialize their identity due to a lack of essentialism or meaningfulness (Plante et al., 2013). In essence, while an invisible stigmatized identity can be subsumed under a social identity (Sedlovskaya et al., 2013) and can be hidden from others (Jones et al., 1984), those who have an invisible stigmatized identity tend to be subjected to social marginalization (Crocker et al., 1998; Quinn, 2006; Quinn & Chaudoir, 2009), distress (Ragins, 2008; Ragins et al., 2007; Sedlovskaya et al., 2013) as well as a number of unique psychosocial challenges (Pachankis, 2007; Quinn, 2006; Ragins et al., 2007).

Individuals have personal boundaries that enable them to maintain ownership and control over personally relevant information (Petronio, 2002). Therefore, societal norms not only dictate what (or whom) is stigmatized but also the expectation that those who bear an identity that would be stigmatized are responsible for revealing their marginalized status (Cole, 2006; Mak & Cheung, 2010; Quinn, 2006) and accepting the associated social consequences (DeJordy, 2008). Within a social environment, this involves consistently evaluating who is aware of their stigma,

who may suspect their stigma, and who has no suspicion of their stigmatized identity (Pachankis, 2007). Since the former prisoner identity is particularly socially discredited, there is a greater social expectation for individuals to reveal that identity to others (DeJordy, 2008). Recognizing whether, when, and to whom to disclose their identity (Bosson, Weaver, & Prewitt-Freilino, 2012) can have important implications for a former prisoner's experiences within an environment. Due to parole restrictions post-release, former prisoners are often subject to being isolated from similarly stigmatized others, and being detached from their true self (Pachankis, 2007). Thus, while in the presence of those who are unaware of their stigmatized identity, former prisoners may experience elevated concerns about being exposed and excluded from a social environment (Bosson et al., 2012). Relationships that foster inclusion seem to encourage individuals to be more open about their status, than those fostering exclusion, which are more likely to cause an individual to withdraw and be more secretive (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). In light of this, former prisoners may be more likely to experience psychological and physical well-being in the presence of social support (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010).

A number of identity management techniques that individuals use to negotiate, manage, or cope with the challenges associated with bearing an invisible stigmatized identity have been identified in the literature (Harding, 2003). Each of the identity management strategies involves concrete decisions about elements of disclosing or concealing information within a social context (Plante et al., 2013).

Deflection refers to avoiding negative social consequences by educating and informing others before one's secret is exposed (Herman, 1993). Deflection through education aims to normalize the stigmatized attribute (Herman, 1993). For former prisoners this may include educating others

about the challenges former prisoners face once they have been released from prison and/or debunking the many myths/stereotypes associated with former prisoners.

Defying the expectations created by the stigmatized identity is when an individual actively attempts to reduce the dominant perceptions of a stigma by displaying attributes that disprove those common stereotypes associated with the stigma (Taub, Blinde, & Greer, 1999). In this way, an individual acknowledges the stigma and in turn endeavours to reduce its impact (Harding, 2003). For former prisoners, this may mean working extra hard in an effort to display their dedication to their work and capabilities rather than association with their history of incarceration.

Identity substitution involves disclosing deviant identity that is less stigmatized than one's true identity (Park, 2002). This involves drawing from and switching identities to suit the social context. A similar concept "identity switching" identified by Shih, Young, and Bucher (2013) describes that individuals may place varying emphasis on and associate to varying degrees with a particular identity. For a former prisoner this may mean being honest about having a criminal record but not revealing their history of incarceration, or only revealing crimes committed that may not be considered as serious.

Conditional disclosure involves disclosing negative information at an opportune time within a suitable social situation. Recognizing that a former prisoner may determine the timing in which their identity is revealed, but not necessarily whether it is revealed (Harding, 2003), an individual may initially disguise a conviction and incarceration but later disclose his/her identity after a period of time (i.e. once they have proven they are a good employee). This method of disclosure appears to be least harmful when those receiving the information are able to take into account the individual's counteracting positive qualities (Harding, 2003). If successful, this technique may

facilitate obtaining employment and increases the chances of employment arrangement becoming long-term (Harding, 2003).

Counterfeiting describes deliberately constructing a false identity (Button, 2004). For former prisoners this may include fabricating aspects of one's past and/or present situation. This strategy can be compared to *avoidance*, which describes an individual's strategy in revealing nothing, and appearing non-deviant (Button, 2004). While avoidance does not entail deliberate fabrications, it requires consistent self-editing and half-truths (Woods, 1994) and may necessitate avoiding intimate social interactions with others.

Finally *withdrawal* involves avoiding interactions with individuals who may not be aware of one's stigma, and a preference for interacting with individuals who share the same stigma or are accepting of it (Goffman, 1963; Herman, 1993; Jones et al., 1984). From this perspective, withdrawal protects the stigmatized individual from rejection or difficult social interactions by limiting social contact to those who are accepting of one's true identity (Harding, 2003; Lee & Craft, 2002).

The former prisoner identity can be disclosed or concealed at the discretion of the individual bearing the identity. Choosing whether to disclose or conceal one's identity comes with its own unique set of consequences. While remaining secretive about one's true identity may mean that one can hide from any denunciation by others (Chui & Cheng, 2013). Concealment also jeopardizes one's intimacy with others (Lee & Craft, 2002), and means that they cannot be known for their true self. On the other hand, opening up about their identity might invite unfavorable responses such as threats to social status, rejection, labeling, discrimination, and punishment (Crocker et al., 1998; Lee & Craft, 2002; Quinn, 2006). For former prisoners, the consequences associated with disclosure and concealment may be particularly prominent in

the workplace, where their stigmatized identity may be especially relevant (Pachankis, 2007). There, the former prisoner identity may be viewed as deviant from the "norm". Ultimately, former prisoners are often particularly aware of the stigmas held towards this identity and the onus to manage their identity by either disclosing it to or concealing it from others. Recognizing this, the following sections will explore disclosure and concealment as identity management strategies.

Disclosure (revealing)

Disclosure is a self-regulatory strategy that can be used to manage privacy boundaries (Petronio, 2002). Jourard (1971) offered one of the earliest definitions of self-disclosure as an act of making oneself discernible, such that one can be distinguished from and perceived by others. Cozby (1973) expanded on this definition further noting that self-disclosure includes verbal communication of *self-relevant* information to another. Here, disclosure is described as verbally revealing personal information (i.e. invisible stigmatized identity) to a chosen confidant. For former prisoners, the act of disclosure is accompanied by an awareness that the information revealed may be perceived as undesirable or be associated with negative connotations (Allen & Carlson, 2003; Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Research suggests that given this awareness, an individual's willingness to take risks may be relevant to disclosure decisions. For instance, individuals that are less risk averse may be more likely to disclose a stigmatized identity (Clair, Beatty, & MacLean, 2005).

Disclosure requires individuals to be articulate and persuasive enough to convince an employer to consider one as an employment candidate in spite of one's incarceration history and criminal record (Harding, 2003). This involves effectively defying stereotypes towards former prisoners, as well as exhibiting perseverance, self-confidence, and proficiency (Harding, 2003).

Accordingly, disclosing a stigmatized identity can be a challenging task as it is a multifaceted process that involves exercising self-control, effective communication, and the ability to cope with disclosure outcomes (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Individuals who chose to disclose are tasked with finding a suitable time and place to reveal their sensitive information, and they must reveal information in a way that is understandable and does not leave the confidant feeling uncomfortable (Cozby, 1973). The content associated with disclosure has been described by three basic parameters *(a)* breadth or quantity of the disclosed information, *(b)* depth or intimacy of the disclosed information, and *(c)* duration or time devoted to discussing the information (Cozby, 1973). *Breadth* refers to the number of matters and level of detail disclosed (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). For a former prisoner, this may translate to a variance in the degree of detail an individual chooses to expose about their history of incarceration and associated criminal record. *Depth* refers to the degree to which the information disclosed is considered private or intimate (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Revealing a stigmatized identity can be considered to be inherently intimate when it involves revelations of affective content (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). The role of emotions is particularly relevant for former prisoners since their prison and reintegration experiences in and of themselves may be characterized by a multitude of emotions (e.g. shame, guilt, and depression). Furthermore, the former prisoner identity, especially in the work context may be deemed an especially important piece of information to others. Lastly, *duration* refers to how much time an individual spends to speaking about their invisible stigmatized identity (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). In this way, an individual may choose to talk at great length about the experiences that surround their incarceration or they may prefer to succinctly reveal the information (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010).

Disclosure and Employment

The environment in which disclosure takes place can impact how the disclosed information will be perceived by those receiving the information (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Once an individual decides to disclose their identity there may be psychological, health and behavioral consequences (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010). Chaudoir and Fisher, (2010) suggest that disclosure may be burdensome to those who are likely to constantly evaluate potential situational cues that signal devaluation and that this cognitive burden can impede one's performance at work. Yet, disclosure experiences that are positive and supportive can have long-term psychological benefits (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010; Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010; Major et al., 1990; Rodriguez & Kelly, 2006). Following this assertion, Chaudoir and Fisher (2010) point out that a significant element in predicting whether the disclosure will be beneficial is the response of the confidant. Under certain circumstances, an individual may choose to disclose more to a person with high power than to a person with low power. For instance, Slobin, Miller, and Porter (1968) found that in an attempt to establish intimacy with their boss, employees of a large insurance company in the United States reported greater disclosure to immediate superiors than to immediate subordinates. Yet, problems after disclosure tend to be reported within relationships with both coworkers and supervisors. Based on a survey of the experiences of individuals with various mental illness, (Wahl, 1999) found that in the workplace, coworkers and supervisors were rarely supportive and accommodating of individuals who had disclosed their mental illness. Similarly, in a qualitative case study of four women who had participated in a 20-week Psychosocial/Psychoeducational Intervention program, Bergmans et al. (2009) found that participants experienced stigmatizing reactions when they revealed their mental illness or suicide attempts to colleagues. Bergmans et al. (2009) suggest that such reactions from either coworkers

or supervisors may be counter-productive to an individual's desire to regain a positive sense of self.

When an individual discloses an invisible stigmatized identity, this implies that there has been a change in the social information available to a confidant. From this perspective disclosure can impact the nature of social interactions between a discloser and chosen confidante (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Worthy, Gary, and Kahn (1969) suggested that receiving self-disclosing information can be rewarding as disclosure implies that one is trusted, potentially yielding a level of intimacy between individuals (c.f. Cozby, 1973). In this way, disclosure from a former prisoner to another individual in the workplace may increase intimacy between two individuals in their working relationship. Based on a role-playing experiment, Cozby (1972) found that while disclosure lent itself to increasing intimacy between individuals, this intimacy may also be associated with various costs such as anxiety over revealing private information and concerns about interacting with an individual who is privy to this private information and responding unusually. When former prisoners disclose their social identity, they also open up the opportunity for the experiencing the social stigmas associated with that identity. Therefore, there is a risk that the quality of a relationship may be compromised (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). In essence, disclosing a stigmatized identity yields the potential for both rewards and risks (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010), and can have positive and/or negative effects on workplace relationships (Jones, 2011) and in turn, employment outcomes. For example, Granger (2000) found that disclosure was linked to premature job termination. Yet, disclosure is the only strategy available to those who must be subject to a background check based on the nature of the industry or level of responsibility in which they intend to work (Harding, 2003). Because of the difficulty of finding a job under this strategy, when the former prisoner does find a job, that individual

must be willing to remain in the job (Harding, 2003). Accordingly, some research has found a link between disclosure and increased job tenure (Fabian, Waterworth, & Ripke, 1993; Rollins, Mueser, Bond & Becker2002). However, disclosure has not been consistently linked to an individual's ability to maintain employment (Jones, 2011). Despite the wide range of positive and negative effects that disclosure can have on employment outcomes, disclosure seems to have more positive effects for individuals, but presents several risks for negative social effects within the employment context.

H3a: Disclosure mediates the relationship between perception of social devaluation and discrimination with employment.

H3b: Disclosure mediates the relationship between internalization of stigma with employment.

Concealment (passing)
Stigmas are inherently expected to cause an individual to experience shame, guilt, and mistreatment from others. Accordingly, should an individual feel as though they need to protect themselves from these consequences (Harding, 2003) or if a person is not prepared to reveal (Defenbaugh, 2013) they may choose instead to conceal their identity (Lee & Craft, 2002). Goffman (1963) referred to this deliberate effort to conceal one's stigmatized identity as *passing*. Like disclosure, concealment involves control of information about the self (Sedlovskaya et al., 2013). More specifically, former prisoners conceal information about their deviant status from others to avoid rejection or any other negative social consequences (Goffman, 1963; Herman, 1993; Jones et al., 1984; Schneider & Conrad, 1980). Ahrens (2006) pointed out that one's choice to be silent about a defining aspect is illustrative of their perception of their own powerlessness in society. In this way, concealment can be seen as including heightened self-regulation, reduced self-verification, and reduced situational vigilance. Each of these

components diminish cognitive resources and create continual dissonance for individuals

employing concealment strategies (DeJordy, 2008; Frable, Blackstone, & Scherbaum, 1990).

More specifically, concealment often serves as an adaptation to an environment that is less

accepting of social deviations from the norm (Pachankis, 2007).

Concealment and Employment

Revealing sensitive information can seem risky and make one feel vulnerable

(Defenbaugh, 2013). Since the former prisoner stigma is not readily visible, unlike that of other

stigmatized individuals, keeping one's identity a secret, instead, can be an option to consider.

Concealment involves presenting oneself as non-stigmatized and covering one's socially

devalued identity (Barreto & Ellemers, 2003; Newheiser & Barreto, 2014). For former prisoners,

concealing their identity entails not admitting or telling their employer or coworkers about their

past incarceration. While concealing their identity may protect an individual from social

devaluation within a particular context, individuals risk facing prejudice and discrimination

should their invisible stigmatized identity be revealed (DeJordy, 2008; Newheiser & Barreto,

2014). Background checks and personal histories on resumes can be disruptive to identity

concealment as they enable some employers to formally identify ex-convicts (Harding, 2003).

Individuals who choose to conceal their identity often hope to benefit by keeping their

devalued identities hidden (Newheiser & Barreto, 2014). Bosson et al. (2012) proposed that

individual success in secrecy might produce positive feelings of self-determination and control.

While hiding their identity may shelter them from the denunciation of others, the onus to make

their identity known is on them (Chui & Cheng, 2013). As such, as an individual makes an effort

to conceal something important about themselves, they may face an internal struggle that can

have severe implications for their wellbeing, including heightened long-term distress (Barreto &

Ellemers, 2003; Ellemers & Barreto, 2006; Sedlovskaya et al., 2013). Although concealing a

stigmatized invisible identity may minimize one's experiences of stigma, concealment involves a necessary preoccupation with hiding one's identity (Ragins et al., 2007), which can be psychologically taxing (DeJordy, 2008). Furthermore, as an individual continues to successfully concealing their identity, they may perpetually experience fear of being found out (Ragins et al., 2007).

Concealing a stigmatized identity may limit an individual's ability to experience a sense of authenticity (Goffman, 1963). As such, concealment involves careful monitoring of one's behaviour to avoid exposure (Frable et al., 1990). Individuals with invisible stigmatized identities may be more cautious about revealing their identity in an environment where disclosing their identity could lead to exclusion. On the other hand, stigmatized individuals may be more open when they feel as though an environment encourages support and inclusivity (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). Environments that explicitly or implicitly encourage identity concealment may hinder interpersonal relationships (Newheiser & Barreto, 2014) and in turn prevent individuals from performing optimally (Critcher & Ferguson, 2013). In particular, individuals may be less motivated to disclose their identity in environments where they feel as though they may be heavily stigmatized, and this may be detrimental to their well being (Clair et al. 2005, Ragins, 2008). In examining the circumstances under which persons with genital herpes utilized various identity management strategies, Lee and Craft (2002) found that they favored secrecy when interacting with co-workers and withdrew from strangers. Yet, in order to maintain close relationships, individuals had to disclose their identity as this was exemplary of the integrity of the relationship (Lee & Craft, 2002). Given the importance of integrity and trust in many organizational environments, any hindrances to these elements are of great concern.

During the job application process, concealment has become increasingly difficult as employment forms increasingly require individuals to make their criminal record known to their prospective employers (Henry & Jacobs, 2007). Furthermore, long-term or higher-level employment can also be more difficult (Harding, 2003). Based on in-depth interviews with 15 male parolees, in New Jersey and New York City, Harding (2003) found that many of the individuals studied were consistently employed on either a long-term basis or in a series of short-term jobs, despite the challenges they faced obtaining employment. According to Harding (2003), success in obtaining employment seemed to be based on how individuals present themselves to potential employers - most individuals in the study chose to conceal their identity.

H4a: Concealment mediates the relationships between perception of social devaluation and discrimination with employment.

H4b: Concealment mediates the relationships between internalization with employment.

The Moderating Role of Self-Efficacy
For individuals who have been social categorized as a former prisoner, the former prisoner identity often characterizes how one is seen from a social perspective. As such, the defining characteristics of the category may provide individuals with definition of self that informs their self-concept (Hogg et al., 1995). From a social identity perspective, although individuals who have been incarcerated may have accepted the truth of their criminal past, they may choose to personally reject the social stigma and stereotypes associated with the criminal label and instead choose to believe in themselves as a positive, contributing member of society (Harding, 2003). This is in line with the *self-esteem motive*, which was initially a central component of the early formulation and development of social identity theory (Stets & Burke, 2000). Essentially, individuals aim to achieve or maintain a positive social identity. For many

stigmatized individuals, acceptance as a member of a group the can be essential to building their self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Crocker & Major, 1989). Thus, recognizing the social negativity associated with their criminal record and history of incarceration, fitting into a social environment such as the workplace may be especially desirable. In turn, they may be motivated to obtain and maintain gainful employment in order to protect or enhance their self-concept (Major & O'Brien, 2005; Stets & Burke, 2000). As such, individuals are expected to be motivated to obtain employment and recognize that in doing so they are faced with deciding how they will manage their former prisoner identity (as it is a salient identity), either by disclosing or concealing their identity.

From another perspective, society's negative view of the former prisoner identity may lead to various outcomes that can negatively impact the individual's sense of self (Dwyer, 2013). For individuals that perceive the stigmas associated with the former prisoner identity as justified (i.e. incarceration history should be a concern for prospective employers), seeing themselves as "reformed" may mean that they entirely object to being included in former prisoner social reintegration (Harding, 2003). Nevertheless, the search for employment may be consistently riddled with others who continue to treat them like criminals (if they know about their criminal past). As such, former prisoners may be faced with a discrepancy between their own self-concept and the social identity of the ex-convict and its associated stigma (see Harding, 2003).

Past research has suggested that in general individuals with an invisible stigmatized identity may have a lower sense of self (Frable et al., 1998). In fact, Frable et al. (1998) suggest that the relative inability to relate to similarly stigmatized others, could contribute to their low sense of self. Coincidingly, Camp et al. (2002) found that amongst their sample of women with mental illness, a common sense of identity felt within a women's group provided an accepting

and understanding network which contributed to their maintenance of a positive a positive self-concept.

As a significant component of understanding one's self-concept, self-efficacy has a primary influence on the actions that individuals choose to engage in. Self –efficacy is representative of one's perceived capability to perform an action and attain a desired outcome. In particular, individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy tend to have more confidence in their ability to achieve positive outcomes (Luszczynska, Scholz, & Schwarzer, 2005). Self-efficacy is described as an individual's belief in his/her ability to achieve a particular goal within a specific situation or context (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy has been conceptualized as equipping individuals with resilience in the face of adversity as well as persistence in confronting obstacles. In particular, Bandura (1986) notes that self-efficacy is not indicative of an individual's knowledge of what to do; rather it reveals an individual's judgment of their ability to perform a specific action.

Disclosure and self-efficacy

Disclosure can play an integral role in one's ability to form a positive sense of self (Pachankis, 2007). In particular, disclosure has been theorized to be a goal-oriented behavior such that people disclose to others based on specific motivations and goals (Derlega & Grzelak, 1979; Omarzu, 2000). Therefore, understanding the nature of the objectives that guide individual decisions to disclose their invisible stigmatized identity may be an important aspect in understanding disclosure outcomes (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010).

As mentioned earlier, a social identity theory perspective lends insight into our understanding of the self-esteem motive, whereby individuals aim to achieve or maintain a positive social identity by building their sense of self (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Crocker & Major, 1989). Individuals may be enabled to better express their thoughts and feelings, develop a sense

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of self, and build intimacy with others when they engage in disclosure (Derlega et al., 1993; Jourard, 1971). In particular, the relationship between self-disclosure and one's sense of self appears to be significant (Shapiro & Swensen, 1977). In a sample of seventy-six adolescents who identified as having lesbian mothers, there was a positive correlation between disclosing the lesbian identity of one's mother and having a high sense of self (Gershon, Tschann, & Jemerin, 1999). Worthy et al. (1969) found that disclosure can help to build intimacy in relationships, such that liking leads to disclosure to the other, and also that disclosure from another will lead to greater liking and can feel rewarding to the receiver of the information. In maintaining close relationships, disclosure is exemplary of the integrity of the relationship (Lee & Craft, 2002). However, most individuals tend to disclose less about more intimate topics (Jourard & Lasakow, 1958). This may be linked to the fact that individuals become vulnerable when they engage in interpersonal disclosure to social evaluation and in turn either garner social support or greater stigmatization (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). The vulnerability in disclosure decisions may impact individual outcomes depending on the strength of their self-concept (Nielsen, Rugulies, Hjortkjaer, Bültmann, & Christensen, 2013). Furthermore, individuals may be mindful that timing is key since disclosing highly intimate information too early in the development of a relationship may not contribute to likeness felt between two individuals and may be perceived as negative or inappropriate (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Self-efficacy can also influence the relationship between disclosure and employment outcomes depending on the legal and occupational context. In a qualitative study that addressed the decision to disclose or conceal disabling conditions, Allen and Carlson (2003) identified that legislation impacts an individual's choice to disclose their stigmatized identity. In particular, environments in which their identity is

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heavily stigmatized may be less conducive to appeal to their disclosure motives and well-being

(Clair et al. 2005, Ragins, 2008).

For former prisoners that choose to disclose their identity, I propose that self-efficacy—

the extent to which an individual believes in their own ability to obtain employment—moderates

the impact that perceptions of social stigmas, and internalization of stigmas has on one's ability

to obtain employment. Specifically, the more confidence a former prisoner has in their ability to

obtain employment, the more likely they will be successful in their endeavors to do so, inspite of

perceptions of social stigma and /or internalization of social stigmas.

H5a: Self-efficacy will moderate the strength of the mediated relationships between social

perception (Hypothesis 1) and employment via disclosure, such that the mediated relationship

will be stronger for an individual with high self-efficacy than an individual with low self-efficacy

H5b: Self-efficacy will moderate the strength of the mediated relationships between stigma

internalization (Hypothesis 2) and employment via disclosure, such that the mediated

relationship will be weaker for an individual with high self-efficacy than an individual with low

self-efficacy

Concealment and self-efficacy
An ability to conceal a socially devalued aspect of the self may be viewed by individuals

with invisible stigmas as highly advantageous in social interactions as it may enable them to

minimize their experiences of stigma and to be accepted as 'normal' (Goffman, 1963; Smart &

Wegner, 1999). Individuals often chose to hide their invisible stigmatized identity in order to

avoid negative social outcomes such as bias, rejection and/or anticipated stigma (Newheiser &

Barreto, 2014). Perceptions of social stigmas are typically more profound among released

prisoners as they tend to be more likely to anticipate rejection and discrimination (Chui &

Cheng, 2013). In this way, former prisoners may be especially motivated to conceal their stigmatized identity (Harding, 2003; Smart & Wegner, 1999; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008).

Concealing may actually undermine self-esteem and instead fuel ego depletion, which can impact subsequent individual outcomes (DeJordy, 2008). For instance, Jourard (1959) proposed that low disclosure is indicative of a self-suppression and a decreased ability to grow as an individual. In line with this notion, Kalichman and Nachimson (1999) conducted a study of HIV-positive men and women and found that concealing their HIV positive status from their sex partners was associated with low self-efficacy. Yet, it is important to consider environmental concerns in concealment decisions. Drawing from a sample of individuals with a disabling condition, Allen and Carlson (2003) identified that the attitude of individuals in the workplace were one of the main stakeholders in the individual reasons for concealment. In a separate study of men and women who were previously employed and undertaking a community supervisor community service order in Scotland, Eley (2007) reported that some of the individuals did not disclose their criminal record in order to be competitive when applying for jobs.

H6a: Self-efficacy will moderate the strength of the mediated relationships between social perception (Hypothesis 1) and employment via concealment, such that the mediated relationship will be stronger for an individual with high self-efficacy than an individual with low self-efficacy.

H6b: Self-efficacy will moderate the strength of the mediated relationships between stigma internalization (Hypothesis 2) and employment via concealment, such that the mediated relationship will be weaker for an individual with high self-efficacy than an individual with low self-efficacy.

As individuals with a socially stigmatized invisible identity, former prisoners are faced with the decision to decide how they will manage their former prisoner identity. In considering the role of identity management in the employment context, the present research considers two primary identity management strategies: disclosure and concealment. I will explore the former prisoner employment experience from former prisoner perspectives by considering how the decision to disclose or conceal is affected by their own perception of social stigmas towards their former prisoner identity as well as the internalization of stigma. In examining how the subsequent choice to disclose or conceal affects one's ability to obtain employment, I will consider the role of self-efficacy, particularly how a former prisoner's self-efficacious beliefs affect their employment prospects.

Overall Research Design

Recognizing the importance of employment to successful reintegration post-release as well as the discrediting and limiting nature of bearing a socially stigmatized identity as an individual after incarceration, the purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of the psychological mechanisms that inform identity management and the associated employment

effects. To address this purpose, this study employed an explanatory mixed methods design. This involved the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. Greater emphasis was placed on the quantitative study for addressing the study's purpose while the intent of the qualitative inquiry was to explain the quantitative results (Creswell & Clark, 2010). The quantitative aspect of the study involved distributing surveys to a sample of participants who had been incarcerated in a federal institution. Following the completion of the quantitative data collection and preliminary analyses, the qualitative inquiry involved semi-structured interviews with a separate sample of individuals to explore the identity management throughout the employment process more in depth.

The quantitative data is useful for highlighting the general experiences of individuals with a history of incarceration, while the semi-structured interviews give individuals a chance to articulate their post-release employment experiences in their own words. The qualitative data is useful for highlighting that no one blanket explanation or experience could be applied to explain the post-incarceration experience. Individual experiences and perceptions are composed of numerous elements such as: needs, expectations, past experiences, perspectives of incarceration, post-release experiences and support systems/resources. Each of these elements contributes to unique and individual experiences post-release. However, common themes are identified that may contribute to our understanding of (a) what makes the post-incarceration experience unique, and (b) how the experiences of the post-incarcerated might contribute to our understanding of other invisible socially stigmatized populations.

The information gathered from both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of this study were selected purposefully and analyzed separately in a concurrent manner (Creswell & Clark, 2010). In the chapters that follow, I outline the research design, analysis and results for the

quantitative and qualitative inquiries. Then, I discuss how the results of the qualitative study

inform the outcomes of the quantitative study and in turn contribute to understanding formers

prisoner employment experiences.

CHAPTER THREE: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

The quantitative portion of this mixed methods study involves survey data collection and analysis that is based on the perspectives of former prisoners released from federal institutions. This study focused on gaining a general understanding of how individual perceptions affect identity management decisions and in turn the extent to which individuals felt confident in their ability to obtain employment. This chapter begins by providing a description of the sample of individuals included in this study. Following this, the survey measures, data collection procedures and analytic approach are described in detail. The chapter closes with a discussion of the ethical considerations applicable to this study.

Sample

The sample for this study includes formerly incarcerated individuals who had been released from prison are in the process of reintegrating into society post-release (n=186). I as well as persons employed at a day reporting centre and five halfway houses solicited participants by informing their clients about the project. The participants were males that had been released from a federal institution and were on a supervised release in the community. Approximately 10 to 15 individuals were not able to fill out the survey on their own and were given the option to have the survey read to them by a volunteer or the primary researcher. Typical reasons for requiring assistance with the survey were: (a) literacy concerns (b) language barrier and (c) physical disability.

A purposive random sampling strategy was used to collect surveys from individuals who were (a) actively searching for employment post-release, (b) intended to or would consider searching for employment in the future, or (c) had searched for employment in the past post-incarceration. This specific subset of the population was targeted recognizing the study's specific focus on the interpretations of individuals that were either actively thinking of or considering

employment or had considered it in the past (post-incarceration). Most individuals who had been released from prison qualified for inclusion in this study since searching for and obtaining employment are typically key elements that are incorporated in release plans and parole conditions (Public Safety Canada, 2008). However, there were some individuals that chose not to participate based on: terminal illness, long-term disability or mental illness. Those individuals expressed that their circumstance had prevented them from being able to work; however, they were not purposefully excluded from the study.

Measures

The purpose of the survey was to tap into individual perspectives and experiences and as such all measures were obtained based on perceptual self-reported data. The survey required participants to (a) identify demographic and offence details and (b) provide answers to scale items. Recognizing that this may lead to common methods bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003; Spector & Brannick, 2010), this was accounted for in the statistical analysis.

Demographics and control variables

Individuals were asked to provide the following demographic information: age, marital status, number of children, religion, household income, highest level of education, and ethnicity. Each of these variables was useful for determining the representativeness of the sample.

Marital status, number of children, and household income were included to differentiate between individual characteristics and backgrounds. The control variables were identified based on their potential to affect the model variables. Age and years of education were controlled for as these have been found to be predictive of employability (Moore et al., 2013; Uggen, 2000). Furthermore, previous studies suggest that race may impact disclosure decisions (Dimond & Hellkamp, 1969; Jourard & Lasakow, 1958), perceptions of stigma (Winnick & Bodkin, 2009) and self-efficacy (Moore et al., 2013). Religion has also been found to be predictive of individual

propensities to disclose a stigmatized identity (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). In order to avoid any confounding results in relation to these constructs, race, and religion were also controlled for. Finally, criminal records may have differing effects on employment depending on the nature of the conviction. For instance, individuals who have been convicted of a sexual offence tend to experience greater barriers to employment in comparison with individuals who have committed other types of crime (Brown, Spencer, & Deakin, 2007; Waldfogel, 1994). Based on the impact that criminal history can have on employment, individuals were asked to identify: crime conviction, sentence length, and prison location. The respective security levels were recoded based on the current official security level of each institution. With reference to employment, participants were asked to identify whether they had been employed before they were incarcerated as well as whether they were currently employed, and to identify the occupation for either or both criteria. Next, I will outline each of the measures and scales that were used to test the hypotheses.

Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination.

Perception of social stigmatization was measured using the perceived devaluation and discrimination scale developed by Link et al. (1987). Perceived devaluation and discrimination (PDD) is a concept coined by Link et al. (1987) and represents individual expectations of rejection associated with a socially stigmatized aspect of their identity. In particular, The PDD scale was used to assess the extent to which an individual believes most people will devalue or discriminate against a person that has been to prison. For the purposes of this study, the scale was modified with wording that prompted individuals to focus specifically on the former prisoner identity. For example, individuals were asked to rate their expectations for others to reactions to "an individual who has been to prison" or "a person with a criminal record". The six-point Likert scale ranged from 1 ("strongly agree") to 6 ("strongly disagree"). The items were

written so that anyone could respond to them, irrespective of their incarceration history or employment status. A sample item includes, "Most people think less of a person who has been to prison". The alpha for the PDD scale in the current study was 0.81.

Internalized Stigma of Incarceration

Self-stigma describes a process whereby individuals internalize their perceptions of the stigmas others associate with a key aspect of their identity (Corrigan & Shapiro, 2010; Mak & Cheung, 2010). The Internalized Stigma Of Mental Illness Scale (ISMI) developed by Ritsher, Otilingam, and Grajales (2003) was used to assess this phenomenon. The scale was modified with incarcerated and criminal record terms in order to capture the internalization of stigma specifically with reference to the stigma associated with having been released from incarceration (i.e. Internalized Stigma of Incarceration (ISI)), and having a criminal record (i.e. Internalized Stigma of Criminal Record (ISICR)). Although these are closely related concepts, the literature suggests that experiences associated with incarceration are more nuanced and separate from those associated with having a criminal record (i.e. Western, Kling, & Weiman, 2001). More specifically, individuals may internalize stigma with reference to their experiences and/or history of incarceration and not feel the same sense of stigma with reference to their criminal record, and vice versa. This may be related to individuals feeling as though they "look" like someone who has been incarcerated (i.e. Moran, 2012) which presents itself as a limitation, versus the sense that their criminal record in and of itself is self-identifying. As criminal offence information becomes more readily available to the public (i.e. internet, media) concerns for the accessibility of criminal history may be especially significant.

The ISMI scale measures five main components of internalized stigma: "alienation, stereotype endorsement, discrimination experience, social withdrawal, and stigma resistance" (Ritsher et al., 2003, p.7). According to Ritsher et al. (2003) 'Alienation' captures the individual

subjective experience of "being less than a full member of society" (p.7), a perception akin to Goffman's (1963) notion of the 'spoiled identity'. 'Stereotype Endorsement' assesses the extent to which respondents agreed with common stereotypes about individuals with an incarceration history. 'Discrimination Experience' represents respondents' perception of how they are typically treated by others (Ritsher et al., 2003), while 'social withdrawal' measures the extent to which people have or intend to withdraw socially. Lastly, 'stigma resistance' portrays an individual's expression of being unaffected by or resistant to internalized stigma (Ritsher et al., 2003).

The four-point Likert scale ranges from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 4 ("strongly agree"). This scale used item content that is applicable to all respondents and oriented to the present, therefore, no items referring to specific types of relationships or concrete past episodes of experienced discrimination (Ritsher et al., 2003). A sample item includes "Nobody would be interested in getting close to me because I was in prison". The alpha for the ISI and ISICR scales in the current study were 0.93 and 0.91 respectively.

Identity Management Strategies

Link, Struening, Dohrenwend, Cullen, and Shrout (1989) developed the stigma management and coping strategy scale to assess the various approaches to dealing with a stigmatized status, among the mentally ill. Identity management strategies (i.e. disclosure and concealment) were measured using the scale developed by Link et al., (1989) as well as items from an adaptation of this scale, which was developed by Winnick and Bodkin (2008). These measures tap into the coping orientations that might be used to deal with stigmatization and are thus applicable to individuals who have been officially labeled (Link et al., 1989). Three main conceptual themes were captured in this scale, namely secrecy, education, and withdrawal. In particular, these themes represent stigma management strategies that include adjustments such as

withdrawing from social interaction, openly disclosing one's stigmatized status, and keeping one's stigmatized status a secret. Here, the focus was on two particular identity management strategies, disclosure and concealment. Disclosure and concealment represent an individual's approach in managing their invisible stigmatized identity (Chui & Cheng, 2013; Goffman, 1963; Plante et al., 2013).

The six-point Likert scale ranged from 1 ("strongly agree") to 6 ("strongly disagree"). The items were modified with terms that reflect a former prisoner's lived experience (i.e. having been in prison and having a criminal record). Disclosure was captured by the conceptual theme 'education' or 'preventative telling'. A sample item includes "Since I've been convicted, I often find myself educating others about what it means to be an individual with a criminal record". The alpha for the measure of disclosure in the current study was 0.85. Concealment was captured by the conceptual theme 'secrecy'. A sample item includes "I will not admit to having a criminal history on a job application". The alpha for the measure of disclosure in the current study was 0.89.

General Self Efficacy

General self-efficacy (GSE) was included in this study as a measure of individual confidence in their ability to manage a wide range of stressful or challenging demands (Luszczynska, Scholz, & Schwarzer, 2005). This measure is particularly useful for examining the well-being or behavior of individuals who have had to adjust to multiple demands (Bonetti et al., 2001). GSE was measured using the 8-item New General Self-efficacy (NGSE) scale adopted by Chen, Gully, and Eden (2001). Participants were asked about their perceived ability and confidence with reference to several general endeavors. The four-point Likert scale ranged from 1 ("not true at all") to 4 ("exactly true"). A sample item from the New General Self Efficacy

scale (NGSE) is "when facing difficult tasks, I am certain I will achieve them." The alpha for the measure for NGSE in the current study was 0.919.

Employment Self-efficacy

To assess the confidence individuals had for engaging in several career search tasks (Solberg, Good, & Nord, 1991), employment was also measured using the 35-item Career search self-efficacy (CSE) scale adopted by Solberg et al. (1994). Past research has identified CSE as a decent predictor of employment activities and outcomes (Solberg, 1998). This was useful to include as a measure of employment outcomes that encompassed the perceptions of those who were actively employed and those who were actively seeking employment. Using a 5-point Likert scale, participants were asked to rate their confidence ranging from 1("not confident at all") to 5 ("very confident"). A sample item includes "[How confident are you are in your ability to] know where to find information about potential employers in order to make good career decisions".

The employment measurement was based on the item used by Gillis and Andrews (2005) to measure employment status. In this work, employment status (i.e. job attainment) was gauged by asking respondents to indicate whether they were employed. Respondents indicated either *Yes* or *No* at the time of the assessment. In line with this measure, here, employment status was simply a dichotomous measure of whether the individual was employed prior to incarceration and/or at the time of the assessment. There was a low but significant correlation between past employment (0.27, $p < .01$) and current employment (0.16, $p < .05$), with CSE; therefore, as a more robust measure of employment expectations and outcomes, I rely on CSE as my dependent variable throughout the remainder of the analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

A paper-based survey was used to collect the quantitative information as this would not interfere with any conditions that individual parolees may have (i.e. limitations on use of technology), and they could be easily administered in all corrections settings. Web-based surveys are being increasingly used as a preferred mode for survey data collection given the many benefits (i.e. large participant pool, reduced costs), however several issues have also been noted (i.e selective nonresponse, data reliability) (Couper, 2000; Van Gelder, Bretveld, & Roeleveld, 2010). Paper-and-pencil questionnaires are also recognized to have several limitations (i.e. potential for decreasing response rates and high costs) (Couper, 2000; Van Gelder et al., 2010). Web-based surveys are particularly not suited for individuals who have been incarcerated since they require participants to be familiar with and have access to the Internet. This is not an appropriate instrument for surveying releases since computer knowledge may vary across releases. Further to this individuals may have parole conditions that restrict their use of computers.

Participants were asked to complete a survey with reference to their perceptions of their experiences post-release and were told that the survey was expected to take between 15-20 minutes. It was explained to participants that although they may or may not directly benefit from doing this survey, their participation may help to inform others about the experiences that individuals with a criminal record face as they re-integrate into society and the workplace, and in the long term, contribute towards developing a society that is more sensitive to the effects of such experiences and in turn more accepting of individuals with criminal records. Due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter, participants were told that they should only answer questions that they felt comfortable answering. Participants were also told that their decision to take part in this study by completing a survey was completely voluntary. I acknowledged my

appreciation of their consideration to participate. All participants were recruited voluntarily through word of mouth and by being asked in person by the lead researcher. Interested participants were given the survey by the lead researcher. Also, employees at a day reporting centre were notified about the study and had an opportunity to inform their clients. Individuals that were interested in participating in the study or that had participated could also encourage potential participants. There were some participants that opted not to complete the survey once they had started and those surveys (n ≈ 10) were not included in the analyses.

At the day reporting center, individuals with an incarceration history, referred to by the staff as 'clients', would meet with designated staff members for guidance related to their reintegration into the community post-release. The program at the day reporting centre helps to facilitate the successful reintegration of higher risk and higher need offenders. There, counselling is one-on-one and individualized case management plans are implemented. This includes case managers identifying and targeting services and community resources that best meet the needs of each individual.

Prior to the commencement of the research study, staff members and case managers were debriefed about the purpose and content of the study and were also given a chance to read through the survey. The surveys were filled out when I was on site at the location as well as when I was not on site. In the event that I was on site, I met with interested participants following their meeting with the staff member. At the end of their meeting, the staff member introduced the study to the clients, if they agreed to participate in the study, they were then introduced to me and I gave them a more detailed debrief about the study procedures. In the event that I was not on site, the staff member debriefed the clients and set them up to fill in the survey or read the survey to them and fill it in with them depending on their needs.

Surveys were also collected at halfway houses, which are open-custody residential facilities for individuals who were incarcerated in a federal institution. Halfway houses are residences to support individuals on conditional release as they gradually and safely reintegrate into the community after being in prison (James, 2014). Thus, many of the individuals that were surveyed at the day reporting centre had also lived in a halfway house. These residences house anywhere from ten to thirty individuals at any given time and are meant to aid in an individual`s transition into the community. I collected the surveys after weekly scheduled house meetings as recommended by the halfway house staff as this was a time when most residents would be present. Weekly house meetings typically included pizza, a short list of updates for the residents and an opportunity to discuss house rules and/or their violation. Following a brief update, I was invited by the staff to address the group and speak about the objectives and requirements of the study, including the rights of all participants. I invited individuals to participate and those who expressed an interest were handed a questionnaire.

Regardless of location, participation in the study was voluntary which is a commonly used sampling strategy for vulnerable populations such as individuals with an incarceration history (Main & Gudjonsson, 2006). The sample was concentrated in a single metropolitan area, which may limit the representativeness of this sample. For instance, there may be more access to opportunities for employment than in other cities in Canada. However, this permitted access to individuals from a broad variety of backgrounds (i.e. religion, race, education level, marital status).

Approximately 250 questionnaires were distributed and a total of 186 responses were received (the overall response rate = 74%). The survey data was then transferred to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 23.0. All personally identifiable

information (i.e. first and last name) was replaced by pseudonyms for each respondent to protect the confidentiality of their responses. The full data set was stored on a password-protected computer and password-protected external hard drive, which only I had access to.

Representativeness of the Sample

For all research studies, it is important to confirm that the sample obtained is (a) adequate for the testing the hypotheses and (b) representative of the population. Hair, Anderson, Babin, and Black (2010) suggest a 'n to k ratio' of at least 5-10 respondents (n) per variable (k). Further, Combs (2010) suggests a sample size of at least 100. Since there were 10 variables in this study, the goal was to achieve a sample size that comprised between 100-200 post-incarcerated males that fit the aforementioned criteria.

With reference to the population, this sample of post-incarcerated men was drawn from a population of federally sentenced males in Ontario, Canada. The representativeness of this sample was assessed based on the most recent statistics from Public Safety Canada (2016). These statistics were based on the entire federal jurisdiction offender population. As of 2015, the population of offenders in the community under supervision was comprised of 7,195 men (93%) and 505 women (7%) (Public Safety Canada, 2016). Since this study was focused on males within a specific metropolitan area, the statistics were used as a general guideline. In 2015, the offender population was comprised of individuals on day parole (5.8%), full parole (14.3%), statutory release (12.9%), and long-term supervision orders (1.6%) (Public Safety Canada, 2016). Most of the individuals that I spoke with were on statutory release, however there were a few individuals released on full parole. According to Public Safety Canada (2016) sentences less than 5 years were most common with approximately half (50.4%) of the total offender population serving for this period of time (Public Safety Canada, 2012). With respect to

ethnicity, most of the total offender population identified by Public Safety Canada (2016) was White (60%), other racial groups included: Blacks (8.2%), Aboriginals (21.9%), and Other (9.5%). The final sample of males in this study was as follows: White (38.7%), Black (28.5%), Aboriginal (5.4%), and other groups (24.7%)

There were a diverse set of religions represented amongst the offender population reported by (Public Safety Canada, 2016) as follows: Catholic (35.9%), Native Spirituality (5.0%), Muslim (5.4%), and None (15.2%). In this study, Christian (61.3%), Muslim (10.8%), Native Spirituality (4.3%), and 4.8% of the individuals surveyed did not identify with a religion represented. With respect to the nature of the offence close to 70-percent of the identified offenders were serving a sentence for a violence-related offence (Public Safety Canada, 2016). Comparatively, 61% of the males included in this study had served a federal sentence for a violent offence. Further to these criteria, the representativeness of the population was considered achieved based on the demographic criteria collected from the final sample of males in this study (e.g. Oyewole, Peng, & Choudhury, 2010).

Analytic Approach

The survey responses were empirically analyzed using SPSS and Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS). SPSS features were used for initial data quality checks and post-hoc validity and reliability checks. AMOS was used based on its more advanced features and capabilities to assess model fit as apart of a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and to test hypotheses using Path Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) capabilities. A primary objective of this study was to test the proposed underlying nature of stigma and social identity theoretical frameworks in the context of employment post-incarceration. As an advanced statistical tool, SEM was considered to be appropriate for testing the proposed hypotheses given its strengths in identifying confirmatory and theory driven relationships (Byrne, 2016).

SEM was an appropriate analysis to address the complexity and multi-dimensionality

associated with managing socially stigmatized identities and the ensuing employment effects.

Through SEM, the hypothesized relationships between independent (i.e. exogenous) variables

and dependent (i.e. endogenous variables) are analyzed simultaneously (Lei & Wu, 2007). This

higher-order modeling approach has been recognized for its contribution to more theoretical

parsimony and ability to reduce model complexity (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). The

functionality of SEM is appropriate for conducting a CFA, and this is useful for assessing the

relevant variables and item-factor relationships in order to determine the number of factors

required to establish an acceptable model-data fit (Blunch, 2012). SEM is able to account for

measurement errors and is also useful for examining the relationships between latent constructs

such that the error in the model can be reduced (Hair et al., 2010). The robustness of data fit to

the hypothesized theoretical framework is examined by various fit indices against commonly

accepted benchmarks (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). These SEM capabilities were

essential for testing the overall model fit and to report for each of the hypotheses. In order to test

Hypotheses 1 and 2, SEM was particularly useful given its support for correlation and covariance

analysis. SEM also supports analyses of latent variables and their mediating effects, which was

necessary to test Hypotheses 3 and 4. Finally, path analysis enables an analysis of intervening

effects, which was required for testing the moderation effects proposed by Hypotheses 5 and 6.

Approach for testing Hypotheses 1 and 2
Hypothesis 1 proposed a direct relationship between perceived devaluation and

discrimination to employment, and Hypothesis 2 proposed a direct relationship between

internalized stigma and employment. These relationships were tested using SEM, and the

significance of the results were determined based on the significance of beta coefficients and

change statistics (Lyness & Heilman, 2006), which involved regressing former prisoner

perceptions of social stigmas on CSE as well as internalization of stigma on CSE and the control variables.

Approach for testing Hypotheses 3 and 4

SEM was used to analyze the direct and indirect effects between the measured and latent variables (MacKinnon, 2008). Hypotheses 3 and 4 proposed a mediating effect, thus the analyses involved an examination of the joint influence (i.e. indirect effects) of the mediating variables (disclosure and concealment in the current study) on the relationship between PDD and ISMI dimensions with perceived employment outcomes (CSE).

In AMOS, bootstrapping was used as a part of SEM, to generate a distribution based on the data, following the procedures outlined by Preacher and Hayes (2004) and Hayes (2009) to test the effects of the intervening variables. This involved regressing (a) disclosure (H3) and (b) concealment (H4) (intervening variables), and the control variables on CSE (outcome variables) (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007). Bootstrapping has been used as a valid and powerful method for testing mediation hypotheses (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004; Williams & MacKinnon, 2008). Using this analysis, data is replicated several times in order to approximate the sampling distribution of a particular statistic from the collection of its values. This allows for an account of the error within each sample, which makes it more precise. Bootsrapping is useful for considering data as a "surrogate population" in a sample study thereby enabling the approximation of the sampling distribution. Ultimately, as recommended by Hayes (2009), several (i.e. 5000) "phantom samples" or bootstrap samples are created and incorporated into the computation of the sample summary.

In order to confirm the mediating effects of disclosure and concealment, the Estimand for AMOS developed by Dr. James Gaskin, Brigham Young University, was used. The Estimand requires creating the indirect effect by labeling the two paths that represent the indirect effect,

namely the direct path between a predictor variable and a mediating variable "A", and the direct path between that mediating variable and an outcome variable "B". First, the model fit and R^2 were assessed to determine their adequacy. Then the indirect effect was created between them in order to check the theorized mediated effect. In the output in the scalars column, the 'User-defined estimands' identifies the results for the standardized indirect effect. Then, in 'bias corrected intervals', the lower and upper bounds on the 95 percent confidence interval are assessed, followed by an assessment of the *p value* which should be less than .05 if mediation exists.

Approach for testing Hypotheses 5 and 6

Mediation analyses are described as determining the "how" in a research question (i.e. *how* can we explain the relationship between a predictor and outcome variable), while moderation analysis is described as determining the "when" and "for whom" aspect of research questions (i.e. *when/for whom* does this predictor lead to that outcome) (Hayes, 2012). Following the *how* effects proposed by Hypothesis 3 and 4, Hypotheses 5 through 6 proposed a moderating effect to test for any associated change in the direction and strength of the relationship between two variables associated with introducing a third variable, self-efficacy (i.e. interaction effects). In general, moderation analysis typically requires testing for the interaction effect between X (independent variable) and Y (dependent variable) in a model involving M (moderating variable) (Blunch, 2012). A moderating variable can enhance, decrease or be indifferent in terms of the effect on the predictor variable (IV) on the outcome variable (DV) (Fairchild & MacKinnon, 2009). The present study suggested a moderated mediation which included consideration for the extent to which self-efficacy influenced the relationship between (a) internalized stigma (b) perceived devaluation and employment outcomes for disclosure and concealment strategies. Hayes (2012) specified that moderation occurs when the interaction term is significant ($p < 0.05$)

and the change in R^2 is significant. To test the moderated mediation effects proposed, I followed the procedures suggested by Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt (2005) and Preacher and Leonardelli (2001). This involved standardizing the following variables: disclosure, concealment, and self-efficacy; and then product terms were created for: disclosure with self-efficacy and concealment with self-efficacy. In AMOS, these product terms were included as well as the standardized self-efficacy variable, and each of these variables was regressed on the employment outcome (CSE). The significance of the moderating effects was determined based on the p values in the regression weight output.

Ethical Considerations

Scientific research is required to be conducted in a systematic, skeptical, and ethical manner (Cargan, 2007). The systematic and skeptical nature of this study is evidence based on the carefully planned and executed research design and rigorous statistical analyses. Several considerations were made in the design and execution of this research. Pursuant to the Human Participants Research Committee requirements for research involving the use of human subjects, specific considerations and reasonable actions were taken to address potential ethical issues involved in the inclusion and involvement of participants in this study. Former prisoners are considered to be a vulnerable population and interactions with them required especial adherence to strict privacy and confidentiality. To ensure participants' privacy and assure confidentiality, the information provided by participants was not linked to them personally in any identifiable way. Surveys were collected with pseudonyms (chosen by the participant) and I also assigned a unique respondent ID to each survey and record. The names and identities of each participant were and continue to be strictly prohibited from appearing on any report or publications. The collected surveys were stored in a locked cabinet file.

Although physical, psychological, or economic risks to the participants were not anticipated, I recognized that participating in a survey with reference to re-integrating into society and in particular employment may be a sensitive topic for those who have spent time in prison depending on the nature of their re-integration experiences thus far. Since the process required participants to volunteer information with reference to their re-integrating into society and the workplace, I acknowledged that this might be more difficult for some participants if they have any feelings of anxiety, stress or insecurity associated with this topic. To minimize risk, all participants were informed about the intention of the study and their role in the study prior to participation through the information and consent form. This form explicitly clarified participants' right to privacy as well as the voluntary nature of participation, noting that participants could withdraw their participation at any time. The contact information for all dissertation committee members and myself was also included. To guard against any potential harms that may come to the participants, particularly considering the sensitive nature of the subject area, I also included a list of professional resources that they can contact for any assistance. This included contacts such as the halfway house they were already registered at (if applicable) and Telehealth Ontario. Additionally, based on being sensitive to any potential issues the participants may experience, tact and professionalism was explicitly used when collecting, analyzing and reporting the data. Subjects were also debriefed with confirmation from staff to determine if the research experience had caused any problems, and if so, attempts would be made to correct the problems by leveraging professional resources.

CHAPTER FOUR: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Introduction and Contextual Overview

Chapter 4 presents the results of the statistical analysis of the 186 post-incarcerated respondents that participated in this study. The current study proposed six hypotheses that focus on the nature of the relationships between two psychological facets of stigmatization (a) Internalized Stigma and (b) Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination (independent or predictor variables) and Employment outcomes (dependent variable) with reference to post-incarcerated individuals. In this chapter, the summarized results are presented, followed by a detailed review and discussion of the analyses and findings.

Data Screening

The survey results were manually entered into SPSS. Scale items were recoded based on the theorizing and practice suggested for the original scales. A benchmark of .05 is a commonly accepted level for statistical significance (Cowles & Davis, 1982). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for a p value < .05, and the effect size of the relationships identified was analyzed for statistical power.

Before analyzing the survey data in SPSS, I inspected the survey results for any glaring data quality issues (i.e. missing data items, erroneous entries) (Kruse & Mehr, 2008). This included a careful review of key demographic variable descriptors such as frequency descriptive statistics and central tendency statistics. Below the procedures that were used to prepare the data for analysis are outlined, this includes a Missing Value Analysis, considerations for outliers and categorizing of values. Then, a description of the CFA tests for model data fit as well as the approaches used to test Hypotheses 1-6 is provided.

Missing Values Analysis

SEM analyses cannot be tested with missing values; therefore, it was essential for the analyses to be run with a full dataset. Based on the instructions to participants, it was expected that some data may be missing should it be too sensitive for them to feel comfortable sharing. Once the missing data was identified, it was necessary to demonstrate that the data was missing completely at random. To test for this, I used the Little's Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) Test. Results of the MCAR test revealed a chi-square 15552.50, DF=270, with a significance value of .63. Since the p-value was not statistically significant, the MCAR test suggested a null hypothesis, in essence determining that the hypothesis that the data are missing at random should not be rejected, and therefore that the data were likely missing completely at random.

Since the data were missing at random and this was a relatively small sample, it was important to retain the valuable information provided by respondents and in turn to appropriately replace the missing data so that statistical analyses could be performed. To replace the missing data, the Expectation-Maximization (EM) algorithm was chosen as an imputation method. EM is a principled, Maximum-Likelihood (ML) based data method that is typically accepted and recommended for the replacement of missing values and has been identified to overcome some of the limitations such as generating biased estimates and underestimating, which are commonly associated with of other techniques (e.g. mean substitution, regression substitution) (Moss, 2009; Schafer, 1997; Schafer & Olsen, 1998). Further support for EM based on missing data theory argues that it is a preferred method since it does not involve any randomness (Dong & Peng, 2013). In accordance with this rationale, a Missing Values Analysis (MVA) was conducted for each subscale, missing data were then replaced based on EM, and finally all of the subscales

were combined to form the data set that would be used for statistical analyses. The

intercorrelations and descriptive statistics for the study variables are outlined in Table 1.

Categorizations

Following the initial data screening, key demographic variables were organized into

grouping categories to allow for meaningful comparisons. The key demographic variables

considered were: age, number of children, religion, crime, correctional institution, prior

occupation, current occupation, and ethnicity. Below, an explanation is included for how each of

these characteristics has been categorized. Descriptive statistics for the raw and imputed

demographics are provided in Table 2.

In accordance with Statistics Canada information regarding the post-incarcerated

(Government of Canada, 2016), 'age' was organized to groups as follows: Group 1 - 18 and 19,

Group 2 - 20 to 24, Group 3 - 25 to 29, Group 4 - 30 to 34, Group 5 - 35 to 39, Group 6 - 40 to

44, Group 7 - 45 to 49, Group 8 - 50 and over. These categorizations would be useful for

identifying the representativeness of the sample, and for making comparisons across age groups.

The category identifying the number of children that a participant has was reduced to *children* or

none, in order to identify those that were parents versus those who were not. Religion was

reduced to four main categories based on the most prevalent identified in the sample: Group 1 -

Christian (includes all identified denominations), Group 2 – Muslim, Group 3 - Native

Spirituality (nation of gods, native-spirituality, spiritual), Group 4 - none/atheist, Group 5 –

other. In order to address the concerns for safety and violence commonly cited in the literature

(Gill, 1997; Wang & Kleiner, 2000) and by employer, offence history was categorized as *violent*

or not. If multiple types listed including one or more violent crimes, the overall offence history

was coded as violent. In line with the most recent Canadian correctional institutions

classifications, the correctional institutions identified by the respondent as having time served

were categorized as *minimum, medium,* and *maximum*. An individual may have served in multiple institutions over the course of time depending on several factors including the required level of restriction and time until release. If multiple institutions were listed, the highest security listed was coded. Information was not obtained for the level of security that individuals were released from which was a limitation of this study. Employment was coded as *employed* or not. Given the implications for individuals with a criminal history that vary by industry, occupations prior to and post incarceration were categorized into one of five sectors: *primary, secondary and tertiary, quaternary, quinary* in order to effectively represent the nature of work within which individuals have been or are currently employed (Table 3). The primary sector represents industries that are associated with producing raw materials and basic foods (e.g. agriculture, mining, farming). The secondary sector includes manufacturing, processing, and construction industries (e.g. automobile production, textile production, construction). The tertiary sector is described as the service industry (e.g. retail, clerical services, banking, healthcare), while the quaternary sector is described as industries that are defined by intellectual activities (e.g. scientific research, education, information technology). Finally, the quinary sector has been considered by some to be an extension of the quaternary sector, and it includes top executives or officials at the highest levels of decision making in a society or economy (i.e. government, science, education, nonprofit organizations, healthcare, media) (Adrian, 2014). Lastly, the descriptive statistics for ethnicity, revealed three main ethnicities that were represented in this study: White, Black, and Aboriginal. This is consistent with the main ethnicities represented in correctional institutions in Canada, as well as with the ethnicities reported in Canadian criminal justice statistics. Thus, ethnicity was categorized by being reduced to represent the main ethnic groups in the current sample (*white, black, aboriginal*). All other ethnicities – more specifically

those represented by 5% of the proportion of respondents or less, were collectively represented by an "other" category.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed to examine the validity of the measures for predicting the employment outcome for individuals post-incarceration. CFA enables the validation of the measurement model (Jackson, Gillaspy Jr, & Purc-Stephenson, 2009). This was appropriate for this study to demonstrate the fit between the items that measured the predictor, intervening and outcome variables as well as for assessing whether the data fit the hypothesized model.

Three alternatives at the first and second-order were tested for a total of six alternative models, to determine the model of best fit. First order models are described as a model where the theorized items are loaded onto their respective components (Hoyle, 2012). Second-order models confirm whether the theorized constructs load onto underlying constructs or components (Hoyle, 2012). All models were tested using all of the study variables relevant to the hypotheses. The baseline six-factor first and second-order models were tested independently. Four alternative five-factor alternative models combined two variables from the baseline model. The first two alternatives involved a first and second-order combination of the measures for Internalized Stigma. Internalized Stigma was measured based on incarceration and criminal record and each of these elements were expected to have a differential impact on the extent to which individuals internalize stigma. A well-fit model with a combined internalized stigma measure would suggest that both incarceration and criminal record are highly correlated in their contribution to internalized stigma, and should be observed collectively rather than as separate variables. The final two 5-factor alternative models involved a first and second-order combination of the measures for general self-efficacy and career search self-efficacy. Testing this alternative would

confirm whether these two elements of self-efficacy were best observed as a singular measure of efficacy or separately. Based on the rationale for using CSE as the measure for employment outcome, I expected that these measures for self-efficacy were best measured separately as they represented distinct constructs that independently contributed to the model. The results confirmed that GSE and CSE were indeed separate constructs and best measured separately.

Before conducting the CFA for each alternative model, SPSS was used to analyze and record the reliability for each scale, and items were removed based on the "scale if item deleted function" which identifies which items can be removed to improve the Cronbach's alpha for the scale. Items with an item-total correlation below 0.35 were deleted. The improved scales were used to develop a structural model in AMOS in order to determine the model of best fit. After the initial measurement model was run in AMOS, the fit of the SEM models were evaluated using both global and focused fit indices (Jackson et al., 2009). For good global fit, the normed Chi-Square test of fit (χ^2/df ratio), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA), and p value for close fit (PCLOSE) were evaluated. The χ^2 / df ratio is an estimate of degree of fit between the expected covariance matrix (derived from the estimated model) and reported ratio between 1 and 5, and $p > 0.05$ indicate a good fit. Some researchers suggested that chi-square is sensitive to sample size and is not always the best measure of a good fitting model and suggested looking at alternatives and a range of fit indices (Lei & Wu, 2007; Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow, & King, 2006). The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) compares the fitted model with a more restricted independence model. Values close to or greater than 0.95 are generally accepted (Bentler, 1990; Bollen & Long, 1993). It represents the proportionate improvement in model fit relative to the independence model. The RMSEA represents an index of "badness of fit" per degree of freedom with lower values indicating better fit and less

"badness of fit," with a desired value below 0.08 (Bollen & Long, 1993; Byrne, 1998). An RMSEA value below 0.06 suggests a high degree of model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999), thus this was the threshold used for the current study. The PCLOSE test evaluates the null hypothesis that the population RMSEA is less than 0.06, and can be useful to explain the sampling error in the RMSEA. This is evident since PCLOSE is a one-sided test of the null hypothesis that the RMSEA is a close-fitting model. Values greater than or equal to 0.05 are deemed as acceptable thereby indicating a close-fitting model (Kenny, Kaniskan, & McCoach, 2015).

The reliabilities for the scales as included in each model were tested in SPSS and items were deleted in accordance with six interrelated criteria to improve reliability of each scale. Then the retained items were tested in AMOS for model fit. Models that did not show a good fit were progressively rerun by dropping (a) unstandardized items that were not statistically significant ($p>0.05$), (b) highly correlated items and/or (c) items with the lowest beta estimate. If this did not improve the fit, then error terms were co-varied. Standardized and unstandardized solutions were produced for the CFA. The unstandardized values represented the slopes of regressing the response (Y) on the factor (X) and the standardized loadings were the slopes in a correlation matrix (i.e. the item correlation with a factor). I began by analyzing the *p* values associated with the unstandardized factor loadings (Estimates). Higher factor loadings indicate a better fit of the item to the factor (i.e. dimension). In line with Kline (2015), a factor loading greater than 0.40 was required to retain items (Kline, 2015). Next, I examined the squared multiple correlations and removed items with a poor item squared multiple correlation (< 0.35). Removing items with a poor item squared multiple correlation typically improves the CFI.

Standardized residuals and modification indices were also evaluated in order to address highly correlated items in the model. The items with the highest modification indices (MI) index

were covaried one by one assessing improvements to model fit each time. MIs are important to evaluate since they represent changes to the chi-square that would occur when omitting a path within the model (Hooper et al., 2008) and generally should be less than 4. Factors that were highly correlated with multiple factors were deleted from the model. Finally, I also checked for Heywood cases throughout the analyses but particularly at the end - as these may improve as the analysis progresses. Heywood cases are important to identify, as these are factors that have a standard regression weight greater than 1, which is not theoretically possible and prevents any further analyses.

Based on the outlined processes, the baseline and alternative models were progressively modified until a final model emerged that met the predetermined acceptable threshold and criteria for an acceptable model fit. Table 4 outlines the global fit indices for all alternative models and Table 5 outlines the scale reliabilities for all alternative models. Theoretically, the CFA was a significant confirmation of the measures' validities and their associated factor loadings. The CFA results can also be described as significant from a practical perspective based on the ensuing empirically based understanding of the constructs and their interconnected correlations provide for a more thorough understanding of the effects that internalized stigma, perceived devaluation and discrimination, and identity management choices have for employment outcomes post-release.

The final model of best fit was the first-order alternative model that combined the measures for Internalized stigma or Incarceration (ISI) and Internalized Stigma of Criminal Record (ISCR). The final model met generally acceptable fit indices thresholds with a total of 38 items retained. All retained items were significant at $p < 0.05$ and the beta values range from 0.538 (lowest) to 0.925 (highest). All retained items and their respective beta values are included

in Table 7. A total of thirteen items from the Career Search Self Efficacy scale, three items from

the Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination scale, nine items from the combined Internalized

Stigma scale, four items from the scale measuring concealment, three items from the scale

measuring disclosure, and six items from the scale measuring self-efficacy were retained, as the

other items were dropped due to poor model fit.

The overall model was deemed a good model fit (*CMIN/df* = 1.323, CFI = 0.951, RMSEA =

.042, PCLOSE = .967). The standardized regression weights (i.e. factor loadings or beta values)

for the retained items were between 0.64 and 0.85 for CSE (outcome variable). The factor

loadings for the predictor variables were between 0.54 and 0.92 for PDD and between 0.65 and

0.86 for IS. The factor loadings for the intervening variables were between 0.68 and 0.93 for

conceal, between 0.71 and 0.86 for disclose, and between 0.66 and 0.85 for general self-efficacy.

Validity and Reliability

        Once the model of best fit was determined, the validity and composite reliability for the

scales was confirmed. Assessment of reliability and validity are necessary to confirm that it is

likely that the adopted measures are consistently measuring what they are intended to measure.

More specifically, validity is described as the accuracy of the study measures as reflections of the

concepts or constructs under review (Creswell & Clark, 2010). For this study I addressed

content, criterion-related, construct, convergent, and discriminant validity. Criterion-related and

constructs validity concerns were addressed by ensuring that the measures used in the current

study were diligently tested and compared with results from previously identified studies.

Criterion and content validity concerns were addressed by having the questionnaire reviewed by

a criminologist (committee member), as well as a staff member at the day reporting center. This

also served as an opportunity to familiarize staff at the day reporting center with the research

objectives, and potential benefits of the research for individuals with an incarceration history,

who were actively considering or seeking employment. The convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity were tested using the 'Excel StatTools: Validity Master', developed by James Gaskin. In accordance with Hancock and Mueller (2001), convergent validity was evidenced based on an AVE > 0.5 and a maximal reliability lower threshold of 0.800. Discriminant validity was based on the square root of the AVE as greater than any inter-factor correlation.

Reliability describes the extent to which the measures are consistent. The current study adopted survey instruments that have been psychometrically and empirically verified by other researchers across disciplines. The reliabilities for all scales were tested by reviewing Cronbach alpha's estimates and compared against a generally acceptable Cronbach's alpha threshold (alpha > 0.70). While these results provided evidence of the internal consistency of ratings across respondents, I also tested for composite reliability using using the 'Excel StatTools: Validity Master" developed by Dr. James Gaskin. In particular, reliability was evidenced by CR > 0.7. Reliability statistics for the retained items are provided in Table 8.

Common Method Bias

Common Method Bias (i.e. bias associated with the measurement method) and can be problematic because it can be a source of measurement error (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Based on the 'zero-constrained approach' (Richardson, Simmering, & Sturman, 2009) I performed the Common Method bias check with the common latent factor method in AMOS. The unconstrained common method factor model was compared to the fully constrained, zero constrained, common method factor model and in the chi-square test it came out to be significant. After plugging in the difference in chi-square and degrees of freedom for the constrained and unconstrained models, the differences in degrees of freedom and difference in chi-square and the p-value were as follows: difference of 72.2 for the chi-square and 45 for the

degrees of freedom, the p-value was 0.006. The common method bias results are presented in Table 9. The results indicate a substantial difference from 0 between the constrained and unconstrained models; therefore, there is a significant shared variance. This led to retaining the unconstrained common method factor and in turn imputing the factor scores. Imputing factor scores creates a single variable to represent each of the relevant constructs that will be used in testing the causal model. Those new variables will account for the shared variance as explained by the common latent factor, thus by retaining the unconstrained common method factor, common method bias corrected measures were used to test the causal model.

In order to avoid any confounding results in relation to these constructs several variables were controlled for based on the theoretical and empirical rationale expressed above: age, education, race, and religion. The variables were controlled for by a regression of each variable on expected outcome effects. Age and years of education, and type of crime were regressed on employability; race was regressed on disclosure, perceptions of stigma, and self-efficacy; and religion was regressed on disclosure.

Multivariate Assumptions
As recommended for multivariate analyses key underlying statistical assumptions for multivariate equations were tested before testing the causal model (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008). Outliers can be influential for results as they may pull the regression away from its "true" optimal line. To test for outliers, the mean scores of all retained items, their z-scores, and cook's distances were reviewed and no significant outliers were revealed. Based on the collinearity statistics in SPSS, the Variable Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all constructs was less the 3 (O'brien, 2007) and the tolerance values were greater than 0.1 indicating that there were no concerns related to multicollinearity.

Causal Model

      As mentioned above, the causal model was tested using single variables that represent each of the relevant constructs based on common method bias corrected measures. Error terms (residuals) were placed on all endogenous variables (conceal, disclose, and employment) since anything that is being predicted requires a residual. The exogenous variables (PDD and ISMI) were covaried. Additional exogenous control variables were included in the model (age, religion, education, ethnicity) and covaried with the other exogenous variables. In line with the expected influence of control variables based on findings of past research (Brown, Spencer, & Deakin, 2007; Dimond & Hellkamp, 1969; Jourard & Lasakow, 1958; Moore et al., 2013; Uggen, 2000; Waldfogel, 1994; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008, 2009)., I controlled for the effects of the control variables on select endogenous variables as outlined above. Once the control variables were incorporated into the model the model fit was deemed to be acceptable *CMIN/df* = 3.377, CFI = 0.947, RMSEA = 0.113, PCLOSE = 0.095). Table 6 provides a summary of fit indices of the final model and Table 7 outlines the final CFA results.

Hypotheses 1 and 2

      Hypothesis 1 proposed a direct relationship between perceived devaluation and discrimination to employment, and Hypothesis 2 proposed a direct relationship between internalized stigma and employment. To test these relationships, I conducted a Pearson Correlation analysis in SPSS and then a SEM in AMOS. In AMOS the relationships were tested simultaneously and also tested for model fit. The results from the observed variable SEM analysis are reported in Table 10.

      Correlation analysis indicated that PDD was not statistically correlated with the respective employment outcome. Internalized Stigma was statistically and negatively correlated with the respective employment outcomes (r = -0.37, *p* < 0.01). Tian and Wilding (2008) suggest

that correlation r (coefficient of determination) values between 0.10 and 0.30 are represent weak

relationships; values between 0.40 and 0.60 are considered moderate relationships, and values at

0.70 and above represent strong relationships. In the current study, the Pearson's data analysis of

r statistics revealed that internalized stigma has a weak to moderate negative correlation with

career search efficacy. The proportion of variation in the employment outcome variable was

further analyzed using the coefficient of determination (R^2) values for its significance and

effects.

Hypotheses 3 and 4

Hypotheses 3 and 4 examined the extent to which disclosure and concealment

simultaneously influence the relationship between (a) perceived devaluation and discrimination

and (b) internalized stigma with employment outcomes. According to Baron and Kenny (1986),

complete mediation occurs when the total effect of the mediated model (c') equals 0, and partial

mediation is where c' is reduced but does not equal 0. In order to test mediation effects, we

consider the correlation coefficients in a series of steps associated with regression analyses. First,

we test for a "path c", which represents the direct effect between the independent/predictor

variable (X) and the outcome/dependent variable (Y). Next, "path a" tests whether X s

significantly related to the mediator variable (M). The third step is to test 'path b', which is

whether M is significantly related to Y. If steps 1-3 are met and c=0 and c'≠0, this is described as

partial mediation (i.e. β for X and Y is reduced but is still significant and the other two βs are

significant). If c'=0 then complete mediation (i.e. β for X and Y becomes non-significant). There

is no mediation when the p-value is insignificant for any of the direct relationships, thus if the

relationship between X and M or M and Y is non-significant then there is no mediating effect.

The estimand developed by Dr. James Gaskin in AMOS was used to analyze the mediation

effects of disclosure and concealment. This requires two parameters to be named and then create

an indirect effect out of them in order to check the mediating effects. 'Path A' represents the relationship between a predictor and mediating variable, while 'Path B' represents the relationship between a mediating and outcome variable.

As noted above, the direct relationship between PDD and employment was not significant. When the mediating variables concealment and disclosure were introduced into the model, neither mediator was indicative of an indirect effect. Thus, Hypotheses 3a and 4a were not supported. With respect to hypotheses 3b and 4b, stigma internalization was significantly related to employment. However, when the mediating variables concealment and disclosure were introduced into the model, neither mediator was indicative of partial or full mediation. Thus, Hypotheses 3b and 4b were not supported.

Hypotheses 5 and 6

Moderated mediation attempts to explain both how and when a given effect occurs (James & Brett, 1984; Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007). "Moderated mediation occurs when the strength of an indirect effect depends on the level of another variable, or in other words, when mediation relations are contingent on the level of a moderator. There are multiple ways in which the magnitude of an indirect effect may be dependent upon a moderator" (Preacher et al., 2007, p. 193). For this study, self-efficacy was proposed to moderate the mediated relationship between predictor variables (perceived devaluation and discrimination) and intervening variables (disclose and conceal) with employment outcomes. AMOS is a useful software for testing moderated mediation relationships since it incorporates testing for all paths simultaneously" (Preacher et al., 2007).

In order to test the moderation effects in AMOS I began by standardizing the variables concealment, disclosure, and self-efficacy in SPSS. Then, I introduced self-efficacy and the new product terms into the model and drew covariance between each of the interactions terms and

each of the exogenous terms. Since new variables were introduced into the model, I reassessed model fit, which was deemed to be acceptable (CMIN/df = 2.260, p = 0.21, RMSEA = 0.083, CFI = 0.952, PCLOSE = 0.128). However, based on the insignificant results of the mediation analyses (Hypotheses 3 and 4), Hypotheses 5 and 6 were not supported.

Post-Hoc Analyses

Post-hoc power analyses were performed for unsupported direct effects based on the 'Post-Hoc Statistical Power Calculator For Multiple Regression' developed by Dr. Daniel Soper. The calculator requires you to report the number of predictors (n=8), Observed R^2 (R^2=0.99), Desired probability level (α=0.10), and sample size (N=186). Based on this, the observed statistical power is calculated. The required statistic is any value greater than or equal to 0.8. For the current study, the observed statistical power was 1.0 which suggests that there was enough power to detect any significant effects that may have existed therefore, I am confident that the non-significant effects observed are truly non-significant. This analysis suggests that if a significant effect did exist, there was a 100% chance of that effect being discovered.

Discussion

The purpose of this quantitative study was to develop a better understanding of the psychological mechanisms that inform identity management and the associated employment effects. In other words, I expected to find a link between (a) perceived devaluation and discrimination and (b) internalized stigma with employment outcomes, and I expected this relationship to be explained by an individual's chosen identity management strategy, such that differences in individual employment outcomes could be explained by considering an individual's chosen identity management approach. I had also expected that the prevalence of these outcomes would be strengthened or weakened depending on the extent to which individuals expressed self-confidence and a belief in their general capacity to do so.

The present study found significant relationships between internalized stigma and disclosure and concealment such that those who engaged in a disclosure strategy were less likely to engage in concealment strategies ($r=0.23$). All of the results are presented in Table 10. Internalized stigma was also related to employment outcomes, and more specifically one's confidence in their ability to engage in various tasks related to employment. Winnick and Bodkin (2008) considered the impact that labeling 450 incarcerated men in a medium-maximum prison in Ohio, and found that perceived devaluation and discrimination were also related to secrecy (i.e. concealment), which was contrary to the findings in this study. Considering these findings together, the link between psychological implications and identity management is evident. Further to this, these seemingly contradictory findings may point to the interrelated nature of disclosure and concealment processes. This is in line with Kahn and Hessling's (2001) findings which identify the traditional separation of disclosure and concealment literature and suggests that considering both of these elements together may speak better to the unidimensionality (i.e. one related trait on a continuum) of the identity management choice.

Although self-efficacy was significantly correlated with the employment outcome, there was no significant relationship between identity management strategies and employment. Based on the enhancement of self-esteem initiative prescribed by social identity theory, I expected identity management strategies to explain the link between individual sense of stigma and their ability and/or confidence therein to successfully attain employment post-release. However, contrary to my expectations, this study found that while individuals do internalize stigma post-release, and this does affect their employment outcomes. In other words, identity management does not explain this link. However, self-efficacy was correlated with employment outcomes, which confirms that this is a significant element for individuals.

Upon closer examination of the descriptive statistics for internalized stigma and perceived devaluation and discrimination, there are observed relationships between perceived devaluation and discrimination with disclosure. Internalized stigma was also related to disclosure, concealment, and employment outcomes. All key regression statistics from the SEM analyses are presented in Table 11. Despite these interactions, the majority of the study's hypothesized relationships were found to be non-significant.

Over the course of the study, I developed a more in-depth understanding of the former prisoner employment experience through interactions with the releasees. It became clear that there were several nuances (e.g. release conditions, offence type, former prisoner identity-salience) that had not been captured in the research design that were relevant to the former prisoner population and their experiences with employment post-release. Therefore, the non-significant results may be due to these nuances and in hindsight I would have made the appropriate modifications and included the following elements: survey measures, incarceration history; self-efficacy, release conditions and tenure, and employment intentions. To follow, I will provide a brief description of how I anticipate each of these elements may have had an effect on the results.

Survey Measures. With respect to the survey measures, the measures were designed to assess how disclosure and concealment identity management strategies impact the effects of stigma internalization on individual confidence in obtaining employment post release. However, the hypothesized relationships were based on existing theoretical understandings of social identity and stigma management. There are limited works in the current management literature that consider the invisible socially stigmatized identities. Further to this, there is a limited understanding of the employment experiences of individuals post-release. Existing theoretical

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perspectives may not encompass elements that are relevant to invisibly stigmatized individuals, and more specifically former prisoners. This may have impacted the extent to which these measures captured the relevant constructs.

Incarceration history. The current survey asked for a list of institutions where individuals had been incarcerated as well as the relevant charges and time served. For individuals that had an extensive list of charges over time and/or those that had served in multiple institutions, it was difficult for them to list all of their charges and institutions. The amount of time that an individual has spent in prison is more likely to affect the extent to which they are institutionalized and require more guidance as they transition from prison to society, and employment. This can include individuals who have a lengthy sentence or those who have been in and out of jail for an extensive period of time.

Information with reference to the institution that individuals were released from may have been useful in order to assess any impact on employment outcomes. This impact may differ depending on the institutional environment and availability of programming and employment opportunities. Information about programming may give insight into understanding how individuals have been prepared for employment (i.e. social skills, training) prior to their release.

Self-efficacy. Institution history may also be relevant to self-efficacy considerations. For instance, a recent study by Roth, Asbjørnsen, and Manger (2017) looked at predictors and outcomes of various elements of prisoners' academic self-efficacy. The authors found that participants who reported no previous convictions scored higher than others on self-efficacy and perceived efficacy decreased with longer sentence length. Self-efficacy was measured as a dependent variable (i.e. career search self efficacy) with respect to confidence in ability to obtain employment. It was also measured as a moderator (i.e. general self efficacy). Further

considerations may include which elements of an individual's history may have an impact on self-efficacy. For instance, educational background was incorporated into the present study. However, a large number of participants were clustered in the "high-school diploma" category. Roth et al. (2017) categorized the level of education into eight options: "not completed any education", "primary school/lower secondary school", "one year of upper secondary school", "two years of upper secondary school", "completed upper secondary school", "vocational college", "individual subjects at a university or university college", and "a degree course at a university or university college". A more comprehensive account of educational background may have enabled further differentiation between participants and further insight into the effects for self-efficacy.

An individual's access to support may also have an impact on their self-efficacy. An individual who has been incarcerated for less time may be more likely to have maintained a social network whereas someone who has been incarcerated for a more extensive period of time may be less likely to have maintained a social network over time. Individuals that have maintained a social network may be more likely to have social support in obtaining employment and in turn more success in obtaining employment. This particular measure was not incorporated in the hypothesized model. An individual's support network may include: access to family, friends, and/or organizations that aid with their transition into society and employment. Support in prison can come in the form of employment opportunities so that individuals have continuity in their employment history, and potential gain skills, especially within general labour (i.e. welding, forklifts, etc). The extent to which individuals have received aid in their transition to and preparation for employment (i.e. resume preparation, job applications, employment opportunities) may have an impact on their self-efficacy in obtaining employment post-release.

Release conditions and tenure. Although individuals were required to be releasees in order to be included in the study, the survey did ask for information specific to their release. However, it became evident that the release conditions and amount of time that individuals had been released may be relevant understanding their perspectives. Thus, it would be helpful to incorporate the length of time that an individual has been released, and how close they are to the conclusion of their statutory release. Parole conditions are also relevant since these outline any limitations that individuals may have that can impact their job search (i.e. location, computer restrictions). Thus, it would have been useful to know what parole conditions individuals had and any effects those may have had on their job search.

Employment Intentions. On the survey, individuals were asked to identify their employment prior to and following their incarceration. Most individuals are required to get a job as part of their parole requirements. However, it may have been useful to also to assess the extent to which individuals were motivated to obtain employment. Further to this, for those individuals that were still searching for employment it may have been useful to ask further details about the jobs they intended to apply to. I anticipate that including this information as well as a larger sample size would be more reflective of former prisoner employment experience. This would enable relevant comparisons across groups as well as highlight further control variables and in turn usefully inform predictions.

In spite of these limitations, this explanatory mixed-methods study incorporated a qualitative inquiry that was useful for considering these elements and explaining the unexpected results (Creswell & Clark, 2010). Thus, I conducted semi-structured interviews with post-incarcerated individuals as a follow-up to further explore their individual employment experiences post-release including how they make sense of their identity as an individual with an

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incarceration history, as well as how their individual employment experiences post-release are shaped by their former prisoner identity – including specific decisions about whether to disclose or conceal their identity.

CHAPTER FIVE: QUALITATIVE DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

Research Design

While the survey questionnaire was useful for measuring individual perceptions, identity management strategies, and employment outcomes in general, this did not articulate the depth of individual experiences with employment post-release. Based on tenets of stigma theory and social identity theory, identity management strategies were expected to explain the link between individual sense of stigma (i.e. identity sense making) and the ability or confidence of former prisoners to successfully attain employment post-release. The results suggest that individuals do internalize stigma post-release, and that this affects their employment outcomes. However, contrary to the theorized expectations, identity management does not appear to explain this link. In spite of the insignificant results from the quantitative portion of the study, this mixed-method research study was designed to incorporate a qualitative inquiry in order to explain the quantitative results (Creswell & Clark, 2010). In light of the limited knowledge pertaining to managing an invisible stigmatized identity throughout the employment process, I was also prompted to further explore the depth of individual experiences with employment post-incarceration.

Given the social relevance of the formerly incarcerated identity, particularly in organizations, my interpretivist inquiry will use the Gioia Methodology (Corley & Gioia, 2004; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012; Gioia et al., 2012; Nag, Corley, & Gioia, 2007) to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the experience of former prisoner employment reentry post-release. In this chapter I describe the qualitative methods I used to explore this particular phenomenon. I begin by outlining the theoretical lens followed by a description of the research design that was chosen to address the outlined research questions. Following this, I will briefly discuss my social relation to this study and how personal biases were identified and managed

accordingly. Next, the data collection process and analytic techniques will be described in detail. I will conclude the chapter with careful considerations to demonstrating the trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations.

Theoretical Framework

Within the interpretative paradigm, philosophical intentions, motives and expectations and influences shape the study of a particular phenomenon of interest (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). This provides an avenue for explanation and deeper understanding of the social world as constructed by individuals directly involved in and experiencing it (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 1994). Interpretivist research seeks to obtain thick and rich descriptions that contribute to understanding the approaches that people use to describe, interpret, and construct a particular phenomenon. Using an interpretative lens, I will demonstrate how certain social identities (i.e. former prisoner) become devalued in specific contexts (i.e. the workplace), and how this social devaluation is interpreted by individuals and ultimately influences an interrelated process, such as, that of identity sense making and management. The former prisoner identity is perceived to be personal and not necessarily salient to the individual, but rather a product of the social meaning underlying the former prisoner identity. Gioia et al.(2012) highlight that people are considered to be 'knowledgeable agents' who actively engage in the employment experience knowing what they are trying to do. Therefore, through this research I hope to gain more insight into former prisoner experiences at various stages of employment re-entry.

Although searching for and keeping employment may be included as a part of an individual's parole conditions, many individuals may also have their own personal rationale outside of their conditions, for searching for employment. Taking these seemingly incompatible reasons to seek employment, I explored three specific research questions:

1. How does the employment experience affect individual perceptions of self and employment?

2. How do individuals manage an invisible stigmatized identity at various stages of employment re-entry?

3. What factors influence individual identity management decisions?

Interviewing former prisoners as they reintegrate into employment post-release offers a unique contribution to developing understanding of the meanings that social stigma and identity management has at the individual level. Due to the interpretive nature of the study, this research involved a reflexive process whereby transparency about my own social relation to the research as well as my personal biases was necessary in order to account for how those biases were managed throughout the research process.

Managing Biases

There is a potential for biases in all research methods, and this can occur at any stage of the research process (Morrow, 2005). Left unaccounted for, biases can lead to assumptions that influence the research and may weaken the associated results. Traditionally, interpretivist research more actively embraces that researchers and participants co-construct meaning, and recognizes this as an important consideration when interpreting data (Morrow, 2005). Therefore, it is good practice for a researcher to rigorously reflect on and be transparent about their personal biases and to make every reasonable attempt to reduce the risk of bias. In keeping with this practice, I have actively incorporated a self-reflexive component into this research. As outlined below, this involved a careful reflection on and transparency about my personal perceptions and experiences in order to consider how these may have impacted my role as a researcher throughout the research process.

Self-Reflexivity

  As a Black person born in Canada to parents who immigrated from Africa and the Caribbean, I grew up in a small city as a minority. Throughout my life I have been consistently reminded of my visibility as a minority as well as societal associations between ethnicity and crime. Growing up, I was warned not to stay out late because there was a persistent fear that as a black person, I would be a prime target for blame if any trouble were to take place. Throughout high school I watched as the consequences for boys engaging in petty crimes consistently differed between ethnicities. During my graduate studies, as a tenant in a basement apartment, I was told not to have too many 'black visitors'. According to my landlord, 'black people' were often portrayed in the media as being associated with crimes, and so my landlord felt that too many 'black visitors' might scare the neighbours. As I progressed through the present research I have continued to be confronted by this intersectionality. Some individuals have assumed I have a family member or close friend in prison, when in fact I do not. At numerous presentations of my research audience members have been asked about my personal history in the criminal justice system, when in fact I do not have a criminal history. I am simply passionate about understanding and improving employment conditions and prospects for the former prisoner population. However, my awareness of the interconnectedness between ethnicity and crime has followed me throughout my life. As such, I have consistently been aware of the stigma and consequences associated with the criminal label and identity.

  Despite this socially imposed interconnectedness with corrections, my interest in the former prisoner population began when I was introduced to a group of youth in a juvenile detention centre. As I interacted with the them, I became concerned about the barriers that may prevent these youth from achieving their aspirations. Moreover, it was important to me that the persistent fear and stigma towards individuals in prison that pervades society be debunked, I

admittedly, had become a product of those fears and stigmas, thereby associating danger and violence with the criminal identity. My initial experience with former prisoners involved, and continues to include, a persistent determination to get to know individuals for who they are outside of their former prisoner identity. Collecting the survey data was a useful start to this process. I often sat amongst the individuals in the halfway house as they completed their surveys and had informal conversations with them. It was important to me that data collection was not just data collection but that I truly infused myself into this sample as best I could.

Methods

One of my aims was to give "voice" to releasees and to adequately represent their perspectives by providing an accurate description of their experiences (Gioia et al., 2012). More specifically, I conducted interviews to provide an opportunity for releasees to describe their experiences and perspectives in their own words. Interviews can be flexible and bridge several individual realities. In this way, interviews have been described as a collaborative process (O'connor & O'neill, 2004) that serve as a unique opportunity for a researcher to take the role as a "learner", and participants to take on the role of "teacher". Prior to this research I did not have a background in criminal justice studies or any experience with the criminal justice system and was ready and open to learning about such systems and experiences from the teaching of participants. This is in line with the tenets of interpretive research which calls for flexibility by design and recognizes the "inter-view" as an exchange whereby the participant gains insight into the interviewer's perspective and experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Semi-structured interviews provide an outlet where issues pertinent to the interviewer and interviewee can be raised and discussed (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997). Semi-structured interviews were useful for obtaining retrospective accounts and real-time perspectives. Therefore cultivating exceptional

conversation skills was essential, and through the ensuing conversational paths, discursively justified knowledge was produced (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

The interviews I conducted included rich descriptions of the individual's experiences while incarcerated in federal institutions and also in-depth narratives about facilities, social network, work experiences, and personal development, as well as reintegration experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In describing their experiences post-release, individuals spoke about several aspects including: their aspirations, parole conditions, experiences with and approach to looking for employment, and their support network (or absence thereof).

Sampling Strategy

Purposeful sampling, a practical technique shaped by several preconceived but reasonable boundaries that are determined prior to data collection (Coyne, 1997), was used to select the sample of participants for the interviews. In order to obtain male accounts of their perspectives and experiences with employment post-release the sample included males on conditional release who were: (a) actively searching for employment post-release, (b) intended to or would consider searching for employment in the future, and (c) had searched for employment in the past post-incarceration. Since searching for employment is typically a parole condition, most male former prisoners fit this sample criteria. The sample was drawn from a day reporting centre in a single metropolitan area and interviews were conducted at the centre over the course of six months. Staff and case managers were debriefed about the purpose of the interviews prior to data collection and identified eligible participants accordingly. I was introduced to individuals who agreed to participate in the study. I gave each participant a detailed debriefing about the study and interview process.

Sample Characteristics

As in the quantitative study, individuals were asked to provide the following demographic information at the beginning of the interview: age, marital status, religion, highest level of education, and ethnicity. With reference to their offence, individuals were asked to identify: crime conviction, sentence length, and prison location. The respective security levels were recoded based on the current official security level of each institution. With reference to employment, participants were asked to identify whether they had been employed before they were incarcerated as well as whether they were currently employed, and to identify the occupation for either or both criteria.

A total of 22 men with active warrants released from federal custody were interviewed (see table 12 for demographic information for those who provided information). There were several age groups represented across the sample. Seven of the male participants were between 20-29, three between 30-39, six between 40-49, and six above the age of 50. Of the 17 individuals that reported their marital status, nine were single (53%). Fourteen individuals indicated their criminal convictions and nine of them had committed non-violent offences (e.g. drug trafficking, computer hacking; 64%). As metionned earlier, industries can be described by particular sectors. Reviewing this, the primary sector represents industries that are associated with producing raw materials and basic foods (e.g. agriculture, mining, farming). The secondary sector includes manufacturing, processing, and construction industries (e.g. automobile production, textile production, construction). The tertiary sector is described as the service industry (e.g. retail, clerical services, banking, healthcare), while the quaternary sector is described as industries that are defined by intellectual activities (e.g. scientific research, education, information technology). Finally, the quinary sector has been considered by some to be an extension of the quaternary sector, and it includes top executives or officials at the highest

levels of decision making in a society or economy (i.e. government, science, education, nonprofit organizations, healthcare, media) (Adrian, 2014). Of the 14 prior occupations reported, eight individuals had been employed in the secondary sector (57%), two in the tertiary sector (14%) and one in the quinary sector. Six of the individuals surveyed were currently employed with four (67%) employed in the secondary sector. Overall, based on the information obtained, the proportions of characteristics of the interviewees were similar to those observed in the quantitative study.

Interview Guide

The interview guide (see Appendix F) was designed to encourage individuals to share their experiences and perspectives of employment regardless of their current employment status. The purpose of this was to capture a well-rounded idea of the variation of experiences that exist for individuals across the post-incarcerated population – not just those that have been successful in attaining employment post-release. The interview questions were designed in line with the guiding research questions, yet rather than strict adherence, I was flexible when interviewing (i.e., the protocol was used as a guide such that each of the questions were asked at some point in the interview, yet not always in the same order). Interviews followed the conversational paths put forth by the interviewee, which encouraged interviewees to speak about what was "on their minds". The interviewing process can elicit deep thoughts and disclosures from participants, which was evident at times when participants' answers moved outside of the work context, to describe their personal views and general experiences post-incarceration. Table 13 provides an outline of the research questions and the associated interview questions. Some of the interview questions were anticipated to inform more than one research question.

Interviews generally began by asking individuals about whether they were employed prior to incarceration and if so, individuals were asked to describe what the job was like.

Participants were also asked to describe whether they were currently working or looking for employment and whether they felt as though incarceration will (or has) affect(ed) their ability to be employed. Further to this, participants were asked to describe their experience looking for work post-release (or what they anticipated it would be like). Individuals who were employed at the time of the interview were asked additional questions that began with whether their employer knew about their incarceration history and whether they had disclosed or concealed their incarceration history from their employer. They were also asked whether their employer knew (or did not know) about their incarceration history and whether it had affected their work experience (and how so). The next set of questions explored how participants experience their identity as a formerly incarcerated individual while at work. More specifically, participants were asked to describe their experiences at work since their release. Participants were also asked about their relationships with their supervisor and colleagues.

The interview concluded by asking individuals about any specific experiences or perspectives and whether they felt that they had not fully conveyed or mentioned their experiences with employment post-incarceration as well as any general viewpoints that they wished they could share with employers about individuals who have been incarcerated. This was particularly insightful because it enabled individuals to fully explore their conception of self and how they might present that self to others, specifically with reference to their incarceration history.

Interviews were recorded with the permission of participants and lasted between thirty minutes and one hour. Interview notes were made for the four participants that did not agree to be recorded. The interview notes were taken throughout the course of the unrecorded interviews, which included quotes from the participants as well as summaries of what the participants said. Following each of the unrecorded interviews I read over the notes and edited them for clarity.

During the analysis I referred to my notes as an account of an individual's experiences. The notes were considered for relevant themes. However, no direct quotes were included from the notes in the analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

Throughout the survey process I visited the halfway houses and the day reporting centre. During that time I became well acquainted with the staff and spent time speaking informally with the former prisoners visiting the centre. Some individuals were not comfortable being formally interviewed, but were open to having informal conversations and this helped me to understand more about how individuals experience life post-release. While these informal conversations helped to deepen my understanding of individual experiences throughout the employment process, this also gave me an opportunity to learn more about the day reporting centre itself and the significance of services they provide to clients. I also had a chance to learn about the various challenges and successes that individuals experienced over time as they reintegrated back into society post-release. These experiences not only developed my understanding of the elements that affected the employment process; this also gave me an opportunity to become more familiar with the array of components involved in reintegration post-release and to better understand former prisoners' experiences in this larger context.

Interviews were scheduled in accordance with space, staff, and participant availability at the day reporting centre. As such, two to three interviews were conducted, once a week - over the course of six months. Within these limitations, post-incarcerated participants were selected for the interviews (Glaser, 1978; Patton, 2002). Following each cluster of interviews, I identified themes that appeared across the interviews in a separate document. I added to and refined this list of themes over time as I conducted further interviews until I reached the point of data saturation. Data saturation is described as reaching a point where the data collected adequately answers the

research questions such that "new categories, themes or explanations stop emerging from the data" (Marshall, 1996, p.523). Therefore, I continued to conduct interviews and identify themes until the point that no new themes emerged, and no further refinement was evident. In total 53 themes were initially identified. At this point of data saturation, the sample size was considered to be sufficient at 18 participants. I continued to interview 4 more participants to ensure that this theme held true.

Transcription

All names of persons or prisons are removed to protect the confidentiality of the participants. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and then edited for speech fillers. For instance, utterances (stutters, pauses, nonverbal, involuntary vocalizations) were captured in as much detail as possible in the associated transcripts (Oliver, Serovich, & Mason, 2005). I felt it was important for the material to be transcribed in this way for my records. However, since the purpose of the present study was to highlight the post-incarcerated employment experience from the perspective of former prisoners, a denaturalized transcription was appropriate for analysis (Oliver et al., 2005). As specified by Oliver et al. (2005), denaturalized transcription involves eliminating idiosyncratic elements of speech whereby "the focus is less on how one communicates perceptions, but the perceptions themselves" (p. 1278) and "the content of the interview"(p. 1278). Square brackets were used in the quotes where words are included for clarity where there were grammatical errors or slang used. However, the majority of participants' original wording was maintained. Square brackets were also used to maintain confidential information (i.e. individual identity, location). Filler words such as "you know", "um", and "right" were also excluded to focus on the essence of what individuals were saying. These final denaturalized transcripts were used for the analysis.

Analytic Approach

Interviewing and analysis have been widely considered to proceed together when engaging in interpretive research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997). Therefore, the interviews were analyzed based on the analytic approach described by Gioia et al. (2012) ("The Gioia Method"), where participant data was simultaneously collected, coded, and analyzed. The Gioia Method is a rigorous analytic method for the conducting and presentation of inductive research that involves a series of phases whereby predominant themes are highlighted in order to provide a rich thematic description of the entire data set. The primary focus of this analytic approach is to develop an inductive model that is firmly rooted within the data and that accurately represents individual experiences within a theoretical perspective (Gioia et al., 2012). This approach involves the recognition that a researcher may already be familiar with the phenomenon of interest. However, researchers are encouraged to willingly enforce an ignorance of the literature throughout the data collection and analysis (Gioia et al., 2012). Therefore, although a literature review and quantitative study had already been completed in preparing for the quantitative study, this prior knowledge was not referred to for the initial coding of the qualitative data. Instead, as a recursive interview-analysis process, this research involved the emergence of further ideas and questions that appeared to develop from the interviewing. As this process evolved, the questions I asked participants became more refined. Throughout this process, individuals spoke about the various ways that they experience the former prisoner identity and how it affected the employment process, and I was curious to deepen my understanding of the perceived individual experience. Keeping a list of the emergent themes and refining this list over time helped me to thoughtfully engage in this process.

I maintained familiarity with and continued to develop the themes over the course of the data collection period and this enabled me to relate to the participants and to probe them further

as they talked about their experiences. The emergent themes were identified directly from the qualitative data, enabling the data to speak for itself. Then, I revisited the existing literature to determine where the data converged and diverged from the existing literature. There were themes that did not coincide with existing theoretical explanations, and in response to discovering these themes, I explored the literature further for any further insights. In essence, I explored how different theoretical perspectives could inform each other and how this iterative analytical process enabled a confirmation of existing literature as well as an opportunity for new knowledge development.

A computer assisted qualitative data analysis system (QSR NVivo) facilitated the in-depth analysis, comparison of accounts, and identification of emerging themes (Jones, 2007). Overall, the analysis involved immersion in the data, organizing the data, and a-posteriori categorization, generating categories and themes in order to facilitate an assembled data structure (Gioia et al., 2012). This iterative process involved four phases: (1) generating 1st order concepts, (2) generating 2nd order themes, (3) generating aggregate dimensions, and finally (4) model development. Each of these stages is described below.

Generating 1st order concepts
The 1st order analysis is generally a "loose" process that involves a free emergence of concepts and faithful adherence to the terms used by the research participants (Gioia et al., 2012). I started off with the initial themes that were identified throughout the interview process and aligned relevant participant quotes with those themes. At first, there was little effort towards refining the identified codes. This is useful for the discovery of categories and the identification of new concepts (Gioia et al., 2012; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). This process of an "exploding" number of codes and terms is particularly useful for an in-depth exploration of the concepts that apply to individual accounts of their employment experiences post-release. As I

listened to the audio and read through the transcripts, I identified 105 loosely defined codes. This was slightly above the suggestion made by (Gioia et al., 2012) for an initial generation of anywhere from 50 to 100 emergent 1st-order concepts. However, these codes were refined further as I went on to generate 2nd order themes.

Generating 2nd order themes

The subsequent analytic phase involves identifying any similarities or differences amid the emerging first order concepts and categories in order to generate second order themes (Gioia et al., 2012). In this phase, in addition to applying concepts to the empirical data, categories and related subcategories were identified (Miles et al., 2014). Concepts were assessed and I re-read the associated quotes to determine whether it was appropriate to merge any concepts. In this way, the content of the initial concepts was not discarded but was integrated to better explain an overarching theme. I also assessed the extent to which they informed the guiding research questions.

Through this process thirty-seven 2nd order themes were identified. Since it is preferable for participant terms to be maintained throughout this process (Gioia et al., 2012), I considered the participant quotes and labelled the associated categories accordingly. Considerations of the emergent themes involved assessing whether they pointed to any concrete construct that might facilitate a description and explanation of the phenomena of interest (Gioia et al., 2012). This process has been described as moving into the theoretical domain (Gioia et al., 2012). In this way, I focused on identifying existing theoretical concepts that were pertinent to the research questions as well as any budding concepts that did not necessarily exist in the current literature but that "leap out" based on their pertinence to the guiding research questions (Gioia et al., 2012). Analyzing the data in this way enabled a refinement of the initial concepts into salient themes (Gioia et al., 2012).

In line with suggestions made by Gioia et al. (2012) several considerations applied to this phase. First and foremost, I considered whether a 'deeper structure' was evident in the array of identified categorizations. Secondly, I considered multiple levels simultaneously. For instance, at this point in the analysis I considered the themes at the level of the participant terms and codes, at the more abstract 2nd-order theoretical level of themes, and I also considered what may be taking place as within the larger narrative. Once the identified set of themes and concepts appeared to be well-developed, I moved on to consider aggregate dimensions (Gioia et al., 2012).

Generating Aggregate Dimensions

Generating aggregate dimensions is described as a process of further interpretation (Gioia et al., 2012). This is an emergent process of interpreting the data, themes, concepts, and existing constructs in the literature. In particular, interpretation involves "attaching significance to what was found, making sense of findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and imposing order, and considering alternative understandings that critically challenge the patterns that seem apparent" (Patton, 2002, p. 480) and whether any new concepts have been discovered (Gioia et al., 2012). This process is continued until the categories are well described and fit with the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Four primary aggregate dimensions were identified that organized the 2nd order themes. However, as I worked through the different levels of analysis, the themes that were explicitly expressed by at least 3 participants were included in the interpretation of the aggregate dimensions.

Model Development

Model development is a process that includes a progression from methodological to theoretical conceptualizations of the data (Gioia et al., 2012). It is described as establishing a data structure that involves configuring the data into an intuitive visual aid that provides a

graphic representation of the progression from raw data to terms and themes (Pratt, 1998; Tracy, 2012). In this way, it is essential that the developed model accurately fits the data by accounting relational dynamics among the emergent concepts, themes, and dimensions and their dynamic interrelationships were refined, which enabled theoretical insights that would not otherwise be apparent, to be revealed (Gioia et al., 2012). The data confirmed existing theory as well as areas where new theoretical insights had emerged. The final concepts, themes and dimensions are outlined in Table 14. The rigor of this process (i.e. trustworthiness) was carefully considered as an essential element to validate the associated findings.

Ethical Considerations

In addition to the ethical considerations outlined in Chapter 3, specific considerations were made for this qualitative inquiry. Since most of the interviews were audiotaped and transcribed it was essential to maintain confidentiality of the interviews. Thus, with the approval of the Human Participants Research Committee interview recordings were stored and password protected in the principle investigator's private office. Following the completion of the present study, the transcriptions were archived in a separate and secured, locked area in the principle investigator's private office and will be deleted upon completion of the project (expected 2027).

Certain ethical considerations become relevant depending on the researcher's position. The relationship between the researcher and the researched for this study was overt in that the interviewees were fully aware that this interview was a part of a research study. This was an important aspect of obtaining informed consent. Each participant signed a consent form for this study. Early into the research it became clear that the information obtained was highly sensitive and that certain details mentioned in the interview by the participant (i.e. last name, crimes committed) may make a participant's identity easy to determine. Therefore, a pseudonym was selected for each participant.

Some interviewees noted a distance between us in the interview (i.e. "you there behind that desk" or "people like us" – referring to themselves and other individuals who have been incarcerated). At times like this, I acknowledged their perspective but also tried to connect with them in other ways thereby building more trust and openness throughout the study. This involved consciously using terms that resonated most with individuals (rather than my own terms) in order to connect with them and to get a better understanding of their lived experience (Gioia et al., 2012). Some individuals preferred phrases such as "I went to prison" as opposed to "I was incarcerated". I did my best to gauge this based on the language used by participants and/or whether they corrected an articular phrase/term I used, and adjusted my own language over the course of each interview.

It was also important to consider whether there were any anticipated consequences. In order to minimize harm, I was open about and gained their consent to use a tape recorder. Some individuals expressed a discomfort with the tape recorder and they were given the option not to be recorded. I was also mindful of being sensitive to the time constraints and varying location restrictions and parole conditions of the participants by meeting at a neutral location (i.e. day reporting centre) and at a time that was convenient for them. At the end of the interviews, the exit was gradual. I would let participants know that this was my last question and then give them the opportunity to speak about anything they would like to express to employers or that they feel might be important to mention in general. Following the interviews, individuals were able to discuss any concerns about the study directly with the staff or myself at the day reporting centre.

Overall, rich, thick descriptions and direct quotations from the interviews were used to share the participants' perspectives and these details were representative of the consistency of the study. Participants offered descriptive accounts of their experiences and perspectives that were

useful for me to develop a better understanding of their social reality as formerly incarcerated

individuals considering, searching for, and actively engaged in employment. Therefore, the

associated quotations provide information about the experience and perspectives of employment

post-release and enable readers to consider the potential applicability of their experiences to

other populations.

CHAPTER SIX: QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Chapter Overview

This mixed methods study has been preceded by three guiding research questions

(a) What are the psycho-social effects associated with bearing an invisible yet stigmatized identity?

(b) How do individuals manage an invisible stigmatized identity?

(c) How do stigmatized identities affect employment outcomes?

In this chapter, I will outline my qualitative findings regarding the identity management experiences of former prisoners throughout the employment process with the goal of showing how individuals manage an invisible stigmatized identity at various stages of employment re-entry. This inquiry was guided by the following three research questions:

a) How does this experience affect individual perceptions of self and employment?

b) How do individuals manage an invisible stigmatized identity at various stages of employment re-entry?

c) What factors influence individual identity management decisions?

Interviewees, commonly referred to themselves as "criminals", suggest as per Hogg and Terry (2000) that their certainty about their place in the social world at release was very much tied to their prison identity, thus this impacts their confidence in society and influences their behaviours and expectations of their environment. The relational elements of social identity were evident in the language that participants use to describe themselves and others who had been incarcerated as a collective "us" whereas those without a prison history were the comparative group—"them" or "you guys". These accounts are reflective of individuals' awareness of their former prisoner identity as it compares to the identity of "non-deviant" citizens. In this context, the results are

structured in three sections. First, I look on the past and consider how people are affected or shaped by prison. Then, I look at individual conceptions of their "present" and how this view shapes their conception of self. Next, I explore how people self-identify or categorize different components of their self by separating the difference between crime versus action, and how these inform individual understandings of their morale and in turn their identity.

The Influence of the past

Hogg (2000) points out that in the face of uncertainty, individuals tend to be motivated to develop distinct strategies to reduce that uncertainty. This cognitive process is in line with the tenets of cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), which situates mental life as a set of cognitive representations. From this perspective, individuals form perceptions of and expectations for their social environment – these contribute to cognitive representations that are formed in one's mind (Cooper, 2011). As individuals interpret whether their expectations are met, experiences of cognitive and/or emotional dissonance describe instances whereby cognitive appraisals are inconsistent (Cooper, 2011). As they reintegrate, former prisoners have to focus on adjusting and making continuous lifestyle changes as well as facing obstacles that will ultimately assess whether they are committed to community living (Scott, 2010). Many former prisoners may have difficulty overcoming the negative effects of imprisonment and coping with the realities of everyday experiences (Gill, 1997), which may subsequently affect their ability to attain and maintain employment post-release. While in prison, individuals typically become accustomed to everyday routines, having everything planned and done in a timely manner, and they also may have become accustomed to the differing context and informal rules associated with the prison environment (i.e. prisoners vs. others) in an environment where there is little room for individual decision (Ricciardelli, 2014; Ricciardelli & Memarpour, 2016). Furthermore, over the course of several years negative perceptions of self are demonstrated and perpetuated in

a prison environment and this typically has a profound impact on the former prisoner. Adapting to a new way of life, as well as battling with internalizing and overcoming ingrained perceptions that they had become accustomed to, are some of the challenges former prisoners face as they seek employment. For instance, Jason described the systemic treatment and experiences in prison that have contributed to his perception of his identity as a former prisoner.

> *It just is a statement. It's just part of my life. It has been for, like, 5 years it feels like almost. When this is all over, it will almost be 5 years. You get treated like a criminal. "What's your name, what's your number? Go here, go there. This is the address you have to be at. Call me 3 times a day. Write down where you're going. Call this person. Go here. Piss in this cup." F*** I am a criminal. "Strip now". [Well,], if this is how you treat me for five f***ing years, how do I not say I'm a criminal. That's how I get treated. (Jason)*

As Jason describes, based on his experiences being treated as a criminal, this label and the ensuing consequences have informed how he is socially identified. Jason's account illustrates that he, like several others who echo his sentiment, felt like a criminal based on their experiences within the criminal justice system, and that this effect had continued to pervade his reintegration experience even after 14 months post-release. From a social identity perspective, we would expect that in spite of the effects of one's prison experience, based on the *self-esteem motive*, individuals aim to achieve or maintain a positive social identity. However, this may be a struggle for individuals as they are confronted with the the personal challenges associated with reintegration and the realities of obtaining and maintaining employment over time. The employment effects associated with incarceration often marginalize former prisoners from the

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mainstream economy to work in secondary markets and informal economies where they are more vulnerable to reoffend (Western, 2002). In light of this, career development is largely inaccessible to former prisoners (Vernick & Reardon, 2001). Industry trends seem to support the presumption that former prisoners typically face limited job prospects compared to those without a criminal record (Holzer et al., 2003). This translates into many former prisoners having found themselves settling for temporary, low-skill, low-income employment (Harding, 2003). While individuals may approach employment with the best of intentions post-release, over time these additional struggles may be discouraging. Essentially, by limiting earning opportunities, conviction may provide 'market sanctions' such that former prisoners become more likely to be hired for unskilled and exploitative labor (Atkin & Armstrong, 2013). For some individuals, this may translate into overqualification for the jobs that they have access to post-release. In spite of their overqualification, individuals are faced with the necessity to obtain employment due to parole requirements as well as requirements for successful reintegration. Thus, seeking employment may require impression management in order for these individuals to appear attractive to employers. Recognizing this, Oliver spoke about negotiating how to present himself to employers on his resume.

> *This week I'm going to redo my resumes. I'm going to do one for welding footing*
>
> *and I'm just going to omit about 15 years of it. Because a lot of places told me that*
>
> *I'm over-qualified so they're worried that they're going to train me and I'm going*
>
> *to work somewhere else. So I'm just going to put renovations down, because I've*
>
> *done them most of my life. I've always done it on the side type of thing. I was*
>
> *actually a registered company for a while, so I'm going to put down general labour,*
>
> *renovations and welding, but [for] two different resumes. If somebody said, "What*

were you doing before this?" [and I say] "General labour." It's not a lie but it's

not exactly the truth either. (Oliver)

Here, Oliver expresses his expectation that he is most likely to find work in certain industries. Based on his personal experience and the advice of others, he expects that success in being considered for, and hopefully obtaining employment in those industries will involve reframing his work experience. Oliver's expectations for employment, as they are based on his previous work experiences, are in line with findings from several studies that have found that previous work experience affects the individual socialization process (Louis, 1980; Meglino, DeNisi, and Ravlin, 1993; Bauer and Green, 1994; Ashforth and Saks, 1995). Although Oliver knew that his employment prospects would be limited because of his incarceration history, his pre-existing experience and skills limit him further by potentially presenting a red flag to employers concerned about whether his over-qualification may limit their ability to retain him as an employee. This paradox presented Oliver, and others like him, with a dilemma for how to present one-self to potential employers. Individuals engage in decisions of self-presentation and the management of impressions, both visually and verbally as they construct an identity (Goffman, 1963). Therefore, we would expect this phenomenon to take place as individual reintegrate into the workplace post-release.

Impression-management tactics are typically focused on projecting a favourable identity or enhancing one's image in order to achieve positive employment outcomes (Jones & Pittman, 1982; Rosenfeld, Giacolone, & Riordan, 1995). In this way, impression management typically involves presenting best self or "up playing" one's identity. For instance, Ali, Lyons, and Ryan (2017) identified that impression management tactics, in particular related to expressions of

remorse, may mitigate employer concerns towards individuals with a criminal history. For individuals with prior work experience certain industries may no longer be accessible based on several factors (i.e. nature of the criminal convictions, time away from the industry, relevance of criminal background checks, etc.). Therefore, there may be instances where impression management may involve "downplaying" or "underplaying" one's professional identity in order to successfully obtain employment. This idea of downplaying positive impressions has been explored based on the strategic choice that individuals may make to downplay positivity in one domain in an effort to generate a particularly positive impression in another domain (Holoien & Fiske, 2013). Relatedly, individuals who are overqualified for a position may downplay the nature of their past work experience in order to highlight features of their past experiences that would be useful for work in the position they are aiming for. Ben, had worked as a professional prior to incarceration and was optimistic about employment when he was released from prison. Although he recognized that he would likely begin in more entry level positions and have to "work his way up". Overtime, as he applied to positions and got some interviews but no offers of employment, Ben expressed concerns about his overqualification and the disadvantage of not having general labour experience:

> *I would be back of the house kitchen staff, like dishwasher and stuff. This is work*
>
> *that I did a long time ago when I was when I was a teenager, or in my early twenties.*
>
> *So I have been applying for those jobs but I am not getting called back because the*
>
> *thing for me is I can go in as earnest as I possibly can and explain that I do have*
>
> *past experience without putting down the job but realistically anyone can do this*
>
> *job and they will hire a 16 year old on this job. To me it is not that challenging. But,*
>
> *I put in my application and then they [might] have somebody [interested who] has*

been washing dishes for 5 years, because that's what they want to do. Which one would you choose as an employer? I think that I am for those jobs for the general labour jobs. I think it is my lack of experience in those areas that is preventing me from getting calls back. (Ben)

Ben's strategy for obtaining employment was to be upfront about his incarceration history in his cover letter to employers. He preferred to have "everything on the table" by disclosing this outright. From this perspective, Ben expressed his expectation that he would likely have a chance being considered for certain roles such as "back of the house kitchen staff". He acknowledged his capability to perform this work, and at the same time pointed to the disadvantages he faced applying for these jobs for which he was overqualified. In particular, while Ben expected the potential disadvantage associated with disclosure, he struggled with the disadvantages based on his lack of relevant experience. For former prisoners like Ben that are required to "start from scratch", this involves downplaying their real employment experience, this may have an impact on their overall self-esteem and identification with their former prisoner identity. Although the effects of overqualification have not been explored in the literature with respect to former prisoners, past research in the migration literature considers the effects of overqualification on individuals has highlighted the impact this can have on individual mental health (Chen, Smith, & Mustard, 2010). Thus, we may expect similar negative effects for former prisoners that have to engage in downplaying as they reintegrate into employment.

The Influence of the present

The former prisoner identity can be described as a socially devalued identity that is not invisible or readily apparent to others (i.e. Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). Despite its invisibility, several individuals spoke about the perceived visibility of the former prisoner identity and how

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this affected their employment experiences post-release. In this way, present perceptions influenced individual employment experiences. For instance, Gary, who had been released from prison days before the interview, described how he felt that his identity as a former prisoner was visible and detectable by others based on his appearance and incarceration history.

I always get a little nervous about, you know, the criminal record and what not. Even in appearance, they [employers] can pretty much look at me and tell "This guy has probably been inside" You know? It's just that, I see it when I look in the mirror. (Gary)

From Gary's perspective, employers are likely to be able to detect his history of incarceration and this made him nervous when considering his prospects for employment. Relatedly, past research has considered the relevance of appearance-based inferences of criminality. Maclin and Herrera (2006) point out that in general, individuals draw from certain mental representations of a criminal and in turn some studies have demonstrated a potential consensus regarding criminal and non-criminal appearances. For instance, in a study conducted by Valla, Ceci, and Williams (2011), participants were asked to distinguish between headshots of criminals and non-criminals, and were able to do so reliably. Although individuals may bear physical markers of past imprisonment (i.e. teeth, tatoos, marks due to carceral punishment) (Shantz & Frigon, 2010), it is entirely possible that the former prisoner identity may also be interpreted based on individual perceptions of what time-served "looks like". Given that this interpretation may be unique to individual assessors, particular nuances likely exist throughout society.

By comparison Joe had been released for a more significant period of time at the time of the interviews and although Joe acknowledged that society may have general expectations of and

perceptions of a 'criminal' appearance, he did not feel as though he fit into that stereotype and felt that others would not identify him as a criminal based on his appearance

> *I don't dress like a criminal and I am not all covered in tattoos and s***. Man, like go to the pen, go lift a whole pile of weights. You are covered in scribbles all over your arms and your face and your neck and then come out and say that "I feel like I'm labeled that I am a convict", fool. Like I am sorry. I see the same people saying that stuff, walking with their pants down around their a**, limping, sucking their teeth and talking this and that and then saying "Well I feel like society has labeled me". Well, they don't even have to know that about you. You're telling them. They don't have to know that. Don't brag about it and then say "Oh well my life is s***ty because people label me". You know, you label yourself. (Joe)*

Joe recognized the visibility of the criminal self (or lack thereof), however, he also acknowledged that one intentionally decides to look like a criminal or not and that, from his perspective, for those that did not have this intention, visibility was not an issue. This is further evidence of Crocker and Major (1989) selective devaluing hypothesis such that he selectively did not identify with the attributes he ascribed to an individual with a criminal history. Although Gary and Joe both recognized that there are attributes that others typically perceive as indicative of an incarceration history, their perspectives highlight their differences in the extent to which this idea was central to their self-concept, which may have been linked to the variance in duration since release and in turn a difference in relevant experiences to draw from that inform and ultimately shape one's sense of self and the "visibility" of the former prisoner identity. For individuals like Gary who felt as though their former prisoner identity is detectable by others

based on their appearance, this is evidence of the embodiment (Moran, 2012) and internalizing of former prisoner attributes. This is reflective of the higher personal importance or psychological centrality of those dimensions to their self-concept. On the other hand, individuals like Joe, who have distanced themselves from such visible characteristics may be seen as expressing the relatively low level of personal importance or psychological centrality of those dimensions to their self-concept.

Interviewees also spoke about their sense of visibility around the former prisoner identity based on employer accessibility to information about their criminal history. Incarceration history can be detected by employers through various sources such as background checks, the media, gap in time on the resume, etc. Several participants expressed their angst towards this increased detectability and the extent to which it affects them throughout the employment process. George describes the increased accessibility to criminal history through the internet and social media:

All you have to do is Google my name. You don't even have to go through a search, you know. And the sad part is because of the social media. If they Google your name and they saw [what I was arrested for], I wasn't charged with any of that, because we put a media band. This is everything leading up to me being caught. Then [for] everything [after, I was] caught, there is nothing in the media, there is nothing with the sentence. There is nothing with what I was found guilty of. There is nothing. It's just a lot of dramatization by the media, and the police, that makes me look like that, a terrorist. So without a blue chip company or a Fortune 500 company, who would happen to do a back ground search, the HR just has to Google [my name]. So, they go "Wow, that's the guy who is sitting here for a fast track interview - wow, we can't hire this guy". Social media is killing finding a lot of jobs. "Have you

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already been pardoned for a criminal offence? Have you ever not received a pardon?" You know, that box. So either you lie in the box, [or you don't tick it], so you are caught both ways. Either the social media get you, or the box will (George)

George's account points to the reality that it is becoming increasingly difficult for individuals with a history of incarceration to conceal this personal information. In this way, the invisible former prisoner identity is uniquely visible by way of various means to detect one's criminal history. As Ben points out, there are various forums for visibility of criminal history. For him, internet searches in particular have influenced his employment experience post-release.

You can Google my name and see where I was charged and there a report was put. I wasn't in the newspaper nor on TV, but my story was put [on a website], which is unfortunate. Because, 20 years ago if it wasn't worth getting printed in the newspaper no one would know about it so my story would just disappear. But it's there, it exists because it was released and so it will be on the internet forever. So you can still search my name and if I don't disclose at the time of hiring and for whatever reason it comes up even if one of the co-workers Google my name, what kind of position am I in? (Ben)

Further to the increased visibility of criminal history, Ahmik points out that because that information is so readily accessible, he has to decide whether to disclose his identity since the consequences in the workplace is otherwise unclear and he expresses his fear of being found out.

I am afraid. I am definitely concerned and I am trying to find a way to get my name off the Internet (Ahmik)

Each of these participants' words reveal their "unrest" surrounding the potential discovery of information about their arrest and incarceration history. This is indicative of the negative impact that bearing an "invisible" stigmatized identity can have on an individual's psychological health. This is in line with the findings by Quinn and Chaudoir (2009), which suggest that individuals that possess a stigma that is more "strongly socially devalued" are expected to heighten psychological distress. Quinn and Chaudoir (2009) found that individuals experienced varying degrees of distress depending on the extent to which the devalued identity was salient and central to their conceptions of self. The individual account in the present study suggest that this unrest may be further exacerbated by intermediary mechanisms (i.e. background checks, google search) through which an individual's identity can be detected by others.

Separating the self and the act

Being labelled as an "offender" tends to ostracize individuals from their wider community and in turn may impede their ability to integrate post-release (Maxwell & Morris, 1999). It is within this context that individuals seeking employment post-release are challenged to make sense of their identity as a former prisoner and determine how that aspect of their self "fits" into their overall conception of self and appraisal of their personal experiences and decisions. Sensemaking is described by Weick (1995) as a social process that is continuous and retrospective in nature. This process is an integral link between perceptions and ensuing actions and decisions. Sensemaking gives meaning to individual acts and experiences (Riley, 2000) and is a useful mechanism for understanding the essence of former prisoner employment reintegration post release. From this perspective, individual identity sensemaking appeared to be based on former prisoner appraisals of their past and present, and further materialized into a drawn distinction between individual choices and actions and their personal perceptions of self. In essence, as participants described their experiences navigating through the uncertainty that is

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reintegration post-release, they seemed to ascribe a certain sense of meaningfulness and interpretation of their past experiences, present conceptions of self, and how each of these inform their current experiences. For instance, Joe described his perceptions of his life experiences and his actions.

> *I've had a pretty cool life. I've not had the life like your wife's mother wants to hear*
> *about, but when I look back on it, I wasn't a s***ty person. I didn't hurt a lot of*
> *people or do like bad things right, I just was like a little bit of a wild Irishman. (Joe)*

Joe acknowledged his deviance, while simultaneously situating his behaviours within the realm of what is acceptable and in line with his identity as an individual. This is in line with research that suggests that "an individual's ethical ideology provides guidelines for evaluating ethically questionable behaviors and ultimately deciding to refrain or engage in them" (Henle, Giacalone, & Jurkiewicz, 2005, p.225). Just as these ethical ideologies may influence an individual's deviance, so too can they define individual moral thought or philosophy. These individual nuances may influence their sense of self to the extent in which they identify with deviant behaviour and make sense of how that behaviour fits into a particular aspect of their identity.

On the other hand, Mike acknowledged the crimes he has committed, however, he took this assessment further by making a personal assessment of the severity of those crimes based on a comparison to which offences he deems to be more severe.

> *I have a criminal record but I am not a thief. You don't have to worry about me*
> *blowing up the place or anything like that. (Mike)*

In this way, Mike separates his personal sense of self from his record of offences. Ron identified with his criminal history in a similar way. While he acknowledged his criminal history, he

pointed out that he had not committed a crime that involved weapons. For Ron, his identity as a former prisoner, though deviant, was situated within a personal set of morals and values.

> *So I go to jail for these bank robberies. No weapons or nothing, no threats, which is bad enough. I realize that. And every single one of them [fellow prisoners] will say "What, why didn't you have a weapon?" This is how these people think." "Why don't I go in with a gun shooting it off and terrifying people". Yeah, that makes a lot of sense, right? And for what? A couple of thousand dollars? Give me a…get out of here you jackass. And they think it's cool…and I think, "what is wrong with these people?". (Ron)*

Ron demonstrates a distinct awareness of his personal boundaries as they relate to the morality of his decision making and actions. Ron's and Mike's accounts suggest that individuals who held similar views, had a specific attitude towards their crimes, and followed a particular moral code. This involved a comparison between their own actions and other alternatives that they identified as more severe. As such, individuals distance their self from their crime by separating the negative characteristics they perceive to be associated with the "criminal" label from the nature of the act they committed. Through these comparisons, individual feelings towards the crime itself becomes clear as do their personal values and those that influenced their conception of self. Crocker and Major (1989) suggest that individuals that have a stigmatized identity may selectively devalue poorly reflected elements of their stigmatized identity and value more positive elements of their identity. In line with this view, we see here that individuals have distinct personal values and that maintaining those values is central to their sense of self. As evidenced above, Joe, Mike, and Ron respectively expressed their individual disassociations

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from hurting people, stealing, and using weapons. It appears that each individual had developed a personal standard with which they would like to uphold, that separates their perceptions of self from certain deviant behaviours, that are typically ascribed to individuals with an incarceration history. This was evidenced further by their separations between their former "offender" self as distinct from their newfound sense of self.

Through the interviews it became apparent that employment, in particular, may give individuals a concrete opportunity to make this separation between criminal act and sense of self and that this separation may be integral to reshaping their identity post release and may ultimately lead to a sense of purpose and successful reintegration. Gary, a recent releasee, describes how employment would give him a chance to identify as something other than a criminal.

It doesn't really look good. It's not very easy to walk around and tell people "Oh, this is what I do, I'm a bum from here". So yeah, it's definitely nothing to be proud of and in a sense this is what I am a little bit more concerned [about], I want to say that I am something other than you know, "that guy". I want to say that "I am not just some convict" or "I am not just somebody who is homeless". [I want to say] "I am [an] entrepreneur" or "I am a cook or a waiter" or whatever it is. (Gary)

Gary expressed his discomfort with bearing an identity as a former prisoner. He spoke of his desire to be able to refer to himself in a more positive way, such as an identity that could be tied to employment. From this perspective, Gary expressed himself by separating his past actions from his current perception of self by expressing a sense of growth and his relentless commitment to refrain from re-offence.

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I have probably got more willingness to learn it and to get through it than most people. There is a lot more on the line for me. I feel that I have a lot to risk or a lot to lose if I don't get things right. If people don't accept me, if people don't like the work that I do and so I [want to] try harder. If I have to stay late or do it on my own time to try and learn it and get it right, I will. To me I take it seriously. I don't know if it is more or less with anyone else, but I see the need to be serious, about what I do. I am not just [going to] flake out on something. Maybe I would have done [that] in the past or [just] say "I'm never gonna get this", or "Whatever, I will just go back to like selling weed" ... But [now] it's a little bit more 'sink or swim' in some senses. In some sense it was a bit [of] growing up [and I] also happen to have a daughter. (Gary)

Gary expresses the great importance he places on obtaining and maintaining employment. His account is indicative of the importance he places on separating act from identity and past from present in order to successfully reintegrate post-release. Similarly, Joe, who had been released for a lengthier period of time explained that being in prison prompted him to deeply reflect, and has since lead to his identification of who he is as a person, rather than as a criminal. Joe also described his confidence in his ability to desist from crime and emphasized how this has since been evidenced in his satisfaction and optimism for future prospects.

*When I was away for a while, I did a lot of soul searching I spent a lot of time staring in the mirror. So I know who I am now. I really like the person I am. I know that the bad person I was – was a life that I lost a long time ago. I found the one that I lost and I am not worried about ever getting in trouble or breaking the law, or doing anything bad, or ever going back there. I have had a pretty s***ty life and*

it wasn't anyone else to blame but my own behaviour knowing that just makes me

happy everyday. I know that I am not going to be living that life anymore. Maybe

in a few years from now, I'll feel dissatisfied but right now I'm pretty happy just

knowing that I am going in a direction, even if it takes me a while to get there. (Joe)

Joe describes his distinct awareness of self and places his past, present, and future in the context of this awareness. Since Joe had been released for a lengthier period of time, he may have had more opportunities to develop his sense of confidence and has demonstrated that he has experienced results that confirm his positive view of himself. Each of these accounts demonstrates the extent to which individuals deliberately separate the "criminal" aspect of their identity from a "new and improved" non-deviant self. Individuals were able to articulate this transformation and make sense of their new found non-deviant identity. Despite the uncertainty associated with reintegrating into society and employment, each of these individuals demonstrated an awareness of their social identity as a former prisoner and simultaneously a keen focus on overcoming the limitations of that identity in order to successfully reintegrate successfully post-release.

Discussion

Guided by the individual perspectives reflected in the qualitiative inquiry, this research illustrates that devaluation shapes individual experiences; particularly since individuals are aware of the prejudice and discrimination directs towards them (Chaudoir and Fisher, 2010). Navigating these challenges, for releasees, may translate to a lack of confidence and trust in building and maintaining relationships with others, feelings of isolation, and lack of social acceptance. Former prisoners have a unique awareness of the social stigmatization associated with their criminal record and incarceration history. They are tasked with an intentional choice to

disclose or conceal that identity throughout the employment process. Participant accounts of their reintegration experiences reflect rather nuanced conceptions of their former prisoner identity and ensuing identity management strategies.

The findings above highlight that as individuals reintegrate into society and employment post-release, they engage in identity sensemaking and management which involves appraisals of their past experiences and present conceptions of self. These appraisals appear to materialize into a distinct internal separation between the criminal acts they committed in the past and their current perceptions of self. Although this separation is explicitly focused on separating past criminal behaviours, these experiences informed their perceptions of self as participants in the labour market. This finding is distinct from previous works that have largely considered the influence of past employment experiences on interpretations of the present and expectations for future employment experiences - work experience on the socialization process (Bauer & Green, 1994; Louis, 1980; Meglino, Denisi, & Ravlin, 1993). Given the great difference between the prison and employment context, this expands our understanding of the interplay between the past, present and future by suggesting that individuals draw from experiences in their past that are *relevant*, even if the contexts are dissimilar. Reflecting on individual experiences with employment post-incarceration, the nuanced identity management strategies shaping employment processes may guide releasee behaviours across stages of the employment process and further change overtime as individuals spend more time released into the community and gain experience navigating the employment context.

Participants' identity management techniques reflect the constructs of identity management embedded in stigma and social identity theories (Harding, 2003; Herman, 1993; Lee and Craft, 2002; Park, 2002; Taub *et al.*, 1999; Woods, 1994). Individual identity

management approach did not appear to directly impact success in obtaining employment – job attainment was evident for individuals who engaged in varying startegies related to disclosure and concealment. However, it was evident that as individuals experience employment, identity sensemaking and management evolve over time. Thus, it is relevant to consider how these processes affect subsequent employment as well as an individual's experience maintaining employment. Across participants, an internal struggle or negotiation as part of the identity management processes was evidenced in how such processes are relational, and involve transitioning between changes in relationships across time and space. As Ricciardelli and Mooney (2018) found, a temporal dimension also exists where the longer a releasee is in the community the more likely they are to disassociate their current self from their criminal past. Indeed, many felt that their criminal and incarceration history was personal and private, thus, although in some cases relevant to employers they are rarely to be shared with coworkers.

A unique consideration in this study is the "visible" nature of the invisible former prisoner identity. Although the former prisoner identity is not visible in the same sense of traditionally referenced visible identities (e.g. ethnicity), the visibility of this identity was evidence by individual perceptions of visibility (i.e. embodiment; Moran, 2012) as well as the detectability of the identity (i.e. criminal record, internet). This appeared to inform individual conceptions of self, their approach to employment as well as their expectations in terms of how employers would respond to them. Consistent with existing literature (e.g. Waldfogel, 1994), the theme of honesty repeatedly emerged across participants as a central consideration to identity management. Given identity detection is always looming, I found that participants actively manage their identity by negotiating between disclosure and concealment throughout the

employment process. Individual identity management choices are multilayered, driven by a motivation to avoid unintended discovery and the resulting stigmatization.

Taken together, this chapter provides insight into former prisoner expectations and perceptions of self at various stages of the employment reintegration process. In line with a social identity perspective, former prisoners expressed an awareness of social categorizations and in particular, their own membership as a part of an out-group relative to other individuals in the labour market. While many individuals collectively identified as "criminals", further categorization into different types of releases was also evident across individual perspectives. Interestingly, despite this collective identification as individuals who had committed a crime, many individuals were able to express how they had either maintained certain ethical or moral standards that were important to their own self-concept. For other individuals, severing their crime from their identity was more relevant to their sense of self. These differences affected not only informed how individuals saw themselves, but also how they perceived others see them, and in turn their approach to identity and impression management while navigating through various stages of employment. Some interiewees expressed an awareness of employer concerns for re-offence and some could identify with that view even though they themselves did not expect to reoffend. Despite some of the negative connotations attributed towards former prisoners, many individuals were able to separate their sense of self as a member of an out-group (i.e. individuals with an incarceration history) from their identification with and understanding of the perspectives of the in-group (i.e. individuals without a prior incarceration history). Galinsky & Moskowitz (2000) note that an individual's ability to consider a perspective outside of their own is critical to their ability to function well in social settings. Therefore, the dual ability to be aware of their identity as a former prisoner as well as accepting of the perspective of others who do not

have a history of incarceration may be indicative of a propensity to successfully navigate through reintegration and employment post-release.

The present qualitative inquiry provides an interpretive representation of individual experiences. Based on individual descriptions of the employment experiences post-incarceration, this research both confirms past theoretical insights and sheds light on further relevant considerations. In particular, this inquiry shapes an understanding of the experiences of individuals that bear an invisible socially stigmatized identity, and how that identity is managed throughout the employment process. Each of these components influences a nuanced understanding of identity management for individuals at various stages of the employment process post-release. Current suppositions prescribed by stigma and social identity theoretical perspectives were confirmed. However, further relevant nuances were revealed that were influenced by considerations for further theoretical underpinnings (i.e. self-determination theory) as well as unexplored areas for consideration.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

The primary aim of my research was to generate knowledge about the employment reintegration process post-incarceration. I focused on developing an understanding of the complexities associated with social identity management for former prisoners at various stages of the employment process. To achieve this I tested and explored former prisoners' experiences managing an invisible socially stigmatized identity (i.e. the former prisoner identity) using quantitative and qualitative research methods. Individuals at various stages of employment and release from prison were asked about their experiences (Study 1: Quantitative) and how they navigated those experiences (Study 2: Qualitative).

I begin this chapter by outlining the implications for research and practice. Afterwards I outline policy recommendations. Finally, I discuss the limitations of this study, and propose subsequent recommendations for future researchers.

Implications for Research

Existing research has not adequately examined how former prisoners experience employment reentry processes. In this study I investigated reentry experiences, specifically examining how individuals manage their former identity as prisoner throughout the employment process and how this affects employment outcomes, my scholarship is well positioned to build knowledge about the outcomes and experiences of socially stigmatized individuals. The quantitative study examined individual perceptions of self and the associated employment outcomes. The results from the quantitative study provide evidence that individuals internalize the stigma associated with the former prisoner identity and that this, as well as their sense of self-efficacy, affects their employment outcomes. The qualitative study provides a more in-depth exploration of individual perceptions of self and how they navigate those perceptions at various stages of employment re-entry.

The findings of this study support existing research, which suggests that invisible social identities influence and complicate workplace interactions (Clair, Beatty, & MacLean, 2005). I further added to the social identity literature by drawing further attention to those that are socially stigmatized. I then contributed to the identity management literature by exploring disclosure and concealment as interrelated processes thereby generating an understanding of the gendered experience of formerly incarcerated males searching for employment post-release. Finally, I confirmed a further understanding of the various identity management strategies that individuals may engage in to navigate employment post-release, as well as the elements that may contribute to their approach.

Invisible Socially Stigmatized Identities

My research contributes to the social identity and stigma literatures by extending considerations for the employment experiences of individuals with an invisible socially stigmatized identity. In particular, my research reveals that although the former prisoner identity cannot be detected visibly there are several social, temporal and psychological elements that contribute to the perceived risk that this identity may be easily detected. Thus, former prisoners are tasked with actively managing their identity by consistently negotiating between disclosure and concealment throughout the employment process. Identity detection is always looming and is constantly being managed due to the ever-changing nature of organizational environments and shifting dynamics. My study highlights the various elements that contribute to the visibility of the former prisoner identity (i.e. internet/media, criminal background check and gap in employment).

My research reveals that stigmatized individuals have specific expectations of what their employment experiences should be like and that these expectations can shape their experiences in the labour market (i.e. Ghumman & Jackson, 2010). As individuals navigate the labour

market, their expectations may be confirmed or denied, and this may progressively influence their identity management approach. My study adds to our understanding of identity management shifts as it relates to the elements that influence these shifts as well as changes in circumstance (i.e. voluntary vs. involuntary disclosure), evidence of work ethic (i.e. disclosure once they had proven themselves), relational changes (i.e. sharing personal information as a close relationship develops).

My research shows that individual identity management choices are multilayered and that individual experiences in one domain (i.e. employment) is not limited to or solely informed by that particular experience. The quantitative results show that individuals who internalized stigma were less likely to disclose their former prisoner identity. Whereas individuals who felt as though they were devalued and discriminated against based on their incarceration history were more likely to disclose their identity. Individuals who internalized the stigma associated with the former prisoner identity were also less likely to have confidence in their ability to obtain employment. The qualitative inquiry further explored these results. Throughout the interviews, individuals highlighted the inter-connectedness of perceptions and experiences associated with their experiences post-release. The associated findings revealed that these individuals develop a sense of self that is comprised of perceptions of their employment identity and former prisoner identity. These perceptions ultimately shaped their experiences navigating from prison to employment and influenced how they manage their former prisoner identity throughout the employment process. Whether they obtained employment or not, they had to undergo a transition process as they adjusted to their perceptions of self and employment experiences post-release.

Managing an Invisible Socially Stigmatized Identity

My research highlights the various approaches that individuals consider for managing an invisible and devalued identity. These findings suggest that individuals may engage in tactics

that enable them to navigate the potential for discovery and avoid stigmatization (DeJordy, 2008)). However, this decision is not limited to a particular context or temporal range. By exploring the choice to disclose or conceal, my research reveals the complexities of the identity management process. Past research considered numerous identity management strategies that incorporated the interconnectedness of disclosure and concealment: deflection, defying expectations, identity substitution, conditional disclosure, counterfeiting, avoidance, withdrawal (Button, 2004; Harding, 2003; Herman, 1993; Lee & Craft, 2002; Park, 2002; Taub, Blinde, & Greer, 1999; Woods, 1994). However, research has largely continued to explore disclosure and concealment as separate processes.

Several of these identity management strategies were evidenced by the participants in this study. Not only does this confirm suppositions made in previous literature, this also encourages further inquiry into the factors that contribute to individual identity management choices. The quantitative portion of the study gave some insight into the effects of individual perceptions on choice of identity management strategy. However, not all of the results were as anticipated. Based on the stigma and social identity theoretical underpinnings, I expected the results to be significant. Instead, they were not significant for all of the hypotheses except hypothesis two which predicted that former prisoner stigma internalization would be negatively related to their ability to obtain employment. Upon further qualitative inquiry, several of the theoretical insights were confirmed, however important nuances also emerged. In particular, individuals expressed a strong commitment to honesty. Further to this, influences of the past and present were evident as individuals made sense of their identity as a former prisoner in the employment context.

Entry into the Labour Market
The relevance of this study for understanding the employment experiences of individuals who have been incarcerated, may also contribute to understanding the experiences of individuals

who are entering the labour market for the first time or re-entering after an absence of a period of time. Past research has explored the experiences related to adjusting to the labour market for women who are re-entering the workforce after childbirth and/or due to caring responsibilities (Gangl & Ziefle, 2009). Various barriers and challenges can contribute to and affect the individual experience on reentry into the labour market. Some of the most common challenges identified for mothers returning to work include lack of information, limited network, downward mobility, limited training, and lack of support (McGivney, 1999). Therefore, by exploring the experiences of former prisoners, there is an opportunity to contribute to other social groups with similar experiences (i.e. women with children). Such experiences may be further extended to other groups such as immigrants who may also relate to the process of adjusting to a new labour market as well as any differences between their expectations and perceptions to their new environment (Kalleberg, 2009; Wild & Ridgeway, 1970). Consequently, immigrants may also experience a shock factor when they are met with the realities of a new labour market. Further to this, individuals who re-enter the labour market after recovery from long-term disability or mental illness may relate to the adjustment that comes with reentry after a lengthy absence. A key difference between the re-entry experiences of former prisoners and those of groups who have traditionally been the focus of re-entry research is the stigma attached to the identity that has kept the individual outside of the labour market. The stigma associated with the former prisoner identity differs from other stigmatized identities for several reasons, mainly: (a) the perception of individual choice (i.e. to commit a crime or not) (b) its deviant nature (c) the perception of risk towards others. Thus, this research may be useful for understanding the re-entry process by considering the additional barriers and issues affecting individuals whose

identities are stigmatized, marginalized, and stereotyped (i.e. racial and sexual orientation) or underserved (i.e. health-related, socioeconomic status).

Implications for Practice

My research focused on the experiences of individuals who have been to prison, through various stages of the employment process, following their release from prison. Further attention has been drawn to the individual experience of invisible social identities, stigma, identity management and re-entry. As a result this research gives further insight into the unique individual experiences that permeate the workforce and can directly impact employment outcomes. There are several practical implications that this research can have for shaping organizational as well as HR practitioner decision-making. Thus, organizational practices and HR practitioners are encouraged to apply this knowledge in practice within organizations.

Inclusive work environments

Several works have pointed to the benefits of workplace inclusivity both for organizations and individuals (Nishii, 2013; Smith, Ingersoll, Robinson, Hercules, & Carey, 2008). My research extends the conceptualization of how organizations can be more inclusive. In Canada, the labour force is defined as individuals who are actively employed or unemployed (i.e. available for work and actively seeking employment) (Statistics Canada, 2010). My study involved surveying and interviewing individuals who were actively seeking employment as well as those actively employed. Several males expressed their drive to obtain employment post-release and the challenges they experienced. Although this study was limited to males who had been incarcerated in a federal institution, it demonstrates the significance of employment for individuals who have been to prison. Further to this, their experiences and perspectives confirm what we know from the literature. Employment is a significant deterrent from engaging in further criminal activities and is strongly linked with desistance from crime.

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Research has traditionally focused on discrimination towards visible attributes (i.e. race, gender and physical disability). My study highlights invisibility and extends the scope of considerations for deep-level diversity. Past research has shown that addressing deep-level differences (i.e. invisible social identities) have a longer lasting impact than surface-level differences (i.e. race, gender) (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004). Deep-level differences ultimately shape the quality of relational dynamics over time as individuals have the chance to have more meaningful interactions with each other (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998). Thus, it is important for organizations to be mindful of these additional deep-level aspects (i.e. stigmatized invisible identities) since this can have an impact on individuals (i.e. promotions), relationships (i.e. socializing with others) and in turn organizational outcomes (i.e. productivity).

With respect to organizational practices, I hope that this research will encourage organizations to be open to considering former prisoners that have the necessary skills required for employment. In order to achieve this aim, I believe it is important for employers to be educated on the implications of hiring individuals on parole. It may be useful for organizations to focus on preventative measures related to the risk factors that are commonly associated with the post-incarcerated population and individual candidacy based on the relevance of those risk factors. For instance, employers might consider the nature of the crime committed and its relevance to the position. Also, any relevant programming or evidence of rehabilitation may be taken into consideration when individuals are being considered for employment. Rather than blanket the stigma across individuals who have been to prison, employers could identify any hesitation towards an individual with a criminal history as they are relevant to the job and the extent to which those factors pose a risk to the organization and fellow employees. This suggestion is in line with the Ontario Human Rights Code, which specifies that during the hiring

process, employers may ask job applicants whether they are bondable if that is a job requirement (Ontario Human Rights Code, RSO 1990, c H.19, 2012).

My research also expands our view of the importance and use of various elements of organizational support. For instance, several participants spoke about the re-socialization process that takes place after having been removed from the workforce (and society) for a lengthy period of time. Drawing from existing organizational and community resources such as mentorship and coaching may offer individuals the appropriate resources, psychological support and coaching that may enable the need to re-socialize. Employee resource groups may also be a positive outlet for individuals to connect with others who share similar elements of their identity outside of the former prisoner identity (i.e. race, gender, religion, hobbies). The opportunity for individuals to connect in an area of interest might ease the socialization process for former prisoners and encourage them to experience greater inclusion amongst their peers.

Diversity Management and Training
Organizations are encouraged to place a greater emphasis on diversity management initiatives in order to benefit from a wider pool of skilled labour. Existing organizational practices (i.e. criminal background checks, credit history check) greatly limit the ability for individuals to obtain employment post-release. Individuals who have served time in prison come from a variety of educational, occupational, and skilled backgrounds. Thus, by excluding them or at least making it more difficult for them to be considered for employment, organizations are missing out on a significant pool of skilled workers.

Initiatives that would help to facilitate inclusion may better prepare organizations for considering a wider range of individuals whose skill sets meet their needs. In their study with reference to racial and gender diversity, Gilbert and Stead (1999) found that diversity management initiatives can facilitate enhanced employee perceptions of employee qualifications

and competence. Perhaps initiatives with a more prominent focus on individual skills may encourage acceptance of individuals with an incarceration history as well as other stigmatized identities. With respect to diversity training initiatives, a greater emphasis on acceptance (i.e. various backgrounds), education (i.e. workplace violence), and social equality may promote inclusion of individuals from a wide range of diverse backgrounds, including those who have a history of incarceration.

Recruitment and Selection

Human resource managers and practitioners can have a direct impact on the hiring outcomes for individuals who have been incarcerated. With respect to equal employment opportunities, Petersen (2016) suggests that while employer apprehension towards hiring individuals with a criminal history may seem reasonable, it can also be argued that there are organizational outcome differences (e.g., in terms of profitability) that may result from a lack of access to information about other aspects of an applicant's background (i.e. health, family plans). Thus, employers may benefit more by understanding the benefits (i.e. unique skills) and risks (i.e. instability) of considering former prisoners for employment rather than excluding them from opportunities all together. Uncertainties for hiring are never entirely avoidable. However, education and preparation for the realties associated with hiring former prisoners inform our understanding of how to address these issues as an organization in a way that gives these individuals a chance, protect existing employees, and has a limited impact on the bottom line. For instance, Petersen (2016) suggests a "New Matching + Model" to improve employer hiring considerations of applicants with a history of incarceration. The model suggests that while employers should be able to access an applicant's criminal record, this should only be applicable where (a) the crime is serious and (b) where a particular relevance or link can be

drawn between the crime recorded and the nature of the work. Research suggests that criminal justice policies, rehabilitative programming and labour-market conditions may have the greatest impact on the extent to which incarceration history affect employment (Aaltonen et al., 2016). North American criminal justice models place varying emphasis on punitive and rehabilitative elements over time. By contrast, Nordic penal systems (i.e. Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) have been recognized for their emphasis on rehabilitation, and lower prison rates, relative to other developed countries (Lappi-Seppälä & Tonry, 2011). Thus, North American criminal justice policies may consider incorporating similar interventions in order to improve employment prospects post-release. Further to this future research may consider comparisons between international penal systems, including a comparison between the Nordic and Canadian systems.

Policy Recommendations

Despite the general expectation for former prisoners to reintegrate successfully when they have been released from prison, existing policies may impede their ability to do so (Demleitner, 2002). However, that need not continue to be the case. This research may be instrumental in encouraging the creation of more inclusive, anti-discrimination social and organizational policies for former prisoners that better bridge the gap between pre- and post-release, thereby better enabling successful reintegration. These include policies that would enable the management of criminal history information such that individuals can be fairly considered for employment opportunities.

Individuals that are actively searching for employment post-release may be asked at some point during their job search to indicate whether they have ever been convicted of a crime. Conviction inquiries tend to be a major barrier for individuals with a criminal history (Pager, 2003). This may discourage potential applicants with criminal records and "singled out"

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applicants despite their qualifications or relevance of the conviction to the work or organization (National Employment Law Project, 2016). This may narrow the pool or qualified applicants to the detriment of employers and applicants (National Employment Law Project, 2016). Therefore, it is necessary for policy makers to consider how they might promote and increase equitable hiring.

Achieving this may include employer education, supportive organizational policies, and financial incentives. One way that this may be achieved is with the assertion that former prison employment should be considered as fulfilling unique aspect of corporate social responsibility – giving individuals a second chance. Furthermore, organizations should respect individual privacy, especially when it comes to personal information that is not work-related. It is important to recognize, however, that this outcome may be influenced by how receptive and supportive the social and political environment is of this aim.

In response to the need for initiatives that promote the employability of individuals post-release, several policy makers and social justice groups have advocated for fair-chance policies. Fair chance policies place an emphasis on encouraging employers to hire the most qualified candidates (National Employment Law Project, 2016). There is a wide spectrum of fair chance policies and such policy recommendations are not intended to force employers to hire individuals with a criminal history. Instead, the aim is to facilitate a fair chance for consideration. For instance, some policies encourage delaying background check inquiries until a candidate is being considered at the later stages of the hiring process (i.e. ban the box) (National Employment Law Project, 2016). Other fair chance policies outline arrest and conviction record consideration guidelines (i.e. time passed since the offence, relatedness of the offence to the position, evidence of rehabilitation) (National Employment Law Project, 2016). Thus, while there are logical

explanations for why former prisoners cannot work with individuals that are considered vulnerable, there are several occupations in which incarceration history need not have relevance to employment decisions (e.g. manufacturing, skilled trades and landscaping) (Blessett & Pryor, 2013).

While policies and employment interventions are important steps to better enable employment post-release, it is important to note that a one-size fits all approach will not be practical in adopting these policies and practices. Researchers have suggested that programs geared to the specific needs of individuals tend to be more effective than programs made for the general population (Griffiths et al., 2007). Keeping this in mind, policies and employment initiatives should endeavour to cover the vast range of skills, abilities, and education levels that span the population of formerly incarcerated individuals.

Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

The following sections outline the limitations associated with the quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods components of this study. The limitations of this study have the potential to provide useful recommendations for future research.

Research Design and Data Collection Procedures

As a cross-sectional survey, this study was focused on participant perceptions at one point in time. While there is no generally agreed upon time frame within which a cross-sectional study has to take place, it is preferable for data to be collected within a shorter time frame. The survey data for my study was collected over the course of three years (2012-2015) due to scheduling conflicts as well as the availability of participants (i.e. decline during holiday season, influx of new residents). Data collection over the course of an extended period of time has the potential to introduce additional variance that might affect results (i.e. policy changes, legislative

changes). For instance, over the course of this study several significant legislative changes took place., Bill C-10 ("the Safe Streets and Communities Act") was introduced in Canada in December 5, 2011, followed by the introduction of Bill C-394 and Bill C-479 in May 2013 (Parliament of Canada, 2012, 2014, 2015). This legislation was being implemented over the course of this study and there were effects for individuals in the criminal justice system. The legislation incorporates several crime-specific changes including: mandatory jail sentences, the elimination of conditional sentences, the elimination of double credit for time already served, increases the maximum time between hearings, and includes additional barriers for applying for a record suspension which may limit the extent to which people can move forward with their careers. Given the numerous changes and criticisms associated with this new legislation, future studies may benefit from collecting data in a more specific period of time so that any effects associated with such changes can be actively captured.

Further to this, the quantitative portion of the research pointed to probable inferences based on individuals' perceptual self-reported data. Thus, this study may be subject to common methods bias such that a methods effect may alter any correlations between variables (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003; Spector & Brannick, 2010). This may lead to concerns that interpretations of respondents' perceptions may have potential limitations (i.e. truthfulness, understanding questions), therefore, it is important not to overgeneralize the associated findings. The common method bias results indicated a significant shared variance. Thus, the unconstrained common method factor was retained for the analyses, which statistically accounted for any shared variance. I would also encourage future scholars to incorporate additional measures of employment (i.e. length of employment, organizational commitment, job performance) in order to differentiate further how perceptions and identity management tactics may affect particular

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outcomes throughout the employment process. In the current study, one's efficacy in their ability to obtain employment is considered to be a decent predictor of future employment. This was a useful measure to understand individual perceptions and was also appropriate for considering individuals at different stages of the employment process.

Given the scarcity of instruments used to assess the employment and re-entry experience for individuals post-release, the measures used for the quantitative study were largely borrowed from closely related literatures (i.e. mental health) and modified where appropriate. One specific consideration relates to the measure of employment and how future studies may conceptualize employment success. Relevant measures of employment may include measures relevant to: job search behaviour, identifying stages of the job application process, median hourly wage, and/or organizational commitment (e.g. Visher et al., 2011). Further to these suggestions, I encourage future research that considers how employment evolves overtime by way of longitudinal analysis. This may involve assessing the extent to which individuals obtain and maintain employment over time, comparing individuals who are employed and those who are not employed, and/or considering employment type (i.e. precarious vs. less precarious jobs). In general, it would be useful for future survey instruments to be developed for this specific area of inquiry. Further to this, as I conducted the study it became apparent that there may be differences in individual perspectives and experiences based on factors that had not been captured in the quantitative study (i.e. amount of time since release). Therefore, these elements were incorporated into the qualitative study.

For the qualitative study, this single snapshot in time meant that follow-ups were not conducted with participants. It would be interesting for future studies to track the experiences of individuals over time. Granted, follow-ups may be challenging with this population given the

possibility that they may return to prison. However, it would be useful for future studies to follow up with participants throughout the re-entry process (i.e. prior to release, immediately following release, and 6-12 months after release). This will lend further insights into any changes to employability and success in obtaining employment. The interviews in this present study revealed that people had different expectations depending on how long they had been released for. Thus, individual perspectives may change over time depending on changing conditions (i.e. warrant expiry and time since release). In this way, future researchers may consider speaking to individuals who have been out of prison for lengthier periods of time. A further consideration relevant to the qualitative inquiry was the setup of the room. Later on in the interview process it became evident that the setup of the available office space may have had an effect on participants being more apprehensive at first. However, this was mitigated as I built a rapport with individuals throughout the interview.

Because there is a relatively scarce emphasis on the experiences of former prisoners in the management literature, mixed-methods research is encouraged to further explore this phenomenon. However, researchers should be mindful of the skills required for a mixed methods approach (Collins & O'Cathain, 2009). This requirement was met with the support of my committee that was comprised of members with expertise in different areas of study and with strengths in qualitative and quantitative methodologies. In mixed methods studies, the sequencing of quantitative and qualitative data collection depends on the research objectives (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). My research was designed with the qualitative study following the quantitative study and the qualitative inquiry was useful for informing the quantitative results. Creswell and Clark (2010) outlined nine strategies for mixed methods research that range in purpose, emphasis and sequence of qualitative and quantitative methods.

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As an example, a convergent mixed methods design would involve the collection and analysis of data from two independent, yet overlapping studies, one using quantitative methods and the other qualitative. The results from each research methodology would be merged to assess any convergence, divergence, or contradictions between both results (Creswell & Clark, 2010). Mixed-methods research could also employ an exploratory design where by the qualitative study has a greater emphasis and occurs first. This would then be followed by the quantitative study which would be useful for assessing the extent to which the findings from the qualitative findings can be generalized to the former prisoner population (Creswell & Clark, 2010). Future researchers are encouraged to explore the employment and re-entry experiences of former prisoners and further employing a variety of mixed-methods research combinations.

Sample Characteristics

This study focused on the experience of males who had been incarcerated in a federal institution and were on conditional release. Future studies are also encouraged to expand our understanding of the reintegration experience by exploring and comparing the experiences of other groups in the criminal justice system, including women. This may include an exploration and comparison of the different perceptions and experiences for men and women. Further to this, future research should explore the perspective of individuals who have been incarcerated in provincial institutions. In the present study, several participants spoke about the differences between federal and provincial institutions (i.e. resources, programming and conditions). These elements may in turn affect reintegration preparedness, expectations and experiences. Within the federal system, individuals had been incarcerated across security levels ranging from minimum to maximum. My study considered the effects associated with the highest security institution in which an individual had served time, but did not specifically account for the level of institution from which the individuals had been released. Future studies are encouraged to consider the level of security that individuals were released from. Future researchers should consider the perspectives of hiring managers, employees, and other stakeholders within an organization in terms of their receptiveness towards individuals who have been released from prison and any associated experiences. Such research can inform understanding of the barriers faced by individuals re-entering the workforce as well as the concerns of potential colleagues and employers.

Another limitation was that the sample size for the quantitative study was relatively small. Although the sample was sufficient or the current inquiry, future studies may benefit from a larger sample. In particular, I suggest drawing from a larger sample for each stage of the

employment process and exploring each stage in depth in order to differentiate experiences and to account for further individual differences that may impact perspectives and experiences post-release. For instance, future researchers may consider accounting for differences in personalities and how that might affect self-efficacy. Another consideration may be for the industries individuals are aspiring to find employment and whether there any differences in their experiences with employment as a result. In terms of location, this study was conducted in a single metropolitan area, which limit the ability to extrapolate these perceptions and experiences to individuals serving time in other parts of the country. However, because it was a large metropolitan area, there were individuals who had served time across the country. Future studies should consider including participants from a wider geographical range and explore any differences in perceptions and experiences. Given the variety of differences across international contexts, future studies may also consider incorporating cross-national comparisons.

Concluding Remarks

My aim was to conduct a mixed-methods comprehensive study of employment for male former prisoners in Canada. Former prisoners represent a population whose voices are typically left unheard in organizational practice and in the management literature. Given the complexities associated with their identity and experiences there is as much to learn about these individuals, as there is to learn from them. My hope is that my work will contribute to expanding understanding of diversity and also contribute to our knowledge and understanding of the experiences of social stigma and identity invisibility.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination Scale

Using the following scale, please circle the number that best represents how you feel about the following statements:

Strongly Agree 1	*Agree* 2	*Slightly Agree* 3	*Slightly Disagree* 4	*Disagree* 5	*Strongly Disagree* 6

1.	Most people would willingly accept an individual with a criminal record as a close friend	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Most people would willingly accept an individual who has been in prison as a close friend	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Most people believe that a person with a criminal record is just as intelligent as the average person	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Most people believe that an individual with a criminal record is just as trustworthy as the average citizen	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Most people believe that an individual who has been to prison is just as trustworthy as the average citizen	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Most people feel that possessing a criminal record is a sign of personal failure	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Most people think less of a person who has been to prison.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	Most people think less of a person with a criminal record.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	Most employers will hire an individual with a criminal record if he or she is qualified for the job	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	Most employers will pass over the application of an individual with a criminal record in favour of another applicant	1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	Most employers will pass over the application of an individual who has been to prison in favour of another applicant	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	Most people in my community would treat an individual with a criminal record just as they would treat anyone	1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	Most people would be reluctant to be in a relationship with someone with a criminal record.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	Once they know a person has a criminal record, most people will take his or her opinions less seriously	1	2	3	4	5	6

Appendix B: Internalized Stigma of Incarceration Scales

Internalized Stigma of Incarceration - ISMI (Prison) Scale

We are interested in how your experience in prison has affected you. Please circle the number that best represents how you feel about the following statements:

Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
1	2	3	4

Alienation				
1. I feel out of place in the world because I have been to prison	1	2	3	4
2. Having been to prison has spoiled my life	1	2	3	4
3. People who have not been to prison could not possibly understand me	1	2	3	4
4. I am embarrassed or ashamed that I have been to prison	1	2	3	4
5. I am disappointed in myself for going to prison	1	2	3	4
6. I feel inferior to others who haven't been to prison	1	2	3	4
Stereotype Endorsement				
7. Stereotypes about prisoners apply to me	1	2	3	4
8. People can tell that I have been to prison by the way I look	1	2	3	4
9. Former inmates tend to be violent	1	2	3	4
10. Because I have been to prison, I need others to make most decisions for me	1	2	3	4
11. Former inmates cannot live a good, rewarding life	1	2	3	4
12. Former inmates shouldn't get married	1	2	3	4
13. I can't contribute anything to society because I was in prison	1	2	3	4
Discrimination Experience				
14. People discriminate against me because I was in prison	1	2	3	4
15. Others think that I can't achieve much in life because I was in prison	1	2	3	4
16. People ignore me or take me less seriously just because I was in prison	1	2	3	4
17. People often patronize me, or treat me like a child, just because I was in prison	1	2	3	4
18. Nobody would be interested in getting close to me because I was in prison	1	2	3	4
Social Withdrawal				
19. I don't talk about myself much because I don't want to burden others with the knowledge that I was in prison	1	2	3	4
20. I don't socialize as much as I used to because being in prison might make me look or behave differently	1	2	3	4

21. Negative stereotypes about former prisoner keep me isolated from others	1	2	3	4
22. I stay away from social situations in order to protect my family or friends from embarrassment	1	2	3	4
23. Being around people who haven't been to prison makes me feel out of place or inadequate	1	2	3	4
24. I avoid getting close to people who have not been to prison to avoid rejection	1	2	3	4
Stigma Resistance (reverse-coded items)				
25. I feel comfortable being seen in public with another person who others might perceive as a former prisoner	1	2	3	4
26. In general, I am able to live life the way I want to	1	2	3	4
27. I can have a good, fulfilling life, despite being an former prisoner	1	2	3	4
28. Former inmates make important contributions to society	1	2	3	4
29. Living as a former inmate has made me a tough survivor	1	2	3	4

Internalized Stigma of Incarceration - ISMI (Criminal Record) Scale

We are interested in how possessing a criminal record has affected you. Please circle the number that best represents how you feel about the following statements:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

Alienation

1. I feel out of place in the world because I have a criminal record   1   2   3   4
2. Having a criminal record has spoiled my life   1   2   3   4
3. People without a criminal record could not possibly understand me   1   2   3   4
4. I am embarrassed or ashamed that I have a criminal record   1   2   3   4
5. I am disappointed in myself for having a criminal record   1   2   3   4
6. I feel inferior to others who don't have a criminal record   1   2   3   4

Stereotype Endorsement

7. Stereotypes about those with a criminal record apply to me   1   2   3   4
8. People can tell that I have a criminal record by the way I look   1   2   3   4
9. Those with a criminal record tend to be violent   1   2   3   4
10. Because I have a criminal record, I need others to make most decisions for me   1   2   3   4
11. People with a criminal record cannot live a good, rewarding life   1   2   3   4
12. Individuals with a criminal record shouldn't get married   1   2   3   4
13. I can't contribute anything to society because I have a criminal record   1   2   3   4

Discrimination Experience

14. People discriminate against me because I have a criminal record   1   2   3   4
15. Others think that I can't achieve much in life because I have a criminal record   1   2   3   4
16. People ignore me or take me less seriously just because I have a criminal record   1   2   3   4
17. People often patronize me, or treat me like a child, just because I have a criminal record   1   2   3   4
18. Nobody would be interested in getting close to me because I have a criminal record   1   2   3   4

Social Withdrawal

19. I don't talk about myself much because I don't want to burden others with the knowledge that I have a criminal record   1   2   3   4
20. I don't socialize as much as I used to because my criminal record might make me look or behave differently   1   2   3   4
21. Negative stereotypes about individuals with a criminal record keep me isolated from others   1   2   3   4

22.	I stay away from social situations in order to protect my family or friends from embarrassment	1	2	3	4
23.	Being around people who don't have a criminal record makes me feel out of place or inadequate	1	2	3	4
24.	I avoid getting close to people who don't have a criminal record to avoid rejection	1	2	3	4

Stigma Resistance

25.	I feel comfortable being seen in public with another person who others might perceive as having a criminal record	1	2	3	4
26.	In general, I am able to live life the way I want to	1	2	3	4
27.	I can have a good, fulfilling life, despite my criminal record	1	2	3	4
28.	People with a criminal record make important contributions to society	1	2	3	4
29.	Living with a criminal record has made me a tough survivor	1	2	3	4

Appendix C: Stigma Management and Coping Strategy Scale

Please circle the number that best represents how you feel about the following statements:

	Strongly Agree 1	*Agree* 2	*Slightly Agree* 3	*Slightly Disagree* 4	*Disagree* 5	*Strongly Disagree* 6

Secrecy						
30. When I meet people for the first time, I will not tell them that I was in prison.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. When I meet people for the first time, I will not tell them that I have a criminal record.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. The best thing for a person convicted of a serious crime is to keep it a secret.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. In order to get a job, I believe an individual with a criminal record will have to hide his or her history of incarceration	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. I won't need to hide the fact that I have been to prison.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. If you have a criminal record, the best thing to do is to keep it a secret	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. If I had a close relative with a criminal record I would advise him or her not to tell anyone about it	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. I rarely feel the need to hide the fact that I have a criminal record	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. In order to get a good job, I will have to hide my prison record.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. I will not admit to having a criminal history on a job application.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. When I apply for a job, I will be upfront about my criminal history.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Education						
41. I believe it is best to help people close to me understand what it is like to be in prison.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. If my friends are uncomfortable with me because I was in prison, I will educate them about my experience.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. If I thought an employer felt uneasy hiring a person who has a criminal record, I would try to make him or her understand that most ex-cons are good workers	1	2	3	4	5	6
44. Since I've been convicted, I often find myself educating others about what it means to be an individual with a criminal record	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. I will join a group that would help the public to better understand the people who commit crimes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
46. In general, it is important to educate others about what it's like to be in prison.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Withdrawal							
47. After I am out of prison, I will switch jobs if I think someone knows I am an ex-con.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
48. I will avoid people with negative opinions about former inmates.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
49. It is easier for me to be friendly with people who also have a criminal record	1	2	3	4	5	6	
50. It is easier for me to be friendly with people who also have been to prison	1	2	3	4	5	6	
51. After being convicted of a crime, it's a good idea to keep what you are thinking to yourself	1	2	3	4	5	6	
52. If I was looking for a job and received an application which asked about my criminal record, I wouldn't fill it out	1	2	3	4	5	6	
53. If I thought an employer was reluctant to hire a person with a criminal record, I wouldn't apply for the job	1	2	3	4	5	6	
54. I will avoid anyone who I believe thinks less of me because I was in prison.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
55. When I meet people for the first time, I make a special effort to keep the fact that I have a criminal record to myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	
56. I will move away after I am released from prison.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

Appendix D: New General Self-Efficacy Scale (NGSE)

Using the following scale, please circle the number that best represents how well each of the following statements describes your beliefs about yourself.

Not true at all	*Hardly true*	*Moderately true*	*Exactly true*
1	2	3	4

	Statement				
1.	I will be able to achieve most of the goals I have set for myself.	1	2	3	4
2.	When facing difficult tasks, I am certain I will achieve them.	1	2	3	4
3.	In general, I think I can obtain outcomes that are important to me.	1	2	3	4
4.	I believe I can succeed at most any endeavour to which I set my mind.	1	2	3	4
5.	I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges.	1	2	3	4
6.	I am confident I can perform effectively on many tasks.	1	2	3	4
7.	Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well.	1	2	3	4
8.	Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.	1	2	3	4

Appendix E: Career Search Efficacy Scale (CSES)

Please circle the number that best represents **"how confident you are in your ability to"**:

Not Confident At all	Unsure	A little Confident	Pretty Confident	Very Confident
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

1. Identify and evaluate your career values	1 2 3 4 5
2. Meet new people in careers of interest	1 2 3 4 5
3. Develop an effective cover letter to be mailed to employers	1 2 3 4 5
4. Evaluate a job during an interview	1 2 3 4 5
5. Conduct an information interview	1 2 3 4 5
6. Identify and evaluate your career preferences	1 2 3 4 5
7. Clarify and examine your personal values	1 2 3 4 5
8. Utilize your social networks to gain employment	1 2 3 4 5
9. Identify and evaluate your personal values	1 2 3 4 5
10. Market your skills and abilities to an employer	1 2 3 4 5
11. Use your social network to identify job opportunities	1 2 3 4 5
12. Integrate your knowledge of yourself, the beliefs and values of others, and your career information into realistic and satisfying career planning	1 2 3 4 5
13. Develop realistic strategies for locating and securing employment	1 2 3 4 5
14. Join organizations that have a career emphasis	1 2 3 4 5
15. Develop a variety of skills you can use throughout a lifetime of career decision making	1 2 3 4 5
16. Dress in a way that communicates success during a job interview	1 2 3 4 5
17. Identify the resources you need to find the career you want	1 2 3 4 5
18. Contact a personnel office to secure a job interview	1 2 3 4 5
19. Know where to find information about potential employers in order to make good career decisions	1 2 3 4 5
20. Solicit help from an established career person to help chart a course in a given field	1 2 3 4 5
21. Achieve a satisfying career	1 2 3 4 5
22. Market your skills and abilities to others	1 2 3 4 5
23. Identify and evaluate your personal capabilities	1 2 3 4 5
24. Identify an employer with job opportunities you want	1 2 3 4 5
25. Know how to relate to your boss in order to enhance your career	1 2 3 4 5
26. Evaluate the job requirements and work environment during a job interview	1 2 3 4 5
27. Prepare for an interview	1 2 3 4 5
28. Select helpful people at the workplace with whom to associate	1 2 3 4 5
29. Identify your work skills	1 2 3 4 5
30. Organize and carry out your career plans	1 2 3 4 5
31. Deal effectively with societal barriers	1 2 3 4 5

32. Research potential career options prior to searching for a job	1	2	3	4	5
33. Deal effectively with personal barriers	1	2	3	4	5
34. Develop effective questions for an information interview	1	2	3	4	5
35. Understand how your skills can be used effectively in a variety of jobs	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix F: Interview Protocol

For all individuals:

Did you have a job before you were incarcerated? If so, describe what the job was like.

Do you feel as though your incarceration will affect your ability to get a job? Why or why not?

Are you currently working or looking for a job? If no, why not?

What has been your experience looking for work post-release? (Or what do you anticipate it will be like?)

For individuals who are employed:

What has been your experience at work been like since your release?

What is your relationship like with your colleagues? Your supervisor?

Does your employer know about your incarceration history?

Has your employer knowing (or not knowing) about your incarceration history affected your work experience?

Appendix G: Additional Interview Questions

Is there anything and employer could do to facilitate the employment reintegration process for you?

Are there any particular skills that you feel you have gained through your experiences prior to incarceration and/or while incarcerated that you feel would be beneficial for legitimate employment?

Based on your offence history, have you gained any skills that you feel would be transferable to legitimate employment?

Have parole conditions and/or administration affected your post-release employment experience in any way?

Do you have a support system? If so, who? Has this support had an impact on your reintegration experience?

What has your experience been like socializing with others throughout the employment process, since your release?

Is there anything that you would like employers to understand about having a criminal history?

Is there anything that you would like the general public to know about the employment reintegration experience post-release?

What advice would you have for someone reintegrating into employment post-release?

Table 1: Intercorrelations and Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Intercorrelations and Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Career Search Efficacy (CSE)[a]	4.16	0.81	–								
Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination (PDD)[a]	2.70	0.75	-.05	–							
Internalized Stigma (IS)[a]	1.76	0.65	-.37	-.01	–						
Conceal[a]	3.47	1.38	-.14	.02	.19	–					
Disclose[a]	3.56	1.04	.12	.13	-.43	-.23	–				
New General Self Efficacy (NGSE)[a]	2.73	0.40	.65	-.10	-.36	-.19	.25	–			
Age	4.56	1.83	.11	.06	-.07	-.06	.10	-.03	–		
Religion	1.95	1.46	.02	-.09	.06	-.05	.00	.04	.04	–	
Education	2.21	0.87	.23	.05	-.09	-.14	.09	.13	.19	-.07	–
Ethnic Group	2.85	0.85	.07	.06	.06	.00	-.12	.00	.23	.01	.06

Note. N = 186.

[a]Variable ranges: CSE = 1-5; PDD = 1-6; IS = 1-4; Conceal/Disclose = 1-6; NGSE = 1-4.

** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for the raw and imputed demographics

Descriptive statistics for the raw and imputed demographics

Descriptive	N (*Raw)*		N (*Imputed)*	N (*Imputed)*
Age Group				
20 to 24	17	9.1%	17	9.1%
25 to 29	34	18.3%	44	23.7%
30 to 34	27	14.5%	42	22.6%
35 to 39	15	8.1%	32	17.2%
40 to 44	10	5.4%	15	8.1%
45 to 49	12	6.5%	15	8.1%
50 and over	20	10.8%	20	10.8%
Marital Status				
Married	29	15.6%	29	15.6%
Single, never married	82	44.1%	82	44.0%
Living common-law	23	12.4%	25	13.4%
Dating	15	8.1%	16	9.0%
Committed Relationship	11	5.9%	11	5.9%
Divorced	9	4.8%	9	4.8%
Widowed	3	1.6%	3	1.6%
Separated	11	5.9%	11	5.9%
Children	96	51.6%	97	52.0%
Religion				
Christian	114	61.3%	114	61.3%
Muslim	20	10.8%	29	15.6%
Native Spirituality	8	4.3%	8	4.3%
None/atheist	9	4.8%	9	4.8%
Other	26	14.0%	26	14.0%
Crime				
Violent	61	32.8%	67	36.0%
Non-violent	88	47.3%	119	64.0%
Employed (Past)	120	64.5%	123	66.1%
Industry (Past)				
Primary	2	1.6%	2	1.6%
Secondary	35	29.2%	39	31.7%
Tertiary	56	46.7%	66	53.7%
Quaternary	14	11.4%	14	11.4%
Quinary	3	2.4%	3	2.4%
Employed (Current)	82	44.1%	82	44.1%
Industry (Current)				
Primary	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Secondary	27	32.9%	28	34.1%
Tertiary	40	48.8%	46	56.1%
Quaternary	6	7.3%	6	7.3%
Quinary	1	1.2%	1	1.2%
Highest Level of Education				
Less than high-school diploma	30	16.1%	30	16.1%
High-school diploma	109	58.6%	109	58.6%
College/technical diploma	32	17.2%	32	17.2%
University degree	13	7.0%	13	7.0%
Post-graduate degree	2	1.1%	2	1.1%
Ethnicity				
Caucasian	72	38.7%	77	41.4%
Black	53	28.5%	53	28.5%
Aboriginal	10	5.4%	10	5.4%
Other (i.e. Latino, Indian, Filipino, Middle eastern, Chinese, Vietnamese)	46	24.7%	46	24.7%

Table 3: Employment Sector Categorizations

Employment Sector Categorizations (Adrian, 2014)

Employment Sector	Description	Examples
Primary	Industries that are associated with producing raw materials and basic food	agriculture, mining, farming
Secondary	Manufacturing, processing, and construction industries	automobile production, textile production, construction
Tertiary	The service industry	retail, clerical services, banking, healthcare
Quaternary	Industries that are defined by intellectual activities	scientific research, education, information technology
Quinary	Includes top executives or officials at the highest levels of decision making in a society or economy (an extension of the quaternary sector)	government, science, education, nonprofit organizations, healthcare, media

Table 4: Global Fit Indices for   All alternative models

Global Fit Indices for All Alternative Models

Global Fit Indices	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
x^2/df	1.26	1.32	1.27	1.32	1.28	1.36
CFI	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.96	0.95
RMSEA	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04
PCLOSE	1.00	0.96	1.00	0.97	1.00	0.90

Model 1: Baseline model (2nd order)

Model 2: Baseline model (1st order)

Model 3: Alternative Model (Combine ISMIs - 2nd order)

Model 4: Alternative Model (Combine ISMIs - 1st order)

Model 5: Alternative Model (Combine Efficacies - 2nd order)

Model 6: Alternative Model (Combine Efficacies - 1st order)

Table 5: Scale Reliabilities for All Alternative Models

Scale Reliabilities for All Alternative Models

Scale	Model 1 Pre-CFA	Model 1 Post-CFA	Model 2 Pre-CFA	Model 2 Post-CFA	Model 3 Pre-CFA	Model 3 Post-CFA	Model 4 Pre-CFA	Model 4 Post-CFA	Model 5 Pre-CFA	Model 5 Post-CFA	Model 6 Pre-CFA	Model 6 Post-CFA
Career Search Efficacy	α= 0.97 n= 35	α= 0.92 n= 11	α= 0.97 n= 35	α= 0.94 n= 11	α= 0.97 n= 35	α= 0.94 n= 15	α= 0.97 n= 35	α= 0.94 n= 13	α= 0.97 n= 35	α= 0.93 n= 14	α= 0.97 n= 35	α = 0.95 n= 16
JE	α= 0.94 n= 14	α= 0.79 n= 3			α= 0.94 n= 14	α= 0.85 n= 5			α= 0.94 n= 14	α= 0.90 n= 8		
IE	α= 0.91 n= 8	α= 0.71 n= 2			α= 0.91 n= 8	α= 0.81 n= 3			α= 0.91 n= 8	α= 0.70 n= 2		
NE	α= 0.89 n= 8	α= 0.73 n= 2			α= 0.89 n= 8	α= 0.79 n= 3			α= 0.89 n= 8	α= 0.68 n= 2		
PEE	α= 0.88 n= 5	α= 0.88 n= 4			α= 0.88 n= 5	α= 0.84 n= 4			α= 0.88 n= 5	α= 0.76 n= 2		
Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination	α= 0.81 n= 14	α= 0.82 n= 3	α= 0.81 n= 14	α= 0.82 n= 3	α= 0.81 n= 14	α= 0.82 n= 3	α= 0.81 n= 14	α= 0.82 n= 3	α= 0.81 n= 14	α= 0.82 n= 3	α= 0.81 n= 14	α= 0.82 n= 3
Internalization of Stigma (Criminal Record + Incarceration)					α= 0.92 n= 65	α= 0.93 n= 14	α= 0.95 n= 58	α= 0.91 n= 9				
Internalization of Stigma (Criminal Record)	α= 0.90 n= 24	α= 0.80 n= 8	α= 0.91 n= 24	α= 0.85 n= 4					α= 0.90 n= 24	α= N/A n= N/A	α= 0.91 n= 24	α= 0.84 n= 3
Alienation	α= 0.76 n= 6	α= 0.69 n= 2			α= 0.76 n= 6	α= N/A n= N/A			α= 0.76 n= 6	α= N/A n= N/A		
Stereotype Endorsement	α= 0.89 n= 4	α= 0.82 n= 2			α= 0.89 n= 4	α= N/A n= N/A			α= 0.89 n= 4	α= N/A n= N/A		
Discrimination Experience	α= 0.79 n= 5	α= 0.73 n= 2			α= 0.79 n= 5	α= N/A n= N/A			α= 0.79 n= 5	α= N/A n= N/A		
Social Withdrawal	α= 0.87 n= 6	α= 0.73 n= 2			α= 0.87 n= 6	α= 0.85 n=			α= 0.87 n= 6	α= N/A n= N/A		
Stigma Resistance	α= 0.69 n= 3	α= N/A n= N/A			α= 0.69 n= 3	α= N/A n= N/A			α= 0.69 n= 3	α= N/A n= N/A		
Internalization of Stigma (Incarceration)	α= 0.93 n= 27	α= 0.83 n= 8	α= 0.93 n= 26	α= 0.90 n= 7					α= 0.93 n= 27	α= 0.92 n= 11	α= 0.93 n= 26	α= 0.88 n= 6
Alienation	α= 0.73 n= 6	α= 0.66 n= 2			α= 0.73 n= 6	α= N/A n= N/A			α= 0.73 n= 6	α= N/A n= N/A		
Stereotype Endorsement	α= 0.85 n= 7	α= 0.71 n= 2			α= 0.85 n= 7	α= N/A n= N/A			α= 0.85 n= 7	α= N/A n= N/A		
Discrimination Experience	α= 0.89 n= 5	α= 0.79 n= 2			α= 0.89 n= 5	α= 0.89 n= 5			α= 0.89 n= 5	α= 0.89 n= 5		
Social Withdrawal	α= 0.89 n= 6	α= 0.67 n= 2			α= 0.89 n= 6	α= 0.86 n= 5			α= 0.89 n= 6	α= 0.89 n= 6		
Stigma Resistance	α= 0.74 n= 3	α= N/A n= N/A			α= 0.74 n= 3	α= N/A n= N/A			α= 0.74 n= 3	α= N/A n= N/A		
Conceal	α= 0.89 n= 8	α= 0.90 n= 4	α= 0.89 n= 8	α= 0.90 n= 4	α= 0.89 n= 8	α= 0.90 n= 4	α= 0.89 n= 8	α= 0.90 n= 4	α= 0.89 n= 8	α= 0.90 n= 4	α= 0.89 n= 8	α = 0.90 n= 4
Disclose	α= 0.85 n= 5	α= 0.76 n= 3	α= 0.85 n= 5	α= 0.84 n= 4	α= 0.85 n= 5	α= 0.82 n= 3	α= 0.85 n= 5	α= 0.83 n= 3	α= 0.85 n= 5	α= 0.76 n= 2	α= 0.85 n= 5	α = 0.83 n= 3
Self-efficacy (Career Search + New General)									α= 0.92 n= 8	α= N/A n= N/A	α= 0.92 n= 8	α= N/A n= N/A
New General Self-efficacy	α= 0.92 n= 8	α= 0.89 n= 4	α= 0.92 n= 8	α= 0.87 n= 4	α= 0.92 n= 8	α= 0.91 n= 6	α= 0.92 n= 8	α= 0.90 n= 6				

Table 6: Fit Indices

Fit Indices	Initial Model	Fitted Model
Normed Chi-square	2.27	1.32
GFI	0.42	0.81
AGFI	0.40	0.79
RMSEA	0.08	0.04
IFI	0.51	0.95
TLI	0.49	0.95
NNFI	0.37	0.83
PCLOSE	0.00	0.97
CFI	0.50	0.95

GFI = Goodness-of-fit statistic, AGFI = Adjusted goodness-of-fit statistic
RMSEA = Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation, IFI = Incremental-fit index,
TLI = Tucker-Lewis index, NNFI = Non-normed fit index CFI = Comparative fit index

Table 7: Final CFA Results

Final CFA Results

Final model			Beta	*S.E.*	C.R	P	beta
PDD3	<---	Perceivedeval	1			***	0.538
PDD4	<---	Perceivedeval	1.532	0.202	7.599	***	0.915
PDD5	<---	Perceivedeval	1.595	0.209	7.635	***	0.906
CSS_sec3cc	<---	Conceal	0.878	0.06	14.522	***	0.793
CSS_sec4cc	<---	Conceal	0.732	0.065	11.253	***	0.684
CSS_sec6cc	<---	Conceal	1.025	0.053	19.5		0.925
CSS_sec7cc	<---	Conceal	1				0.919
NGSE1	<---	GenEfficacy	1			***	0.66
NGSE4	<---	GenEfficacy	1.138	0.124	9.198	***	0.774
NGSE5	<---	GenEfficacy	1.275	0.131	9.716	***	0.818
NGSE6	<---	GenEfficacy	1.172	0.117	10.019	***	0.85
NGSE7	<---	GenEfficacy	1.22	0.132	9.235	***	0.777
NGSE8	<---	GenEfficacy	1.173	0.12	9.738		0.82
CSS_edu1cc	<---	Disclose	1			***	0.791
CSS_edu2cc	<---	Disclose	1.021	0.099	10.359	***	0.856
CSS_edu3cc	<---	Disclose	0.96	0.102	9.42	***	0.714
ISMI_DE3pr	<---	InternalStigma	0.879	0.095	9.247	***	0.68
ISMI_DE4pr	<---	InternalStigma	0.924	0.097	9.509	***	0.697
ISMI_DE5pr	<---	InternalStigma	0.909	0.093	9.816		0.717
ISMI_SW1pr	<---	InternalStigma	1			***	0.754
ISMI_SW2pr	<---	InternalStigma	1.13	0.094	12.006	***	0.862
ISMI_SW3pr	<---	InternalStigma	1.043	0.096	10.87	***	0.786
ISMI_SW4pr	<---	InternalStigma	0.847	0.09	9.371	***	0.687
ISMI_SW5pr	<---	InternalStigma	0.815	0.098	8.302	***	0.697
ISMI_SW3cr	<---	InternalStigma	0.795	0.091	8.696		0.647
CSES_JE14	<---	CareerSearch	1			***	0.845
CSES_JE13	<---	CareerSearch	0.86	0.076	11.238	***	0.712
CSES_JE11	<---	CareerSearch	0.878	0.082	10.764	***	0.69
CSES_JE9	<---	CareerSearch	0.87	0.064	13.669	***	0.81
CSES_JE7	<---	CareerSearch	0.885	0.07	12.559	***	0.768
CSES_JE4	<---	CareerSearch	0.886	0.084	10.558	***	0.681
CSES_JE1	<---	CareerSearch	0.814	0.065	12.536	***	0.767
CSES_IE6	<---	CareerSearch	0.973	0.071	13.686	***	0.811
CSES_IE5	<---	CareerSearch	0.999	0.071	13.992	***	0.822
CSES_IE3	<---	CareerSearch	0.818	0.084	9.694	***	0.639
CSES_NE6	<---	CareerSearch	0.799	0.073	10.94	***	0.698
CSES_NE4	<---	CareerSearch	0.858	0.087	9.828	***	0.645
CSES_NE3	<---	CareerSearch	0.927	0.072	12.875		0.78

Beta=unstandardized coefficient; beta = standardized coefficient
S.E. = Standard error of covariance; C.R. Critical ratio for covariance, *p* = level of significance

Table 8: Reliability Statistics for Retained Items

Reliability Statistics for Retained Items (N=38)

Variables	ID	Cronbach alphas for retained items	Items excluded in final model	Code	Survey Item
Perceivedeval	PDD	0.815	PDD1	accpt_rcrdfrnd	Most people would willingly accept an individual with a criminal record as a close friend
			PDD2	accpt_prsnfrnd	Most people would willingly accept an individual who has been in prison as a close friend
			PDD6cc	rcrd_fail	Most people feel that possessing a criminal record is a sign of personal failure
			PDD7cc	prsn_less	Most people think less of a person who has been to prison.
			PDD8cc	rcrd_less	Most people think less of a person with a criminal record.
			PDD9	rcrd_hire	Most employers will hire an individual with a criminal record if he or she is qualified for the job
			PDD10cc	rcrd_pass	Most employers will pass over the application of an individual with a criminal record in favour of another applicant
			PDD11cc	prsn_pass	Most employers will pass over the application of an individual who has been to prison in favour of another applicant
			PDD12	rcd_trt	Most people in my community would treat an individual with a criminal record just as they would treat anyone
			PDD13cc	rltnshp_rcrd	Most people would be reluctant to be in a relationship with someone with a criminal record.
			PDD14cc	opns_rcrd	Once they know a person has a criminal record, most people will take his or her opinions less seriously
Conceal	CO	0.900	CSS_sec1cc	frstmeet_pr	When I meet people for the first time, I will not tell them that I was in prison.
			CSS_sec2cc,	frstmeet_cr	When I meet people for the first time, I will not tell them that I have a criminal record.
			CSS_sec5	nohide_pr	I won't need to hide the fact that I have been to prison.
			CSS_sec8	nohide_cr	I rarely feel the need to hide the fact that I have a criminal record
			CSS_sec9cc	jobhide_cr	In order to get a good job, I will have to hide my prison record.
			CSS_sec10cc	crimhist_jobapp	I will not admit to having a criminal history on a job application.
			CSS_sec11	upfrnt_jobapp	When I apply for a job, I will be upfront about my criminal history.
GenEfficacy	NGSE	0.899	NGSE2	achv_tsks	When facing difficult tasks, I am certain I will achieve them.
			NGSE3	obtn_outcms	In general, I think I can obtain outcomes that are important to me.
Disclose	DI	0.825	CSS_edu4cc	ed_others	Since I've been convicted, I often find myself educating others about what it means to be an individual with a criminal record
			CSS_edu5cc	jn_edgrp	I will join a group that would help the public to better understand the people who commit crimes.
			CSS_edu6	gened_others	In general, it is important to educate others about what it's like to be in prison.
InternalStigma	IS	0.911	ISMI_ALIEN1cr	outofplce_cr	I feel out of place in the world because I have a criminal record
			ISMI_ALIEN2cr	spoillife_cr	Having a criminal record has spoiled my life
			ISMI_ALIEN3cr	undrstnd_cr	People without a criminal record could not possibly understand me
			ISMI_ALIEN4cr	embrss_cr	I am embarrassed or ashamed that I have a criminal record
			ISMI_ALIEN5cr	dsappt_cr	I am disappointed in myself for having a criminal record
			ISMI_ALIEN6cr	infr_cr,	I feel inferior to others who don't have a criminal record
			ISMI_SE1cr	strtpe_cr	Stereotypes about those with a criminal record apply to me

Variables	ID	Cronbach alphas for retained items	Items excluded in final model	Code	Survey Item
InternalStigma	IS		ISMI_SE2cr	look_cr	People can tell that I have a criminal record by the way I look
			ISMI_SE3cr	vlnt_cr	Those with a criminal record tend to be violent
			ISMI_SE4cr	dcsns_cr	Because I have a criminal record, I need others to make most decisions for me
			ISMI_SE5cr	rwds_cr	People with a criminal record cannot live a good, rewarding life
			ISMI_SE6cr	married_cr	Individuals with a criminal record shouldn't get married
			ISMI_SE7cr	cntrbte_cr	I can't contribute anything to society because I have a criminal record
			ISMI_DE1cr	discr_cr	People discriminate against me because I have a criminal record
			ISMI_DE2cr	achve_cr	Others think that I can't achieve much in life because I have a criminal record
			ISMI_DE3cr	ignr_cr	People ignore me or take me less seriously just because I have a criminal record
			ISMI_DE4cr	patrnz_cr	People often patronize me, or treat me like a child, just because I have a criminal record
			ISMI_DE5cr	clse_cr	Nobody would be interested in getting close to me because I have a criminal record
			ISMI_SW1cr	self_cr	I don't talk about myself much because I don't want to burden others with the knowledge that I have a criminal record
			ISMI_SW2cr	soclze_cr	I don't socialize as much as I used to because my criminal record might make me look or behave differently
			ISMI_SW4cr	protect_cr	I stay away from social situations in order to protect my family or friends from embarrassment
			ISMI_SW5cr	outplce_cr	Being around people who don't have a criminal record makes me feel out of place or inadequate
			ISMI_SW6cr	avd_cr	I avoid getting close to people who don't have a criminal record to avoid rejection
			ISMI_SR1crcc	cmfrt_cr	I feel comfortable being seen in public with another person who others might perceive as having a criminal record
			ISMI_SR2crcc	live_cr	In general, I am able to live life the way I want to
			ISMI_SR3crcc	life_cr	I can have a good, fulfilling life, despite my criminal record
			ISMI_SR4crcc	contrbte_cr	People with a criminal record make important contributions to society
			ISMI_SR5crcc	survive_cr	Living with a criminal record has made me a tough survivor
			ISMI_ALIEN1pr	outofplce_pr	I feel out of place in the world because I have been to prison
			ISMI_ALIEN2pr	spoillife_pr	Having been to prison has spoiled my life
			ISMI_ALIEN3pr	undrstnd_pr	People who have not been to prison could not possibly understand me
			ISMI_ALIEN4pr	embrss_pr	I am embarrassed or ashamed that I have been to prison
			ISMI_ALIEN5pr	dsappt_pr	I am disappointed in myself for going to prison
			ISMI_ALIEN6pr	infr_pr	I feel inferior to others who haven't been to prison
			ISMI_SE1pr	strtpe_pr	Stereotypes about prisoners apply to me
			ISMI_SE2pr	look_pr	People can tell that I have been to prison by the way I look
			ISMI_SE3pr	vlnt_pr	Former inmates tend to be violent
			ISMI_SE4pr	dcsns_pr	Because I have been to prison, I need others to make most decisions for me
			ISMI_SE5pr	rwds_pr	Former inmates cannot live a good, rewarding life
			ISMI_SE6pr	married_pr	Former inmates shouldn't get married

Variables	ID	Cronbach alphas for retained items	Items excluded in final model	Code	Survey Item
InternalStigma	IS		ISMI_SE7pr	cntrbte_pr	I can't contribute anything to society because I was in prison
			ISMI_DE1pr	discr_pr	People discriminate against me because I was in prison
			ISMI_DE2pr	achve_pr	Others think that I can't achieve much in life because I was in prison
			ISMI_SW6pr	avd_pr	I avoid getting close to people who have not been to prison to avoid rejection
			ISMI_SR1prcc	cmfrt_pr	I feel comfortable being seen in public with another person who others might perceive as a former prisoner
			ISMI_SR2prcc	live_pr	In general, I am able to live life the way I want to
			ISMI_SR3prcc	life_pr	I can have a good, fulfilling life, despite being an former prisoner
			ISMI_SR4prcc	contrbte_pr	Former inmates make important contributions to society
			ISMI_SR5prcc	survive_pr	Living as a former inmate has made me a tough survivor
CareerSearch	CSE	0.940	CSES_PEE1	career_val	Identify and evaluate your career values
			CSES_PEE2	nwppl_carr	Meet new people in careers of interest
			CSES_PEE3	cvr_ltr	Develop an effective cover letter to be mailed to employers
			CSES_PEE4	job_eval	Evaluate a job during an interview
			CSES_PEE5	info_intrvw	Conduct an information interview
			CSES_NE1	carr_pref	Identify and evaluate your career preferences
			CSES_NE2	exmn_prsnlval	Clarify and examine your personal values
			CSES_NE5	mkt_saempl	Market your skills and abilities to an employer
			CSES_NE7	carr_pln	Integrate your knowledge of yourself, the beliefs and values of others, and your career information into realistic and satisfying career planning
			CSES_NE8	lctscr_emplmnt	Develop realistic strategies for locating and securing employment
			CSES_IE1	carr_emph	Join organizations that have a career emphasis
			CSES_IE2	sklls_crrdecsn	Develop a variety of skills you can use throughout a lifetime of career decision making
			CSES_IE4	resrcs_crr	Identify the resources you need to find the career you want
			CSES_IE7	chrt_crse	Solicit help from an established career person to help chart a course in a given field
			CSES_IE8	stsfy_crr	Achieve a satisfying career
			CSES_JE2	prsnl_cap	Identify and evaluate your personal capabilities
			CSES_JE3	empl_jobopp	Identify an employer with job opportunities you want
			CSES_JE5	job_envrnmnt	Evaluate the job requirements and work environment during a job interview
			CSES_JE6	prpre_intvw	Prepare for an interview
			CSES_JE8	wrk_sklls	Identify your work skills
			CSES_JE10	soc_brrs	Deal effectively with societal barriers
			CSES_JE12	prsnl_brrs	Deal effectively with personal barriers

Table 9: Common Method Bias Results

Common Method Bias Results						
	Chi-square	**df**	**p-val**	**Invariant?**	Step 1. provide chi-square and df for unconstrained and constrained models, and provide the number of groups. The thresholds (green cells) will be updated automatically.	
Overall Model						
Unconstrained	764.5	608				
Fully constrained	854.9	646				
Number of groups		2				
Difference	90.4	38	0.000	NO	Groups are different at the model level. Check path differences.	
Chi-square Thresholds						
90% Confidence	767.21	609			Any chi-square more than the threshold (Green Cells) will be variant for a path by path analysis. This is only applicable to models where you are changing one path at a time (i.e., have a difference of one degree of freedom)	
Difference	2.71	1	0.100			
95% Confidence	768.34	609				
Difference	3.84	1	0.050			
99% Confidence	771.13	609				
Difference	6.63	1	0.010			

Table 10: Results

Hypothesis	Description	Evidence Beta	*p*	Conclusion
H1: Former prisoner perceptions of social stigmas held towards their former prisoner identity will be positively related to their ability to obtain employment	PDD-->CSE	-0.062	0.358	Not Supported
H2: Former prisoner stigma internalization will be negatively related to their ability to obtain employment	IS-->CSE	-0.368	< 0.001	Supported
H3a: *Disclosure* mediates the relationships between perception of social stigmas and employment.	PDD-->Disclosure-->CSE	-0.007	0.351	Not Supported
H3b: *Disclosure* mediates the relationships between and internalization of stigma with employment.	IS-->Disclosure-->CSE	0.027	0.443	Not Supported
H4a*: Concealment* mediates the relationships between perception of social stigmas perception and employment.	PDD-->Concealment-->CSE	-0.001	0.66	Not Supported
H4b*: Concealment* mediates the relationships between internalization of stigma with employment.	IS-->Concealment-->CSE	-0.01	0.414	Not Supported
H5a: Self-efficacy will moderate the strength of the mediated relationships between perception of social stigmas and employment via disclosure, such that the mediated relationship will be stronger for an individual with high self-efficacy than an individual with low self-efficacy	PDD-->Disclosure-->(Self-Efficacy)-->CSE	0.012	0.835	Not Supported
H5b: Self-efficacy will moderate the strength of the mediated relationships between stigma internalization and employment via disclosure, such that the mediated relationship will be weaker for an individual with high self-efficacy than an individual with low self-efficacy	IS-->Disclosure-->(Self-Efficacy)-->CSE	0.012	0.835	Not Supported
H6a: Self-efficacy will moderate the strength of the mediated relationships between perception of social stigmas and employment via concealment, such that the mediated relationship will be stronger for an individual with high self-efficacy than an individual with low self-efficacy	PDD-->Concealment-->(Self-Efficacy)-->CSE	0.003	0.964	Not Supported
H6b: Self-efficacy will moderate the strength of the mediated relationships between stigma internalization (Hypothesis 2) and employment via concealment, such that the mediated relationship will be weaker for an individual with high self-efficacy than an individual with low self-efficacy	IS-->Concealment-->(Self-Efficacy)-->CSE	0.003	0.964	Not Supported

Table 11: Key Regression Statistics from SEM Analysis

Key Regression Statistics from SEM Analysis

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	*p*	Significant (*p* < .10)	Path Coefficient (beta)
Controls								
CSES	<---	educatn	0.174	0.064	2.717	0.006	Yes	0.186
CSES	<---	agegroup	0.02	0.031	0.631	0.434		0.044
Conceal	<---	ethnicgrp	-0.003	0.119	-0.028	0.845		-0.002
Disclose	<---	ethnicgrp	-0.134	0.08	-1.69	0.100	Yes	-0.111
Conceal	<---	religion_grp	-0.066	0.069	-0.957	0.339		-0.069
Disclose	<---	religion_grp	0.027	0.047	0.586	0.558		0.039
CSES	<---	violence	0.027	0.037	0.731	0.330		-0.111
Variables								
Disclose	<---	PDD	0.18	0.09	1.992	0.043	Yes	0.131
Conceal	<---	PDD	0.039	0.132	0.298	0.766		0.021
CSES	<---	PDD	-0.067	0.073	-0.919	0.358		-0.062
Disclose	<---	ISMIcrpr	-0.661	0.104	-6.331	***	Yes	-0.416
Conceal	<---	ISMIcrpr	0.387	0.153	2.53	0.007	Yes	0.182
CSES	<---	ISMIcrpr	-0.459	0.093	-4.928	***	Yes	-0.368
CSES	<---	Disclose	-0.041	0.058	-0.704	0.481		-0.052
CSES	<---	Conceal	-0.026	0.04	-0.641	0.522		-0.044

Beta=unstandardized coefficient; beta = standardized coefficient
S.E. = Standard error of covariance; C.R. Critical ratio for covariance, P = level of significance
*** *p* < .001

Table 12: Interviewee Descriptives

Interviewee Descriptives

Name	Age Range	Marital Status	Children	Religious Denomination	Conviction	How long since your release	Prison Location	Citizenship	Employed before?	Occupation	Sector	Employed currently?	Occupation	Sector	Income	Education	Ethnicity
Ray	40 to 44		Yes														White
James	25 to 29	never	No		Non-violent				No			Yes	Entrepreneur	Secondary			Black
Ben	40 to 44	Separated	Yes	Atheist	Non-violent		Medium	Canadian	Yes	Graphic Artist/ Owned advertising agency	Quaternary	No			Less than $25000	College / Technical	White
Mike	50 and over	Married		Jehovah's Witness	Violent		Medium	Canadian	Yes	General Labour	Secondary	Yes	Welder (by trade) machine operator, press operator, cleaner	Secondary		Highschool	White
Oliver	30 to 34					7 months	Medium	Canadian	Yes	Welder	Secondary						White
Nikhil	25 to 29	Single, never married	No		Non-violent			Canadian	Yes	IT freelancing - programming computers, security testing (6-7 years)	Quaternary	Yes	IT	Quaternary		University	Sri Lankan
Desmond	50 and over		Yes		Non-violent			Canadian	Yes	Enterainment industry (production, promotion), Dancer, Restaurant owner and chef	Quinary	No					Black
Ahmik	40 to 44	Dating	Yes			15 months	Minimum	Canadian	Yes	Manager (Sales)	Quaternary	Yes	Manager (Retail)	Tertiary			
Jason	30 to 34					14 months			Yes	Construction	Secondary	Yes	Construction	Secondary			White
Ron	45 to 49	Divorced			Violent	4 months			No			No					White
Bob	50 and over				Violent	27 months		Canadian	Yes	Landscaping	Secondary	No					White
Navgeet	25 to 29	Never	No	Muslim					Yes			No					

Interviewee Descriptives

Name	Age Range	Marital Status	Children	Religious Denomination	Conviction	How long since your release	Prison Location	Citizenship	Employed before?	Occupation	Sector	Employed currently?	Occupation	Sector	Income	Education	Ethnicity
George	50 and over	Divorced	Yes	Jewish		3 months	Maximum	Canadian	Yes	Entrepreneur (Advertising)	Tertiary						White
Daryn	25 to 29	Never	No						Yes			No					Black
Gary	30 to 34	Single, Never Married	Yes		Violent	2 days	Maximum	Canadian	Yes			No			Less than $25000	High-school	White
Joe	40 to 44	Living common-law	No	Catholic	Non-violent	13 months		Canadian	Yes	Self employed, Home Renovator, Welder	Secondary	No			Less than $25000	Less than high-school	White
Rashad	25 to 29	Single, never married	No	Muslim	Non-violent			Canadian	No			No				Highschool, In college	Indian
Mark	50 and over	Single, Never Married	No	Christian		9 years		Canadian	Yes	Wood Turner	Secondary	No				High-school	White
Devon	20 to 24	Single, Never Married	Yes	Christian	Non-violent	2 months	Maximum	Canadian	Yes (tempo)	Camp Counsellor TDSB	Secondary	Yes	Cook, Swiss Chalet	Secondary	Less than $25000	High-school	Black
Matt	25 to 29	Single, Never Married	No	Christian	Violent		Medium	Canadian	Yes	McDonalds, Fibreglass, Factory Work Assistant	Secondary	No				High-school	Black
Tristan	40 to 44	Living common-law	Yes	Catholic	Non-violent	3 months	Maximum	Canadian	Yes	Barber Shop Owner	Tertiary	No			$150000 or more	Less than high-school	Black
Mauricio	50 and over	Single, Never Married	No	Catholic	Violent		Medium	Canadian	No			No			Less than $25000	High-school	White

Table 13: Research Questions and Associated Protocol Questions

Rsearch questions and associated protocol questions

Research Questions	Protocol Questions
How does this experience affect individual perceptions of self and employment?	
	Did you have a job before you were incarcerated? If so, describe what the job was like.
	Do you feel as though your incarceration will affect your ability to get a job? Why or why not?
	Are you currently working or looking for a job? If no, why not?
How do individuals manage an invisible stigmatized identity at various stages of employment re-entry?	
	What has been your experience looking for work post-release? (Or what do you anticipate it will be like?)
	How do you feel your employer knowing (or not knowing) about your incarceration history will affect your work experience? If employed, how has it affected your work experience
	If employed, what has been your experience at work been like since your release?
What factors influence individual identity management decisions?	
	What has been your experience looking for work post-release? (Or what do you anticipate it will be like?)*
	If employed, what has been your experience at work been like since your release?*
	What is your relationship like with your colleagues? Your supervisor?
	Does your employer know about your incarceration history?

*Associated with more than one research question

Table 14: Qualitative Anaylsis Outcomes

Qualitative Analysis Outcomes

1st Order Concepts		2nd Order Themes	Aggregate Dimensions
1 I donit work - I screw it all up	54 I only want my supervisor to know	1 the employment identity	1 Perceptions of employment
2 I got kind of tired of it	55 have to get to know me first	2 the rise	2 Perceptions of the former prisoner identity
3 I'm optimistic	56 impression management	3 the decline	3 Navigating the transition from prison to employment
4 a record is like a trophy	57 I am a criminal	4 uncertainty	4 Identity Management
5 employment gives me something to do	58 I see it when I look in the mirror	5 "I am a criminal"	
6 it's all about perspective	59 appearance makes a difference	6 types of releasees	
7 prison has no effect on employment	60 I understand that people get scaed	7 separation between the act and the criminal	
8 employer accomodations	61 means I'm a bad guy	8 employment social capital	
9 it's a physical shock to the system	62 proud	9 systemic tensions	
10 criminal background check	63 remourseful	10 release conditions	
11 everything is online	64 what I did isn't as bad as…	11 vulnerability	
12 preparing a resume	65 I have to get over the judgment	12 disclosure	
13 the gap	66 lacking confidence	13 voluntary/involuntary	
14 all I need is a second chance	67 there's a need for me to do better for myself	14 concealment	
15 a job helps you stay out of trouble	68 you feel it internally	15 situational factors	
16 having a job is important to me	69 employment, not just a criminal	16 "to my boss, but not my coworkers"	
17 money is an issue	70 you can pretty much look at me and tell	17 managing the information	
18 employers would rather hire lumps of cheese	71 high at early release	18 attitudes towards employment	
19 I got no problem with you working here	72 I have to get up to speed	19 applying for jobs	
20 age is the most limiting	73 inside, no idea what goes on in the streets	20 benefits of employment	
21 didn't want me because I was a criminal	74 it's sink or swim	21 employer reactions	
22 I can see the employer's point	75 they recycle you-reoffense	22 limitations	
23 no general labour	76 it's like going to a forein country where you don't speak the language	23 "employers have more control than they think"	
24 pressure to find work with no way to find it	77 lack of support	24 employment preferences	
25 google and find out my criminal histroy	78 not doing what they were intended to do	25 unique skills	
26 selection should depend on criminal histroy	79 organizations	26 transparency	
27 it's a dangerous gig	80 preparation pre-release	27 self-improvement	
28 it's a struggle	81 loss	28 types of releasees	
29 they shafted me	82 adjusting	29 expectations post-release	
30 dreams and goals	83 disfellowship from church	30 recidivism	
31 I really don't want to do what I am doing	84 respect	31 resources to support employment	
32 I wouldn't want to start at the bottom	85 socially awkward	32 social interactions post-release	
33 you gotta be realistic	86 family and friends	33 social network	
34 you gotta enjoy what you do	87 I come from a good family	34 programming	
35 I don't know what I want to do	88 ideas for improvement	35 restricting	
36 lack of experience	89 injustice	36 the transition was easy	
37 overqualified	90 parole officers	37 there's no stability	
38 prison allows for trial and error	91 are they helping or holding me back		
39 life experience	92 assigned a new parole officer		
40 particularly skilled	93 conditions		
41 social skills	94 assessments		
42 employment prior to prison	95 I need a different scene		
43 employment while incarcerated	96 internet restrictions		
44 burden	97 intrusive		
45 don't ask don't tell	98 it's like a joke to me		
46 it depends	99 keeps me in line		
47 until I have earned my keep	100 misuse of authority		
48 employer reactions	101 told to lie about my past		
49 it depends	102 relationship with parole officer		
50 media is killling finding jobs	103 they keep you stressed out		
51 the gap	104 the transition was easy		
52 avoiding future repercussions	105 there's no stability		
53 honesty			