

A Multiple Case Study: Male Correctional Officers' Experiences and Attitudes Regarding
"Gender Quota" Human Resource Management Strategies in Corrections

by

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I have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

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Abstract

The stigma of corrections being labeled as a “male” workplace is a factor in the male/female ratio gap; thus, the new question is how to bridge the gender gap. In response to this human resource managers have implemented affirmative action strategies to ensure more females were being hired and promoted in corrections. Though unofficial in most areas, some state correctional agencies incorporated “quotas” in their affirmative action HRMS. Even though ‘quota-based’ or ‘gender based’ HRMS intended to reduce or eliminate discrimination, they have linked backlash effects and stigmatization toward females and minorities when the dominant group felt it was used. The purpose of this study was to assist the business of correctional facilities in grasping the effects of affirmative action HRMS regarding male correctional officers’ perception of fairness, discrimination, and justice. Additionally, it expanded on the affirmative action knowledge base of those studying the advantages (benefits) and disadvantages (cons) of constructing and maintaining affirmative action HRMS.

This study was conducted using the qualitative multiple case study with a flexible design. A total of 13 participants were interviewed separately in a one-on-one manner. The interview questions consisted of 14 semi-structured questions to capture their perspectives and experiences regarding affirmative action HRMS. Each interview was recorded on a 32 Gb voice recorder, transcribed, and entered into NVivo Pro 12. The major themes discovered were career motivation, affirmative action, gender HRMS perceptions, and behavior/climate. The cross-case themes were reverse discrimination, fairness and trust perception, and behavior/climate.

The findings revealed that officers’ perception of fairness and justice had directly influenced employee behavior when employees believed that a female was promoted using gender based HRMS. Though it was revealed that most officers believed that the number of females needed on

shift was based on unofficial number requirements, heuristics was used to fill in that belief regarding organizational justice. Though the research did not back previous research regarding gender based HRMS and reverse discrimination, it did reveal that there was a relationship between gender based HRMS, FHT organizational justice, and retaliation. These findings can be used to as a method of awareness for male-dominated fields (such as corrections) to understand how incorporating gender into HRMS affects the dominant group. It also serves to provide insight into possible flaws in HRMS. Organizations can leverage these findings to develop or improve fair HRMS and provide a more inclusive, gender-neutral recruitment of promotion strategy.

Key Words: HRMS, justice, retaliation, gender dominance, discrimination, corrections

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Approvals

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Rebecca Patterson, Doctoral Candidate	Date

_____	_____
Dr. Kimberly Johnson, Dissertation Chair	Date

_____	_____
Dr. Deborah Johnson-Blake, Committee Member	Date

_____	_____
Edward M. Moore, Ph.D., Director of Doctoral Programs	Date

Dedication

This research is dedicated to my brothers and sisters in blue. Law enforcement is not an easy path in life. The environment you are thrown into is not one many can understand. You put on your boots, put on your badge, and kiss your loved ones before becoming engulfed in an environment of mistrust, danger, conflict, violence, and sometimes loss. Some go into situations with no idea what lurks behind the next door, some spend 12-hour nights ensuring the safety of violent criminals, and some lay down their life to protect others. It truly takes someone who encompass true bravery, integrity, and love for mankind. It does not matter if your blood runs blue or silver you my honorable brothers and sisters are the true heroes this world needs.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God (Mathew 5:9 KJV).

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Since the passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act in the 70s, organizations are being scrutinized when there is an apparent lack of diversity or strategies to ensure minority groups have equal opportunities (Barrett, 2019). Thus, the need to study diversity management strategies has been a common concept in human resources. However, there is a gap in the literature regarding the strategies' effects on the dominant group (Collia-Cox & Schulz, 2019; O'Brien & Rickne, 2016). Therefore, there is a need for a study that is focused on the perception of reverse discrimination through the implementation of unofficial 'gender quotas' as an affirmative action Human Resource Management Strategy (HRMS) in Northwest Georgia prisons from the point of view of male correctional officers. This study used the fairness heuristic theory (FHT) as the study's foundation. The organization of Section 1 has 10 sections: (a) background of the problem; (b) problem statement; (c) purpose statement; (d) nature of the study; (e) research questions; (f) conceptual framework; (g) definition of terms; (h) assumptions, limitations, and delimitations; (i) significance of the study; and (j) review of the literature.

Background of the Problem

The Department of Corrections (DOC) is an all-inclusive term that incorporates various functions carried out by governmental agencies involving the supervision, treatment, and punishment of individuals convicted of a crime or crimes. One of these functions includes imprisonment of the individual within a correctional facility or prison. Correctional officers are professionals whose role is to work directly with those incarcerated and are responsible for all individuals incarcerated within that correctional facility. Correctional officers are to maintain an environment of safety and order within the correctional facility. They are subjected to threats, aggression, pressure, and risk of death to ensure the security of the correctional facility.

Additionally, history shows that corrections have been a male-dominated field. It was the first division within the criminal justice system that allowed the hiring of female officers. Research accredited this change to the establishment of female correctional institutions and the desire to have women serve as role models, teaching other females how to be a “wife” and “mother” (Collia-Cox & Schulz, 2019). However, it was not until the passage of the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act in the 1970s that female officers could be employed at male institutions (Dorbin et al., 2016). Since this passage, it is estimated that 18% of the state correctional agencies are led by females (Collia-Cox & Schulz, 2017). A recent U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report revealed that female officers currently make up 30.1% of the 372,00 American correctional officers, bailiffs, and jailers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019).

Collia-Cox and Schulz (2017) stated that the stigma of corrections being labeled as a “male” workplace is a factor in the male/female ratio gap; thus, the new question is how to bridge the gender gap. One answer human resource managers found in a study by Fa (2016) implemented affirmative action strategies to ensure more females were being hired and promoted. One of these strategies was using a “quota-based” policy to provide a specific number of applicants within a target group hired or promoted. Though the use of ‘quotas’ was not made official across the nation, recent studies have shown that there have been unofficial ‘gender quota’ strategies used as part of political and state selection processes (Fa, 2016; Hughes et al., 2019; O'Brien & Rickne, 2016).

Though unofficial in most areas, some state correctional agencies incorporated ‘quotas’ in their affirmative action HRMS. For example, under the Minnesota DOC affirmative action Plan (MDCAAP) of 2018–2020 (2017), Tom Roy signed an official plan that outlined the annual goals of hiring and promoting based on ‘disparate group quotas.’ In addition to yearly goals, this

plan included a clause stating that any hiring managers who failed to hire from the “disparate group” were required to complete a “pre-hire justification worksheet.” Like Mr. Roy’s MDCAAP, the New York Department of Correction’s plan stated that diversity reports should be sent to identify achievements and deficiencies in hiring “disparate members” (2019). Thus, justifying the statement in previous research that there was an unsaid “affirmative action quota strategy” being used as part of an organization’s HRMS (O'Brien & Rickne, 2016).

Even though ‘quota-based’ HRMS intended to reduce or eliminate discrimination, scholars have linked backlash effects and stigmatization toward females and minorities when the dominant group felt it was used (Leibbrandt et al., 2018; O'Brien & Rickne, 2016). Dorbin et al. (2016) concluded that this strategy resulted in reverse discrimination. O'Brien and Rickne (2016) suggested that the male officers who felt this discrimination believed that the female officers did not earn their post. Additional research has indicated that this led to a perception of an unjust system by other groups (i.e., males and Caucasians) because they felt that these policies delivered an unfair or unjust advantage (Besley et al., 2017; Morgenroth & Ryan, 2018). Since organizational justice plays a vital role in correctional officer turnover (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019), there is a need to understand how affirmative action HRMS affects the overall sense of justice.

Additionally, the goal of the current research is affirmative action HRMS needs for females and other minorities working in corrections or those from the female or other minority’s perspectives of discrimination (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2018). Unfortunately, there is a deficiency in research dedicated to understanding the dominant group reaction (i.e., male correctional officers; Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2020). In addition, there has been some research devoted to the use of ‘quota-based’ affirmative action HRMS (O'Brien & Rickne, 2016). However, little has been dedicated to its effects in the field of corrections (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2020; O'Brien &

Rickne, 2016). Therefore, this study addressed the gap in the literature and allow human resource managers to understand the phenomena better and focus on corrective actions (i.e., training, communication, more inclusive affirmative action strategies).

Problem Statement

The general problem to be addressed was the potential creation of reverse discrimination through the use of affirmative action Human Resource Management Strategies (HRMS), resulting in lowered organizational justice and retaliatory behavior among the dominant group. Employers, such as correctional agencies, have used affirmative action HRMS to avoid the liability of disparate impact among minorities (Fa, 2016) and women (Dorrough et al., 2016). However, recent research indicated that these policies have resulted in reverse discrimination (Jankowski & Marcinkiewicz, 2019) and lowered organizational justice among the dominant group (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). The sense of injustice leads to resentment, conflict (Dorrough et al., 2016), and retaliation among the dominant group (O'Brien & Rickne, 2016).

Additionally, the perception of injustice and stressful environments created through retaliatory behavior leads to higher turnover rates among correctional officers (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019), costing the department around \$51,000 a year per officer they lose (Wells et al., 2016). Given the high cost to replace an officer in conjunction with an increasing turnover rate, going from 34.86% in 2018 to 43.91% in 2020, according to the GDC 2020 Annual Report (GDC, 2020), there is a need to understand how organizational justice, fairness, and retaliatory behavior affect the organization. Thus, the specific problem to be addressed was the potential creation of reverse discrimination by implementing unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS to reduce the disparate impact of female officers among Northwest Georgia correctional officers,

resulting in lower organizational justice and retaliatory behavior among male correctional officers.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to assist the business of correctional facilities in grasping the effects of affirmative action HRMS regarding male correctional officers' perception of fairness, discrimination, and justice. Additionally, it expanded on the affirmative action knowledge base of those studying the advantages (benefits) and disadvantages (cons) of constructing and maintaining affirmative action HRMS. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to (through the means of interviews) record the perception of male correctional officers between the ages of 18 and 60 in Northwest Georgia regarding the use of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS to reduce the disparate of female officers and the potential these policies have in creating reverse discrimination. Additionally, expanded on how the perception of reverse discrimination impacts fairness, justice, and retaliation.

Research Questions

To grasp a better understanding of the male correctional officer's perceptions regarding the use of an unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS, in addition to the impact these policies have, this multiple case study will be guided by the following research questions:

RQ1. To what extent, if any, does the implementation of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS impact male correctional officers' experiences regarding reverse discrimination?

RQ2. To what extent, if any, does the attitudes of male correctional officers towards the use of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS impact their perception of organizational justice?

RQ3: How has the implementation of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS influenced retaliation among male correctional officers?

Nature of the Study

This section is dedicated to discussing the nature of the study. The nature of the study will describe theories, methods, and designs concerning the researcher’s study. It also includes other theories, methods, designs and explain why some were not utilized. Finally, it consisted of multiple perspectives from methodologists supporting the researcher’s selections. Theories discussed below are the Equity Theory, Organizational Justice Theory (OJT), and Fairness Heuristic Theory (FHT). Methods discussed below are fixed (quantitative), flexible (qualitative), and mixed. Furthermore, the phenomenological design and the multiple case study design were discussed.

Discussion of Research Paradigms

This section examined the paradigm portion of the nature of the study and the chosen paradigm and a brief discussion of other considered paradigms. There are four paradigms in research: positivism, interpretive/constructive, critical, and pragmatic. The positive paradigm is a quantitative paradigm that focuses on what works, includes rules, and focuses on valid and reliable tools (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The interpretive/constructive paradigm is a qualitative paradigm that focuses on the why, based on the idea that reality is created, and seeks to discover the underlying meaning (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A critical paradigm is an ideological review paradigm that focuses on how to change something. The idea is that society is unjust or unequal and helps uncover that injustice/inequality (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Finally, the pragmatic paradigm is a mixed-method paradigm that focuses on how this will help, truth is based on what is valuable, and the best method is the one that solves the issue (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The interpretive/constructive paradigm was utilized for this research. Specifically, the multiple case study because it focuses on the ‘why,’ which is based on the idea that reality is created and seeks to discover the underlying meaning (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The justification of this paradigm is that this study aimed to view the created reality that male correctional officers perceive they are experiencing reverse discrimination due to the use of affirmative action HRMS policies. Therefore, answering why male correctional officers feel what they feel and why they retaliate against an authoritative organization or the female authority figure.

Discussion of Design

Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that when describing a shared meaning among numerous people that experienced the phenomenon, the researcher should consider a phenomenological design. According to Gill (2014), this design is used when the phenomenon has significant characteristics regarding lived experiences and challenges subjectivity. Furthermore, Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that the phenomenological design focuses on all participants regarding the specific phenomenon. In other words, this design is when there is a focus on phenomena similarities across collected data rather than the details of each story or report. Additionally, when the researcher aims to describe the phenomenon or essence, it is best to use the phenomenological design (Gill, 2014). Following the suggestions of both Creswell and Poth (2018) and Gill (2014), the phenomenological design will not be the best fit for the study because the goal is to describe the phenomenon from the individual perspective of each male correctional officer interviewed.

Another design considered is the ethnographic design. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), this design is used when there is a need to explain group functions by focusing on the action taken or being taken regarding the phenomenon. Creswell and Poth (2018) further

suggested that this design should be used when the researcher is examining shared patterns to understand the phenomena. To do this, the researcher studies a group of participants that share similar patterns of beliefs, language, attitudes, culture, or behaviors (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Then the researcher studies these patterns through the group's interaction over time. According to Hulst et al. (2015), this approach focuses on "lived experiences" of the phenomenon through what is heard, witnessed, and experienced.

Finally, a multiple case study under the interpretive/constructive paradigm design is suggested when a detailed account of the case is needed, set within the context of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). This design allows for the flexibility of matching research questions to the case or multiple cases (Hyett et al., 2014). According to Yazan (2015), the case study design allows flexibility to answer the why and how questions while exploring the phenomenon in the context in which it occurs. Creswell and Poth (2018) built on Yazan's suggestion by adding that the case study intends to understand the phenomena by integrating a collection of qualitative data. This includes data from documents, interviews, audiovisual materials, observations to analyze multiple cases, and concludes with the development and delivery of assertions (Hyett et al., 2014). The analysis required a detailed account of each officer within the context of the reverse discrimination created through the implementation of female 'quota-based' affirmative action HRMS among Northwest Georgia correctional officers, which made the multiple case study approach best for this study.

The foundation for this multiple case study was built on the data gathering process and commenced with a current literature review regarding aspects of the phenomena (Morgan et al., 2017; Taylor & Thomas-Gregory, 2015). The researcher distributed recruitment flyers near Northwest Georgia prisons to recruit potential participants. These recruits had to be current or

previously employed (within the last 5 years) male correctional officers. The researcher then sent structured demographic questionnaire and conducted a structured in-depth interview with all respondents who volunteered for this case study. Each interview was conducted via Skype/WebEx. The interview questions utilized were open-ended. Additionally, the researcher used motivational interviewing techniques to draw out additional information adding detail to the officers' experiences and attitudes using unofficial 'quota-based' affirmative action HRMS. Which is why the researcher refrained from phone interviews. All data gathered throughout the study were stored in NVivo 12 for analysis.

Discussion of Method

Determining which research method to use is one of the critical aspects of the nature of a research study. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), there are three categories of research methods: fixed (quantitative), flexible (qualitative), and mixed (using both quantitative and qualitative). The fixed approach is theory-driven and consists of numerical data collection. The idea of theory-driven in a fixed approach allows researcher to determine what variables should be measured and controlled (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These variables tend to be measured quantitatively or numerically. On the other hand, a flexible method allows the researcher to have data collection freedom. This method is best used when the variables are not easily measured quantitatively (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is a subjective systematic approach used to give meaning and describe life. An example of this includes research around culture. In contrast, a mixed-method approach combines both fixed and flexible design (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The chosen method was flexible or qualitative. This section discusses the flexible or qualitative method portion or the nature of the study, why it was chosen, and a brief discussion of other considered methods.

The flexible or qualitative research method was utilized for this study. This method was chosen because the study intended to explore the phenomena of reverse discrimination created through the implementation of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS. This study also explored how the phenomena of reverse discrimination affect the dominant group's view on procedural justice and lead to retaliatory behavior. The choice between using a quantitative and qualitative design method was based on the need to explore the phenomena based on an inductive behavioral approach versus the need to study the phenomena based on a statistical approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

A qualitative methodology was the best research method to use because qualitative research methods effectively understand human behavior, including reasons and motives, in byzantine environments (Creswell & Poth, 2018). One of the features of a qualitative research method is that it allows for the development of comprehensive information and personal accounts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Since this research sought to gain a comprehensive understanding from the dominant group’s perspective of an organization’s affirmative action, HRMS has created reverse discrimination. The qualitative methodology was best for this study.

Since qualitative methods are based on behavioral factors focusing on several variables versus the focus of specific data points, triangulation will be used to strengthen credibility and validity (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This included data from documents, interviews, audiovisual materials, and observations to analyze multiple cases (Hyett et al., 2014). Triangulation is the process of using various sources to obtain an understanding of the phenomenon (Natow, 2020). In qualitative research, there are four types of triangulation techniques. These include investigation, method, data source, and theory (Renz et al., 2018).

The other type of research method considered was fixed or quantitative. According to Barczak (2015), quantitative studies are deductive approaches used when the researcher identifies a theory related to the topic and develops a hypothesis. Then the researcher tests the hypotheses with data to confirm or nullify the hypothesis. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that research conducted within the quantitative design method follows a general logical structure. The structure includes the introduction, theoretical or conceptual framework, hypotheses or research questions, methods used, calculated results, assumptions/limitations/delimitations, implications, discussions, and future research (Barczak, 2015).

According to Barczak (2015), quantitative research studies take a deductive approach shaped by positivist and empiricist philosophies. The objective of this method is to develop and employ hypotheses, theories, and mathematical models. The method starts with the identification of a theory that is relative to the topic that is being studied and is considered the dominant research framework in social science (Barczak, 2015). The researcher then begins the process of collecting and analyzing data to prove or disprove the developed hypothesis. The collection and use of a quantitative method allow for the calculation of simple to complex statistical analysis to show relationships, aggregate data, and/or compare across aggregated data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), there are four primary types of quantitative research: descriptive, correlation, experimental, and causal-comparative/quasi-experimental. Furthermore, it has seven characteristics: measurable variables, use of standard instruments, use repeatable methods, assumption of normal population distribution, predictive outcomes, use measurable devices, and presents the data in graphs, figures, and tables (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

All of which is used to generate knowledge and/or create understanding regarding social sciences, such as economics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, political science, and so on.

The choice between using a quantitative and qualitative design method was based on the need to explore the phenomena based on an inductive behavioral approach versus the need to study the phenomena based on a statistical approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative research also gives the research a human voice and provides conceptual data that cannot be drawn out via numbers and statistics but that of human expression. Regardless of the method chosen, the researcher will take the approach suggested by Barczak. Barczak (2015) suggested that it is crucial to identify and address gaps in the literature, in addition to contributions to the field of study. The rationale behind the use of the qualitative method is that this study builds on current social theories while addressing the gaps in the literature regarding 'quota-based' affirmative action HRMS.

Discussion of Triangulation

Since qualitative methods are based on behavioral factors focusing on several variables versus the direction of specific data points, triangulation was used to strengthen credibility and validity (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Triangulation is the process of using various sources to obtain an understanding of the phenomenon (Natow, 2020). In qualitative research, there are four types of triangulation techniques. These include investigation, method, data source, and theory (Renz et al., 2018). The use of the triangulation technique and bracketing was used to establish credibility. The triangulation technique that was used for this research study were interview questions, an in-depth literature review, the use of institutional websites, and content analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Discussion of Theory

The following social and organizational behavior theories related to this case study considered by the researcher were Adam's equity theory, OJT, and FHT. These theories aim to explain what is seen as justifiable and fair within the organization. However, each theory takes a different pathway towards building a foundation for research; thus, it was imperative to review and examine each theory.

According to Ryan (2016), Adam's equity theory focuses on two central questions. Those are "what is fair/equitable" and "what is the appropriate response to perceived inequity?" Prior research suggested that the employee's perception of fairness regarding the employer constrains labor, industry, and government, causing inequity concerns (Ryan, 2016). Some of these perceptions included the importance of intelligence, education, gender, ethnicity, and social status held by the organization (Ryan, 2016). Ryan (2016) suggested that inequity concerns arise when organizations and individuals do not place the same values on things, such as hiring and promoting. The dissonance between these elements caused a need for change to bring a sense of harmony (Ryan, 2016). This change can include altering the individual's outcome or inputs to change. However, this theory has had significant criticism due to its simplicity. Some researchers suggested that perceptions of fairness and equality can have various psychological or demographic variables (Goldman & Cropanzano, 2015; Rasooli et al., 2019).

According to Rasooli et al. (2019), OJT is rooted in how an employee evaluates organizational behaviors and the employee's resulting behaviors and attitudes cultivated from the equity theory. This theory uses a three-dimensional construct: distributive justice, interactional justice, and procedural justice. Rasooli et al. (2019) explained that distributive justice is the "what outcome," interactional justice is related to employee treatment, and procedural justice is

the ‘how outcome.’ The drawback to this theory is that some scholars have argued that fairness and justice have been interchangeable when they are not (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015; Goldman & Cropanzano, 2015)—warranting concern for a need to separate the two terms.

Therefore, leading to the design of the FHT as an alternative to both the OJT and Adam’s equity theory. FHT (Proudfoot & Lind, 2015) is primarily focused on aspects of the equity theory. However, it pushes a deeper focus on the relationship between distributive justice and procedure justice while understanding that fairness and justice are not always seen as the same. Proudfoot and Lind (2015) suggested that if individuals do not have complete information about an outcome, a substitute is used to determine how to react to the outcome. The theory explained how procedural justice affects the perception of fairness. This study added to the development of the fairness perspective by exploring how ‘gender-quotas’ impact perceptions of reverse discrimination and organizational justice among the dominant group.

According to Wolfe et al. (2018), FHT provides an in-depth understanding of the fundamental mechanisms motivating the organizational justice effect. Al-Amri and Al Shammary (2017) suggested that this theory explains how people respond to dealing with their environments and make predictions about the relationship between procedural fairness and the perception of its outcomes and outcome acceptance. In other words, individuals judge the overall fairness of the connection through equity/inequity evaluations. It is important to note that this theory factors individual perceptions similar to the prevalent motivation theory known as Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.

Summary of the Nature of the Study

The nature of the study outlined and explained the key attributes and characteristics of the study’s design, describe why the best approach to the current study was the use of a qualitative

multiple case study design, and provide a brief description of what is found in Section 3. A qualitative multiple case study seeks to examine the phenomenon within a real-life context. The case study's primary purpose was to understand what is unique to the case. The unique case in this research study was to understand how reverse discrimination and organizational justice impacts the dominant group, male officers, regarding the use of unofficial 'gender quotas' as an affirmative action HRMS.

Conceptual Framework

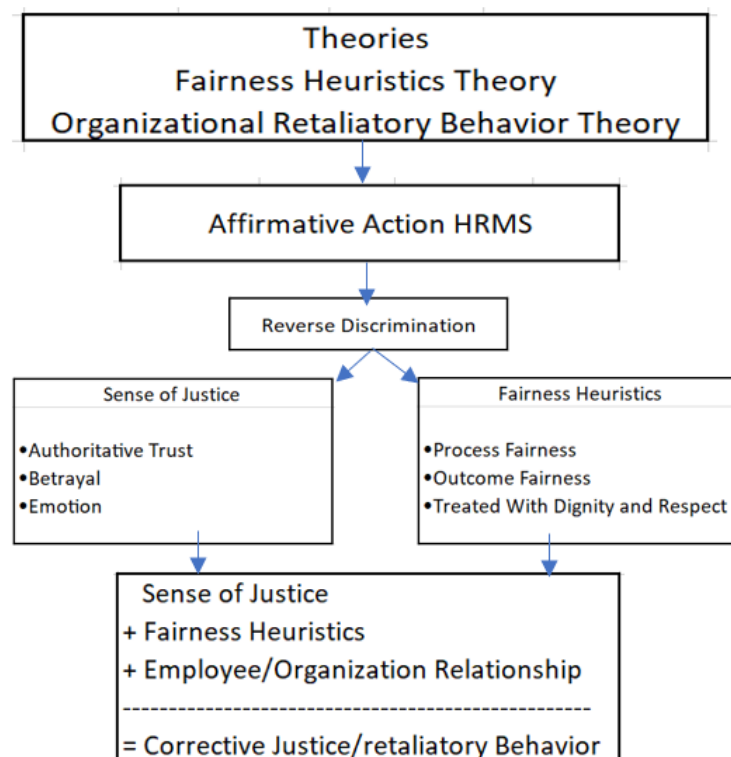
Theoretical orientation operates as a study's overall framework. Theories are paradigms, or analytical frameworks, which are utilized when studying or interpreting a social phenomenon. It is informal, based outside academic political and social science (Creswell & Poths, 2018). Social theories seek knowledge through discovery, posteriori, rather than traditional methods, priori, to understand why humans act and interact the way they do (Rasooli et al., 2019). It also guides scientific investigation by encouraging the researcher to think about topics and measurements that are suitable. However, the researcher needed to understand the theory and the theoretical orientation that theory attempts to explain and/or predict behavior within a specific phenomenon. In contrast, a theoretical paradigm is a worldview that the researcher organizes with experience (Rasooli et al., 2019).

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), developing the theoretical or conceptual framework that aligns with the constructed research question(s) can disrupt or enhance the study. The completion of theory(ies) shapes the nature of the questions, informs data collection strategies, and proposes a call for change or action. Some researchers have questioned whether to utilize one theory in the early stage of the study (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015; Ryan, 2016). To moderate possible criticism, multiple strategies were carefully considered in the nature of the

study. After reviewing the alternatives, the FHT, in conjunction with organizational retaliatory behavior (ORB) was chosen over both the OJT and Adam's equity theory because it allows for the separation of justice and fairness since justice does not always equal, fair treatment. That is a crucial understanding that is needed to grasp reverse discrimination.

Figure 1

Relationship to Concepts



Relationship between Concepts

Fairness Heuristic Theory in Relation to Organizational Retaliatory Behavior.

Though affirmative action HRMSs were incorporated to ensure fair hiring practices (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2016a), they are not necessarily considered fair to everyone. The FHT is applied when determining if the governing authority, such as an employer, can be trusted regarding fairness and justice judgments. The theory offers insight into the

mechanisms underlying the organizational effect (Wolfe et al., 2018). Using FHT as a framework for this research, an understanding is obtained on the influence of perceived fairness regarding the use of an unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS and organizational justice and retaliatory behaviors among male correctional officers.

FHT offers insight into the mechanisms underlying organizational effect (Wolfe et al., 2018). Fair HRMS are essential because it shows employees that their identity and trust within the organization are not in danger of being exploited or rejected (Wolfe et al., 2018). According to Phipps and Prieto (2018), this social theory is used to decide if an individual is willing to accept this authority, cooperate, and conform to the social norms within an organization. For instance, an officer who decides a promotion is worthwhile, while another officer views this same opportunity as a diminished cost through the loss of identity or exploitation. It argues that humans are driven to know if they can trust an authority enough to risk investing time, resources, and emotions towards the organization and social relationships (Kouchaki et al., 2015). Since there are impracticalities and difficulties in accurately evaluating others' trustworthiness, particularly in an organization, fairness perceptions are used as heuristics for trust (Kouchaki et al., 2015).

FHT has three types of fairness judgments. These judgment types are procedural, distributive, and interactional justice. Distributive justice relates to outcome fairness (Phipps & Prieto, 2018; Qin et al., 2015). Procedure justice relates to process fairness (Phipps & Prieto, 2018; Qin et al., 2015). Research suggests that most employment and promotion decisions are based on a process of elimination act through a variety of perceptions (Phipps & Prieto, 2018; Qin et al., 2015). Interactional justice relates to the perception of treatment based on dignity and respect (Phipps & Prieto, 2018; Qin et al., 2015). Qin et al. (2015) suggested that when there is a

lack of sufficient information about one of these types of fairness (i.e., distributive), a person will rely on a different kind of fairness as a heuristic alternative.

Fair HRMS are essential because it shows employees that their identity and trust within the organization are not in danger of being exploited or rejected (Wolfe et al., 2018). When an employee perceives another was hired or promoted due to what they feel is unjust reasoning, the organization or the hired/promoted employee is at risk of retaliatory behavior in terms of social exchange. When applying this to employee relationships with an organization or their direct authority figures, experiences and perception of reverse discrimination can be explained concerning behavior (Wolfe et al., 2018).

Relationship Between Actors and ‘Gender Quota’ Strategies. Expanding the theoretical model into reverse discrimination means determining if the hiring/promotion strategies utilized within the human resource department are perceived as fair among the dominant group. Suppose a person views reverse discrimination because of unfair hiring/promotion practices, that a person is faced with a sense of injustice within the organization. In the context of the correction field, the officer perceives a lost promotion to a female being based on gender and not merit. That officer faces a lowered sense of organizational justice and trust in said governing authority (i.e., human resources, Georgia DOC, hiring manager). This causes an influx of negative emotions in conjunction with a sense of betrayal, creating a sense of imbalance on the justice scale (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). Said officer seeks out the need to fix this injustice and rebalance that scale. This leads to counterproductive work behaviors such as retaliation towards an individual or the organization and generating a hostile environment.

Harris and Van Hoya (2004) conducted a study that measured the likelihood of employment discrimination in the selection and promotion process. The study utilized FHT to combine distributive and procedural fairness information as an antecedent to forming judgments of overall fairness. The study suggested the pattern found was that perceptions of procedural fairness directly impact reactions when an outcome is seen as unfair (Harris & Van Hoya, 2004). Though this concept was applied to racial discrimination, Harris and Van Hoya (2004) contended that the limit does not end there. The usefulness can expand towards various types of discrimination to include all personal characteristics, such as gender (Harris & Van Hoya, 2004).

Colquitt and Zipay (2015) added to that study to include the adherence of other appropriate decisions, such as consistency, equity, honesty, respect, and employees' reaction to these decisions. The study suggested that once an employee sees a justice issue, he/she uses the perception of fairness as justice data (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). This data drives employee actions and behaviors (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). Anger and betrayal can control reactions and responses triggered by injustice perceptions. This, in turn, can ignite negative behaviors (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015), like retaliatory behavior. Colquitt and Zipay (2015) concluded that corporations must manage the perception of fairness and justice.

Discussion of Relationships Between Theory and Concepts. According to Al-Amri and Al Shammary (2017), FHT is aimed at explaining how people respond to dealing with their environments, in addition to making predictions about the relationship between procedural fairness and the perception of its outcomes and outcome acceptance. Given previous studies found that perceptions of fairness can lead to negative behavior and lashing out (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015; Shammary, 2017), potential themes expected to see in this study include a connection to perceived fairness and workplace deviant behaviors. This includes links between

the perception of discrimination, injustice, and retaliatory behavior, thus satisfying all questions and sub-questions.

Summary of the Research Framework

The conceptual framework provided a narrative and visual structure to illustrate the logical connections among the critical elements of FHT, constructs, and the phenomena of this study. Additionally, the framework sets to identify patterns and themes that emerge from the data. Those patterns and themes include connections between perceived fairness regarding using unofficial ‘gender quota’ strategies and perceived fairness, injustice, and retaliation among the dominant group.

Definition of Terms

The Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) inaugurated affirmative action policies to safeguard the equal treatment of all soldiers and to encourage a working environment that promotes fairness without regard to their race, religion, color, gender, or national origin. The following definitions are provided to clarify terms within this study, particularly as the study pertains to correctional officers.

Affirmative Action: A policy or a practice that favors a protected class such as race, nationality, and gender and matches that class's available representation (Barrett, 2019).

Correctional facility: A place of incarceration for those sentenced by governmental officials to forcible confinement (Welters et al., 2020).

Correctional officer: Any employee who has been certified through Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T) certified and worked within any correctional institution responsible for the control and security of housed inmates (Welters et al., 2020).

Discrimination: Any unlawful interaction, policy, or treatment with a specific class of people (Barrett, 2019).

Diversity: A concept that represents the social, cultural, and economic attributes that differ among members in a workgroup (Joshi & Neely, 2018).

Fairness Heuristic Theory (FHT): A theory relating how people react to outcomes regarding their interactions with authorities and predict the relationship between procedural fairness, the perception of outcome fairness, and outcome acceptance (Goldman & Cropanzano, 2015).

Gender quotas: A woman to man ratio in which organizations identify, promote, develop, and retain the female presence (Leibbrandt et al., 2018).

Organizational retaliatory behavior: Indirect or direct actions meant to cause harm to the organization (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015).

Perceived workplace gender discrimination: An individual's perception that he or she was denied equal treatment because of his or her gender (Triana et al., 2019).

Retaliatory behavior: Workplace deviance because of perceived injustice of the employer (Syed et al., 2020).

Reverse discrimination: Acts or policies that are seen to be beneficial in a traditionally non-dominant group (i.e., females or minorities), at the cost of the historically dominant group (i.e., majority races and men; Isom Scott, 2018).

Social learning theory: The ability to integrate different experiences and modify or adapt behavior via learning from one's environment (Cochran et al., 2017).

Tokenism: The explanation of numerical minorities in the workplace impacts group dynamics and negatively affects the token, in this case, women employed in a conventionally male-dominated environment (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2020).

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

This section discusses assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study.

Assumptions

Assumptions are statements, although not proven, that are considered true but are known to carry risks. These assumptions outline the research. The methodological assumption of this study was that the most appropriate method to use was a qualitative method. Qualitative researchers use individual views and experiences of individuals to cultivate suppositions, whereas quantitative researchers present hypotheses involving implications from tools and statistical data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The following assumptions were associated with this study: Participants answered all questions truthfully and without a motive for biased results (Buehl et al., 2018). The researcher did not show bias regarding interview questions nor lead any of the participants (Mackieson, 2018). All demographic variables that were used in this study were relevant (Cypress, 2018). Finally, there was the assumption that there is a relationship existed between the use of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS and organizational justice of the dominant group (Dorrough et al., 2016).

Limitations

Research limitations are variables or influences within the study that is beyond the control of the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These limitations can restrict outcomes the researcher may expect, causing a weakness in the study. So, the researcher must acknowledge

that these restrictions or limitations exist. Two of the most notable limitations, or weaknesses, within the qualitative approach are subjectivity and vulnerability to researcher bias (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Given this researcher was a female correctional Sergeant, this researcher must be aware of personal bias.

To assist in reducing personal bias, this researcher did not interview any correctional officer that served under her. In addition, the following limitations were associated with this study: Participants may have limited their responses out of fear their institution or coworkers became aware of their participation (Mackieson et al., 2018). To address this limitation, all interviews were held separately, and each participant were given an alphanumeric identifier, thus providing participants anonymity. Though participants were made aware of all ethical considerations, privacy, and confidentiality, there may be limits in comprehension. To address this assumption, the researcher provided a safe and secure environment where the participants could express their opinions, thus ensuring confidentiality and anonymity (Buehl et al., 2018). Finally, a smaller participant pool may limit the results of this study regarding transferability to other correctional institutions (Queirós et al., 2017). So, the researcher extended the participant pool to include two prisons from different counties and classifications to assist in this.

Delimitations

Delimitations are considered the scope or boundaries of the study. The following delimitations were associated with this study. This study was limited to male correctional officers. This study was not used to investigate other variables beyond the use of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS, organizational justice, and retaliatory behavior. This study’s scope and target sample was comprised of respondents from male correctional officers within the Northwest Georgia geographical region.

Significance of the Study

This study aimed to examine various practices and factors of two correctional facilities in Northwest Georgia that desire to recruit, hire, and retain female correctional officers. Additionally, this study increased the knowledge of existing research by examining how unofficial gender quota usage causes reverse discrimination. This study provided insight into the role discrimination plays in the perceptions of fairness and organizational justice, resulting in retaliatory behavior among the dominant group within the corrections industry. This assisted in gap reduction, added to the significance regarding the study of human resources, and outlined implications of Biblical integration.

Reduction of Gaps in the Literature

Previous literature has focused on affirmative action strategies associated with gender perceptions and female-friendly policies of law enforcement officers (Armstrong et al., 2015; Elliot et al., 2015; Ferdik & Hills, 2018; Swan, 2016). The researcher went further in this study by exploring discriminatory effects on the dominant group within the industry. Therefore, this research provided insight into the role that these strategies have played in reverse discrimination and feelings of injustice towards male correctional officers. With the insight gained from this study, Human resource managers can develop affirmative action strategies that are viewed as fair and equal among all minority groups, gender groups, and dominant groups within the organization.

Implications for Biblical Integration

The implications for Biblical integration revolved around acknowledging that all humans, male and female alike, should be treated with love and respect as equals in Christ. Discrimination goes against God's plan for humanity. Scripture points out, "there is neither Jew

nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (*King James Bible*, 2017, Galatians 3:28). Scripture further states, “For as the woman is of the man, even so, is the man also by the woman; but all things of God” (*King James Bible*, 2017, 1 Corinthians 11:12). If God himself stated He shows no partiality (*King James Bible*, 2017, Romans 2:11), then humanity should do the same. Through growth and understanding of how unofficial ‘gender quotas’ affect the dominant group, organizations can grow in Christ as they grow.

Benefit to Business Practice and Relationship to Human Resources

Current literature has focused on affirmative action strategies associated with gender perceptions and female-friendly policies of law enforcement officers (Armstrong et al., 2015; Elliot et al., 2015; Ferdik & Hills, 2018; Swan, 2016). However, this researcher expanded on current literature through the exploration of discriminatory effects and perceptions of injustice/unfairness towards the dominant group within the industry. Thus, allowing the research to add to the human resource field by providing insight into the role that these strategies have played in reverse discrimination and created a sense of injustice towards male correctional officers. With the insight gained from this study, human resource managers can develop affirmative action strategies that are viewed as fair and equal among all minority groups, gender groups, and dominant groups within the organization.

Additionally, it is imperative to understand that worldly values and beliefs are far different from what the Bible teaches. For example, Christians are instructed to be respectful and treat others according to how that person would want to be treated. Scripture teaches; “therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (*King James Bible*, 2017, Matthew 7:12) and to “let integrity and

uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee” (King James Bible, 2017, Psalms 25:21). These beliefs and values promote equality and justice toward others. One of the aims of this study is to show how unofficial ‘gender quotas’ can be related to injustice experiences among the dominant group, thus assisting organizations in how to promote equality and justice concerning affirmative action strategies they plan to adopt.

Summary of the Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is used to justify the need for the study. It provides details on how the research will affect the subject and/or what the research will contribute to. It also entails what or whom the study will benefit. This included previous research studies and gaps in the literature, implications of Biblical integration, and the relationship to the field, human resources, of study regarding reverse discrimination, the use of unofficial ‘gender quotas,’ and how it affects the dominant group.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The objective of a literature review was to synthesize and critique existing research. It outlined literature relevant to this current study. One aim of the study is to address the gap literature regarding the phenomena of reverse discrimination and sense of injustice created through the implementation of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS to reduce disparate impact among Northwest Georgia correctional officers through the exploration of male officers’ experiences.

Literature Search Strategy

The researcher utilized Liberty University’s online library to access a search tool to use multidisciplinary databases. This included Credo, JSTOR, ProQuest Central, and Emerald Scholar. The researcher expanded the database search to include Google Scholar, which included

articles not found through the Liberty University Library. The specific search parameters included peer-reviewed articles that were no less than five years old on ‘gender quotas,’ corrections, organizational justice, social theories, gender equality, EEOC, affirmative action strategies, discrimination, reverse discrimination, dominant group, and tokenism.

However, there was a lack of research regarding corrections, so the search was expanded to include political and corporate agencies. For each article that met the criteria, the researcher reviewed a preview of the article to ensure its relevance. After a thorough review of articles found relevant to the current research study, it was evident that reverse discrimination among the dominant group when ‘gender-quota’ affirmative action HRMS was utilized (Fa, 2016; Hughes et al., 2019; O'Brien & Rickne, 2016). Additionally, themes and concepts that were developed in these journals provided the current study with the ability to validate trustworthiness through triangulation (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This will be discussed more in-depth in the study’s discussion portion.

Regarding the conception/theoretical background, the search included social theories, organizational justice theories, fairness theories, and behavior theories. Four articles to assist included “The business of black beauty: Social entrepreneurship or social injustice? *Journal of Management History*” (Phipps & Priet, 2018), “Not all fairness is created equal: Fairness perceptions of group vs. individual decision-makers” (Kouchaki et al., 2015), “Fairness heuristics and substitutability effects: Inferring the fairness of outcomes, procedures, and interpersonal treatment when employees lack clear information” (Qin et al., 2015), and “measuring justice and fairness” (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). The literature review sections include a literature search strategy, a history of corrections, a history of affirmative action strategies, and in-depth review of ‘gender quota’ HRMS, an integrated analysis of potential themes found in

previous research, and an analysis of previously used theories and methodologies regarding the research problem (Table 1).

Table 1

Literature Search Strategy

Subject	Journals	Books	Websites	Dissertation	Total
Theory	3	0	0	0	3
Affirmative Action/Quotas	25	0	13	2	40
Diversity	10	1	1	2	14
Organizational Justice	10	0	1	0	11
Fairness Justice/Perception	8	0	0	0	8
Corrections	9	0	2	0	11
Reverse Discrimination	9	0	2	1	12
CWB/DB/RB	6	0	0	0	6
Qualitative Design	5	1	0	0	6
Total	85	2	19	5	111

Legal Framework in Relation to Business Practice

Affirmative Action Strategy. Since the 1800s, women have faced the struggle for gender equality. According to research, only 21% of the workforce was female workers (Hendon, 2020). Since then, there has been a change in the American culture acknowledging the deficiencies regarding the underrepresentation of female and minority workers, and things have drastically changed. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2017), females now occupy 57% of the total workforce. This can be accredited to the multiple advances in legislation regarding diversity, inclusion, and equal rights (Batton & Wright, 2019).

According to research, affirmative action and diversity legislation were created to incorporate an inclusive and equal opportunity workforce within the 21st century (Barbosa & Fonseca, 2019). In fact, Barrett (2019) reported that in 1965 the planning of affirmative action

began. Though planning did not officially start until 1965, the catalyst of the directional change started with the incorporation of the 14th Amendment into the U.S. Constitution. According to the 14th Amendment:

No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; Nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. (U.S. Constitution. Amendment XIV)

Since this enactment, there have been many notable legislative passages, and compliance offices have been established to ensure that minorities and females have equal rights and opportunities within the workforce. These include the 1964 Title VII Civil Rights Act, United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Rooney Rule, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), Executive Order 10925, Executive Order 11478, and Executive Order 13672.

1964 Title VII Civil Rights Act. The 1964 Title VII Civil Rights Act proposed by President J.F. Kennedy prohibits using sex, color, religion, national origin, and/or race for hiring or promoting candidates (Hirsh & Chan, 2017). It prohibits discrimination within the workplace based on these factors when an employer has 15 or more employees. Additionally, the Act prohibits discrimination among employees due to association with an individual of a particular sex, color, religion, national origin, and/or race. This Act has come to be known as a United States (U.S.) labor law landmark (Bornstein, 2015). This passage came just one year after the Equal Pay Act of 1963, prohibiting wage differences based on the premises of sex, and was included in the 1964 Title VII Civil Rights Act (Hirsh & Chan, 2017).

In June of 2020, the Supreme Court added that employers were not to be discriminated against based on gender identity nor sexual orientation. This statute acknowledges two discrimination causes in employment: disparate treatment, the ‘protected class’ plays a part in the adverse actions taken against him or her, and disparate impact, the employer’s practice, or policy attributes unreasonable disadvantages towards a ‘protected class’ (Bornstein, 2017).

Though the Act offers many protections regarding employment, it is essential to note it allows for discrimination, other than race or color, based on “bona fide occupational qualifications” (BFOQ; Findley et al., 2019). For the employer to be covered under the BFOQ clause, the employer must be able to show the discrimination had a direct relationship towards the job duties, it relates to the mission or essence of the business, and no alternative was reasonable or less restrictive. However, it is essential to note that the employer’s religious preference is not a sufficient qualification for BFOQ per court ruling under “Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Kamehameha School—Bishop Estate” (Findley et al., 2019).

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). With the institution of the 1964 Title VII Civil Rights Act, it was essential to dedicate agencies to enforce this Act. Under Executive Order 10928 signed by President J. F. Kennedy, in March of 1961, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was established. Though this entity was enacted for all the protected classes, it further restricted the ability for employers to hire or promote candidates based on sex. Initially, the expectation was that the EEOC would have the ability to investigate and resolve most of the charges or disputes quickly. However, they have not been able to reach that expectation. In 2013, the EEOC received over 93,700 discrimination charges, and just over 11,500 went to mediations (Lim, 2016). That means only 12.3% of the charges were resolved in mediation.

One such EEOC claim was that of the Justice Department versus Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC). According to the Department of Justice (2017), the lawsuit was brought forward due to a complaint brought by 28 female officers, which alleged the MDOC had been engaging in sex-based employment discrimination against their female correctional officers. According to the complaint, Huron Valley Correctional Facility implemented a broad female-only assignment policy that resulted in the request for female transfers being unnecessarily denied (Department of Justice, 2017). According to “Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta, head of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division, employers may not unduly lock workers into or out of a job because of their sex” (Department of Justice, 2017). Though this matter is still being overseen in court, it is just one of many examples that the EEOC administers.

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP). The objective of the OFCCP is to ensure all entities that conduct business with the federal government are compliant with Executive Order 11246 (Renock, 2017). All entities contracted with the federal government must supply information regarding ethnicity, race, and gender of those they employ (DuBois, 2015). Therefore, allowing the government to determine the entity's diversity demographics. Additionally, it publishes the program requirements under the affirmative action functions. The current requirement is to create a specific objective for minorities and where disparities exist, especially towards a minority group or the utilization of women or men in a minority group (DuBois, 2015).

Furthermore, these contractors, as well as the OFCCP, rely on data collected through the United States Census Bureau when creating employment goals and creating comparisons. In Fact, the Census Bureau creates a particular file for the OFCCP for the sole purpose of

affirmative action planning (Renock, 2017). Under the OFCCP, those contracted under federal entities must submit affirmative action plans annually (Calfas, 2015). These plans must include hiring plans to fill the underrepresentation of females and minorities. Calfas (2015) suggested that these affirmative action strategies have been shown to have a major impact on both gender and minority gaps in the workforce.

Executive Order 10925. Executive Order 10925 was signed into action by President J. F. Kennedy in 1961, due to the endeavors of civil rights leaders. This order states that organizations are required to take affirmative actions to prevent race, national origin, or creed from being a factor in how they treat applicants or workers (Calfas, 2015). It also gave the federal government authority to establish procedures against contractors who violated the EEOC. Calfas (2015) stated that procedures include but are not limited to contract cancelation and/or not receiving future contracts. According to Calfas (2015), this order was reaffirmed by President L. B. Johnson, which was later amended with Executive Order 11375. This added gender to the list of protected classes. Additionally, this Executive Order added to the EEOC by implementing a President's committee within the EEOC, which Vice President L. Johnson chaired, and L. Wirtz was appointed vice-chair (Calfas, 2015).

Executive Order 11478. Executive Order 11478 was signed into action by President R. M. Nixon, paving the way for females to be treated equally in federal governments jobs (Yu, 2018). The passing of this order banned discrimination regarding federal employment based on color, sex, race, national origin, religion, age, or handicap. Moreover, it promoted continued affirmative action programs for equal employment opportunities in every agency and executive department (Yu, 2018).

However, there was a shortcoming with this executive order. It did not prohibit the exception of the firearms that stemmed from laws passed in the 1870s preventing females from entering positions that required firearms (Morton, 2019). It was not until 1971 that the exception of this firearm was voided by the Civil Service Commission allowing females to bear arms. However, the Federal Bureau of Investigations did not allow females until after the passing of Director J. E. Hoover (Yu, 2018). Yu's (2018) study revealed the current, for his time, census discovered only 15.5% of federal workers bearing arms, such as law enforcement, was female, showing the need to implement sex-conscious hiring practices.

Consequently, to implement an affirmative action strategy that is constitutionally acceptable, it must be laid out clearly as an official policy, associated with the governmental interest, carefully tailored to achieve the governmental interest, and must have minimal impact on others (Morton, 2019). Though the plan cannot expressly state a quota option, it can be tailored to allow gender as a consideration regarding hire practices. These must be approved by the Office of Personnel Management. An example of this unofficial quota or targeted gender hire was a Border Patrol agent position advertised as a female-only position (Yu, 2018). This posting set an unofficial quota set for a target gender.

Furthermore, it was not until 1973 that this was revised to include the Omnibus Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968. This Act allowed for funding to be pulled within criminal justice agencies that utilized discriminatory employment methods (Morton, 2019). This created a doorway for the EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) to require courts to impose and enforce these goals. Morton (2019) suggested that litigation was and is not only necessary but effective in changing employment policies in corrections.

Executive Order 13672. Executive Order 13672 was signed into legislation by President B. Obama on July 21, 2014, added sexual identification as a protected class (Oppenheimer, 2016). This order amended 11246 includes prohibiting contractors and subcontractors for the federal government from sexual identity or orientation discrimination. Oppenheimer (2016) pointed out that this Executive Order was enacted to protect lesbian, bisexual, gay, and transgender (LBGT) individuals from being discriminated against as applicants and employees within organizations who carry federal contracts. The Secretary of Labor was directed to prepare guidelines that executed these additional protections. Contractors that were currently under contract had to revise their affirmative action and/or EEOC statements and policies ensuring that gender identity and sexual orientation were classified as protected classes.

The Problem

The problem is the potential creation of reverse discrimination through the use of affirmative action Human Resource Management Strategies (HRMS), resulting in lowered organizational justice and retaliatory behavior among the dominant group. Employers, such as correctional agencies, have used affirmative action HRMS to avoid the liability of disparate impact among minorities (Fa, 2016) and women (Dorrough et al., 2016). However, recent research indicated that these policies have resulted in reverse discrimination (Jankowski & Marcinkiewicz, 2019) and lowered organizational justice among the dominant group (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). The sense of injustice leads to resentment, conflict (Dorrough et al., 2016), and retaliation among the dominant group (O'Brien & Rickne, 2016).

Additionally, the perception of injustice and stressful environments created through retaliatory behavior leads to higher turnover rates among correctional officers (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019), costing the department around \$51,000 a year per officer they lose (Wells et al., 2016).

Given the excessive cost to replace an officer in conjunction with an increasing turnover rate, going from 27.2% in 2018 to 43.91% in 2020 (GDC Annual Report 2018 and 2020), there is a need to understand how organizational justice, fairness, and retaliatory behavior affect the organization. Therefore, the specific problem to be addressed is the potential creation of reverse discrimination through the implementation of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS to reduce the disparate impact of female officers among Northwest Georgia correctional officers, resulting in lower organizational justice and retaliatory behavior among male correctional officers.

Affirmative Action and Diversity

Affirmative Action vs. Diversity. According to Barrett (2019), diversity management concepts began to form by Congress through the application of laws classified as social segregation. These are considered voluntary. Though early diversity management strategies struggled with effectiveness and/or ambiguity, current research suggests that extending diversity policies or strategies beyond affirmative action will attract a greater number of diverse candidates (i.e., beyond gender or race; Barrett, 2019). Though affirmative action and Diversity Management hold similar characteristics, Barrett (2019) pointed out the differences. The main difference is affirmative action strategies are legislatively required, whereas diversity management is voluntary. Another focal difference is the legislative requirements specific towards minorities, females, and veterans (Barrett, 2019). Additionally, diversity management has a focus towards upward movement regarding employees of all types to include but not limited to religious preference, class, gender, politics, and race. In other words, it goes beyond gender and race (Barrett, 2019).

Benefits. Hirsh and Chan (2017) conducted a survey that included 521 rulings regarding employment discrimination. According to the research, around 40% were classified as training, 35% right awareness, 20% organizational accountability, and 5% other (Hirsh & Chan, 2017). This research confirmed a correlation with an increase in female and minority managers and court-mandated affirmative action and diversity management. Additionally, Batton and Wright (2019) found that affirmative action strategies make it easier for organizations to use data examined and analyzed to connect the relationship among internal utilization and external or internal availability. The information gathered allows the organization to adapt its workforce to represent the community with more accuracy (Batton & Wright, 2019). This allows the organization to justify hiring or promotion choices. Batton and Wright (2019) further stated that this allows for a reduction of bias, even unintentional bias, thus allowing the proverbial “glass ceiling” of the organization to explode. Additionally, Dobin and Kalev (2016) pointed out that organizations can overcome lawsuits using affirmative action strategies.

Arguments. Counter arguments have been rooted in the dominant group (Yu, 2018). The idea of this concept is that an individual should be judged or evaluated based on that individual’s qualities and not the characteristics of a specific group (i.e., gender or race). According to Yu (2018), this leads to the denunciation of dominant, majority, group discrimination, reverse discrimination. In fact, Yu (2018) went further and implied that “preferential hiring” is paradoxical. Employers are permitting discrimination to eliminate discrimination. Another argument is based on individual justice in the labor market.

According to Yu (2018), affirmative action strategies violate the value of merit, and the individual deemed more qualified or possessing greater skills and aptitudes for the job is overlooked. This concept justifies the idea that principles of justice become violated and

considered devaluation, or unconscious disinclination, in the evaluation process of the employer. Consequently, this validates the merit principle and should be considered during the identification process, measurement process, and/or ranking process regarding the job task criteria (Yu, 2018).

Other research has suggested that these policies have been known to antagonize conflict within the workplace (Renock, 2017). This can be attributed to ineffective, poorly implemented training and communication regarding any type of diversity or affirmative action strategy. Renock's (2017) research included the concept of devaluation and limitation of employee skills and creativity due to diversity emphasis. However, it is important to understand how training affects employee attitudes regarding affirmative action in lower sections of the organizational flow. Rencok (2017) found that training initiatives were of no consequence in managerial positions. Management tends to view these with cynicism and fear (Dobbin & Kaley, 2015). This practice increases conflict and does not attain the desired results.

Reverse Discrimination Court Cases

Court cases regarding discrimination have been a constant reality since the "white man" was held accountable for the lack of diversity within their organization. The concept of denying employment based on one's nationality, sex, color of skin, and disability is not old news. It is alive and well today. It has been a nasty and costly concept since the installation of the EEOC. In fact, it was revealed in the "Fiscal Year 2018 Enforcement and Litigation Data" by the EEOC (2019) that it settled an estimated 90,558 discrimination claims. These claims awarded victims an estimated \$505 million in the federal, local/state, and private sectors (EEOC, 2019). Considering the resolution was only 19.5% of the EEOC's workforce, one can imagine the total overhead cost of organizations across America had 100% of the caseload has been resolved.

According to this report (EEOC 2019), 51.6% of claims were based on retaliation, and 32.2% were based on sex, race, age, and disability. However, it is important to note that only 1.4% of the claims were based on the Equal Pay Act. This report revealed that there is still a discrimination problem. However, it does not clarify what percentage of the sexual discrimination cases were based on reverse discrimination. Although there have been multiple cases in the news, St. Louis, Flint City, and Hudson Correctional Facility cases of reverse discrimination give a highlight on the reality of the issue.

St. Louis Police Department. It was reported that a “white male St. Louis Police Sergeant” was awarded \$620,000 by a federal jury who proved reverse (Bonenberger v. St. Louis Metro. Police Dept.). The case stated that the officer had posted yet not interviewed for the position of Police Academy’s assistant director. According to the article, the Sergeant was qualified for the job to include the role he held as the St. Louis Police Officers Association’s president. The jury was presented unambiguous evidence to include the claim that the academy director, at the time, stated that it would be useless to even apply because the position was directed at recruiting an African American female (Bonenberger v. St. Louis Metro. Police Dept.). This case left a terrible representation of all parties involved: Mayor Slay, the Police Board of Commissioners, and the St. Louis Police Department in addition to the monetary costs (Bonenberger v. St. Louis Metro. Police Dept.).

Flint City Police Department. Another prominent case was in Flint City. According to the United States District Court Eastern District of Michigan Southern Division case number 12-cv-15513, 14 white Flint City Police Officers filed reverse race discrimination and retaliation charges against the Flint City Police Captain (Robert Garceau et al., v. City of Flint et al., 2016). This case is significant due to the historical background of HRMS used by the Flint City Police

department. Twenty years prior to this case, the department adopted a quota HRMS that required half of all promotions to Sergeant be of a minority group. Ten years after the adoption of the quota strategy, 40 officers filed Civil Rights complaints alleging the mayor had personally selected applicants based on race (Porter et al., v. City of Flint, 2009). Given the previous complaints, Flint City Police Department did not make significant changes to address the reverse discrimination. According to plaintiffs of the 2016 case, the qualifications of becoming and staying at the level of Sergeant were bypassed in minority cases. These included testing provisions and seniority (Robert Garceau et al., v. City of Flint et al., 2016).

Furthermore, the officers would be labeled in a derogatory term “Garceau and the Gang” when referred to be the captain. This label was carried on by the city attorney and an Internal Affairs officer. The captain went further by stating, “If I weren’t chief of police, I would kick Rob Garceau’s (derogatory remark)” due to a prior lawsuit. Another plaintiff in the case was replaced by an African American female by the captain stating, “Well, we need a black female.” Whereas another white officer was told by his Lieutenant stated during a meeting that the captain stated, “The officer wasn’t getting anything he wanted while he was here.” Another plaintiff was told that she would be retained in her position regardless of her test scores. This promoted other plaintiffs to opt-out of the promotion exams because they believed that they would not be promoted irrespective of the scores they acquired. Finally, it was revealed that some of the plaintiffs were referred to as “(Derogatory word) Beating Crew” or “NBC” and was retaliated against by coworkers for being labeled as such. This case cost the City of Flint around 5 million dollars (Robert Garceau et al., v. City of Flint et al., 2016).

University of Michigan. A more recent lawsuit entailed a reverse sex discrimination suit that was granted on behalf of a male police Sergeant employed by the University of Michigan

(Perkola v. Univ. of Mich. Bd. of Regents, 2018). The plaintiff stated that he was denied the Deputy Chief promotion based on sex and race discrimination. Though his race discrimination part of the lawsuit was not proved, it was proven that his gender played a role in his denial. According to the case, the person who got the job was a black female officer who was brought to the University by request to assist in the daily operations. A particular fact that held merit when raised was her lack of educational requirements for the job. According to the job qualifications, the following had to be met:

bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice or related field or an equivalent combination of education and experience, 5 or more years of law enforcement experience, 3 or more years of supervisory experience, and excellent interpersonal skills and oral and written communication skills. (Perkola v. Univ. of Mich. Bd. of Regents, 2018)

San Francisco. Currently, a lawsuit in federal court is being brought against the city of San Francisco by 13 White former officers against both current and former Police Chiefs, the San Francisco Police Department, the city, and both current and former Mayors (NBC News, 2019). The lawsuit states that 12 of the officers were discriminatorily passed over for promotions at levels from sergeant to captain due to being White men and the 13th for being a White lesbian (NBC News, 2019). The lawsuit alleged that these denials violated state and federal constitutional rights and discrimination laws. The plaintiffs in the case requested punitive and compensatory monetary awards. The plaintiffs claim that the “city has used an obscure and biased promotional process” (NBC News, 2019). Subsequently, allowing those who attained lower examination scores to achieve promotions over those who attained higher scores.

This obscure process is known as banding, where candidates with equivalent results are placed in the same pool for promotional consideration (NBC News, 2019). This practice allows

the city to utilize considerations such as experience and/or education to promote within that band. The claim further states that this process is used by the city to achieve higher female and minority promotion percentages by bypassing the strict score-based ranking order (NBC News, 2019). The city postulates that the system was developed as part of a 1979 discrimination settlement regarding African American officers in 1973 (NBC News, 2019). Though, it was revealed that the system was canceled in 1998 that it lacked rationale for “race-conscious promotions” (NBC News, 2019).

Theoretical Orientation

Fairness, Justice, and Heuristics. The theoretical foundation that this study is based on is FHT and the components of ORB. Understanding how social exchange and perceptions of fairness apply to organizational justice is vital because it shapes the relationship between the two entities and influences organizational behavior, such as ORB, job commitment, etc. The concepts underpinning fairness that have been researched under organizational justice have been widely researched. Though justice has been well vetted, fairness has had less attention through research and literature-and therefore seen less frequently in a well-defined manner.

Goldman and Cropanzano (2015) defined fairness as the individual’s perspective of reason and without contradiction of the output/input ratios. This can be viewed through both a social construct as well as a legal construct justice lens. In addition, it relates to treating everyone with equality and deservingness (Goldman & Cropanzano, 2015). In other words, applications of organizational policies should be the same for all, and those who give more get more.

Additionally, fairness means that the organization is making non-discriminatory decisions.

According to Colquitt and Rodell (2015), organizational justice gained attention in the 1960s and

1970s by acknowledging that the treatment of employees will not always be equal within an organization.

This prompted the need for organizations to gain a better understanding of fairness perceptions among their employees and the role that fairness has on employee work and behavior. Early debates of perceptions of fairness were established through the social exchange theory, behavior one person impacts the activities and/or behaviors of another (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015). Furthermore, numerous exchanges between the two parties over a course of time resulted in an expectation of normative behavior. During this social exchange, those involved become sensitive to deviations from the established normative behavior of the other, deeming the exchange unbalanced (Dar, 2020).

It was not until the 1970s the study of heuristics relating to judgments and decision making was first applied (Grandori, 2015). According to Grandori (2015), heuristics can be considered “mental shortcuts” to the rules of information processing when making judgments. This strategy heavily relies on information that is easily accessible but loosely applicable situations. As a result, it can be based on routine or unjustified thinking. This was coined out the concepts of bounded rationality and satisficing. Bounded rationality is when decisions are made by an individual with cognitive limitations or time. Satisficing is searching for available alternatives until a satisfactory resolution is found. In other words, an individual will seek solutions or accept judgment choices that person feels were “sufficient” (Grandori, 2015).

Adam’s Equity Theory. According to Ryan (2016), Adam’s equity theory has offered understanding regarding the importance of fairness perceptions and motivations of individuals in society and the workplace. Though original theorists focused on this relationship exchange and social comparison with satisfactory outcomes, consequences were not evaluated until the

emergence of Adam's equity theory (Ryan, 2016). Like Maslow's hierarchy of needs, equity theory recognizes that there are slight and variable factors that influence a person's relationship perceptions with his or her partners (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015). The theory proposed that this exchange can be seen as output and input ratios used to compare normative behavior of the other party. The significant advance of this theory has created ideas of workplace fairness, the position that employees produce outputs and expect an equal return from the organization; such outcomes include appreciation, pay, rewards, and so on (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015). On the other hand, perceived inequity would motivate restorative behavior through the modification of those ratios.

Though Adam's equity theory has been accredited as a significant contribution to organizational justice research, it has been met with criticism (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015). While this theory addresses the characteristics of organizational justice, perceptions of fairness and equality can have various psychological or demographic variables (Goldman & Cropanzano, 2015; Rasooli et al., 2019).

Buttner and Lowe (2017) suggested that it is not about what the person sees as unequivocally just; it is what that person believes to be just. In other words, what the person believes to be just is what solicits a biased sense of what is fair or just. Therefore, molding that person's action or behavior based on that biased belief. The beliefs that function as a mold is based on social learning, norms, and values learned within his or her societal group (Buttner & Lowe, 2017). This implies that a shared culture forms perceptions of what is just or fair. Another criticism met with this theory is individual variation and applicability in the field (Ryan, 2015).

Fairness Heuristic Theory (FHT). FHT is one of the leading organizational justice theories used to investigate the concept of fairness judgments and the psychological processes involved with decision making. It assumes that when a person joins a social entity, such as an

organization, he or she will face the choice as to what personal resources to contribute and which to withhold, thus fundamentally being an organizational-social relationship dilemma (Kouchaki et al., 2015). People look at how fairly they are treated by that social entity as a guide, as a proxy for trust. This heuristic approach was introduced by Van Den Bos Lind, FHT (Proudford & Lind, 2015).

Kees Van Den Bos's FHT (Van den Bos, 2001) focused on aspects of the equity theory. This theory focuses on the relationship between distributive justice and procedure justice while understanding that fairness and justice are not always seen as the same. Van Den Bos suggested that in the event individuals do not have the full information about an outcome, a substitute is used to determine how to react to the outcome. Consequently, the theory explained how the effect of procedural justice affects the perception of fairness. This study will add to the development of this perspective through the exploration of how 'gender-quotas' impact perceptions of reverse discrimination and organizational justice among the dominant group.

This theory addresses the idea that justice and fairness are not always seen in the same light. According to Goldman and Cropanzano (2015), justice revolves around normative standards and their implementation, whereas fairness is the reaction of those standards. The premise of this theory is further based on fairness perceptions and the approval of authoritative directives. However, authority trustworthiness is vital in this exchange relationship, and that judgment is challenging (Dar, 2020). Hence, the introduction of some fundamental notions of the relational model is extracted, two-sided social dilemma (Soenen et al., 2017).

One side of the dilemma positions that through compliance with the authoritative request, valued outcomes are generated. The other side of the dilemma positions that the individual is subject to exploitation through this compliance. Therefore, the individual creates an overall

perception of justice to determine trustworthiness as a heuristic (Cochran et al., 2017). However, the central assertion is that justice is episodic, and generations of these judgments are revised less than used. If the overall judgment of fairness must be continuously revised, the heuristic value is lost (Soenen et al., 2017).

According to Proudfoot and Lind (2015), the two prominent phases of assessing fairness are judgment and use. The judgment phase is usually starting at the beginning of the relationship. This is when the individual creates an overall judgment of justice constructed from information that is readily available regarding procedures, distribution, and interaction with the authority (Soenen et al., 2017). The heuristic forms cognitions and establishes behaviors appropriately. Information that comes in is adapted to fit the original justice judgments, and the current general justice judgment generates informational, interpersonal, distributive, and procedure justice judgments. In other words, it provides an in-depth understanding of the fundamental mechanisms motivating the organizational justice effect (Wolfe et al., 2018).

Informational Judgments are explanations that communicate information regarding why procedures were followed or applied a certain way (Mohammad et al., 2019). Interpersonal Judgments are formed based on employee treatment by peers or supervisors. Perceptions of fairness regarding the treatment by peers (Rasooli et al., 2019). Distributive Judgments are the perception of fairness and assessment of decisional outcomes, such as recognition or rewards. Boateng and Hsieh (2019) revealed that perceptions of objective and fair criteria used in promotions reduce emotional effects and negative work behaviors like retaliation. Procedural Judgments is the extent to which decision process dynamics are deemed to be fair, or organizational procedural fairness (Mohammad et al., 2019). Of these justice elements, the

leading justice elements related to Affirmative Action policies are procedural justice, distributive justice, and interactional justice that played a pivotal role in ORB (Morton, 2019).

Organizational Retaliatory Behavior (ORB). Adding to fairness perceptions concerning organizational injustice, the next phase is to understand the role of perceived organizational injustice leads to retaliatory behavior. Social exchange theories tend to have three common attributes. Those include some sort of action that initiates the relationship, the relationship, and a response (Cropanzano et al., 2017). This response can lead to organizational citizenship behavior or organizational counterproductive work behavior, one of which is ORB. ORB has been previously defined as negative employee behaviors that resulted from perceived injustice or unfairness regarding his or her employer (Pan, 2018). This type of behavior can range in severity based on the seriousness that the perceived unjust or unfair action or lack of action was. Pan (2018) adds that social exchange relationships are developed through mutual trust and have faith that the other will uphold their part of the obligation. The employer's part includes resources such as pay, benefits, recognition, and so on. When the employer provides these resources, the employee then repays or reciprocates. Employers who have solid and trusting relationships with their employees are more likely to find positive outcomes, such as organizational commitment and lower turnover rates (Ugwu & Anhange, 2015). However, employers that foster distrust or negative relationships find they are repaid with ORB or other deviant behaviors (Ugwu & Anhange, 2015).

Theoretical Justification. Research has revealed that the availability and order of information that is provided serve as the main drivers of fairness heuristics and mediates how distributive and procedural fairness are incorporated into the overall fairness judgment. Proudfoot and Lind (2015) suggested that in numerous situations an individual may rely on the

fairness of the process to evaluate how to respond to his or her outcome because this information is typically accessible, thus justifying the findings of Harris and Van Hoyer (2004) that people tend to turn to procedural information for fairness judgments when the only beliefs about his or her outcome possessed were comparative to others versus what was known. It was further postulated that these findings were appropriate in circumstances of employment discrimination (or reverse discrimination).

Harris and Van Hoyer (2004) suggested that candidates who are not likely to find out who got the job due to a lack of information regarding organization's choice, fairness heuristics suggest those who did not get the job will use the accessible information regarding procedural fairness in their discrimination evaluation (Harris & Van Hoyer, 2004). Harris and Van Hoyer (2004) posit that in promotional opportunities, candidates will rely on distributive fairness. Their study utilized FHT to combine distributive and procedural fairness information as an antecedent to form judgments of overall fairness.

Harris and Van Hoyer (2004) observed that there was a pattern found that the perceptions of procedural fairness have a direct impact on reactions when an outcome is seen as unfair. Though this concept was applied to racial discrimination, Harris and Van Hoyer (2004) contend that the limit does not end there. The usefulness can expand towards diverse types of discrimination to include all personal characteristics, such as gender (Harris & Van Hoyer, 2004).

According to Colquitt and Zapata (2015), the adherence of other appropriate decisions, such as consistency, equity, truthfulness, and respect, and the reaction of employees to these decisions are related. It was postulated that employees desired to pursue justice to ensure their offender (i.e., the organization or a representative of the organization) received a deserved punishment. Their study suggested that once an employee sees a justice issue, he/she uses the

perception of fairness as justice data (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). This data then drives employee actions and behaviors (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). Reactions and responses triggered by injustice perceptions can be controlled by anger and betrayal. This, in turn, can ignite negative behaviors (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015), such as retaliatory behavior.

Colquitt and Zipay (2015) concluded that corporations must manage the perception of fairness and justice because employees respond to injustice automatically and swiftly. They further supported the notion that when an employee believes “that is not fair,” they rely on an unconscious fairness heuristic judgment (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015).

Another study found, through the data collected from a manufacturing plant’s employees, that employees who had higher perceptions of unfair treatment were more likely to see ORB from his or her coworkers (Morton, 2019). This study further found that the employees who participated in ORB engaged in them through the ‘get them back’ justification regardless of the moral application (Morton, 2019). Such ORB consisted of behaviors ranging from gossip to theft, thus having a negative organizational effect despite passive-aggressive natures of the less criminal actions. Morton (2019) went on to point out that this application can apply to diversity strategies. These policies could be viewed as an unfair advantage, which creates a negative impact on the dominant group leading to reduced organizational citizenship, higher turnover, and unethical behavior (Morton, 2019).

Adding to the sense of unfair treatment, Boateng and Hsieh (2019) revealed that correctional officers are not fond of ambiguous or random organizational treatment. Fairness Heuristics explains the legitimacy of the organization’s promotion and hiring actions. As the officer’s perception of procedural justice increases, so does trust. Therefore, favorable feelings are held even when outcomes are dissatisfying. Organizational justice models have allowed for a

better understanding of law enforcement attitudes and behaviors within the organization (Wolfe et al., 2018).

According to Wolfe et al. (2018), the promotion of organizational identification can be recognized within the justice experience. These experiences also breed more vital organizational trust, citizen trust, and organizational goal internalization resulting in beneficial outcomes among officers (Carr & Maxwell, 2017). Wolfe et al. (2018) found that through repetition, assumptions regarding social dilemmas in law enforcement can be found. According to Wolfe et al. (2018), one aspect revolves around benefits ascertained by the officer through the exchange of time and effort towards work efficiency and obtaining the organization's goals. These officers will be willing to endure dangerous situations, work lengthy hours, and earn low wages because they feel they are contributing to society or a purpose greater than themselves.

However, this study revealed that the opposite side of this dilemma by linking the officer's identity with that of the organization could result in rejection and loss of his or her own identity (Wolfe et al., 2018). Social dilemmas such as this force the officer to choose self-interest or corporate interest. FHT explains heuristics are used to resolve such dilemmas (Proudfoot & Lind, 2015). Additionally, Wolfe et al. (2018) found that the principle of the heuristic process is that fairness leads to negating the officer's self-interest and responding accordingly.

Though injustice is subjective and subject to personal differences and circumstantial factors, it plays a pivotal role in ORB. Though affirmative action HRMSs were incorporated to ensure fair hiring practices (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2016a), they are not necessarily considered fair to everyone. FHT is applied when determining if the governing authority, such as an employer, can be trusted regarding fairness and justice judgments. The theory offers insight into the mechanisms that underlie the organizational effect (Wolfe et al.,

2018). Using FHT as a framework for this research, an understanding is obtained on the influence of perceived fairness regarding the use of an unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS and organizational justice and retaliatory behaviors, through ORB, among male correctional officers.

Department of Corrections

Historical Background. Under the umbrella of the American Criminal Justice System, the field of corrections is housed. According to Boateng and Hsieh (2019), there were over 4,575 correctional facilities or institutions across America that housed over 6,851,000 adult inmates. It was the first division under the Criminal Justice umbrella to allow female employment and allow them to be promoted into executive-level positions (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2020). However, it was not until 1822 that the opportunity was open to women when Maryland hired its first matron, followed by New York a decade later (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2020). Nevertheless, they were not allowed to work within a male correctional facility apart from positions such as secretaries (Campeau, 2015; Dorbin et al., 2016). This remained an issue until 1970, when the Title VII of the Civil Rights was signed, allowing female officers to work in male correctional facilities (Yu, 2018). However, it was not until the 1980s that female officers were truly integrated into the workforce at male facilities (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2018; Yu, 2018). Since the '80s, female correctional officers in the United States have seen intense growth (Dorbin et al., 2016).

It was understood that the role that females played in corrections was to serve as role models for the female inmate population. Initially, they were allotted positions that prevented them from being a threat to the "male authority." It was reported that female officers were not offered the ranks that incorporated executive levels until around the Civil War period because of

the need to open gender-segregated institutions or facilities (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2017). Even during this time, promotions were limited and given on a gender-based assignment. Collica-Cox and Schulz (2017) noted that it was not until 1907 that a female by the name of Kate Bernard was given the title of “first female to run an institution.” By 1914, she would be appointed as the Commissioner of New York City Corrections (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2017).

Unfortunately, it would be at least another 60 years before females would become fully integrated across all American correctional facilities or institutions (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2020). This was accredited to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of the 1970s that ended female restrictions, and around the 1980s females were allowed to be employed in a male facility (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2020). 30 years later, female staff now comprise 48% of private correctional officers, 13% of federal correctional officers, 26% of state correctional officers, and 29% of ‘first-line’ supervisory positions (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2017). However, Collica-Cox and Schulz (2018) revealed that females only held 10% of executive correctional positions. Though it is important to recognize that the field of corrections has evolved over the years, so has a strong female presence and role (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2018). Given that probation officers fall under the umbrella of the DOC, it is important to note that the U.S. bureau of statistics reported in 2021 that 50.5% were female (Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, 2021).

Environment. The environment that correctional staff is subjected to is best defined as extremely challenging, where they must interact with administrative staff, inmates, and coworkers and respond to the demands of each (Ferdik & Hills, 2018). Of the notable workplace variables, Fredik and Hills (2018) identified role conflict, job satisfaction, acceptance by coworkers, and stress as high factors in not only turnover but officers’ treatment of offenders.

Given that correctional officers' roles are key to the function and safety of the prison system, the officer environment must be cohesive with creating an environment for inmate rehabilitation. It includes daily interaction and involvement with inmates and can be emotionally demanding. The environment can be seen as unpredictable and overcrowded. Yet, the officers can find themselves feeling alone and can be taxing emotionally.

Additionally, there is an inherent risk of injury that can be fatal. Edel (2018) reported that the leading cause of correctional officer injury is the result of assaults or violent acts from the inmates, thus the constant perception of some degree of harm can be associated with the correctional environment. Edle (2018) added that the rigor and continuous commitment towards the organization lead to emotional exhaustion and can result in a state of depersonalization of the officer. Batton and Wright (2018) found that males believe that due to the environment, their coworkers should be strong, tough, and assertive.

Ferdik and Hills (2018) best defined it as extremely challenging, where they must interact with administrative staff, inmates, and coworkers and respond to the demands of each. Of the notable workplace variables, Ferdik and Hills (2018) identified role conflict, job satisfaction, acceptance by coworkers, and stress as high factors in not only turnover but officers' treatment of offenders. Given that correctional officers' roles are key to the function and safety of the prison system, the officer environment must be cohesive with creating an environment for inmate rehabilitation. Correctional officers are considered to play essential roles in the daily operations within the prison systems. They are accountable for significant job demands that include inmate supervision, observing inmate conduct, establishing overall institutional order, and in some cases serving as a counselor (Baker et al., 2015). As primary control agents, these officers hold a significant amount of power and control over the population (Baker et al., 2015).

Culture and Gender. Corrections culture can be seen as an organized system meant to keep peace and order within the facility (Spasić et al., 2015). Campeau (2015) suggested that the foundation of culture is determined by an officer's conduct, values, beliefs, and attitudes. Additionally, the culture can be seen as isolated, suspicious, and/or pessimistic (Campeau, 2015). This perception inherently gives female applicants a disadvantage and furthers horizontal segregation. Although females have been allowed to occupy correctional officer roles, male and administrative staff strongly oppose females among the ranks in male institutions (Brady et al., 2015).

Batton and Wright's (2018) and Baixauli-Soler et al. (2015) research both argued that females hold a physical disadvantage, making them vulnerable, and just the presence of female correctional officers add to the risk of male correctional officers. Adding to the risk, the female officer opposition argues privacy concerns, such as dressing areas, pat-down searches, toilets, and showers (Batton & Wright, 2018). Regardless of the opposition, legislation regarding the EEOC and equal opportunity regarding female employment rights took priority. However, corrections still abide by an extremely patriarchal establishment made apparent by the solid masculine formation and culture that it holds (Batton & Wright, 2018).

Historically, the result of horizontal segregation and the views of female officers being seen as 'weaker.' Female correctional officers have worked in a hostile environment by not only the offenders that are housed at the facility but their male coworkers (Baixauli-Soler et al., 2015; Batton & Wright, 2018). Research has shown that female officers are subjected to lowered coworker respect, greater informal and formal controls, discrimination, and often are sexually harassed (Batton & Wright, 2018; Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2020; Yu, 2018). It has also been a subject of research that inmates and staff tend to undermine female authority, increasing hostility

and resentment (Batton & Wright, 2018). This resentment grows as male officers are forced to take on more responsibility due to the inability of a female officer being able to handle an aspect of the job.

Corrections culture has been portrayed as a hypermasculine environment with the assumption of being ‘man’s work’ and perpetuated alcohol consumption, horseplay, and misogyny (Arena et al., 2015). However, recent studies suggest that female acceptance into the culture is growing (Batton & Wright, 2018). This can be attributed to the multiple women’s movement waves among the American criminal justice system that has made and continue to make changes (Benan & Olca, 2019). At the forefront, it holds a culture regarding employment and promotion opportunities through the adoption of gender-neutral policies to ensure equal treatment and access for both men and women (Batton & Wright, 2018).

However, Arnold and Loughlin (2019) still contended that the organizational culture of the correctional industry still has strong roots in the ‘typical officer’ gender stereotype. Gender stereotyping in correction, or any other law enforcement agency, is that female officer is viewed as possessing behaviors or characteristics rooted in being helpful, supportive, caring, and sympathetic (Arnold & Loughlin, 2019). However, male officers are viewed as possessing behaviors or characteristics rooted in competitive, dominant, and motivation (Arnold & Loughlin, 2019).

These stereotypes are challenging because they are based on the description that women are one way and men are another. Additionally, they hold rigid principles and expectations (Arnold & Loughlin, 2019). Research suggested that due to the dichotomous model of gender, the evaluation of female success in a ‘male role’ that entails the necessity for ‘masculine

behavior' and females have violated that rigid stereotype of what a female should be leading to the 'backlash effect' or discrimination (Arnold & Loughlin, 2019).

Tokenism. Tokenism is referred to as a minority or gender that is held as a valuable hire or promotion due to increasing the appearance of diversity (Cellica-Cox & Schulz, 2020). The DOC seeks out minorities and females to fulfill their diversity inclusion strategies. Though they are not officially labeled "quotas," the same concept applies. The only real difference is that there is no set number of females or minorities they must hire or promote. Instead, they look at the ratio gap (though skewed) to form an HRMS that seeks out hiring or promoting the minority or the gender in which they are lacking. Unfortunately, the idea of tokenism and the idea of potential 'quotas' being met have resulted in gender or minority stereotypes (Arnold & Loughlin, 2019). Regrettably, when a female attempts to move in rank amongst a male-dominated field, she must also overcome the gender bias (i.e., harassment or exclusion) that comes with it (Cellica-Cox & Schulz, 2020).

Arnold and Loughlin (2019) go on to state that this leads to a descriptive problem, how women are meant to act and behave versus men. Additionally, it further gives problems of expectations regarding social norms. This is referred to as prescriptive stereotyping (Arnold & Loughlin, 2019). When these stereotypes are applied, any violations would result in some sort of punishment. Arnold and Loughlin (2019) and Campeau (2015) further suggested that females who find accomplishment in roles that warrant masculine behaviors, others see that person as having violated the female stereotype and can result in backlash, making it more difficult to assimilate into the male-dominated culture.

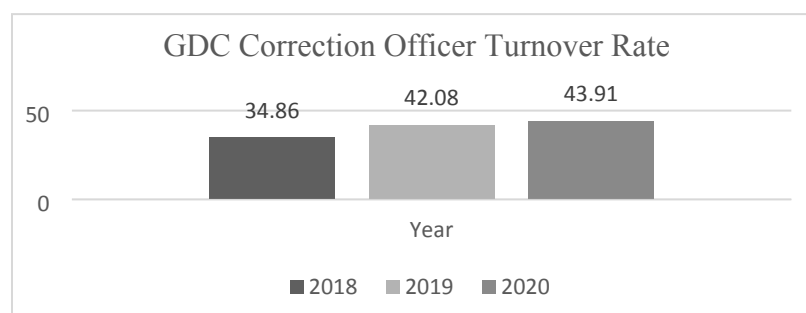
However, some research suggests that female correctional officers gain a higher acceptance rate by their male counterparts versus their female counterparts (Cellica-Cox &

Schulz, 2020). It is further suggested that females tend to view other female officers negatively and are more likely to perceive male supervisors better. Similarly, female correctional officers view each other as weaker, unable to take male sexual jokes, call them gossipy, and sometimes labeled as too friendly with inmates (Cellica-Cox & Schulz, 2020). Consequently, the same females feel there is more difficulty with earning respect within the corrections environment among both inmates and staff (Cellica-Cox & Schulz, 2020).

Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC). According to the GDC website, it is accountable for the supervision of nearly 52,000 state prisoners. It has been labeled the largest law enforcement agency in the state with approximately 10,500 employees and considered one of largest prison systems in America (Georgia Department of Corrections, 2022). It was reported in the GDC’s 2020 annual report that the GDC employed over 8,158 (down from 9,630 in 2018) full-time employees, where 49.8% (down from 53% in 2018). “Of the 8,158 employees, 92.3% work in the Facilities Division, providing direct supervision to offenders” (Georgia Department of Corrections, 2020). The report further stated that the “retention of correctional officers (COs) continues to be a challenge for the GDC” (Georgia Department of Corrections, 2020).

Figure 2

GDC Correction Officer Turnover Rate



According to Edel (2018), these officers are faced with physically demanding, traumatic, and highly stressful positions due to the elevated possibility of personal danger, violence, and

injury. These daily contacts and involvements with detainees and inmates and tasks of securing them are characterized as extremely challenging (Edel, 2018). The first line support system within corrections is coworkers. Officers come together as a community and assist in supporting an officer who feels out of place or alone (Edel, 2018). Feeling alone or as if others do not have their back adds to the stress of unpredictable and at times violent situations within the correctional facility. That sense of ‘oneness’ is imperative in not only the physical aspect of a correctional officer’s work but that of his or her mental health.

Edel (2018) reported that attacks and violence towards correctional officers had been labeled as a principal cause of injuries amongst correctional officers. The continued emotional exhaustion negatively affects job performance and attitudes of correctional officers. This can lead to a depersonalization state (Edel, 2018). In addition to dealing with these taxing conditions added the stress of being labeled as a token or a ‘quota,’ female officers can add additional stress and separate that ‘oneness’ among the group, thus backing the many studies devoted to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, burnout, and turnover (Edel, 2018).

In conclusion, the American prison system reported its population size to be over 1.69 million residents (Batton & Wright, 2018), increasing the need to employ the right person to supervise those incarcerated (Armstrong et al., 2015). Recent statistics show only 28.7% of federal officers (Federal Bureau of Prisons, 2022), 26% of state officers, 48% of private prison officers, and 10% of positions that were considered ‘executive-level’ were held by female officers in corrections (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2018). Justifying Yu’s (2018) assertion that due to law enforcement history, there is a need for discrimination remedies, such as affirmative action.

Thematic Analysis

HRM and Reverse Discrimination. In corporate America, "Inclusion and Diversity" strategies have been among the greatest echoing phrases among HRMS. However, Murphy (2018) suggested that numerous organizations have struggled to integrate these in organizational practices, promotion, and recruiting under the assertion that these strategies will not only enhance an attractive workplace culture but increase productivity and enhance profit margins. Organizations have voluntarily engaged in initiatives that incorporated targeted hiring (Murphy, 2018). Theoretically, these HRMS should generate these highly sought-after results. However, some organizations have been left with inadvertent challenges. Murphy (2018) proposed that the reason for this is the increased confusion of "voluntary affirmative action" and affirmative action requirements.

Through the implementation of "voluntary affirmative action" strategies in the guise of Title VII to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, employer and legal tension has ensued. Organizations have failed to consider reverse discrimination. It has been concluded that these organizational policies and laws that were implemented to address the discrimination of underrepresented groups have prompted claims of reverse discrimination (Murphy, 2018). It is theorized that dominant groups have been receiving discriminatory or unfair treatment resulting from these 'voluntary affirmative action' (Murphy, 2018), such as 'quota strategies.' For example, a male plaintiff may declare he suffered gender discrimination despite gender majority. Murphy (2018) ascertained that the current political climate increases such legal claims.

Regardless of the above-mentioned issues, there have been multiple law enforcement agencies in America that utilize targeted or 'quota-based' policies. According to Yu (2018), the following have increased the use of targeted female recruitment: Albuquerque Police

Department, New Mexico; Tucson Police Department, Arizona; Delaware State Police Department; and San Jose Police Department, California. This has been allowed due to Title 5 of 29 C.F.R. 1608.5(c), which states that an employer may open positions or hire specifically to one gender if they have obtained OPM permission. However, it is crucial to note that this special permission is waived concerning female-only targeted recruitment with Customs and Border Protection Border Patrol agents (Yu, 2018). This has resulted in a substantial increase of female recruits being selected for training. Nevertheless, this has also resulted in an influx of reverse discrimination suits from men (Yu, 2018).

Gender Quotas. Louw (2019) defined ‘quotas’ as a selection of people to a position based on quantitative goals of group membership, such as reaching a specific portion of that group. Christensen and Muhr (2019) referred to it as a type of constructive discrimination established with the goal of changing the opportunities for a targeted group, which have been characterized to be at a disadvantage due to their ‘minority status’ within a certain setting, wherein the majority within that setting was not exposed to, regardless of the accessibility of qualified applicants. Other terms consist of “positive action or discrimination,” “equal opportunities promotion,” and “affirmative action hire” (Madison, 2019). These “quotas” have been termed to symbolize justice, equality, and reflect value regarding all sexes, standing up to female under-representation (Terjesen & Sealy, 2016).

These ‘quotas’ are used to ‘fast-track’ equal representation or to thwart the effects of unintentional bias of the minority group (i.e., African Americans or females) (Dorrough et al., 2016). Furthermore, these ‘quotas’ alter the opinions or attitudes bringing about organizational behavioral change at a systematically fundamental level (Christensen & Muhr, 2019). Research has shown that the adoption of ‘gender quotas’ have had stronger cultural/societal impacts due to

the spillover effects helping expand women's rights (Christensen & Muhr, 2019). Hughes et al. (2019) suggested that over the last 30 years 'quotas' that target women have developed into one of the largest moving electoral developments. According to Hughes et al. (2019), these 'quotas' have spread to over 130 countries and have altered party rules, constitutions, and electoral laws, mandating that a percentage or ratio of legislative candidates be female. These 'quotas' become a threshold, percentage, or even a specific number for female nominations selection (Hughes et al., 2019).

The word *quota* has become known as a 'dirty word' in the American society and law resting on the premise of 'political correctness,' even though these 'quotas' have historically been used in America as an affirmative action remedy for racially proportionate integration among schools within a community. However, this has not stopped the idea of using 'gender quotas' as an affirmative action HRMS. According to Oppenheimer (2016), most organizations have had recruitment and retention programs targeted at minority groups, to incorporate established timetables and/or goals for the progression of minorities (termed as soft quotas).

Additionally, some organizations adopted 'hard quotas' to ensure the success of hiring or promoting minority groups (Oppenheimer, 2016). In some instances, union contracts included requirements that the organization had to adopt these goals or 'quotas' as part of their contract. This would eventually push the U.S. Supreme Court to permit the use of 'quotas' under limited circumstances among private employers to expand organizational hiring of minorities and women (Oppenheimer, 2016).

Global Movement. Prior to the globalization of quota acceptance, Canada made a dramatic change. They adopted a 'comply or explain' policy among publicly traded organizations (Arnold & Loughlin, 2019). The generalization of this policy states that

organizations must prove gender diversity among their boards or show an explanation as to why they lack it. According to Arnold and Loughlin (2019), these types of policies have become a necessity due to the sluggish rate regarding the progress of female representation.

In the aftermath of the popularity and proven effectiveness, France reviewed their policies and would soon initiate ‘Party Law’ (Arnold & Loughlin, 2019). Under this provision, political parties would face financial penalties if they failed to run as many females as they did males. This resulted in an increase from 11% to 26% regarding the amount of female representation within the national assembly (Arnold & Loughlin, 2019). Arnold and Loughlin (2019) found that the public shame that resulted from non-compliance and a lack of female presence attributed to this increase.

Quota laws began to emerge in the early 1990s, starting in Italy (Weeks, 2017), with Norway being the first to enact them for organizational boards (Mateos De Cabo et al., 2019). This is a result of compiled research regarding the change in the globalized women’s rights movement, adoption, and enforcement since the 1990s (Alexander & Welzel, 2015). According to Arnold and Loughlin (2019), there are at least 112 countries that have incorporated voluntary ‘quotas’ as a selection process for nominees, and 54 legislate non-voluntary candidate ‘quotas.’ The result was a global widespread adoption of gender ‘quotas’ regarding legislatures (Alexander & Welzel, 2015).

Likewise, Sweden adopted a voluntary quota strategy with placement to enhance the gender balance (Besley et al., 2017). In 2011, Belgium applied a ‘quota’ law that enacted fines and other penalties for non-compliant organizations (Einarsdottir et al., 2019). Following that, The Netherlands incorporated a 30% ‘gender quota’ in 2013 (Einarsdottir et al., 2019). A year later, the Australian government jumped on the ‘quota’ bandwagon and implemented a

mandatory quota or target strategy (www.wgea.gov.au). With the increase of popularity, Ireland was soon to follow suit in joining the 100 plus countries that currently used them. Germany, Portugal, and Austria implemented laws regarding ‘quotas’ between 2015 and 2017 (Einarsdottir et al., 2019).

The ‘quota’ movement has since spread like wildfire across Africa, Latin America, and Europe. In fact, research has found that Africa is now ranked fourth among the top 10 countries with a strong female representation within the legislation, leaving Latin and European countries at the top two (Arden, 2017). At the time of Arden’s (2017) research, there were 25 African, 63 European, and 51 Latin American countries utilizing ‘quota’ adoption policies. Each of these found success in the creation of a ‘critical mass’ of females in their legislation. This research suggested that even though the implementation of ‘quotas’ will not cease the hindrance and barriers to females in legislation, it has become a powerful enhancement tool (Arden, 2017). With that said, it is important to note that the 2016 female labor market showed that Iceland ranked highest, making it the frontrunner in the gender equity movement since their adoption of ‘quota’ laws (Einarsdottir et al., 2019). See Figure 3 for visualization of Countries Utilizing ‘Quotas’ in 2019.

Figure 3

Countries Utilizing “Quotas” in 2019

Country	Voluntary	Type	Country	Voluntary	Type
Albania		Legislated	Egypt	No	Reserved seats
Algeria	No	Legislated	El Salvador	Yes	Legislated
Angola	No	Legislated	Equatorial Guinea	Yes	No legislated
Argentina	Yes	Legislated	Eritrea	No	Reserved seats
Australia	Yes	No legislated	Eswatini	No	Reserved seats
Austria	Yes	No legislated	Ethiopia	Yes	No legislated
Belgium	No	Legislated	France	Yes	Legislated
Bolivia	Yes	Legislated	Germany	Yes	No legislated
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No	Legislated	Greece	Yes	Legislated
Botswana	Yes	No legislated	Guatemala	Yes	No legislated
Brazil	Yes	Legislated	Guinea	No	Legislated
Bulgaria	Yes		Guyana	No	Reserved seats
Burkina Faso	No	Legislated	Haiti	No	Reserved seats
Burundi	No	Reserved seats	Honduras	No	Legislated
Cabo Verde	No	No legislated	Hungary	Yes	No legislated
Cameroon	Yes	No legislated	Iceland	Yes	No legislated
Canada	Yes	No legislated	Ireland	No	Legislated
Chile	Yes	Legislated	Italy	Yes	Legislated
Colombia	No	Legislated	Kenya	Yes	Reserved seats
Costa Rica	Yes	Legislated	Kosovo	No	Reserved seats
Cote d'Ivoire	Yes	No legislated	Lesotho	No	Legislated
Croatia	Yes	Legislated	Liberia	No	Legislated
Cyprus	Yes	No legislated	Libya	No	Legislated
Djibouti	No	Reserved seats	Lithuania	Yes	No legislated
Dominican Republic	No	Legislated	Luxembourg	Yes	No legislated
Ecuador	No	Legislated	Malawi	Yes	No legislated

Country	Voluntary	Type	Country	Voluntary	Type
Mali	Yes	Legislated	Sao Tome and Principe	No	Legislated
Malta	Yes	No legislated	Senegal	No	Legislated
Mauritania	No	Legislated	Serbia	No	Legislated
Mauritius	No	No legislated	Sierra Leone	No	No legislated
Mexico	Yes	Legislated	Slovakia	Yes	No legislated
Moldova	No	Legislated	Slovenia	Yes	Legislated
Montenegro	No	Legislated	Solomon Islands		Legislated
Morocco	No	Reserved seats	Somalia	No	Reserved seats
Mozambique	Yes	No legislated	South Africa	Yes	No legislated
Namibia	Yes	No legislated	South Sudan	No	Legislated
Netherlands	Yes	No legislated	Spain	Yes	Legislated
New Zealand	Yes	No legislated	Sudan	No	Reserved seats
Nicaragua	Yes	Legislated	Sweden	Yes	No legislated
Niger	Yes	Reserved seats	Switzerland	Yes	No legislated
North Macedonia	No	Legislated	Tanzania	Yes	Reserved seats
Norway	Yes	No legislated	Togo	No	Legislated
Panama	No	Legislated	Tunisia	No	Legislated
Paraguay	Yes	Legislated	Uganda	No	Reserved seats
Peru	No	Legislated	Ukraine		No legislated
Poland	No	Legislated	United Kingdom	Yes	No legislated
Portugal	No	Legislated	Uruguay	Yes	Legislated
Congo (Brazzaville)	No	Legislated	Vanuatu		No legislated
Romania	Yes	No legislated	Venezuela	No	Legislated
Rwanda	No	Reserved seats	Zimbabwe	Yes	Legislated
Samoa		Reserved seats			
San Marino		Legislated			

Gender Quotas and Reverse Discrimination. Wilkins et al. (2015) conducted a study on zero-sum beliefs of 181 participants. In this study, Wilkins et al. (2015) found that gender

‘quotas’ led to anger and resentment towards women, leading to feelings of victimhood and loss, and feeling that they are targets of anti-white or anti-male rhetoric. In agreement, Seierstad (2016) conducted a qualitative interview on 19 females who worked in the capacity of non-executive board members. During these interviews, it was found that ‘quota’ policies have created the phenomenon of reverse discrimination amongst the dominant group and the belief of preferential treatment when the organization implements hiring decisions and promotions based on ‘quotas’ (Seierstad, 2016).

This phenomenon was built on a moral principle of ethical individualism. According to Seierstad (2016), preferential treatment in hiring and promoting practices is paradoxical: “If we do not use preferential hiring, we permit discrimination to exist. But preferential hiring is also discrimination. The dilemma is that whatever we do, we permit discrimination.” Recent research has made suggestions beyond that, stating that even though these have had the aim of best intentions, many male employees feel that they are now the target of discrimination (Russen et al., 2020). Russen et al. (2020) conducted an experiment design that recruited 87 hotel managers to examine the perceptions of managers regarding gender-based promotion strategies. Their study found that many males perceive those steps, such as using gender ‘quotas’ taken to alleviate inequality, have also led to unfair or biased treatment towards them. According to Russen et al. (2020), anti-male bias has played a role in the perception of gender discrimination on various levels of the promotion process due to the feeling of missed opportunities regarding their female counterpart receiving promotions over them.

Fairness and Justice Judgements. FHT is suggested to be the leading theory of fairness from a global approach. It presents a conceptual framework used to explain why or how counterproductive workplace behaviors are related to the organization (Cohen, 2019). The

underlying assumption in FHT is that justice judgments are used as cognitive shortcuts to assist in behavior decisions. These fairness judgments, or fairness heuristics, are created and then people use them to interpret fairness information to make it harmonious with the heuristic (Cohen, 2019). In accordance with this theory, people in uncertain situations regarding a relationship with authorities rely on their notions of fairness (Cohen, 2019). In other words, an employee who interprets higher levels of injustice is more likely to acquire negative perceptions about his/her employer and respond with increased counterproductive work behaviors, like organizational retaliation.

Fairness and Justice. Mechanisms motivating organizational justice affect making predictions about the relationship between procedural fairness and the perception of its outcomes and outcome acceptance (Miner et al., 2017). In other words, individuals judge the overall fairness of the connection through equity/inequity evaluations. Recent research has suggested that equal treatment and equal opportunity policies challenge fairness (Shaughnessy et al., 2016) and can result in reverse discrimination among the dominant group (Morton, 2019). How an employee evaluates an organization's actions and how those actions are associated with the behavior and attitude of an employee is the focus of organizational justice (Russen et al., 2020). Fairness within the workplace is affiliated with the perception of organizational justice (Li et al., 2020).

Previous research has linked organizational justice and work outcomes (Li et al., 2020). Organizational justice in relation to fairness judgments has three dimensions which include procedure justice, distributive justice, and interactional justice. Phipps and Prieto (2018) described these dimensions as-procedural justice is the determination of decision-making

concerning fairness; distributive justice is the relation of outcomes and fairness; and interactional justice is the determination of if treatment was received based on dignity, respect, and fairness.

Procedural Fairness regarding an organization's procedures and processes that are used to significant outcomes are perceived as fair (Qureshi et al., 2017). In other words, the outcomes of the organization must be seen as just or fair when the worker's input or efforts are considered. Qureshi et al. (2017) suggested that if the organization's procedures and processes are seen as fair, there will be an increased willingness of employee cooperation regardless of if the outcome of such procedures and processes are not seen as favorable to the employee. In that same respect, employees who see the procedures or process are not fair are less likely to be willing to cooperate with the organizational outcomes.

When applying social relationships and trust to employee relationships with an organization or their direct authority figures, experiences and perception of reverse discrimination can be explained concerning behavior (Wolfe et al., 2018). Negative emotions in juxtaposition with betrayal create inequality on the justice scale. When this happens, there is a need for corrective justice and rebalancing the scale (Park et al., 2019). This attempt to balance the scale tends to end with retaliative behaviors towards the organization or a co-worker. This in turn can create a hostile environment.

Retaliation and Balance. The range of retaliatory behaviors that an individual can use in response to injustice is vast. These behaviors are mostly seen as unethical in practice. What makes organizational retaliatory behaviors unique is the justification used by the employee to balance the scales (Miner et al., 2017). The range of these unethical behaviors can include serious behaviors like vandalism and theft to minor atrocities like gossiping (Khattak et al., 2020). As previously discussed, affirmative action policies, such as 'quota' usage, might elicit

these behaviors from the dominant group due to the perception of the unfair or unjust advantage that the minority group obtains (Dover et al., 2016). Such a perception of injustice and stressful environments created through retaliatory behavior leads to higher turnover, reduced employee engagement, reduced organizational commitment, and lower job satisfaction (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019).

Weber Shandwick conducted a 2016 survey, “*Civility in America VII: The State of Civility*,” that concluded that 30% of managers reported that incivility was a reason they had to threaten to fire or fire a subordinate because of incivility, and around 25% of employees reported an uncivil workplace as a reason they had quit a previous job. In addition, 87% of workers reported that workplace incivility had impacted their performance at work. They further reported the impact included but was not limited to a reduction in performance and productivity, organizational commitment, and the organization’s reputation. All of these will increase sick leave utilization, disability claims, turnover costs, and legal expenses. Table 2 lists the statistical outcome reported on the survey by Shandwick (2016).

Table 2

Civility in America VII: The State of Civility by Shandwick, 2016

Experienced bullying	19%
Witnessed bullying	19%
Aware of abusive behavior	61%
Female victims	60%
Suffered physical health	40%
Left their job	65%
Desired to leave their job	45%
Reported moral suffered	55%
Discouraged others from employment	33%
Reported effected personal time	32%
Called in sick	23%

It has also shown that these types of toxic actions and behaviors will spread throughout the workplace like a virus (Submitter & Komari, 2020). This virus, or problem, starts with one person; then over time coworkers may start behaving or acting differently and/or start to believe that their organization has a greater tolerance regarding this type of behavior. According to Submitter and Komari (2020), deviant or retaliatory behavior costs American organizations an average of \$50 billion (about \$150 per person in the U.S.) a year, resulting in a 20% failure rate because of this type of behavior.

Summary of the Literature Review

The literature review has provided information and examined information that introduces the focal point of this study, which is the potential creation of reverse discrimination with affirmative action Human Resource Management Strategies (HRMS), resulting in lowered organizational justice and retaliatory behavior among the dominant group. In addition, it has provided a history of affirmative action policies and the relationship between organizational justice and reverse discrimination. This review presented the benchmarks and criteria that were used in determining if HRM policies contain unofficial ‘quotas’ and the behaviors/ actions of those that experienced it first or second hand. The next section addressed the intended methods.

Summary of Section 1 and Transition

This study sought to understand how the use of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS affects perceived fairness among the dominant group. Additionally, it depicts how that perceived fairness affects that group's view on organizational justice and retaliatory behavior. As most previous studies regarding gender discrimination and affirmative action HRMSs in law enforcement are focused on the female perspective, there is a gap in literature and knowledge regarding the male perspective. The results of this research study should serve to

provide insight into reverse discrimination of male correctional officers using unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS. With the insight gained from this study, HR professionals can develop affirmative action strategies that are viewed as fair and equal among all minority groups, gender groups, and dominant groups within the organization.

Two more sections will follow this section. Section 2 focuses on the project's design and details regarding how the study was organized and conducted. This includes the participants, research and design method, the researcher's role, data collection and analysis, and reliability and validity. Finally, Section 3 concludes the research study by detailing the applications for professional practice and implications for change. This includes an overview of the study, anticipated themes, the presentation of the findings, recommendations, and reflections.

Section 2: The Project

The aim of this qualitative multiple case study was to investigate the phenomena of reverse discrimination created through the implementation of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS. This study also explored how the phenomena of reverse discrimination and sense of fairness has affected the dominant group's view on procedural justice and lead to retaliatory behavior. The use of a qualitative design method was based on the need to explore the phenomena via an inductive behavioral approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This section discusses the method and approach, ethical concerns, data collection, triangulation, and data analysis, in addition to the role of the researcher.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to assist the business of correctional facilities in grasping the effects of affirmative action HRMS regarding male correctional officers’ perception of fairness, discrimination, and justice. Additionally, it expanded on the affirmative action knowledge base of those studying the advantages (benefits) and disadvantages (cons) of constructing and maintaining affirmative action HRMS. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to (through the means of interviews) record the perception of male correctional officers between the ages of 18 and 60 in Northwest Georgia regarding the use of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS to reduce the disparate of female officers and the potential these policies have in creating reverse discrimination. Additionally, expanded on how the perception of reverse discrimination impacts fairness, justice, and retaliation.

Role of the Researcher

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the researcher “is the primary source for data collection and analysis” in qualitative case studies. Creswell and Poth (2018) further asserted that

it is up to the researcher to determine the appropriateness of using a case study. In addition, the researcher must develop the data collection method, identify the analysis used, and distinguish what is learned from the case study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Morgan et al. (2017) stated that the researcher must have effective communication skills, ask good questions, be adaptable, avoid bias, have strong listening/comprehension abilities, and conduct ethical research.

The researcher selected cases based on various criteria to include gender of officer, regions of study, and ages. Multiple data sources will be used, including an in-depth literature review, interviews, a survey, and the use of institutional websites. Correctional facilities in the selected demographical area have similar operation procedures and policies regarding HRMS in hiring and promoting and work environment. Accordingly, this researcher focused on the experiences of reverse discrimination of male correctional officers created through affirmative action HRMS policies. In addition, the researcher took an active role in identifying and recruiting participants once IRB approval was received (see Appendix A).

The recruitment process included creating and using recruitment letters (see Appendix B) with detailed information concerning the research study, confidentiality, and the researcher's contact information. Next, the researcher and primary contact distributed the letters within proximity to correctional facilities. The primary contact was a male officer whom the researcher had communicated through previous work history in one of the GDC correctional facilities. Afterward, the researcher relied on the "word of mouth approach," where officers tell their peers about the study and disseminate the information.

The researcher focused on recruiting potential participants who meet stringent demographics. This included current or former male correctional officers between 18 and 60 years old. In addition, the potential participant must be currently employed or have been

employed within the past 5 years at one of the Northwest Georgia regions. The researcher then used purposeful sampling to identify 25 respondents who met the eligibility requirements outlined in the recruitment letter (Appendix B). Then through the saturation process, the researcher recruited a total of 13 participants were sent an invitation email (Appendix C).

The researcher also took an ethic perspective to create knowledge about the participants and their experiences. This included advising respondents that the study is completely voluntary, and that participation would be confidential. To ensure ethical protection and confidentiality of participants, the researcher instituted ethical and confidential measures. The researcher created a consent form (Appendix D) which included ethical protections and confidentiality measures. This form includes the explanation regarding the exclusion of all identifiers and names within the presentation of data. The form also includes recordkeeping, handling, and storage measures taken by the researcher. All records were kept on a password-protected laptop. Password-protected files were labeled with alias names and password protected. In addition, it was reinforced that participation is voluntary, and the participant could withdraw at any time.

The researcher then constructed meaning by analyzing semi-structured in-person interviews that included open-ended questions as proposed by Creswell and Poth (2018). Skype or WebEx was utilized when face-to-face interviews was not a possibility. The researcher relied on body language and motivational interviewing techniques, such as mirroring, expressing empathy, reflective listening, and summarizing to draw out additional information, thus adding detail to the experiences and attitudes the officers have had with the use of “quota-based” affirmative action HRMS. To protect the integrity of the interview sessions, the researcher utilized a 32 Gb voice recorder. All data gathered throughout the study was transcribed by the researcher into NVivo Pro 12 and housed in the above-mentioned password-protected laptop and

files. Appendix F list the researcher's questions to direct the discussions and avoid generalized responses.

Epoché and Bracketing

Epoché. Epoché is where the researcher abstains from explanations, knowledge, and scientific conceptions to “return to the unreflective apprehension of the lived everyday world.” Phenomenological psychological reduction only requires the researchers to defer their “belief in the existence of what presents itself in the lifeworld. Transcendental phenomenological reduction is “a more radical version of the epoché where a ‘God’s eye view’ is attempted” (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020, p. 10). This researcher's bracketing approaches were both the epoché and phenomenological psychological reduction. The researcher abstained from judgment and scientific conceptions while allowing the participants' natural attitudes and subjective meanings to take precedence.

Bracketing. Bracketing is the preliminary step of qualitative research illustrating an act of deferring opinions, beliefs, or judgments about the phenomenon to focus on analyzing the experience (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020). This conception can be traced to Immanuel Kant, who, at the time, claimed that the single reality one can know is the one experienced by that single person who experienced it in their mind (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020). In 1913, Edmund Husserl built on that premise by suggesting the use of bracketing to assist in better understanding another’s phenomena (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020). Bracketing involves opening one’s mind and altering one’s perspective. He offered three bracketing constructs: “the epoché or phenomenological attitude; the phenomenological psychological reduction; and the transcendental phenomenological reduction” (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020).

The bracketing techniques that were used by this researcher started with acknowledging that bias exists, whether consciously or unconsciously, especially concerning the existence and discussion of gender inequality. Steps taken to reduce personal and interpretation bias. The researcher's professional and firsthand experiences were a factor in the motivation behind this study. As a female who previously held the title of Sergeant within the Georgia Department of Corrections, the researcher has experienced the backlash of perceived reverse discrimination by the dominant group. Additionally, the researcher rooted all assumptions regarding the participants' accounts via social constructivism. The major key was that the researcher's expectation to be actively aware and mindful of each participant's meanings which will vary and will be subjective based on the individual life experiences of the participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These bracketing techniques allowed the researcher to focus on collecting rich data.

Research Methodology

This section discusses the planned research method and design that was utilized for this research study, with an in-depth description of the use of flexible or qualitative research and interpretive/constructive paradigm used for this research. Following these descriptions, this section will further discuss the application of the multiple case study design.

Discussion of Flexible Design

There are several qualitative research designs: phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A multiple case study approach should be used to compile a detailed account of the case set within the context of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This design allowed for the flexibility of matching research questions to the case or multiple cases (Hyett et al., 2014). The case study design

delivers a technique in which the researcher will have the flexibility to answer the why and how questions while exploring the phenomenon in the context in which it occurs (Yazan, 2015).

A multiple-case study design is most appropriate to analyze multiple correctional facilities. Thus, allowing the researcher to obtain a greater understanding of the research problem. This design allows for the researcher to collect deeper data. The multiple-case study design has distinct advantages over the single-case research study design. For example, the findings are often more convincing than a single case study (Yin, 2018). A multi-case study can provide consistent compelling evidence for the direction of future research (Yazan, 2015). Human Management studies often employ the multi-case study design because it establishes a comprehensive analysis of the case and the real-life context within the phenomenon (Yazan, 2015).

A multiple-case study research design was used for this research study. This type of design permits each participant to revisit experiences and feelings of the phenomena while allowing the researcher to capture the correct sentiment (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher chose the multiple-case study approach because there are many correctional facilities in the state of Georgia. This approach allows for cross-case analysis to examine similarities, differences, and themes across cases. Thereby, allowing a greater understanding of the complexities of the phenomena at distinct levels of security in corrections.

The foundation for this multiple case study was built on the data gathering process and then commenced with a current literature review regarding aspects of the phenomena (Morgan et al., 2017). The researcher sent requests to local Northwest Georgia Prisons to recruit potential participants (once IRB approval was obtained). The researcher also sent a structured demographic questionnaire and conduct a semi-structured in-depth interview with all

respondents who volunteer for this case study. The interview approach was used to gain information. This approach allowed the researcher to ask detailed questions regarding specific events (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

In addition, it allowed the researcher to obtain complementary data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Furthermore, the semi-structured interview process was used to obtain thematic data from all participants. Questions were presented in an open-ended structure allowing an exhaustive approach to the participants' responses and expand on topics the researcher did not anticipate. Additionally, the researcher used motivational interviewing techniques to draw out additional information adding detail to the experiences and attitudes the officers have had with the use of 'quota-based' affirmative action HRMS.

Discussion of Method

A qualitative, or flexible, methodology was used for this research because qualitative research methods are effective in gaining an understanding of human behavior, including reasons and motives, in byzantine environments (Creswell & Poth, 2018). One of the features of a qualitative research method is that it allows for the development of comprehensive information and personal accounts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Since this research sought a comprehensive understanding from the dominant group's perspective of an organization's affirmative action HRMS has created reverse discrimination; the qualitative methodology was the best method for this study.

Social science, such as sociology, anthropology, and psychology, is the foundation of qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative research is best defined as a research method that is focused on gathering data with open-ended questions and communicating through conversation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This method focuses on 'what' the participants think and

‘why,’ thus allowing for in-depth questioning and probing of the participants based on their responses. This is done in conjunction with the intent of understanding the participant's feelings and motivations.

Qualitative research is the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive data to obtain insights into the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Since the research sought to have the participants’ experiences and feelings shape the journey of this case study, this method was the best approach. By allowing explanatory answers, participants were able to dive deeply into their firsthand experiences and feelings while allowing the examination of those experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To uncover and interpret the phenomena of reverse discrimination of the male-dominant group, a personal interpretation of the participants’ perception would be needed.

In addition, this research study explored the context of information as it relates to the situation of affirmative action HRMS effects on male correctional officers. This understanding could only be achieved through close interaction with male correctional officers who have experienced the phenomena of the study through firsthand or secondhand experiences. Exploratory research about the use of affirmative action HRMS and its effects requires close collaboration between the participants and the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, this study called for a qualitative or flexible method to obtain adequately answered research questions.

Discussion of Method(s) for Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of using various sources or approaches to obtain a thorough understanding of the phenomenon (Natow, 2020). In qualitative research, there are four types of triangulation techniques. These include investigation, method, data source, and theory (Renz et

al., 2018). Since qualitative case studies are based on behavioral factors with a focus on several variables versus the focus of specific data points, triangulation is a crucial component used to strengthen the credibility and validity of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Using triangulation allows for a more objective and accurate representation of the data collected, strengthening the validity of the study (Natow, 2020). The triangulation techniques that were used for this research study included interview questions, an in-depth literature review, the use of institutional websites, and content analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Summary of Research Methodology

A qualitative multi-case study design was the best fit for this research study because the researcher conducted research and gathered information across multiple correctional facilities where the researcher could observe, and study reverse discrimination first-hand. Qualitative research can offer a multifaceted understanding of the problem or situation (Creswell, 2016). Since a multiple-case design allows the researcher the ability to compare the results of the research among multiple locations at various levels of security, the researcher was able to draw out more in-depth information and conclusions (Creswell & Poth, 2018) regarding how ‘gender quotas’ can be related to injustice experiences among the dominant group. This can assist organizations in promoting equality and justice concerning affirmative action strategies they plan to adopt.

Participants

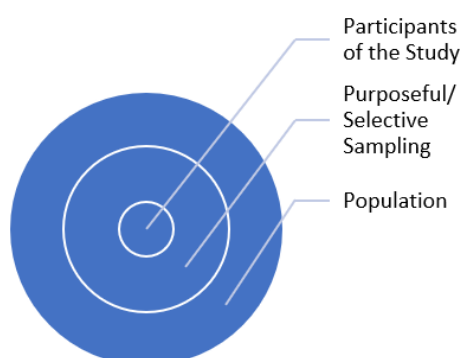
The participants of this research study included current and former male correctional officers in Northwest Georgia. Correctional facilities in this demographical area have similar operation procedures and policies regarding HRMS in hiring/promoting and the climate or environment in which the correctional officers work. Officers were recruited through purposeful

sampling. The primary contact was a male officer with whom the researcher had contact through previous work history in one of the GDC correctional facilities. The researcher created recruitment letters with detailed information concerning the research study, confidentiality, and the contact information of the researcher (Appendix B). The letters were distributed out by a primary contact and the researcher within proximity to correctional facilities. Afterward, the researcher relied on the ‘word of mouth approach,’ where officers tell their peers about the study and pass on the information.

Those who responded were asked to voluntarily participate in the research study, acknowledging that participation will be confidential. To ensure ethical protection and confidentiality of participants, ethical and confidential measures were instituted. This included a consent form that was completed by the participants, granting informed consent to participate in the study. It also included an explanation regarding the exclusion of all identifiers and names within the presentation of data. In addition, it was reinforced that participation is voluntary and the participant can withdraw at any time. The researcher followed all Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines and requirements to ensure participants and the organization are protected.

Population and Sampling

This section discusses the population and sampling portion of the research study. It defended the sampling method used by examining the applicable methodology and concepts. This included purposeful sampling (subsets included age, gender, and experience). It explained the sample size using applicable methodology and concepts. In addition, it illustrated the eligibility criteria for participants and the appropriateness of the study. Finally, it showed the relevance of the characteristics of the selected sample. Figure 4 gives a representation of how purposeful sampling was used for this research.

Figure 4*Study Sampling****Discussion of Population***

The GDC is considered the largest prison system in the United States. It has the responsibility of supervising and monitoring approximately 52,000 state prisoners. It is the largest law enforcement agency in the state with approximately 11,533 employees ranging in ages 18-60, both male and female (GCI | The Georgia Department of Corrections [state.ga.us]). The geographical focus for this research is Northwest Georgia. The geographical region includes districts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, and 14. Of the 11,533 GDC correctional officers, about 335 were considered for this research study because they met the geographical region requirement. Of this population, the demographic requirements included males, age 18-60, and a current/former correctional officer employed (or was employed within the last five years) in the Northwest Georgia area. See Table 3 for visualization of demographical requirements.

Table 3*Demographical Requirements*

Demographics	Requirements
Age	18-60
Geographical Location	Northwest Georgia
Gender	Male
Industry	Correctional Officer
Employment Status	Current or Former Employee

Discussion of Sampling

Sampling is a participant selection method used to select a subgroup of individuals from a specific population in a research study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition, purposeful sampling, otherwise known as selective sampling, was utilized for participant selection (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). To accomplish this, the researcher selected participants from two specific correctional facilities in the geographical area that meets the occupational and classifications needed for the research study. The purposive of this method allowed participants to be chosen according to characteristics relevant to the study (Palinkas et al., 2015).

Moser and Korstjens (2018) proposed that sampling is used in qualitative research to ensure the alignment of participants to the study. Unlike probabilistic/random sampling, purposeful sampling is commonly used when using a qualitative research method. It is used to identify and select participants that would yield the most effective data (Palinkas et al., 2015). This technique requires selecting participants with extensive experience or knowledge of the phenomena being studied. In addition to these requirements, communication skills, willingness/availability to participate, language barriers will be considered (Palinkas et al., 2015).

While using purposeful sampling, the researcher took into consideration the population of facilities within the geographical focus in Northwest Georgia for this research. This included 53 medium-security correctional officers and 103 close security correctional officers between the ages of 18 and 60. Of this population, the researcher utilized eight close security officers and five medium-security officers. All of which will be of the male gender. This ensured that the sampling focuses on participants with similar characteristics, such as male correctional officers. The objective was to refrain from oversaturating the data to the point where additional information or themes can no longer be observed through the interviews (Boddy, 2016). In qualitative studies, the need to use a smaller number of participants deepens the inquiry per participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, all respondents who met the requirements from Table 3 were invited to participate and be considered for the research study.

Summary of Population and Sampling

The researcher generated the population sample for this research study with current and former male correctional officers in Northwest Georgia who responded to recruitment letters (Appendix B). Once recruitment met an applicable representation of each facility (13 correctional officers total), the recruitment was concluded. Those identified were sent an invitation email (Appendix C) with an attached copy of the informed consent to act as a research subject (Appendix D). The information and data from this research study may help human resource managers change current policies that impact human resource decision-making and transparency practices regarding the use of affirmative action HRMS. Additionally, this study may be used in a broader aspect with similar organizational justice concerns, behavioral challenges, and discrimination issues.

Data Collection & Organization

While quantitative research seeks to produce statistical relevance-related phenomenon occurrence to generalize findings, qualitative research seeks opportunities to dig into the phenomenon to determine its meaning (Williams & Moser, 2017). Regardless of which approach is chosen, the data collection and organization will be a clear and repeatable method. If its data collection and organization methods are lacking in rigor, data analysis can be hindered, and the value of outcomes becomes diminished (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Regardless of the chosen data collection method (one-on-one interviews or a focus group), there will be copious amounts of data generated. There is also a variety of ways to record (or make a record of) what is done or said in these one-on-one interviews or focus groups. Some methods include but are not limited to notetaking by hand, audio recording, and video recording. Regardless of the method, the researcher must ensure that these recordings are transcribed verbatim prior to the beginning of data analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Sutton and Austin (2015), it can take eight hours for an experienced researcher to transcribe a single 45-minute recorded interview, generating a written dialog of around 20-30 pages.

According to Sutton and Austin (2015), researchers tend to maintain nonformal notes in a notebook of the audio/video-taped interviews in an accompanying folder. Through notes, the researcher can make comments during the interview regarding nonverbal cues, behaviors, and environmental contexts that are not adequately expressed, or captured, via an audio/video recording. In addition, field notes allow for valuable structure or interpretation of the taped data. This can also act as a reminder regarding factors, situations that are imperative to the study, and data analysis. The researcher must maintain the same security protocols allotted for any audio/visual recordings and/or transcripts as required by IRB.

Data Collection Plan

This section discusses the process and data collection steps for the research. This includes obtaining IRB approval, participant selection, invitation and consent, interview process, follow-up email, and document review.

IRB Approval. Prior to starting this research study, the researcher obtained approval from Liberty University and the Internal Review Board (IRB). The IRB approval letter. This letter is attached as Appendix A.

Participant Selection. After obtaining IRB approval, the researcher began the recruitment process with the distribution of the recruitment letter (Appendix B). First, the researcher used purposeful sampling to identify potential participants that met the demographical requirements of this research study as outlined in a previous section.

Invitation and Consent. Once potential participants were identified, the researcher reached out to those participants via emailed invitation (Appendix C) and requested to schedule an interview. Attached to the email was a copy of the consent form to act as a research subject (Appendix D).

Interview Process. The researcher constructed meaning through the analysis of semi-structured in-person interviews and utilize open-ended questions as proposed by Creswell and Poth (2018). Skype or WebEx was utilized when face-to-face interviews are not possible. The researcher relied on body language and motivational interviewing techniques to draw out additional information, adding detail to the officers' experiences and attitudes with the use of 'quota-based' affirmative action HRMS. To protect the integrity of the interview sessions, the researcher used a 32 Gb voice recorder throughout every interview. All data gathered throughout the study were transcribed by the researcher into NVivo Pro 12 and housed in an above-

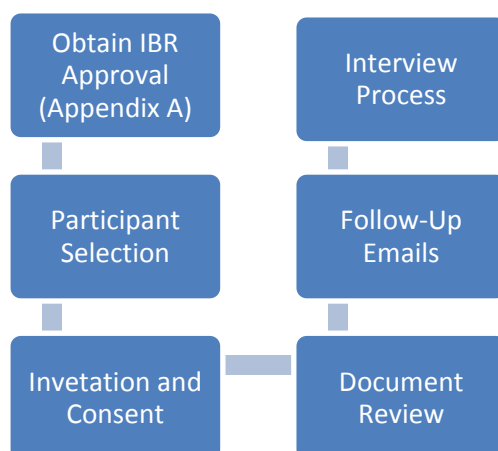
mentioned password-protected laptop and files. Appendix F list the questions used to direct the discussions and avoid generalized responses.

Follow-up Email. Follow-up emails allow for further elaboration providing further explanations regarding responses from the participants. Additionally, the follow-up email allows for the participants to think about the initial interview and provide additional information or comments after they have had time for reflection. The researcher emailed each participant a copy of his transcribed interview.

Document Review. The final stage of this research process was the document review. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested when completing a qualitative case study, the researcher would need to complete a documentation review. This is needed to corroborate all data and information that the researcher collected from interviews and other sources (Creswell & Poth, 2018). During the review process, the researcher reviewed the GDC website, the literature reviewed, the EEOC website, and interview transcriptions. See Figure 5 below for visualization of the data collection plan.

Figure 5

Data Collection Plan



Instruments

The instruments used in this multiple case study included the researcher, an interview guide, audio recordings, and NVivo Pro 12.

The Researcher. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the primary data collection instrument in qualitative studies is the researcher. The researcher was an instrument of the study. This allowed the opportunity for the researcher to listen to each participant, collect his/her experiences, and analyze the data collected via software utilization. In addition, the researcher ensured the protection of anonymity of each participant via the concealment of all identifying information and names. Also, as an instrument of the study, the researcher transcribed all data gathered into NVivo Pro 12.

Since there is a need for flexibility and careful analysis in qualitative studies, the researcher must be able to ask excellent questions, have quality listening skills, avoid bias, and have a solid understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher used these skills in conjunction with motivational interviewing techniques to review documents, conduct interviews, take notes, ask follow-up questions, secure the confidentiality of participants through the redaction of names or any other identifying information, and analyze the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

In a qualitative case study, the researcher's primary function was observation (Cunningham et al., 2018). Observation in research requires applying individual perceptions, finding understanding in each participant's response, and establishing research details (Cunningham et al., 2018). The research was conducted and documented to ensure efficient data retrieval and analysis. The observation process allowed the researcher to identify patterns,

themes, and perceptions that are meaningful in the application of the participant's experience to the study (Cunningham et al., 2018).

Additionally, the researcher facilitated the free flow of information by recruiting research participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher established the technique for participant recruitment and decision-making during the interview process. Throughout the progression of the interview, the structure may need to be changed for the convenience of the participants and allow flexibility. The researcher scheduled interviews, was responsible for time management during the interview, sent follow-up emails, and analyzed data collected through the interview. The researcher took active measures to reduce researcher bias through bracketing techniques that are discussed under the reliability and validity section.

Interview Guide. The interview guide included the researcher's introduction, the purpose of the interview, include main interview questions and the necessary follow-ups, and end with a closing statement. Each participant was interviewed in a private setting and asked the same open-ended questions. However, the researcher asked follow-up questions requesting elaboration based on the participant's response. Interview locations were chosen based on participant convenience. The researcher ensured that each setting promotes privacy and confidentiality. Skype or WebEx was utilized when face-to-face interviews are not possible. The researcher created interview questions (Appendix F) that align with the problem statement, research questions, and the purpose of the study. The chair reviewed each interview question to ensure alignment with the problem statement, research questions, the purpose of the study, and methodology.

The interview questions consisted of four opening questions and 10 interview questions. Each allowed for the exploration of how gender affirmative action HRMS affects male

correctional officers and their attitudes and behaviors based on fairness and retaliation. Some specific questions aimed to address the participant's personal experiences and behaviors related to being overlooked for a promotion or position that was awarded to a female counterpart. Additionally, some questions explored the participants' feelings and behaviors in relation to the perceived discrimination and perceived gender promotions. A closing statement was included to conclude the interview and allow the researcher to thank the participant for his time and contribution to the research study.

The interview guide offered reliability during the interview process. It also functioned as an instrument that connects the research questions to the research problem. The participant's answers to the interview guide questions reflect the participant's experiences, knowledge, behavior, and/or emotions, and potentially generate data that will be used to develop new concepts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To encourage participants' responses, open-ended questions were be utilized. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), words such as *how*, *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why* should be utilized. The interview guide should include questions regarding the main themes, in addition to follow-up questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Each participant should have the opportunity to answer the main theme questions. Follow-up questions and encouraging questions should be utilized to support the participant's explanation and allow for clarification (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The interview questions address the research questions that were identified in Section 1 of this research study. These questions assist in breaking down each research question allowing for thick, rich, and more depth of each research question. Research question RQ1 from Section 1 explores how the implementation of 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS impacts male correctional officers' experiences regarding reverse discrimination. Research question RQ2 from

Section 1 explores the attitudes of male correctional officers towards the use of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS that impacts their perception of organizational justice. RQ3 from Section 1 explores the implementation of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS influenced retaliation among male correctional officers.

Notes. The researcher took descriptive and reflective notes during all portions of the research project (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Creswell and Poth (2018) recommended that the researcher takes notes throughout the review of materials and visual elements. These notes were collected and organized as outlined in the data analysis section.

Audio Recording. To protect the integrity of the interview sessions, the researcher used a 32 Gb voice recorder throughout every interview. Creswell and Poth (2018) recommended the utilization of audio recordings during interviews. Based on their recommendation, all semi-structured interviews with participants were audio-recorded, allowing for the researcher to capture information that would have otherwise been lost if the researcher relied solely on memory and/or written notes (Thomas, 2016). The participants were advised that the interview was being recorded when the researcher scheduled them. This allowed the researcher the opportunity to gain their approval. The researcher utilized the audio recording by transcribing them for future review and analysis.

NVivo Pro 12. All data gathered throughout the study were transcribed by the researcher into NVivo Pro 12 and housed in an above-mentioned password-protected laptop and files. NVivo Pro 12 is a qualitative data analysis computer software package produced by QSR International. NVivo Pro 12 helps qualitative researchers to organize, analyze and find insights in unstructured or qualitative data like interviews, open-ended survey responses, journal articles,

social media, and web content, where deep levels of analysis on small or large volumes of data are required.

Data Organization Plan

This qualitative case study data collection techniques included identifying the population of participants from the GDC website. The study's potential participants were male correctional officers between the ages of 18 and 60 who are currently employed or have been within the last 5 years of a correctional facility in the Northwest Georgia region. The recruitment letters were distributed by a primary contact and the researcher within proximity to correctional facilities. Afterward, the researcher relied on the 'word of mouth approach.' This approach is where officers tell their peers about the study and pass on the information.

After establishing the number of willing participants, the researcher used purposeful sampling, otherwise known as selective sampling, which will be utilized for participant selection (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). To accomplish this, the researcher selected participants from two specific correctional facilities in the geographical area that meet the occupational and classifications needed for the research study. The sample size included eight male close-security and five medium-security officers, allowing data saturation and in-depth analysis of the interview responses.

Data collection included written notes, audio files and transcriptions, and copies of marketing materials. These materials were safeguarded on a password-protected computer and pseudonyms were used to replace identifying information to protect the privacy of participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Physical materials were stored in a locked filing cabinet to which only the researcher had access. At the start of the study, the researcher established a naming pattern for digital files to ensure they were easy to locate and access during analysis as recommended by

Creswell and Poth (2018). Additionally, the researcher maintained a spreadsheet with the file name, participant pseudonym, date, and data type for easy reference (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher stored all data collected during the interviews in a password-protected folder for the number of years required by the school administration after the research study's approval.

The interview questions were open-ended, semi-structured, and flexible enough to allow the researcher to explore additional information based on answers as needed (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The interview questions were used to obtain the data will be in the interview guide. These interview questions were created to answer the research questions acknowledged in Section 1. The fundamental elements of each interview response were housed in a database. The coding of written data was used as it is helpful with qualitative case studies (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The coding was established through the data collected from the interview transcripts. Some coding involved organizing the data into sections for comparison and classification into outlines and themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This qualitative case study utilized open coding such as written notes and observing the interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Summary of Data Collection & Organization

The researcher acted as the primary instrument to collect data for this qualitative case study. The researcher used interviews and document reviews to gain a deeper understanding of the issue being studied as suggested by Creswell and Poth (2018). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), these methods allow the researcher to fully answer the research questions with reliability and validity. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in person and the researcher used the interview guide to direct the interview (Creswell & Poth, 2018). She reviewed materials found on the GDC and EEOC websites to further understand the issue, corroborate data, and help answer the research questions. The researcher used an audio recording device to ensure all

elements of the interview were captured. Audio recordings, transcriptions, and notes were categorized and stored on a secured computer for analysis. The use of multiple data collection methods assisted in supporting the validity and reliability of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data Analysis

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), a qualitative case study data analysis involves three stages: organization, theme development, and interpretation. The data collected during the study were organized in a manner that allows an answer to the research questions. The use of NVivo Pro 12 software aided the researcher in the organization and coding process (Thomas, 2016). The combination of organization and coding allowed the researcher to develop themes and generate meaningful learnings.

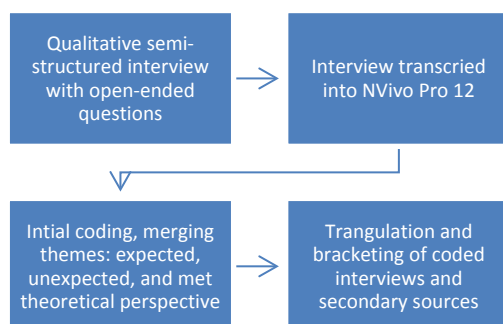
Important elements of qualitative research were thoroughly detailed data analysis and description of cases. Utilization of notes and journaling from the study's beginning initialize thematic analysis and interpretation of data. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), data collection and analysis happen concurrently. All information gathered throughout the study assisted in guiding the researcher and was stored in NVivo Pro 12. Interviews were electronically recorded with the use of an audio recorder and then the recordings were transcribed to written data. The data were then be grouped into themes open codes that exceed the cases. To establish the themes from the analyzed data, direct interpretation and categorical aggregation was used (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

A qualitative codebook was used by the researcher to complete data analysis. The codebook highlighted the emerged themes, along with quotations from the participant to support themes. To identify emerging themes, the researcher used inductive content analysis to analyze frequently used words, phrases, and concepts. In addition, data that were gathered from

participant observations was analyzed to account for triangulation. Field notes were utilized for observations and content analyses. Data Analysis outlined below in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Data Analysis



Emergent Ideas

The established interview guide allowed the researcher to identify emergent ideas and themes. Each participant was asked the same questions. Follow-up questions were utilized to gain a better understanding of the participant's answers. By asking each participant the same questions, a better opportunity was provided to format transcribed responses into potential ideas prior to running through NVivo Pro 12 data analysis. Each transcribed response was reviewed within a word document that NVivo Pro 12 generated. This was done in the same order as the asked interview question. All similarities and themes found in the participant's responses was highlighted then notated. The notes were saved in a separate Word document to allow for easy referencing and comparison of the themes developed within NVivo Pro 12.

Coding Themes

Coding is key when using the qualitative research method because it allows for the data to be analyzed, allowing for sequential steps to serve the study's purpose (Williams & Moser, 2019). It is the classification and categorizing of issues, themes, similarities, and differences revealed from the participants' interviews (Williams & Moser, 2019). It also allows the

researcher to understand the phenomena from the perspective of the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Coding unveils themes that are embedded within collected data, and it suggests the thematic direction for categorizing data to be categorized, discussed, and presented (Williams & Moser, 2019). These codes present clear significant findings of the research, called theming (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that themes were detected through significant phrases found within the data creating themes. These themes were actively filtered by NVivo Pro 12, where the most relevant themes will be displayed as results. The grouping process for themes were developed through the comparison of words within all documentation and materials gathered.

In qualitative research, the two main types of coding are inductive and deductive (Williams & Moser, 2019). Through the deductive coding process, the researcher begins with preestablished codes that are applied to the data. The deductive approach allows the researcher to tightly focus on and identify relevant data (Williams & Moser, 2019). On the other hand, inductive coding is the opposite. Through inductive coding, the researcher creates codes based on the data. In other words, codes emerge from the collected data (Williams & Moser, 2019). For this study the researcher used open coding, axial coding, and seductive coding in the inductive context.

Open Coding. Open coding is the process of reading and rereading collected data to understand how patterns will be grouped and coded. According to Linneberg and Korsgaard (2019), open coding is the process of assigning a numerical value to patterns and themes that are identified. These patterns and themes should be broken down into distinct components to allow for careful analysis of similarities and differences (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). The

researcher identified clusters of patterns within the narrative based on the subject matter and highlight each with a distinct color.

Axial Coding. The second step in coding is axial coding. Through this process, the researcher identified connections and links between themes allowing for the formation of clusters (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). It also involved identifying categories and/ or meanings with external divergence and internal convergence (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). These themes must be different but internally consistent (Williams & Moser, 2019). To accomplish external divergence, the researcher reviewed transcripts to identify trends, patterns, and themes that give new meaning to the participant's narratives. To accomplish internal convergence, the researcher identified and highlighted similar themes that were provided by the participant narratives. Combined this allowed the researcher to assess for apparent patterns while looking for alternative and significant descriptions of the data (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019).

Selective Coding. The final step in coding is Selective coding. This is the process of reducing the collected data into smaller sets of themes in the final narrative (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). According to Williams and Moser (2019), sub-themes are created from groups of similar themes allowing for the presentation of the data.

Interpretations

Once coding is completed, the researcher will review the codes to identify themes, as suggested by Creswell and Poth (2018). An inductive approach was used to look for patterns among codes to gain insights and develop themes (Thomas, 2016). The frequency of themes in the data were analyzed by the researcher, with the most frequent themes being considered as significant to the study (Thomas, 2016). The researcher also considered the significance of themes as it relates to the research questions. Any themes found outside the scope of research

were set aside for review and analysis later for determination of significance (Thomas, 2016). The final themes will be discussed in a narrative format to answer the research questions in Section 3.

Data Representation

Under each developed theme, participant responses were quoted and provided according to their groupings per NVivo Pro 12. These responses were meant to drive and back up the developed themes. Additionally, data also was represented visually in charts that displayed the themes, interpretations, and results based on participant responses.

Analysis for Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of using various sources or approaches to obtain a thorough understanding of the phenomenon (Natow, 2020). The use of triangulation allows for a more objective and accurate representation of the data collected, strengthening the validity of the study (Natow, 2020). In qualitative research, there are four types of triangulation techniques. These include investigation, method, data source, and theory (Renz et al., 2018). Since qualitative case studies are based on behavioral factors with a focus on several variables versus the focus of specific data points, triangulation is a crucial component used to strengthen the credibility and validity of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The triangulation technique used for this research study were interview questions, an in-depth literature review, the use of institutional websites, and content analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Summary of Data Analysis

During the data analysis phase, the researcher carefully and thoroughly reviewed the data produced from all elements of the study to properly code and develop themes. NVivo Pro 12 software assisted the researcher with identifying, separating, grouping, and consolidating codes

for theme development. The researcher selected major themes based on frequency and significance to the study. After that, minor themes were selected by determining thematic relationships, patterns, and relevance. The final themes are discussed via the narrative format in Section 3 to answer the research questions. Emergent ideas and themes were developed through the review of transcribed interview data and compared to NVivo Pro 12 findings. Data analysis occurred within the NVivo Pro 12 software, where the display of codes content revealed common themes.

Reliability and Validity

Qualitative researchers seek to fully understand a phenomenon, while ensuring accuracy and trustworthiness (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The terms associated with accuracy and trustworthiness are known as reliability and validity in research. These terms are critical components in academic research. Reliability means the data were collected consistently and the study could be repeated by future researchers generating similar results (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Validity means that the findings accurately answer the research question and represent each participant's intentions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This section discusses the reliability and validity strategies that will be used in this research study.

Reliability

Reliability has three main concepts. First, it considers the consistency of the test results. Second, it measures whether the test gives consistent results at its outcome or is transferable. Third, there are two primary types of reliability (external and internal). The reliability of the study improved through the prevention of data oversaturation by using an adequate number of participants, the utilization of the interview guide, and NVivo Pro 12 software for data analysis. To achieve reliability for the study, the researcher strove for minimal biases and errors

(Grandori, 2015). Grandori (2015) suggested that reliability leads to repeatability. To ensure consistency throughout the project, the researcher used specific strategies. This included the use of an interview guide and consistent coding. This ensured that all participants had identical experiences throughout their interviews and that codes were applied consistently throughout the study. To establish reliability, the researcher used an interview guide, consistent coding, and triangulation.

Interview Guide. The interview guide provided in Appendix F was utilized during the interview process to ensure all participants are asked the same primary questions in the same way supporting reliability and consistency (Grandori, 2015). The wording of each question was chosen with the intent to avoid ambiguity and will be asked in the same order to ensure consistency. The questions were formulated to ensure they address the research questions and are appropriate for the study. This ensured the research was conducted consistently throughout the study and assist future researchers in conducting interviews in the same manner to allow duplication of this study.

Consistent Coding. The second strategy utilized was consistent coding throughout the research study. The defined codes established by the researcher was based on the literature review and review of the interview transcripts. The researcher applied those codes during the data analysis stage using NVivo Pro 12 software. Any codes that emerged during the analysis phase were thoroughly defined, documented, and applied consistently to all portions of data. The consistent use of codes assisted in establishing reliability via the application of the same codes in the same way throughout the entire study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Triangulation. Triangulation is the final strategy to be used. It is the process of using various sources or approaches to obtain a thorough understanding of the phenomenon (Natow,

2020). The use of triangulation allows for a more objective and accurate representation of the data collected, strengthening the validity of the study (Natow, 2020). Since qualitative case studies are based on behavioral factors with a focus on several variables versus the focus of specific data points, triangulation is a crucial component used to strengthen the credibility and validity of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The triangulation technique that was used for this research study were interview questions, an in-depth literature review, the use of institutional websites, and content analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Validity

When all relevant information needed to obtain insights into the phenomena has been found, theoretical saturation is reached. Qualitative researchers do not utilize probability sampling if their goal is theoretical saturation. Instead, the researcher uses a sampling procedure that is purposeful (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Though the qualitative research coding process is arduous and time-consuming, it is the best as it decreases the probability of missed codes. validity has three main concepts. First, it considers the extent to which the test measures, and what it claims to measure. Second, it measures whether the extent to which the test claims to measure is achieved, and there are two primary types of validity (external and internal).

Validity in research means that the data are comprehensive, accurate (Creswell & Poth, 2018), and trustworthy (Van Rijnsoever, 2017). Accuracy in research is ensuring that the data reflects the intention of participants, while inclusiveness ensures enough data has been collected throughout the study and it has been found true among multiple sources. Trustworthiness refers to the confidence degree in the results. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested using validity strategies from the lenses of the researcher, participant, reviewer, and reader. Additionally, the

validity of this chosen design was measured through transferability and credibility (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Transferability. For this study, the researcher used saturation, member checking, and a thick description to ensure the transferability of the study results. This allowed the researcher to review the research study results and to allow interpretation as to the extent to which the results can be transferred between subjects of the study and the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Saturation. First, the researcher reached the point of saturation through the participants' lens. Saturation is met when the researcher reaches a point where no new information is obtained from further data. The saturation point determines the sample size in qualitative research as it indicates that adequate data has been collected for a detailed analysis. For this study, interviews and document review continued until new information was no longer able to be collected in addition to saturation of the sample size of 13 participants (Van Rijnsoever, 2017).

Member Checking. Second, the researcher sought participant feedback as a validity check from the participants' lens (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This check is considered vital to qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher compiled and presented the data for participants to review after the interviews were conducted. This allowed participants the opportunity for clarification and to offer feedback related to the accuracy (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Though member checking does not promise that the information is correct, it does reduce errors and further protects participants by ensuring nothing was misrepresented (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Thick Description. The third and final validation strategy that the researcher utilized was thick description in the final dissertation report. This process was included as a validation strategy from the readers' lens (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Thick description is described as the use

of language to make the reader feel that they are experiencing the phenomenon. It also allows the reader to have adequate evidence to make determinations regarding the trustworthiness of the findings. In addition, it creates a level of transparency and trustworthiness that supports validity.

Credibility. For this study, bracketing was used to establish credibility. Bracketing is the preliminary step of qualitative research illustrating an act of deferring opinions, beliefs, or judgments about the phenomenon to focus on analyzing the experience (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020). This conception can be traced to Immanuel Kant, who, at the time, claimed that the single reality one can know is the one experienced by that single person who experienced it in their mind (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020). In 1913, Edmund Husserl built on that primase by suggesting the use of bracketing to assist in better understanding another's phenomena (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020). Bracketing involves opening one's mind and altering one's perspective. He offered three bracketing constructs: "the epoché or phenomenological attitude; the phenomenological psychological reduction; and the transcendental phenomenological reduction" (Dörfler & Stierand, 2020).

The bracketing techniques to be taken by this researcher started with the acknowledgment that bias exists, whether consciously or unconsciously, especially concerning the existence and discussion of gender inequality. Steps were taken to reduce personal and interpretation bias. The researcher's professional and personal experiences were factors in the motivation behind this study. As a female who previously held the title of Sergeant within the Georgia Department of Corrections, the researcher has experienced the backlash of perceived reverse discrimination by the dominant group. Additionally, the researcher's assumptions are rooted in social constructivism regarding the participants' accounts. The major key was the expectation of the researcher to be actively aware and mindful of each participant's meanings which varied and

were subjective based on individual life experiences of the participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These bracketing techniques allowed the researcher to focus on collecting rich data.

Summary of Reliability and Validity

Ensuring that the study was both reliable and valid was of the utmost importance to the researcher. Without reliability and validity, the study will not be able to successfully add to existing literature or inform higher education marketers because the findings will not be trusted or able to be applied to other institutions. Therefore, the researcher utilized multiple strategies to ensure the study is both reliable and valid. To ensure reliability or consistency, the researcher documented the interview questions in an interview guide and used it to conduct interviews. This process ensured that each participant was asked the same initial questions in the same manner. Additionally, the researcher thoroughly documented the codes used to create themes, with titles, descriptions, and examples of the data collected.

The researcher used strategies from the researchers, participants, reviewers, and readers' lenses (Creswell, 2016). These included utilizing multiple data sources for triangulation, saturation, member checking, and using a thick description. The use of these strategies resulted in the findings being deemed accurate, comprehensive, and trustworthy (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Cypress, 2017).

Ethical Assurance

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), ethical assurance plans discuss and explain how the researcher protected each participant and maintained a high ethical standard throughout the research study. To preserve scholarly work in qualitative research, it is imperative that the researcher maintain ethical behavior and protect each research participant (Yin, 2018). The first step to being taken by the researcher was obtaining IRB approval (approval number IRB-FY21-

22-770) prior to recruiting participants for this study. Once obtained, the researcher took the following ethical guidelines regarding ethical assurance: (a) reviewed benefits and risks regarding the appropriateness of using human subjects, (b) provided each participant a consent to act as a research subject that outlines what the study is about, what the participant is asked to do, risks and benefits, and confidentiality, (c) ensured that each participant knew that he could withdraw from the study at any time, and (d) kept all data that was collected safely secured in a password-protected file on a password-protected computer (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Following these outlined ethical guidelines protects each participant's rights and ensures trustworthy, ethical qualitative research.

Summary of Section 2 and Transition

Section 2 discussed the research method and design, participant selection process, data collection method, data analysis process, and the research and validity strategies used in this study. Institutions were selected for this qualitative multiple-case study based on their location and individual participants recruited through purposeful sampling. The researcher conducted interviews and used a coding procedure to look for themes during the analysis stage. The researcher ensured reliability and validity by using several strategies, including consistency in interviewing and coding, triangulation and saturation, and bracketing. The next section of this research study is the presentation of the research study's findings, including a discussion of themes, application to professional practice, and recommendations for action and further study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

This study was developed to explore the perception of reverse discrimination through the implementation of unofficial ‘gender quotas’ as an affirmative action Human Resource Management Strategy (HRMS) in Northwest Georgia prisons from the point of view of male correctional officers. Section 3 summarized the study results and their application to the human resources profession. In this section, the researcher presented an overview of the study, the results of the findings, described applications to human resources, addressed a gap in the literature, provided recommendations regarding the phenomena, and recommendations for future study. In addition, biblical application and personal reflections on the study are discussed. This section then concludes with a summary of the conclusions.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to record (i.e., through the means of interviews) the perception of male correctional officers between the ages of 18 and 60 in Northwest Georgia regarding the use of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS to reduce the disparate of female officers and the potential these policies have in creating reverse discrimination. It also expanded on how the perception of reverse discrimination impacts fairness, justice, and retaliation. Additionally, it contributed to gap reduction relating to perceptions of injustice, discrimination, and retaliatory behavior in the field of corrections. Prior research has noted that unofficial ‘gender quota’ strategies were used in political and state selection processes (Hughes et al., 2019). Additional research has indicated that this led to a perception of reverse discrimination (O'Brien & Rickne, 2016) and an unjust system by others by the dominant group (Morgenroth & Ryan, 2018).

This study was designed to focus on three central questions. The first question focused on unofficial ‘gender quotas’ and reverse discrimination regarding male correctional officers. The second question focused on unofficial ‘gender quotas’ and organizational justice regarding male correctional officers. Finally, the third question focused on unofficial ‘gender quotas’ and retaliation regarding male correctional officers. Effective affirmative action HRMS policies can assist in avoiding reverse discrimination (Dorbin et al., 2016), disparate impact (Fa, 2016), lowered organizational justice (Morgenroth & Ryan, 2018), negative outcomes such as retaliation and negative work climate (Leibbrandt et al., 2018) and turnover (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019).

The researcher utilized triangulation of the data through an in-depth literature review, participant interviews, and member checking. Before the interview commencement, the researcher used the literature review to compile potential questions relevant to the research questions. She then cross-referenced the interview questions with the research questions to identify those more relevant to the topic of discussion and weed out the “weak” questions. Once she identified ‘strong’ questions, she submitted those to her chair for review and finalization. Once the data collection process was completed, the researcher compiled and presented the data for participants to review via a follow-up email. This email follow-up allowed participants to add clarification to their responses, offered accurate feedback, and protected them by ensuring nothing was misrepresented (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher utilized the initial participants’ interviews and the member checking for data triangulation and determining the accuracy of the collected data.

After IRB approval, the researcher reached out to correctional facilities in the Northwest Georgia area for participation in the research study. Once permission was granted, the researcher

handed out recruitment flyers within the vicinity of the correctional facilities that included the researcher's school email. The researcher identified the population within the geographical region districts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, and 14. Of the 11,533 GDC correctional officers currently employed, the researcher considered 335 officers for this research study because they met the geographical region requirement. Using purposeful sampling, the researcher identified a participant pool of 12-15. The purpose of using this method was to allow participants to be chosen according to characteristics relevant to the study (Palinkas et al., 2015) and to prevent oversaturating the data to the point where additional information or themes could no longer be observed through the interviews (Boddy, 2016).

After the researcher identified participants that met the stringent requirements of the study, she reached out to those participants via email invitation. Each email invite included a copy of IRB approval, consent form, and demographic questionnaire with a request to schedule a one-on-one interview. In addition, interviews were scheduled via video conferencing through WebEx and Skype with the request that the participant complete and return both attachments before the interview. The interview process took four weeks to complete. During the interviews, each participant answered 14 semi-structured questions to capture their perspectives and experiences regarding affirmative action HRMS. The use of motivational interviewing helped draw out rich, descriptive responses to the questions and assist in recognizing the need for clarification.

The researcher voice-recorded the interviews using an audio recorder. After each interview, the researcher thanked the participant and reminded each that a copy of the transcript would be emailed to them for review. Additionally, the researcher assigned each participant an alphanumeric code and reminded each participant that all identifying information would be

removed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. The alphanumeric codes were categorized into two groups based on correctional facility. The group number is indicated in the first four characters of the alphanumeric code.

For data analysis and theme identification, the researcher used NVivo Pro 12, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft Excel software. The researcher identified four (4) main themes with multiple subthemes through the data collection and analysis. These themes included (1) career motivation, (2) affirmative action, (3) gender HRMS, and (4) behavior/climate. In addition, according to Yin (2017), emerging patterns and themes within a multiple-case study design allowed the researcher to investigate the data within and across both cases. Those themes included (1) fairness and trust perception, (2) reverse discrimination, and (3) behavior/climate.

Presentation of the Findings

This section disclosed the dissertation research findings. This research study was designed to address three research questions. The discussion and findings of this study were organized around the findings of these three questions. Additionally, the research study results improved the current literature reviewed in the preceding sections. The research questions were:

RQ1. To what extent, if any, does the implementation of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS impact male correctional officers’ experiences regarding reverse discrimination?

RQ2. To what extent, if any, does the attitudes of male correctional officers towards the use of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS impact their perception of organizational justice?

RQ3: How has the implementation of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS influenced retaliation among male correctional officers?

The purpose of this study was to assist the business of correctional facilities in grasping the effects of affirmative action HRMS regarding male correctional officers' perception of fairness, discrimination, and justice. Additionally, it expands on the affirmative action knowledge base of those studying the advantages (benefits) and disadvantages (cons) of constructing and maintaining affirmative action HRMS. The aim of this qualitative multiple case study was to (through the means of interviews) record the perception of male correctional officers between the ages of 18 and 60 in Northwest Georgia regarding the use of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS to reduce the disparate treatment of female officers, in addition to the potential these policies have in creating reverse discrimination. Additionally, it will expand on how the perception of reverse discrimination impacts fairness, justice, and retaliation.

Background of Participants Visualization

The researcher interviewed 13 male correctional officers who met the stringent requirements in the preceding sections. Since this study aims to investigate the phenomena of reverse discrimination created through the implementation of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS; and to explore how the phenomena of reverse discrimination and fairness affect the dominant group's view on procedural justice and lead to retaliatory behavior, the number of participants selected in the research study varied among different correctional facilities. Additionally, the interview questions' responses established themes documented in the subsequent sections.

The researcher obtained general demographic information about each participant. This information included marital status, age, ethnicity, education level, religious affiliation, length of time spent in corrections, and rank/position level. Collecting this demographic information may

assist in determining if the officer's demographics played a role in their perceptions (see Table 4).

Table 4

Participant Demographics

Identifier	Age Group	Rank	Marital Status	Ethnicity	Education	Religious Affiliation	Years in Corrections
Grp1M1	54-60	SGT	Married	Caucasian	High	Christian/Catholic	16-20
Grp1M2	54-60	COII	Single	Caucasian	Bachelor	Christian/Catholic	30+
Grp1M3	35-44	COII	Single	Caucasian	Associate	Atheist/None	6-10
Grp1M4	35-44	COII	Married	Caucasian	Trade	Christian/Catholic	6-10
Grp1M5	45-54	COII	Married	Caucasian	Associate	Christian/Catholic	26-30
Grp1M6	35-44	SGT	Married	African American	Master	Christian/Catholic	11-15
Grp1M7	45-54	SGT	Married	Caucasian	Trade	Christian/Catholic	26-30
Grp1M8	35-44	LT	Married	Caucasian	Associate	Christian/Catholic	16-20
Grp2M1	25-34	COII	Married	Caucasian	Bachelor	Christian/Catholic	1-5
Grp2M2	54-60	Upper Mgt	Married	Arab	Master	Islam	21-25
Grp2M3	35-44	COII	Single	Caucasian	High	Christian/Catholic	6-10
Grp2M4	35-44	SGT	Married	African American	Associate	Atheist/None	6-10
Grp2M5	54-60	Upper Mgt	Single	Caucasian	Master	Christian/Catholic	30+

Themes Discovered

After collecting the general demographic information of the participants, the researcher constructed the next set of questions to explore the officer's perceptions, attitudes, and experiences regarding their careers and the use of unofficial 'gender quota/gender targeting' affirmative action HRMS as the general subject. According to Braun and Clarke (2017), thematic analysis organizes, analyzes, and reports themes identified in the data set. They also believed that thematic analysis could contribute to generating findings that are believed to provide an

understanding of the data and add to credibility (Braun & Clark, 2017). The steps identified in the thematic analysis are transcription, familiarization /reading, coding, search/review/identify themes, and data finalization (Braun & Clark, 2017).

The researcher slowly played and typed out what was recorded throughout the transcription step. The researcher then played back the recording and read along to ensure that there was not any missing information. This process was done for each interview. Once transcribed, the researcher noted initial coding to familiarize herself with the data. The identified codes were noted on an Excel spreadsheet with the participants' alphanumeric identifiers. This spreadsheet was used in conjunction with NVivo Pro 12 to identify major themes from the data set. The results were then added to the Excel spreadsheet in addition to participant comments that supported the theme. After theme identification, the researcher reviewed all created themes to determine relevancy. Anything determined not relevant was discarded.

While reviewing the dataset, the researcher identified subthemes that were grouped under the major themes. The researcher then analyzed each major theme and subtheme, describing how each fit with the overall study phenomena and participant experiences. The major themes included (1) career motivation, (2) affirmative action, (3) gender HRMS perceptions, and (4) behavior/climate. The data are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5*Visualization of Themes*

Major Theme	Frequency	Subthemes	Frequency
Corrections Career	41	Recruitment	16
		Promotion Motivation	12
		Environment	13
Affirmative Action	43	Fairness Perception	11
		Recommendations	13
Gender HRMS Perceptions	68	Fairness Perception	19
		Missed Promotions	13
		Inadequate Promotions	12
		Sense of Reverse	13
		Discrimination	11
Behavior/Climate	29	Trust Loss	
		Negative Climate	12
		Retaliation/Negative Behavior	17

Once the researcher had completed the theme review and analysis, a cross-case analysis was completed. During the cross-case analysis, the researcher grouped the participants based on the security level of the correctional facility. Group one was closed security (Grp1), and group 2 (Grp2) was medium security. The information for each case was intimately examined for information related to how the participants experienced HRMS related to using gender as a tool for recruitment and promotion while documenting all findings. The researcher identified three cross-case themes. The themes identified in the cross-case analysis were (1) reverse discrimination, (2) fairness and trust perception, and (3) behavior/climate. The data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6*Cross-Case Themes*

Major Theme	Frequency
Reverse Discrimination	14
Fairness and Trust Perception	22
Behavior/Climate	24

Interpretation of Themes

Theme One: Corrections Career. Correctional officers are certified peace officers who work within any correctional institution and are responsible for the control and security of housed inmates (Welters et al., 2020). Though this was not specifically related to the three research questions, it was helpful for the study to understand what motivated the officers to seek employment, promotion motivation, and the environment in which they work. This theme could provide additional insight into the phenomena as a whole and offer insight into future research. The participants' responses to opening questions revealed three subthemes related to the corrections career theme. Those were (1) recruitment, (2) promotion motivation, and (3) description of the workplace environment.

To get an overall view of the themes related to the dataset, the researcher analyzed the common themes under career to get a consensus of all participants' experiences related to the subthemes. The subthemes were the officer's recruitment (i.e., what leads them to corrections), promotion motivation (i.e., their drive for promotions), and environment (i.e., the setting and climate in which they work). The common themes regarding the group's recruitment were military, change, a sense of community, benefits (e.g., pay, retirement, etc.), needing a job, and helping others/making a difference. The common themes regarding the group's promotion motivation were none/non-existent, desired benefits (e.g., pay, retirement, etc.), subpar

skills/abilities of others, and family. The common themes regarding the group's environment were dangerous, dislike, jaded, hard, antisocial, enjoyable, unpredictable, challenging, negative, rewarding, and seeing the worst in people.

Theme Two: Affirmative Action. Affirmative action is a policy or a practice that favors a protected class, such as race, nationality, and gender, and matches that class's available representation (Barrett, 2019). Historically, minorities have been highly underrepresented in corrections and have received less favorable treatment. This underrepresentation has resulted in the need for affirmative action policies. Though affirmative action policies are needed to ensure equality, organizations must consider the dominant group's perception regarding how these policies are set forth and create a solution to prevent possible negative perceptions. The affirmative action theme describes two subthemes. The participants' responses to interview questions 1-4 revealed two subthemes related to the affirmative action theme. Those were (1) fairness perception and (2) recommendations.

To get an overall view of the themes found related to the dataset, the researcher analyzed the common themes under affirmative action to get a consensus on all participants' experiences related to the subthemes. The common themes regarding the group's fairness regarding affirmative action were don't think about it, don't complain about/mention it, slippery slope, and loss of trust/morale/loyalty. The common themes regarding the group's recommendations were based on skill/qualifications, integrity, following policy, fairness/equality should reflect society, and has no place in corrections.

Theme Three: Gender HRMS Perception. Though recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017) data indicated female correctional officers represent 31% of first-line supervisors, females are still considered tokens (Batton & Wright, 2019), and a need for gender-focused HRMS.

Gender HRMS policies focus on creating gender equality and reducing disparate treatment (Crusmac, 2019). The participants' responses to interview questions 2-7 revealed five subthemes related to the gender HRMS theme. Those were (1) fairness perception, (2) missed promotions, (3) inadequate promotions, (4) a sense of reverse discrimination, and (5) trust loss.

To get an overall view of the themes found related to the dataset, the researcher analyzed the common themes under gender HRMS perception to get a consensus on all participants' experiences related to the subthemes. The common themes regarding the group's fairness perception of gender targeting HRMS were not fair, should not be used, less qualified, no issue if qualified/related to the inmate population, just stay out of law enforcement, negative, 'even out' the numbers, should be equal recruitment, caused a strain, some functions are better performed by a female, important to have 'well rounded' agency, gender or any other descriptor not fair, diversity is needed, creates strife, no issues with recruitment if used to diversify, and very poor and problematic.

The common themes regarding the group's perception of missed promotions where it does not go unseen, lost opportunity, sexist, yes due to lack of female representation, anger, impacted career motivation, and hurting good officers. The common themes regarding the group's perception of inadequate promotions included the following comments: she was a train wreck, ended bad, bad and getting worse, female did not care, unqualified, less qualified, and poor leadership. The common themes regarding the group's perception of a sense of reverse discrimination were profanity, not experienced, experienced first/second hand, and officer gender should match inmate population gender. The common themes regarding the group's perception of trust loss were lost in the system, has become about 'who you know,' of course, yes, when given anyone an unfair advantage, lost trust in the promotional system, and neutral.

Theme Four: Behavior/ Climate. Swamy et al. (2020) defined workplace climate as the psychological impact of the work environment from the employees' perception. Whereas workplace behavior is any action(s) taken by the employee (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015). The behavior/climate theme describes two subthemes related to the perception of negative behavior and shifts' climate experienced in relation to the use of gender HRMS. The participants' responses to interview questions 8-9 revealed two subthemes related to the behavior/climate theme. Those were (1) climate and (2) retaliation.

To get an overall view of the themes found related to the dataset, the researcher analyzed the common themes under behavior and climate to get a consensus on all participants' experiences related to the subthemes. The common themes regarding the group's perception of the climate were negative, annoyed, low morale, anger, worry for safety, unhappy, happy if deserving, quietness, inmates feel/know this, dangerous, loss of respect, and bad attitude. The common themes regarding the group's perception of negative behavior were off-handed/sly comments, explicit words related to the female/situation, social media, not witnessed, gossip, starting rumors, dismissive, second-guessing orders, created lies, moved shifts, challenging behavior, and labeling.

Interpretation of Cross-Case Themes

Security Level. A multiple case study extensively examines a single phenomenon within a real live context (Yin, 2018). Within this single phenomenon exists separate units (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The design includes the use of replication across separate cases for data collection. In a multiple-case study, a cross-case analysis begins by synthesizing details and comparing the data collected from all cases (Yin, 2018). Welch et al. (2020) described the conclusions developed from the replication process and cross-case analysis as robust and reliable for

extending theory. By separating the cases by security level, the researcher adds to the reliability of the study.

The security level of a correctional facility is determined by the inmate population housed within it. According to the GDC website, a close security correctional facility houses offenders with a history of assaults, a high risk of escape, major adjustment issues and/or crimes, and detainees for other serious crimes on file

(<http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/Divisions/Facilities/StatePrisons>). A detainer is “a request by another law enforcement agency to hold an offender pending other charges or actions”

(<http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/Divisions/Facilities/StatePrisons>). These offenders housed here never leave the prison and require constant correctional officer supervision. Whereas medium-security houses offenders with no major adjustment problems may work outside the facility’s fence and must be under constant correctional officer supervision

(<http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/Divisions/Facilities/StatePrisons>). The themes identified in a cross-case analysis based on security were (1) reverse discrimination, (2) fairness and trust perception, and (3) behavior/climate.

Reverse Discrimination. Reverse discrimination describes themes related to the perception of reverse discrimination effects in relation to the use of gender HRMS. Question 6 was related to and provided the data for the reverse discrimination theme.

Fairness and Trust Perception. Fairness and trust perception or FHT organizational justice (FHT OJ) describes themes related to the perception of fairness in relation to the use of gender HRMS. Questions 2-3 were related to and provided data on the fairness and trust perception theme.

Behavior/Climate. Behavior and climate describe themes related to behaviors and workplace climate in relation to the use of gender HRMS. Questions 7-8 were related to and provided the data behavior/climate theme.

Representation and Visualization of the Data

The researcher utilized thematic coding to analyze the qualitative data obtained from the interviews conducted. This process assists with analyzing the meaning of both the words and sentence structure. By using this process, the researcher was able to take relevant information and group it together based on the participants' responses related to their perception of using gender as an HRMS, discrimination, and retaliatory (negative behavior), in addition to fairness perception. Through this means, the researcher identified four major themes: corrections, affirmative action, gender HRMS, and Behavior/Climate. Table 7 provides a visual representation of the participants' responses grouped under the corrections theme.

Table 7

Coding Qualitative Data: Corrections Theme

Participant Identifier	Interview Extract
Grp1M1	Recruitment: It just kinda happened and fell in my lap.
	Promotion Motivation: I only wanted the one and I got it. There was no time I wanted to be in charge of a shift.
	Environment: The first 14 years didn't feel much accomplishment or sense of purpose. After 14 years in 2004 got promoted to transfer SGT. There were good jobs and sweet details but mostly didn't like it.
Grp1M2	Recruitment: I chose it because of my lifelong fascination with the military and police and it worked with my college schedule.
	Promotion Motivation: I'm ambitious and want to excel.
	Environment: My experience has been a roller coaster of highs and lows. I love it and cannot think of doing anything else.
Grp1M3	Recruitment: Honestly initially because of the fact that every day 'at work' had to be different, and that I enjoy working with people.
	Promotion Motivation: Advancement for my own career, and to become a better officer.

	<p>Environment: I never stopped enjoying the fact I was right about never working the same day twice, and I have learned so much about cultures/people that I actually learned more about myself. So, in my opinion, a very positive one.</p>
Grp1M4	<p>Recruitment: At the time it was a steppingstone to probation.</p>
	<p>Promotion Motivation: Not worth it. Not interested.</p>
	<p>Environment: Mentally draining</p>
Grp1M5	<p>Recruitment: I chose the field of law enforcement because I was fresh out of the military and worked within the civilian sector for a short time and was hard to adjust to the lack of structure compared to the military.</p>
	<p>Promotion Motivation: My motivations to seek promotion in my agency were near non-existent.</p>
	<p>Environment: Structured environment with enough variety in my workday to feel challenged. My career in law enforcement was rewarding. There are some facets of the job that can make you jaded and somewhat antisocial around civilians but all and all, I enjoyed the work.</p>
Grp1M6	<p>Recruitment: Honestly, I got a phone call from a relative.</p>
	<p>Promotion Motivation: Promotion motivation is based on more Money usually.</p>
	<p>Environment: Different, every day isn't the same. Now, I don't think I can do anything else now.</p>
Grp1M7	<p>Recruitment: I needed a job, and it was either that or McDonalds. There was an ad in the paper, and it paid more than McDonalds.</p>
	<p>Promotion Motivation: To promote my sup at the time said look around you and just look at the officers around you and ask yourself do you want to work for that person or them work for you. I said I don't want to be in charge, and he replied by pointing at a guy and said that guy. And said do you like that guy, I said no he has a (explicit word) personality. And He said if you don't get promoted you will work for that guy and his (explicit word) personality will be coming at you. And there was a certain amt of pressure from our people higher than me that I needed to promote. Because the guy with the (explicit word) personality was an idiot and they said we can sleep better knowing that you are running the prison at night instead of him.</p>
	<p>Environment: Very challenging. It has changed my way of thinking. It made me realize there are a lot of different viewpoints that people come into life with. Not everyone views life the way I do. And for sure that my values about what is right and wrong is not like a lot of other people's. Also, violent.</p>
Grp1M8	<p>Recruitment: I chose to work in Corrections because I was working at what I felt at the time, was a dead-end job. I was looking for something that would offer a retirement. There was a common belief among people that state jobs had incredible benefits and a good pension. Compared to what the mill was offering, this belief was correct. Going to work in corrections was one of the best things I could have done for myself at the time.</p>
	<p>Promotion Motivation: For the first four years, I had no desire to seek a</p>

promotion within the department. Once people who started after me and felt less qualified than me began getting promoted, I thought it was time to try to move up. I had a bumpy start to being a supervisor.

But when things began to change at facility 1 (Gangs became prevalent, officer recruitment and retention began to suffer), I saw a possible opportunity at facility 2. I was fortunate to receive a promotion to Lieutenant.

Environment: Gangs have become prevalent; officer recruitment and retention have begun to suffer. It can negatively change you. I can see two people get into a fight and not think twice about what is happening. I have witnessed people die and think, "Oh, no, I have a lot of paperwork to do." I believe this is not an excellent way to see things, but it is part of who I am after witnessing some pretty nasty things.

Grp2M1	Recruitment: I chose a career in corrections because I thought that I would be given an opportunity to help people who were underserved.
	Promotion Motivation: I was motivated to seek promotions based on the pay rate and job capabilities.
Grp2M2	Environment: It has not been as rewarding or fulfilling as I had imagined
	Recruitment: To Make a difference.
	Promotion Motivation: Very good if you are flexible and willing to relocate. There are many promotion opportunities.
Grp2M3	Environment: Very rewarding
	Recruitment: Because of retirement and benefits.
	Promotion: I just want to stay in the position I am in right now. At this point, just waiting closer to retirement to promote up.
Grp2M4	Environment: Overall good.
	Recruitment: I needed a job and it seemed like a good idea.
	Promotion Motivation: Very motivated. I did not want to stay a CO the rest of my career. I have a family and want to make sure I can take care of them
	Environment: It has been interesting. It has had its up and downs. But, it could have been worse. I have seen good and bad officers come through. Some female officers with questionable morals as the theme for a hot minute was inappropriate relations with inmates. There is a lot of stress and altercations.
Grp2M5	Recruitment: I am not sure. It has been a long time. I would say benefits, helping the community. I felt like it was a good fit for me. I enjoyed what I did, and the benefits were good.
	Promotion Motivation: It has went well for me. I managed to get to upper management before retirement. Having a degree helped. At a certain level, they prefer to promote those who have an education.
	Environment: It has been good. Hard work but good. I made it where I wanted before I retired.

Table 8 provides a visual representation of the participants' responses grouped under the affirmative action theme.

Table 8

Coding Qualitative Data: Affirmative Action Theme

Identifier	Interview Extract
Grp1M1	<p>Fairness Perception: This, I have no opinion on fairness. I learned to compartmentalize. Don't worry. Do my job. Let others do what they do. I have a team. I worry about that. I tell the inmate the same. Whatever the other inmate is doing, you must do your time.</p> <p>Recommendations: I think it would be nice to pull the application without knowing who. Things need to be for muscle, things for education, etc. The good ole boy system needs to be gone.</p>
Grp1M2	<p>Fairness Perception: I dislike any affirmative action policies but understand the need.</p> <p>Recommendations: Go with the most qualified and try to be fair in the selection process. It should be fair and based on performance and qualifications. Sadly, this is often not the case. Great improvements have been made since I started. But there is still a way to go.</p>
Grp1M3	<p>Fairness Perception: Not fair. But never bring up an issue that you have with it, 'or else.'</p> <p>Recommendations: I have no recommendation. Integrity trumps politics every time, (if consistent.)</p>
Grp1M4	<p>Fairness Perception: I have not really experienced it first-hand.</p> <p>Recommendations: Follow policies do the best you can in our career and treat others fairly</p>
Grp1M5	<p>Fairness Perception: Hire yes/promote No. Affirmative action hiring, it is important to have representatives reflective of the community an agency serves. As far as affirmative action promotions, I feel you can't legislate the respect and trust required to work within a team such as law enforcement.</p> <p>Recommendations: As far as recommendations to agencies regarding affirmative action policies, I feel it is paramount the rank and file understands the importance of a well-rounded and diverse agency.</p>
Grp1M6	<p>Fairness Perception: Neutral on this subject.</p> <p>Recommendations: No. The Title VII and Civil Rights of 1964 laid the groundwork for discrimination.</p>
Grp1M7	<p>Fairness Perception: Umm didn't know we had any affirmative action policies. I thought affirmative action was over.</p> <p>Recommendations: I don't have an answer to that. I mean if a female is a decent candidate for the job hire or promotes her. But that needs to be based on their ability to do the job and not their sex.</p>
Grp1M8	<p>Fairness Perception: To put it bluntly, the GDC has hurt itself for decades by</p>

	<p>not promoting the most qualified person. Instead, they often opted to promote someone based on loyalty or friendship. The definition of nepotism exists because someone had to describe a problem in our society. We have all heard of “the good old boy system” because it exists and continues to be a problem in our community.</p> <p>Recommendations: Promote the most qualified person regardless of gender, race, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or age. The workforce at the GDC is a reflection of society and for the command staff to stick to antiquated policies is ignorant and quite frankly, puts officers’ lives at risk. Simply put the GDC should “get over themselves” and try to catch up with an ever-changing society. I believe that fair recruitment and promotion policies must be based on a few factors. Recruiting the right individuals for a company can sometimes be a crapshoot, but some things can make an individual stand out against the competition. Experience, education, work history, and a willingness and desire to obtain a specific position should be considered. I believe all of these should be used for promotional opportunities as well.</p>
Grp2M1	<p>Fairness Perception: I think that it’s important to make sure that it’s fair across the board. a job offer or promotion should be given to the best candidate regardless of gender, race, age, religion, etc.</p> <p>Recommendations: I think you have to look at what makes it such a male-dominated organization and see how you can make it more appealing to women whether it’s safety concerns, job security, work-life balance, etc.</p>
Grp2M2	<p>Fairness Perception: Affirmative action should not play a role in hiring or promoting. Currently and for the past couple of years, we are having difficulties finding employees male or female.</p> <p>Recommendations: New generations have different needs, and we are not meeting their needs. GDC has to adapt to recruit</p>
Grp2M3	<p>Fairness Perception: Regarding affirmative action hiring/promoting policies, do your best and wait your turn.</p> <p>Recommendations: None</p>
Grp2M4	<p>Fairness Perception: I think, for the most part, it is a necessity. Because no matter how advanced we become as humans. You will always have those people who are racist or sexist. Unfortunately, it is not always so obvious. Without these policies, we could be missing out on some (explicit word) good officers and see more discrimination.</p> <p>Recommendations: Be clear, be consistent, and yes take into account affirmative action policies. But don’t (explicit word) on your dedicated employees because they are outside of that policy. You should not be discriminating against anyone when making hiring or promoting decisions. Simple as that.</p>
Grp2M5	<p>Fairness Perception: No. Performance alone and tenure will not earn anyone a promotion as long as these policies remain in place</p> <p>Recommendations: Hire and promote based on tenure, experience, and attitude as well as attendance to the job and performance of duties.</p>

Table 9 provides a visual representation of the participants' responses grouped under the gender HRMS perception theme.

Table 9

Coding Qualitative Data: Gender HRMS Theme

Identifier	Interview Extract
Grp1M1	Fairness Perception: No, these are not fair. However, I have really only notice gender as a factor on the promotion side not the hiring side.
	Missed Promotions: There have been. The negative parts stick out.
	Inadequate Promotions: There was one. She got to captain and then lost it. I don't know if anything said out loud but in private they were this (explicit word) got the promotion (explicit word). Cocky lil (explicit word). Things are so bad and getting worse.
	Sense of Discrimination: Of course, it has. Well, this was not promotion but position assignment.
	Trust Loss: Loss yes. But because of the good ole boy system.
Grp1M2	Fairness Perception: I don't find them fair. But I understand why they are used. However, due to the smaller number of qualified females that apply for law enforcement jobs, I understand their case.
	Missed Promotions: I was given a position into a Segregation unit and a female complained because it was said I would do a better job, but I was denied it due to her complaining.
	Inadequate Promotions: Yes, we recently have had a female promoted to Sergeant and get a desirable post but hasn't held a true security post.
	Sense of Discrimination: Not currently towards myself.
	Trust Loss: Of course. And then there is a safety issue when erroneously placed in roles of supervision.
Grp1M3	Fairness Perception: I can't say that I have ever seen a 'gender quota' in any sense other than an exclusive (gender inmate population) facility hoping to hire in one side or the other. Usually, a female prison needing female officers' type of situation. Only in that specific situations, I find it fair.
	Missed Promotions: Yes, due to their being a scenario that had left a shift without a female supervisor of any rank, for a female unit at a facility, and even though policy stated being a female to supervise was not mandatory, that was all that was even allowed to apply for the position/
	Inadequate Promotions: The time I spoke of. A rookie female officer actually received that position over the more qualified officers (who had even filed protests).
	Sense of Discrimination: Quotas always are discriminatory in nature, in some way shape or form.
	Trust Loss: Yes, anything that gives an advantage (in ways you cannot control) in chances to advance one's own career, is hard to deal with.

Grp1M4	Fairness Perception: We need both genders at prison. Equal recruitment.
	Missed Promotions: Not firsthand.
	Inadequate Promotions: They make up positions and time to accommodate females to keep working here.
	Sense of Discrimination: I do not feel that the use of unofficial 'gender quotas' has created a sense of discrimination against you or a coworker. I believe we may have almost half females some positions they are gender specific and that's sometimes.
	Trust Loss: If used, I would say a loss of trust in the promotional system as a whole.
Grp1M5	Fairness Perception: I don't feel gender-based recruitment is fair or necessary.
	Missed Promotions: Yes, gender has impacted progression.
	Inadequate Promotions: Yes, I have seen women promoted over men. one instance where a female who did not test well enough to be eligible for promotion to receive a promotion as "penance" from misconduct by a supervisory agent. The appearance of the promotion as "shut up" money did not set well among those who were eligible for promotion. This situation goes beyond gender "quotas" so it may not be relevant to this survey.
	Sense of Discrimination: Though I have never felt or heard any speak of gender-based recruitment as something that is discriminatory toward myself or others as long as the candidate is qualified to be hired. But it is not fair if gender is the motivating factor.
	Trust Loss: Promotion based on affirmative action alone is a slippery slope and will lead to moral, loyalty, and trust issues between the administration and those adversely affected by the promotion.
Grp1M6	Fairness Perception: Nope a woman should not be promoted just because she is a woman. Same to be said of a man. It is biased and shouldn't be allowed.
	Missed Promotions: Not really because there are not a lot of females wanting to work in corrections.
	Inadequate Promotions: Not to my knowledge
	Sense of Discrimination: Not for gender. I feel this is more likely to be used promoting an ethnic group.
	Trust Loss: Yea it would.
Grp1M7	Fairness Perception: I think using gender is actually needed sometimes depending on the type of prison that you are at. A female shift OIC can make it appear to the predatory inmates as though the prison as weak. It is just some of these (explicit word) inmates think you are property, never be more than that, and will never respect a woman. So, when you get a bunch of these hood rats slinging dope. They aren't gonna give a (explicit word) about woman. They grew up watching daddy beat the breaks off mom and that is what they do. All they understand is violence.
	Missed Promotions: Gender has caused a female to get promoted over a male. A female got promoted. She was in the top three and so was this other guy. But even prior to the promotion board taking place. When it became known that this

	<p>female submitted for the promotion board, everyone knew that she would be promoted no matter what. As long as she was in the top three and she was.</p> <p>Inadequate Promotions: Another female got promoted over a male coworker and that female was an absolute train wreck and everyone knew it.</p> <p>Sense of Discrimination: No.</p> <p>Trust Loss: I don't know. I guess I am neutral on this.</p>
Grp1M8	<p>Fairness Perception: I feel that women have made great strides in the equality of the workplace. But I don't feel that just because someone is a woman they should be chosen over a man who may be better suited or qualified for the job.</p> <p>Missed Promotions: Yes I have seen gender cause a male to lose an opportunity. When the GDC realized that they were behind in promoting women, I saw women promoted that I felt may not have deserved the position.</p> <p>Inadequate Promotions: I know of a female that everyone considered unfit to lead; however, she was promoted to Sergeant because of a sexual relationship with a Unit Manager at the time.</p> <p>Sense of Discrimination: Despite being "passed over" for promotion, there is usually quite a bit of support for the new supervisor because of the intimate nature of the work. Don't get me wrong, people get upset, but those who understand their self-worth know that their time will come soon enough. Just be patient.</p> <p>Trust Loss: Yes. Hard to trust an unfair system.</p>
Grp2M1	<p>Fairness Perception: I think that it's important to welcome women into a field that is predominantly men, but I don't believe that a female should get hired or promoted over a male based solely on the fact that she is female and not based on qualifications and job performance.</p> <p>Missed Promotions: I personally have not felt that gender was an issue with progression for me, but I have seen gender used for progression to roles that affected some of my coworkers.</p> <p>Inadequate Promotions: Yes, I have seen several promotions from a particular group of women who knew a high-ranking prison official from outside of work. They were moved into "better" jobs and promoted quickly.</p> <p>Sense of Discrimination: I haven't felt gender quotas affect me personally based on the low number of women coming into the job field, but I do personally know people that it has affected.</p> <p>Trust Loss: I have learned that it doesn't always matter how qualified you are when a job opportunity or promotion is available. There are a lot more politics in place and gender as well as "who you know" plays a large part in promotion opportunities. Cannot trust a system like this.</p>
Grp2M2	<p>Fairness Perception: Very poor. Gender should not play a role in recruitment or promotion. Best person rule.</p> <p>Missed Promotions: No.</p> <p>Inadequate Promotions: No</p> <p>Sense of Discrimination: I am not aware.</p> <p>Trust Loss: Yes.</p>

Grp2M3

Fairness Perception: Yes, if related to Population. I don't think a female should work in a male's prison or a male work in a female's prison.

Missed Promotions: Promotion has always been who the "higher ups" want.

Inadequate Promotions: Most of the time, if there is not a female supervisor, a female will get it. they always keep one of the females an LT.

Sense of Discrimination: No.

Trust Loss: N/A

Grp2M4

Fairness Perception: Not Fair when using gender as recruitment or promotion, I find it a fair practice only if gender is not the only factor. However, if gender or anything that eliminates a candidate simply because they need to check a box. Yea. That is bull (explicit word). I mean. I have worked with smart women who can do the job and know their policies. Put in their time. One lady is a SGT I have worked under many times. I have no issue with that. It is when I lose out for something I think I deserve because I am a man. Ridiculous.

Missed Promotions: Sometimes it feels like you gotta be in the good ole boy system. However, I cannot prove it, but it was obvious that some women were promoted because of them being a woman. I had put in and boarded for a Sergeant position and lost it to two women with less time than me. I was (explicit word) mad. I did not want to even come in the next few days after it was announced. I paid my dues and got the shaft. After that, I lost a lot of trust in the system. I almost stopped trying to advance in the ranks after that.

Inadequate Promotions: There was a female that got promoted. She was horrible to work under and when she failed, she supposedly blamed her lack of experience and the fact she got the job for doing acts. If you know what I mean. Funny story on that, she ended up getting caught up with bringing in contraband in and got arrested. There was another instance a woman was promoted. That girl was crazy. She was promoted after me. But I know some others that deserved that spot. She made everyone's life (explicit word) for 12 hours. She ended up having an affair with another officer. Lost her mind when he dumped her, and she used her position trying to get him fired. They ended up firing her because of harassment.

Sense of Discrimination: Yes, I know equality is needed and that we need policies to make sure discrimination is not present. But to say oh. Sorry dude we need a chick to fill this spot. Piss on your time and dedication. Maybe next time. Is that not discrimination. Could you imagine if someone said oh, you are a chick so you can come in here for the dog and pony show but no chance you will get it. That would cause Atlanta to come in and clear out some folks. I want to say though. Yes, I agree with like seeking out to recruit females. Show that this is not a man's world. Women are just as competent and sometimes more competent than a man. And another thing I want to point out. Since we are discussing discrimination and affirmative action. When the word affirmative action hire or promotion is used, that is strictly saying that had that person been a man, they would not have gotten a job. I mean. It is not just white men getting the shaft here. I know one of the guys that should have gotten one of those slots as Black. He eventually got his promotion, and he is a (explicit word) good

	officer.
	Trust Loss: Loss trust in the system.
Grp2M5	<p>Fairness Perception: I believe gender should not play a role in hiring or promotion. That being said there, women seem to be preferred over men for the role Warden at a female correctional by the DOC. However, I knew a Warden at a female facility who would strongly disagree with this practice. He once said, the fact is when you have a female in control of other females there is going to be conflict.</p> <p>Missed Promotions: I have seen females promote over more qualified males. So, yes, I say that it has had an impact. Me personally though, I don't look at gender or color when promoting, the key to success is to surround yourself with loyal, competent people.</p> <p>Inadequate Promotions: When I was at (removed name of facility), I hired this black woman that wore a hijab to her interview. Of course, she was of the Muslim faith. So, I very carefully chose my words about telling her about the dress code. We'll time went on and in a couple years she put in for sergeant. She topped the board, but by this time I had realized she was an educated idiot. Well, the next sergeant board she blew it away. First again. I picked around her. By this time, I knew she was an idiot. Third sergeant. Board she blew it away again. I got to thinking, now if it gets out that this girl finished #1 on three straight promotion boards and I picked around her three times it's going to look like discrimination. So, I promoted her. She came right out of the gate doing stupid (explicit word). Letting one officer count a building, doing a of and not doing any paperwork or getting the inmate checked by medical then I don't remember the other situation, but it was something to do with handcuffing an inmate in lockdown. So, she was still on working test and I took her stripes. Well, she appealed it and her only defense was that she was sorry. Do you believe they made me give her rank back. From then on I just let her continue to do stupid (explicit word).</p> <p>Sense of Discrimination: I do not have any recollection of a coworker or myself being discriminated against because of gender.</p> <p>Trust Loss: Who wouldn't.</p>

Table 10 provides a visual representation of the participants' responses grouped under the Behavior/Climate theme.

Table 10*Coding Qualitative Data: Behavior/Climate Theme*

Identifier	Interview Extract
Grp1M1	<p>Climate: Mostly Negative.</p> <p>Retaliation/Negative Behavior: In my experience no. That kind of activity was more so on social media. I think most of my coworkers just wanted to do the job and go home. I don't doubt this happened.</p>
Grp1M2	<p>Climate: When you see an unqualified individual receive a promotion for reasons other than being the best person considered out of the line-up, morale will almost completely tank for anyone believing this is their real career.</p> <p>Retaliation/Negative Behavior: Males seem to accept it. If we complain we just get looked down on or looked at as being sexist.</p>
Grp1M3	<p>Climate: Morale suffers.</p> <p>Retaliation/Negative Behavior: We just don't talk about it.</p>
Grp1M4	<p>Climate: It changes. It seems that the power they receive usually changes them for the worse.</p> <p>Retaliation/Negative Behavior: I have not firsthand.</p>
Grp1M5	<p>Climate: Creates strife toward the female who was promoted as well as lack of motivation and lower moral based off those promotions.</p> <p>Retaliation/Negative Behavior: Yes, there are negative behaviors when gender is a factor. However, I have never observed retaliation towards a promoted female. I did see a lack of confidence, dismissiveness and second guessing of her orders or plans.</p>
Grp1M6	<p>Climate: Just a general atmosphere situation. Like the whole shift feels it you know they are not happy. But we don't say anything.</p> <p>Retaliation/Negative Behavior: No not witnessed.</p>
Grp1M7	<p>Climate: My experiences of negative behaviors or workplace climate on shift is when a female is promoted, it has caused negative climate.</p> <p>Retaliation/Negative Behavior: Yea I have heard a few people make comments because about female that promoted. Um, I think some people unofficially retaliated because that one female was an absolute train wreck. Well, rumor was there were two that made less than true comments to HR about her touching them because they did not want to be on her shift. And that worked.</p>
Grp1M8	<p>Climate: My experiences is there can be negative behavior and climate. I can say that anytime a female comes on shift there is a climate shift. I think that really pertains to the string of female and inmate relations I have seen over my time.</p> <p>Retaliation/Negative Behavior: There were times when the males that lost out on promotions due to gender, they made sly comments about the female that was promoted over them. Off-handed comment like "you did not deserve the promotion," but an apology usually follows these comments. In corrections, everyone knows everyone and depends on each other at some point, so fences must be mended.</p>

Grp2M1	Climate: I haven't worked on the same shift as a female who was promoted unfairly, so I can't really speak to the changes or environment felt.
	Retaliation/Negative Behavior: I haven't witnessed or experienced retaliation towards a female officer based on gender promotion being a reason.
Grp2M2	Climate: Negative behaviors regardless of gender has a negative impact on shift.
	Retaliation/Negative Behavior: Yes. Others try to challenge her more and question her judgement.
Grp2M3	Climate: Officers on shift get upset. But, they have to put up with it or change shifts.
	Retaliation/Negative Behavior: No. Well. Unless they change shift. I guess that might be considered.
Grp2M4	Climate: Well, it depends. I mean if it is clear the woman got promoted because she deserved it. The entire shift is happy. Well sometimes you get that sexist officer. Blah women shouldn't work here blah. But if it is obvious based on who all boarded, well. Morale goes down. You can feel it in the air. Lots of quietness. And (explicit word) the inmates see that. They know when the officers are playing on the same team. It can be dangerous in that aspect.
	Retaliation/Negative Behavior: I mean like you hear people talk. I mean, once a male officer told his female sergeant that "I wish I was a woman then I could suck (explicit word) and get a promotion". Also heard officers call that particular woman an affirmative action hire. I mean you have things like talking about her behind her back to disregarding orders. Walking off from her. How can you respect someone who is only holding any sort of bars because of something like being a man or a woman. Sometimes it is hard to be mad or take it out on her when really it is those higher up. I mean they made the choice. Offered her the job. What is she gonna do, say no. I mean she wanted the job, or she wouldn't have put in for it.
Grp2M5	Climate: Mostly due to the bad attitudes on shift.
	Retaliation/Negative Behavior: I have heard the usual workplace gossip. "Well, she's so and so's girl" Or she (explicit word) her way to the top. Mainly the usual male ego thing. And having a bad attitude on shift.

Relationship of the Findings

Understanding and analyzing the relationship of the findings are an important aspect of any research study as it allows the ability for the researcher to determine the strength and direction of relationships that exist between the themes or concepts. It then allows for the researcher to provide a detailed discussion of how the findings relate to key areas from the research proposal. Those areas include the research questions, the conceptual framework, anticipated themes, and the literature review.

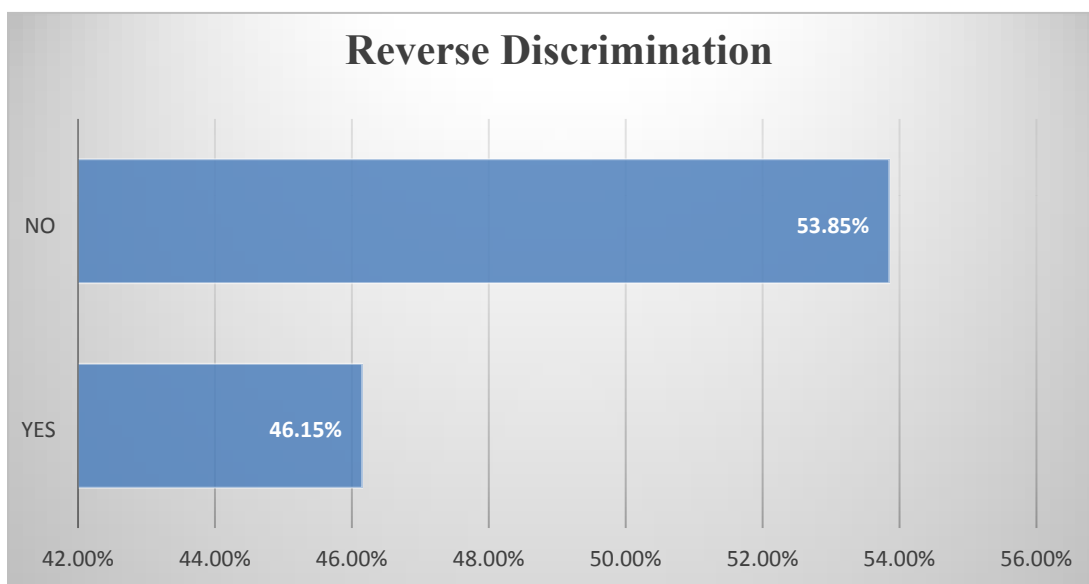
Research Question One. RQ1. To what extent, if any, does the implementation of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS impact male correctional officers’ experiences regarding reverse discrimination?

In reference to this research question, the participants were asked if they felt the use of unofficial ‘gender quotas’ has created a sense of discrimination against you or a coworker? If so, in what ways? If not, why? This theme also relates to the conceptual gender based HRMS and the problem of creating reverse discrimination, with participants providing insight into how they perceive these policies in relation to being discriminated against. This study revealed of the 13 participants, six (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp2M1, and Grp2M4) reported they did perceive it as reverse discrimination, and seven (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M7, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5) reported they did not perceive reverse discrimination.

The dataset below depicts the statistics regarding the perception of reverse discrimination in relation to the use of gender-based affirmative action policies (See Figure 7).

Figure 7

Reverse Discrimination



Of the participants, 53.85% reported they did not experience reverse discrimination when their organization used gender based HRMS. The insight provided by Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M7, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5 contradicted previous findings presented by Russen et al. (2020), Seierstad (2016), Wilkins et al. (2015), and Yu (2018).

Wilkins et al. (2015) conducted a study on the zero-sum beliefs of 181 participants regarding the perception of anti-male bias. It concluded that gender “quotas” led to anger and resentment towards women, creating feelings of victimhood and loss and feeling that they are targets of anti-white or anti-male rhetoric (Wilkins et al., 2015).

Seierstad (2016) conducted a qualitative interview with 19 females who worked in the capacity of non-executive board members regarding the need for both utility and justice rationales for increasing the share of women on boards. During these interviews, it was found that “quota” policies have created the phenomenon of reverse discrimination amongst the dominant group and the belief of preferential treatment when the organization implements hiring decisions and promotions based on “quotas” (Seierstad, 2016).

Yu (2018) conducted a study regarding 201 Protection Border Patrol agents to highlight proactive efforts in recruiting females and explored the recruitment practice in federal law enforcement. This study revealed these policies led to an influx of reverse discrimination suits from men, led to the denunciation of dominant, majority, group discrimination, reverse discrimination, and further implied that “preferential hiring” is paradoxical (Yu, 2018).

Russen et al. (2020) conducted an experiment design that recruited 87 hotel managers to examine the perceptions of managers regarding gender-based promotion strategies regarding gender discrimination and fairness. Their study found that many males perceive those steps, such as using gender ‘quotas’ taken to alleviate inequality, have also led to unfair or biased treatment

towards them and found that anti-male bias has played a role in the perception of gender discrimination.

Though some agreed with the idea of reverse discrimination (as found by the above-mentioned studies) and found them unfair because “and promote based on tenure, experience, and attitude as well as attendance to the job and performance of duties (Grp2M5), 61.5% participants of this study did not provide notations of these findings. The following statements indicate a lack of reverse discrimination from these policies. Grp1M2 stated, “I dislike any affirmative action policies but understand the need.” Grp1M4 stated,

I do not feel that the use of unofficial ‘gender quotas’ has created a sense of discrimination against you or a coworker. I believe we may have almost half the females some positions they are gender specific and that’s sometimes.

Grp1M8 stated,

Despite being ‘passed over’ for promotion, there is usually quite a bit of support for the new supervisor because of the intimate nature of the work. Don’t get me wrong, people get upset, but those who understand their self-worth know that their time will come soon enough.

Grp2M4 stated,

For the most part, it is a necessity. Because no matter how advanced we become as humans, you will always have those people who are racist or sexist. Unfortunately, it is not always so obvious. Without these policies, we could be missing out on some (explicit word) good officers and see more discrimination.

Research Question Two. RQ2. To what extent, if any, does the attitudes of male correctional officers towards the use of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS impact their perception of organizational justice?

In reference to this research question, the participants were asked multiple questions due to the complexity that comes with the idea of fairness, trust, and justice. Those were: (1) How would you describe your perception of fair recruitment and promotion policies?; (2) When using gender as a recruitment or promotion tool, do you find that it is a fair practice towards you and/or your male coworkers? Why?; (3) do you feel about using unofficial ‘gender quota’ or gender-targeted recruitment and promotion policies for correctional officers?; and (4) Do you know of a situation where a female was promoted over a male that seemingly had more experience or qualifications? If so, please explain. This theme also relates to the conceptual gender-based HRMS and the problem of lowered organizational justice, with participants providing insight into how they perceive these policies in relation to their sense of justice, trust, and fairness (FHT OJ).

Justice: Fairness and Trust: Fairness perception is multidimensional and consists of two major categories: fairness outcomes (distributive justice) and fairness process (procedural justice; Russen et al., 2020). These perceptions are rooted in social comparison (Syed et al., 2020). Particularly, when a person reacts to a situation, that person considers not only his/her situation but the situations of others as a comparable reference. People tend to be sensitive to fair treatment and decision-making fairness in relation to opportunities and find them just as important as outcomes when engaging with the employee/employer relationship. Studies have shown that fairness perception is associated with positive and negative emotions and attitudes

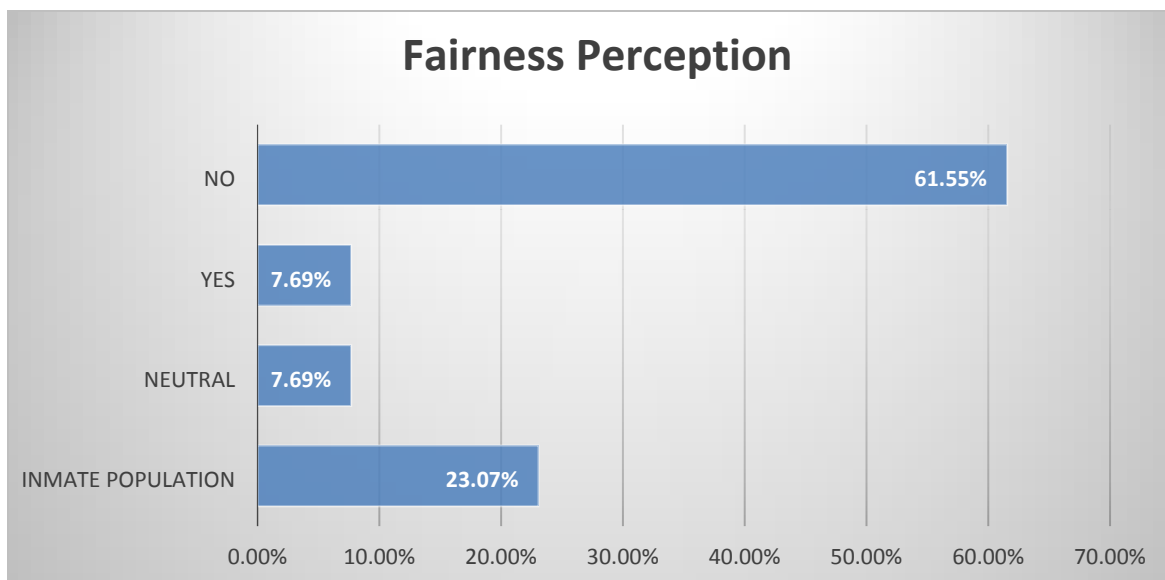
(Syed et al., 2020). However, research has shown that the perception of unfairness is substantially stronger than fairness (Syed et al., 2020).

Fairness Dataset. This study revealed that eight (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M5, Grp1M8, Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) of the 13 participants perceived using gender as an affirmative action tool as unfair. Contradictory to that, one (Grp1M7) of the 13 participants perceived using gender as an affirmative action tool as fair. However, three (Grp1M3, Grp1M6, and Grp2M3) of the 13 participants perceived using gender as an affirmative action tool is fair if used to hire based on the gender of the inmate population within the facility. Meaning if the gender based HRMS were not used to match the gender of the population, 11 (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M8, Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) of the 13 participants reported they would find this practice unfair. Finally, one participant (Grp1M4) was neutral on the subject.

The dataset below depicts the statistics regarding the perception of fairness in relation to the use of gender-based affirmative action policies (See Figure 8).

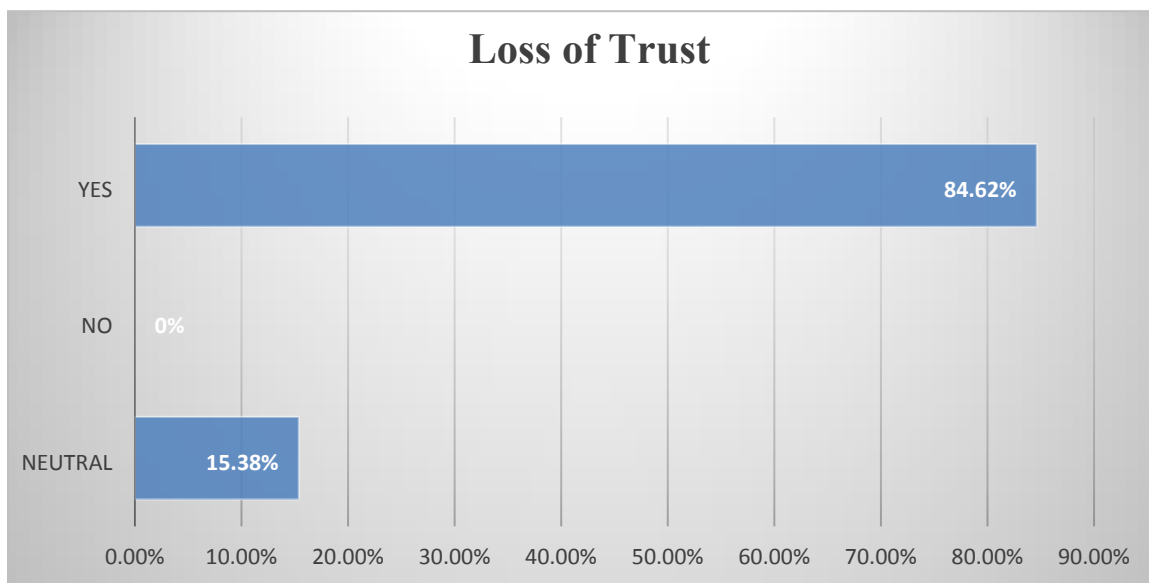
Figure 8

Fairness Perception



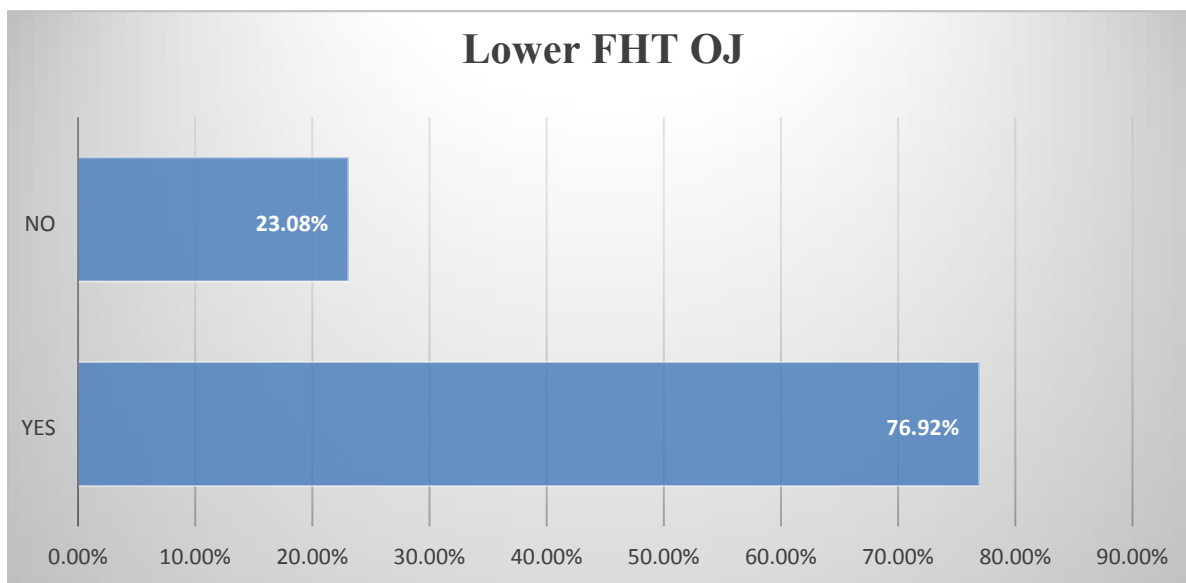
Trust Dataset. This study revealed that 11 (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M8, Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) of the 13 participants felt a loss of trust in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool in what they perceived as an 'unfair manner.' Whereas two (Grp1M7 and Grp2M7) of the 13 participants remained neutral on the subject.

The dataset below depicts the statistics regarding the perception of trust in relation to the use of gender-based affirmative action policies (See Figure 9).

Figure 9*Loss of Trust*

FHT OJ. Since organization justice is based on fairness perception and trust (Wolfe et al., 2018), the researcher combined and correlated the data to provide information related to FHT organizational justice. To do this, participants that felt that using gender as an affirmative action tool was unfair and reported a loss of trust were correlated with a lowered organizational justice based on FHT. Ten (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M8, Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) of the 11 participants that felt using gender as an affirmative action tool was unfair in totality or unfair in what they felt was an unfair manner also reported a loss of trust and one (Grp1M4) did not. In other words, 92.3% of the 11 participants that felt any sense of unfairness also lost trust in the system.

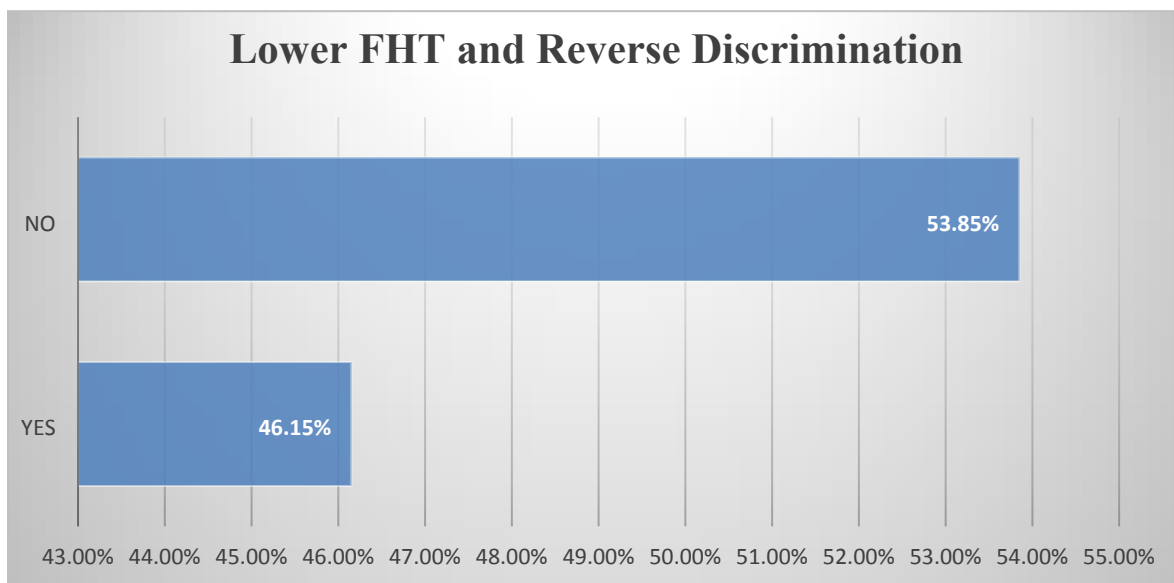
The dataset below depicts the statistics regarding the perception of organizational justice in relation to trust and fairness (FHT) and discrimination regarding gender-based affirmative action policies (See Figure 10).

Figure 10*Lower FHT OJ*

Of the participants, 76.92% (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M7, Grp1M8, Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) reported lowered organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT OJ) towards the use of gender-based HRMS. Whereas 7.79% (Grp1M4) felt they did not.

FHT OJ and Reverse Discrimination. This study revealed that all six (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M6, Grp2M1, and Grp2M4) of the participants that reported a perception of reverse discrimination also experienced lowered FHT OJ. Meaning 100% of the participants that revealed a sense of reverse discrimination also experienced lowered FHT OJ. However, it is important to note that only six of the 13 participants met the criteria of both FHT OJ and reverse discrimination.

The dataset below depicts the statistics regarding the perception of FHT OJ and discrimination regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies for all 13 participants (See Figure 11).

Figure 11*Lower FHT OJ and Discrimination*

Of the 13 participants, only 46.2% of the participants (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp2M1, and Grp2M4) who reported lowered FHT OJ also reported a sense of reverse discrimination, 100% of the participants that reported a sense of reverse discrimination in relation to the use of gender-based HRMS also reported lowered FHT OJ. Meaning though there was not a strong representation of reverse discrimination in the participants' responses in totality, there was a strong representation of linking gender-based HRMS tools towards lowered organizational justice based on the insight provided by (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp 1M8, Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5). Regarding reverse discrimination and lowered FHT OJ, the insight provided by (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5) contradicted those presented by Boateng and Hsieh (2019), Dorrough et al. (2016), Morgenroth and Ryan (2018), and Russen et al. (2020). Whereas the insight provided by (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M6, Grp2M1, and Grp2M4) supported these previous findings.

Dorrrough et al. (2016) conducted a study regarding the side effects of quota rules on group operations. This study revealed a relationship between the use of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS and organizational justice of the dominant group. Additionally, this study found that a sense of injustice leads to resentment and conflict (Dorrrough et al., 2016).

Morgenroth and Ryan (2018) conducted a study regarding the side effects of quota rules on group operations. This study found that affirmative action strategies led to a perception of an unjust system by other groups (i.e., males and Caucasians) because they felt that these policies delivered an unfair or unjust advantage.

Boateng and Hsieh (2019) conducted a study exploring job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational justice among prison officers. This study indicated gender-based affirmative action policies cause an influx of negative emotions in conjunction with a sense of betrayal, creating a sense of imbalance on the justice scale (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). Thus, creating lowered organizational justice among the dominant group (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). This study further revealed that correctional officers dislike ambiguous or random organizational treatment.

Russen et al. (2020) conducted an experiment design that recruited 87 hotel managers to examine the perceptions of managers regarding gender-based promotion strategies regarding gender discrimination and fairness. The results of this study found that an employee evaluates an organization's actions, and how those actions are associated with the behavior and attitude of an employee is the focus of organizational justice (Russen et al., 2020).

Though some participant responses were aligned with the above studies in relation to reverse discrimination, most of the responses provided insight that supported lowered organizational justice in relation to the use of gender-based HRMS tools, finding them both unfair leading to moral, loyalty, and trust issues (Grp1M5). All of the 11 participants that found

these practices unfair also reported a loss of trust (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp 1M8, Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5). The following statements indicate a loss of trust and perception of unfairness from these policies, meeting the criteria of FHT organizational justice. Grp1M2 stated, “I don’t find them fair. But I understand why they are used. However, due to the smaller number of qualified females that apply for law enforcement jobs, I understand their case,” and “Of course. And then there is a safety issue when erroneously placed in roles of supervision.” Grp1M5 stated, “far as affirmative action promotions, I feel you can't legislate the respect and trust required to work within a team such as law enforcement,” and “Promotion based on affirmative action alone is a slippery slope and will lead to moral, loyalty, and trust issues between the administration and those adversely affected by the promotion.” Grp1M8 stated, “put it bluntly, the GDC has hurt itself for decades by not promoting the most qualified person.” and “Hard to trust an unfair system.” Grp2M4 stated, “Not Fair when using gender as recruitment or promotion, I find it a fair practice only if gender is not the only factor,” and “Loss trust in the system.” Grp2M5 stated, “I believe gender should not play a role in hiring or promotion,” and “Who wouldn’t (regarding loss of trust).”

Research Question Three. RQ3: How has the implementation of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS influenced retaliation among male correctional officers?

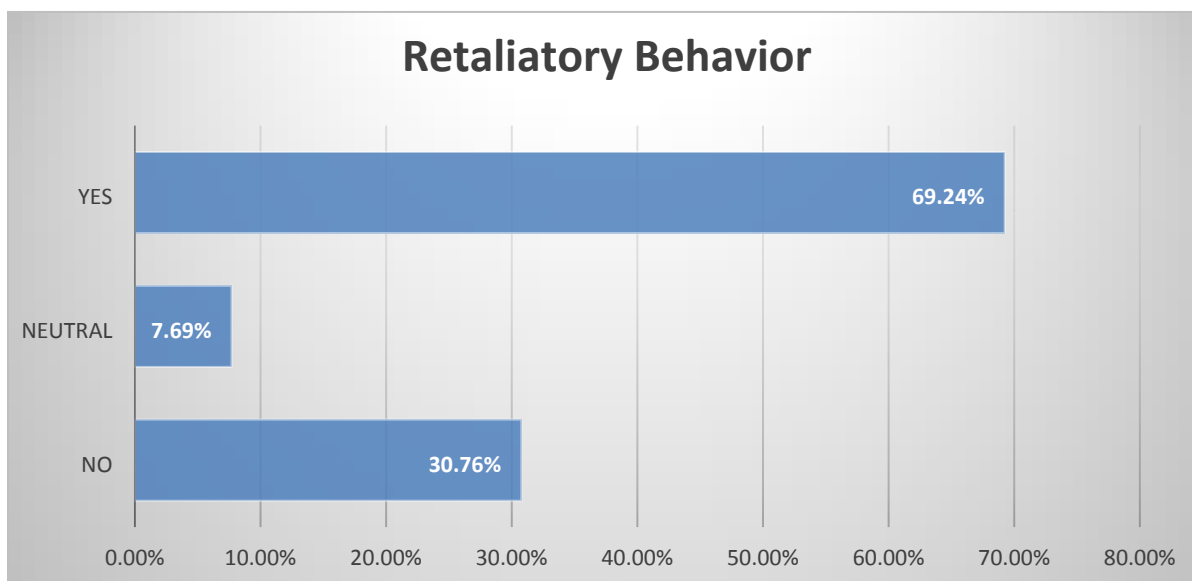
In reference to this research question, the participants were asked the two following questions: (1) how would you describe your experiences of negative behaviors or workplace climate on shift when a female is promoted? and (2) have you experienced or witnessed retaliation towards a female officer because you or others thought her gender impacted the hiring or promoting process? If so, in what ways? This theme also relates to the conceptual gender-based HRMS and corrective (or negative) behavior/retaliation.

Retaliatory Behavior. This study revealed that eight (Grp1M1, Grp1M5, Grp1M7, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) of the 13 participants reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior. Four (Grp1M4, Grp1M2, Grp1M6, and Grp2M1) of the 13 participants reported they had not heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior. One (Grp1M3) officer was neutral on the subject.

The dataset below depicts the statistics regarding retaliatory behavior concerning the use of gender-based affirmative action policies (See Figure 12).

Figure 12

Retaliatory Behavior

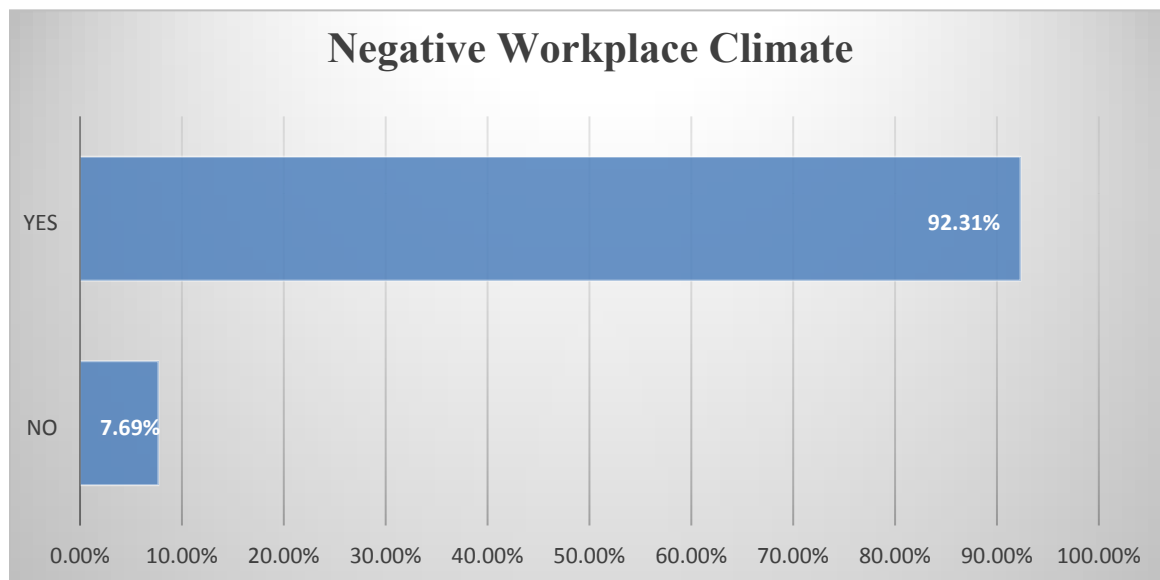


Negative Workplace Climate. This study further revealed that 12 (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M7, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) of the 13 participants experienced a negative workforce climate when a female came on shift with the appearance of a gender-based advantage and one (Grp2M1) participant was neutral on the subject.

The dataset below depicts the statistics regarding the negative workplace climate resulting from the use of gender-based affirmative action policies (See Figure 13).

Figure 13

Negative Workplace Climate

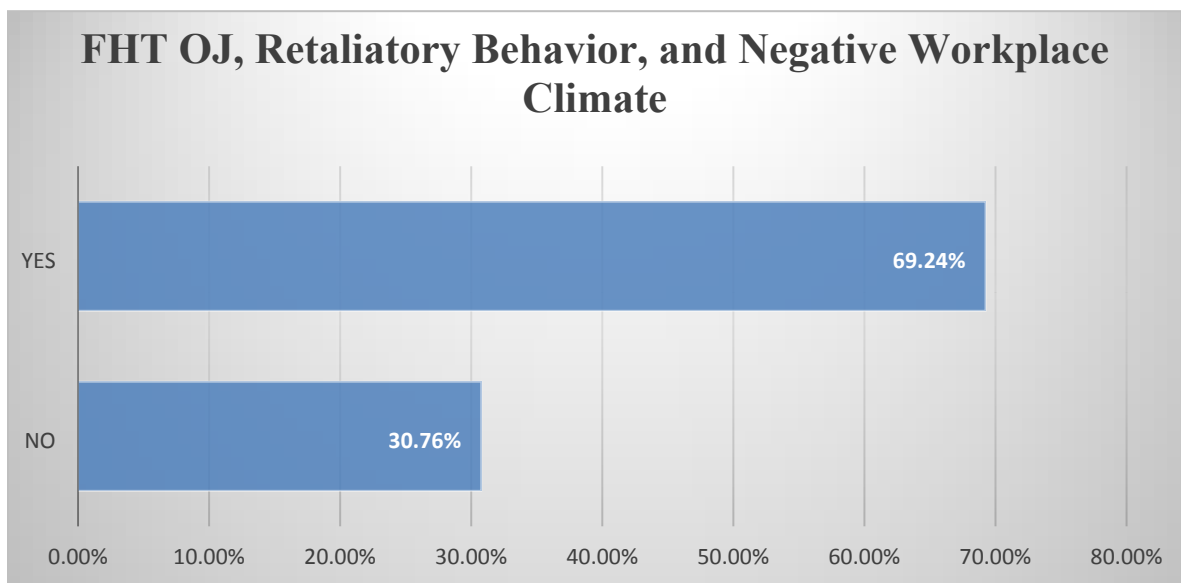


FHT Organizational Justice and Retaliatory Behavior/Negative Workplace Climate.

The dataset below depicts the statistics regarding the perception of retaliation in relation or negative workplace climate to organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT) regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies: nine (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) responses revealed a relationship, and four (Grp1M4, Grp1M7, Grp2M1, and Grp2M3) responses revealed no relationship (See Figure 14).

Figure 14

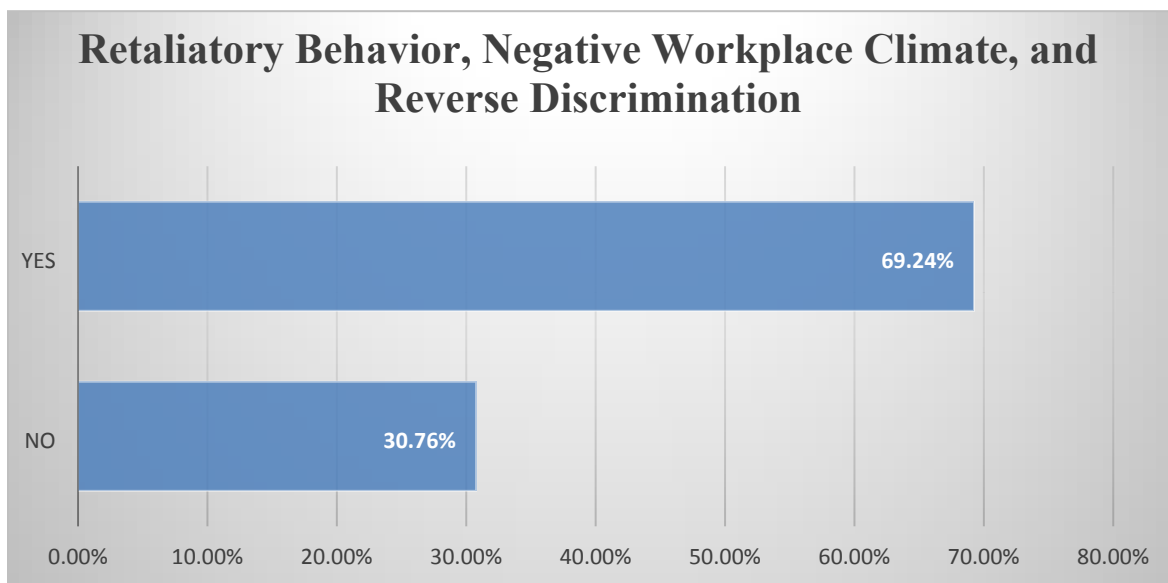
FHT OJ, Retaliatory Behavior, and Negative Workplace Climate



Reverse Discrimination and Retaliatory Behavior/Negative Workplace Climate. The dataset below depicts the following statistics: five (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp2M1, and Grp2M4) of the 13 participants perceived retaliation and a negative workplace climate in relation to reverse discrimination regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies and eight (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M7, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5) of the 13 participants did not (See Figure 15).

Figure 15

Retaliatory Behavior, Negative Workplace Climate, and Reverse Discrimination



This study revealed four subgroups of themes under the umbrella related to RQ3. Those were (1) hearing or witnessing behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior, (2) experienced a negative workforce climate when a female came on shift with the appearance of a gender-based advantage, (3) the perception of retaliation in relation to organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT) regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies, and (4) retaliation and a negative workplace climate in relation to reverse discrimination regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. Subgroups 1-3 supported, and subgroup 4 below contradicted previous findings presented by Boateng and Hsieh (2019), Morton (2019), O'Brien and Rickne (2016), and Submitter and Komari (2020).

O'Brien and Rickne (2016) conducted a study regarding gender quotas and women's political leadership. It concluded the sense of injustice leads to retaliation among the dominant group. They further suggested that the male officers who felt this discrimination believed that the

female officers did not earn their post. It was evident that reverse discrimination among the dominant group when ‘gender-quota’ affirmative action HRMS was utilized.

Boateng and Hsieh (2019) conducted a study regarding prison officer misconduct, job stress, and organizational justice. This research revealed that perceptions of objective and fair criteria used in promotions reduce emotional effects and negative work behaviors like retaliation, leading to lowered organizational justice (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). Such a perception of injustice and stressful environments created through retaliatory behavior leads to higher turnover, reduced employee engagement, reduced organizational commitment, and lower job satisfaction (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). It was further concluded that an influx of negative emotions combined with a sense of betrayal created a sense of imbalance on the justice scale (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019).

Morton (2019) conducted a study regarding ‘the dark side of diversity’ and dominant group blowback. In this study, Morton (2019) collected data from a manufacturing plant’s employees, showing that employees with higher perceptions of unfair treatment were more likely to see ORB from coworkers. This study found that the employees who participated in ORB engaged in them through the ‘get them back’ justification regardless of the moral application (Morton, 2019). This study concluded that these gender-based policies could be viewed as an unfair advantage, which creates a negative impact on the dominant group leading to reduced organizational citizenship, higher turnover, unethical behavior, and can result in reverse discrimination among the dominant group (Morton, 2019).

Submitter and Komari (2020) conducted a study regarding the relationship between organizational justice and counterproductive work behaviors. They found that toxic actions and behaviors will spread throughout the workplace like a virus (Submitter & Komari, 2020). This

virus, or problem, starts with one person. Over time, coworkers may start behaving or acting differently and/or believe their organization has a greater tolerance regarding this type of behavior.

Leibbrandt et al. (2018) conducted a study regarding the back lash against women regarding gender quotas. This study found that even though ‘quota-based’ HRMS intended to reduce or eliminate discrimination, scholars have linked backlash effects and stigmatization toward females and minorities when the dominant group felt it was used.

For subgroup 1, 61% of the participants (Grp1M1, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M7, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior. For subgroup 2, 92.3% of the participants (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M7, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) reported they experienced a negative workforce climate when a female came on shift with the appearance of a gender-based advantage. For subgroup 3, 69.2% of the respondents (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) revealed a relationship regarding the perception of retaliation in relation to organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT) regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies.

The following statements show support for this phenomenon. Grp1M5 stated, “there are negative behaviors when gender is a factor. I did see a lack of confidence, dismissiveness and second-guessing of her orders or plans” and “it creates strife toward the female who was promoted as well as lack of motivation and lower moral based off those promotions.” Grp1M7 stated, “I have heard a few people make comments because about female that promoted. Um, I think some people unofficially retaliated because that one female was an absolute train wreck”

and “my experiences of negative behaviors or workplace climate on shift is when a female is promoted, it has caused negative climate.” Grp1M8 stated, “there were times when the males that lost out on promotions due to gender, they made sly comments about the female that was promoted over them. Off-handed comment like “you did not deserve the promotion,” but “an apology usually follows these comments. In corrections, everyone knows everyone and depends on each other at some point, so fences must be mended.” Grp2M2 stated, “others try to challenge her more and question her judgment.” Grp2M4 stated,

If it is obvious based on who all boarded, well, morale goes down. You can feel it in the air—lots of quietness. The inmates see that. They know when the officers are playing on the same team. It can be dangerous in that aspect.

Grp2M4 also stated

I mean, like you hear people talk. I mean, once a male officer told his female sergeant that ‘I wish I was a woman then I could suck (explicit word) and get a promotion.’ Also heard officers call that particular woman an affirmative action hire. I mean you have things like talking about her behind her back to disregarding orders. Walking off from her.

For subgroup 4, Only 38.5% of the respondents (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp2M1, and Grp2M4) revealed a relationship regarding reverse discrimination caused using gender-based affirmative action policies and perceived retaliation and a negative workplace climate. Whereas 61.5% of the respondents (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M7, Grp 1M8, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5) did not. In fact, they reported no sense of reverse discrimination related to using gender HRMS.

The following statements show support for this phenomenon. Grp1M3 stated, “quotas always are discriminatory in nature, in some way shape or form” and “we don’t talk about it” regarding retaliatory behavior. Grp2M4 stated,

I know equality is needed and that we need policies to make sure discrimination is not present. But to say oh. Sorry dude we need a chick to fill this spot. Piss on your time and dedication. Maybe next time. Is that not discrimination.

Grp2M4 also stated,

I mean like you hear people talk. I mean, once a male officer told his female sergeant that ‘I wish I was a woman then I could suck (explicit word) and get a promotion.’ Also heard officers call that particular woman an affirmative action hire. I mean you have things like talking about her behind her back to disregarding orders. Walking off from her.

The following statements reflect a contradiction to this phenomenon. Grp1M4 stated, I do not feel that the use of unofficial ‘gender quotas’ has created a sense of discrimination against you or a coworker. I believe we may have almost half females some positions they are gender specific and that’s sometimes.

Grp1M7 stated “no” regarding reverse discrimination. Stating, “I think using gender is actually needed sometimes depending on the type of prison that you are at.” Grp1M8 stated,

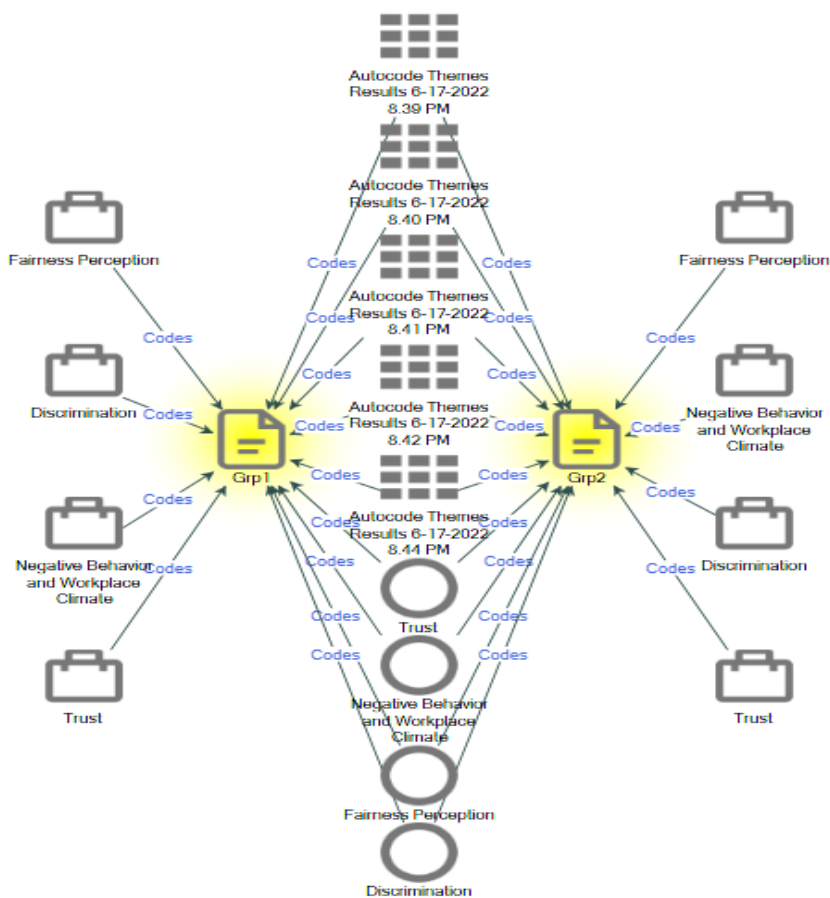
Despite being ‘passed over’ for promotion, there is usually quite a bit of support for the new supervisor because of the intimate nature of the work. Don’t get me wrong, people get upset, but those who understand their self-worth know that their time will come soon enough regarding reverse discrimination.

Grp2M2 stated, “I am not aware” regarding reverse discrimination. Grp2M3 stated, “no” regarding reverse discrimination.” Grp2M5 stated, “I do not have any recollection of a coworker or myself being discriminated against because of gender.”

Cross-Case Analysis. For the cross-case analysis, the researcher limited the findings specific to the research problem concepts. Those were perception of fairness, reverse discrimination, organization justice (trust and fairness), and retaliation (to include workplace climate). See Figure 16 below. Participants from case 1 were identified using Grp1 and case 2 were identified using Grp2 in the first four characters of the alphanumeric pseudonym identifiers.

Figure 16

Case Comparison Theme Diagram



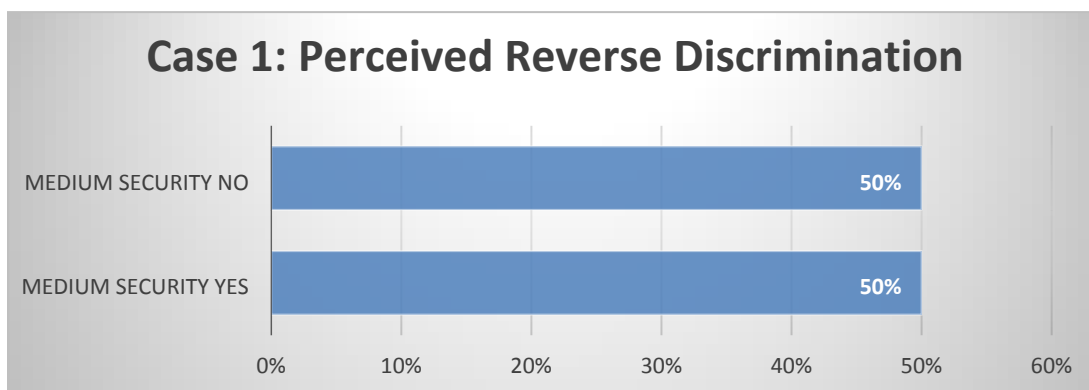
Case One Visualization of Data. Case one comprised eight officers associated with a close security correctional facility and were identified with Grp1 as the first four digits in their identifier.

Research Question One. RQ1. To what extent, if any, does the implementation of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS impact male correctional officers’ experiences regarding reverse discrimination?

Reverse Discrimination. The dataset below depicts the statistics about the perception of discrimination regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. Four (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, and Grp1M6) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional facility perceived a sense of reverse discrimination in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool. Contradictory to that, four (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) of the eight participants associated with a medium security perceived no sense of reverse discrimination in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool fair or neutral towards the subject (See Figure 17).

Figure 17

Case 1: Perceived Reverse Discrimination



Of the eight participants associated with Grp1, 50% (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, and Grp1M6) reported reverse discrimination regarding the use of gender-based HRMS. Whereas 50% (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) felt they did not experience reverse discrimination or were neutral on the subject. This neither supported nor contradicted the previous findings presented by Russen et al. (2020), Seierstad (2016), Wilkins et al. (2015), and Yu (2018).

Wilkins et al. (2015) conducted a study on the zero-sum beliefs of 181 participants regarding the perception of anti-male bias. It concluded that gender “quotas” led to anger and resentment towards women, leading to feelings of victimhood and loss, and feeling that they are targets of anti-white or anti-male rhetoric (Wilkins et al., 2015).

Seierstad (2016) conducted a qualitative interview with 19 females who worked in the capacity of non-executive board members regarding the need for both utility and justice rationales for increasing the share of women on boards. During these interviews, it was found that “quota” policies have created the phenomenon of reverse discrimination amongst the dominant group and the belief of preferential treatment when the organization implements hiring decisions and promotions based on “quotas” (Seierstad, 2016).

Yu (2018) conducted a study regarding 201 Protection Border Patrol agents to highlight proactive efforts regarding the recruitment of females and explored the recruitment practice in federal law enforcement. This study revealed these policies led to an influx of reverse discrimination suits from men, led to the denunciation of dominant, majority, group discrimination, reverse discrimination, and further implied that “preferential hiring” is paradoxical (Yu, 2018).

Russen et al. (2020) conducted an experiment design that recruited 87 hotel managers to examine the perceptions of managers regarding gender-based promotion strategies regarding gender discrimination and fairness. Their study found that many males perceive those steps, such as using gender “quotas” taken to alleviate inequality, have also led to unfair or biased treatment towards them and found that anti-male bias has played a role in the perception of gender discrimination.

Though some agreed with the idea of reverse discrimination (as found by the above-mentioned studies) and found them unfair because “they promote based on tenure, experience, and attitude as well as attendance to the job and performance of duties (Grp2M5), 61.5% participants of this study did not provide notations of these findings. In fact, the following statements indicate a lack of reverse discrimination from these policies. Grp1M2 stated, “I dislike any affirmative action policies but understand the need.” Grp1M4 stated, “I do not feel that the use of unofficial ‘gender quotas’ has created a sense of discrimination against you or a coworker. I believe we may have almost half females some positions they are gender specific and that’s sometimes.” Grp1M8 stated,

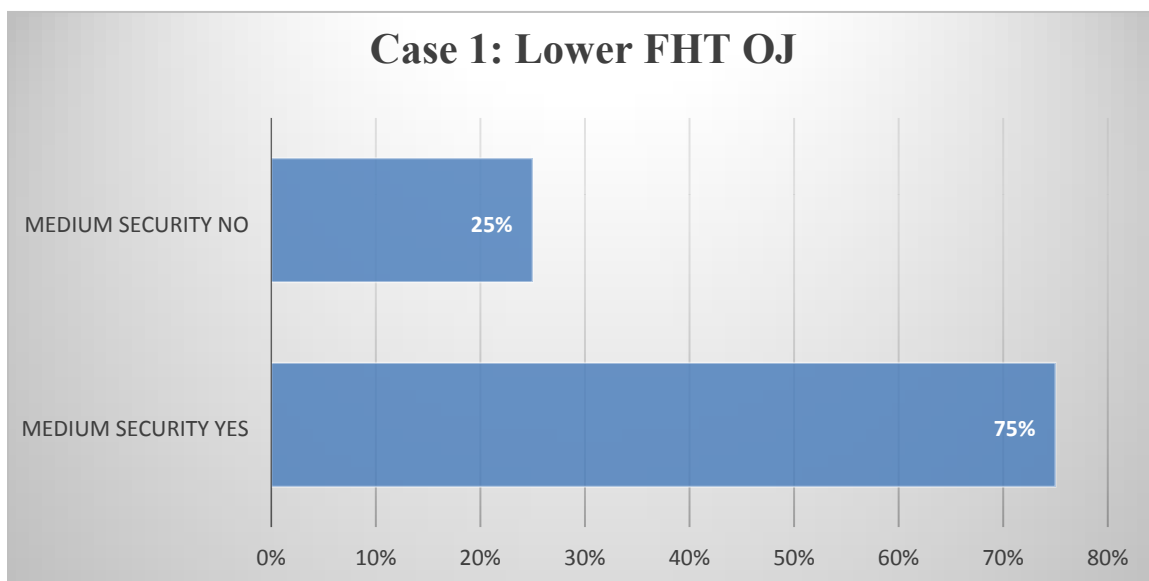
Despite being ‘passed over’ for promotion, there is usually quite a bit of support for the new supervisor because of the intimate nature of the work. Don’t get me wrong, people get upset, but those who understand their self-worth know that their time will come soon enough.

Research Question Two. RQ2. To what extent, if any, does the attitudes of male correctional officers towards the use of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS impact their perception of organizational justice?

FHT OJ. The dataset below depicts the statistics regarding lowered organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT) towards the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. Six (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3 Grp1M5, Grp1M6, and Grp1M8) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional facility experienced lowered FHT organizational justice in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool. Contradictory to that, two (Grp1M4 and Grp1M7) of the eight participants associated with a medium security facility did not experience lowered FHT organizational justice in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool or neutral towards the subject (See Figure 18).

Figure 18

Case 1: Lower FHT OJ



Of the eight participants associated with Grp1, 75% (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, and Grp1M8) reported lowered organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT OJ) towards the use gender-based HRMS supporting. Whereas 25% (Grp1M4 and Grp1M7) felt they did not, supporting previous findings presented by Boateng and Hsieh (2019), Dorrough et al. (2016), Morgenroth and Ryan (2018), and Russen et al. (2020).

Dorrrough et al. (2016) conducted a study regarding the side effects of quota rules on group operations. This study revealed a relationship between the use of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS and organizational justice of the dominant group. Additionally, this study found that a sense of injustice leads to resentment and conflict (Dorrrough et al., 2016).

Morgenroth and Ryan (2018) conducted a study regarding the side effects of quota rules on group operations. This study found that affirmative action strategies led to a perception of an unjust system by other groups (i.e., males and Caucasians) because they felt that these policies delivered an unfair or unjust advantage.

Boateng and Hsieh (2019) conducted a study exploring job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational justice among prison officers. This study indicated that gender-based affirmative action policies cause an influx of negative emotions in conjunction with a sense of betrayal, creating a sense of imbalance on the justice scale (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). Thus, creating lowered organizational justice among the dominant group (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). This study further revealed that correctional officers dislike ambiguous or random organizational treatment.

Russen et al. (2020) conducted an experiment design that recruited 87 hotel managers to examine the perceptions of managers regarding gender-based promotion strategies regarding gender discrimination and fairness. The results of this study found that an employee evaluates an organization's actions, and how those actions are associated with the behavior and attitude of an employee is the focus of organizational justice (Russen et al., 2020).

Though some participant responses were aligned with the above studies in relation to reverse discrimination, most of the responses provided insight that supported lowered organizational justice in relation to the use of gender-based HRMS tools, finding them both unfair leading to moral, loyalty, and trust issues (Grp1M5). 100% of the seven participants that

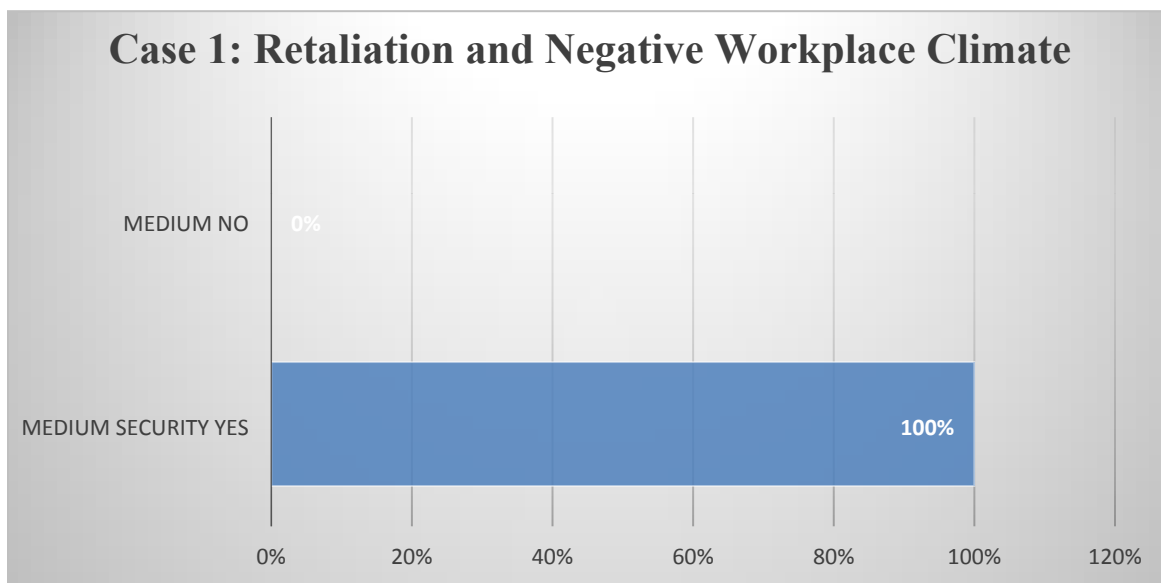
found these practices unfair also reported a loss of trust (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, and Grp1M8). The following statements indicate a loss of trust and perception of unfairness from these policies, meeting the criteria of FHT organizational justice. Grp1M2 stated, “I don’t find them fair. But I understand why they are used. However, due to the smaller number of qualified females that apply for law enforcement jobs, I understand their case,” and “Of course. And then there is a safety issue when erroneously placed in roles of supervision.” Grp1M5 stated, “far as affirmative action promotions, I feel you can’t legislate the respect and trust required to work within a team such as law enforcement,” and “Promotion based on affirmative action alone is a slippery slope and will lead to moral, loyalty, and trust issues between the administration and those adversely affected by the promotion.” Grp1M8 stated, “put it bluntly, the GDC has hurt itself for decades by not promoting the most qualified person,” and “Hard to trust an unfair system.”

Research Question Three. RQ3: How has the implementation of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS influenced retaliation among male correctional officers?

Retaliation and Workplace Climate. The dataset below depicts the statistics about retaliatory behavior and negative climate regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. All eight (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional facility reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool (See Figure 19).

Figure 19

Case 1: Retaliation and Negative Workplace Climate

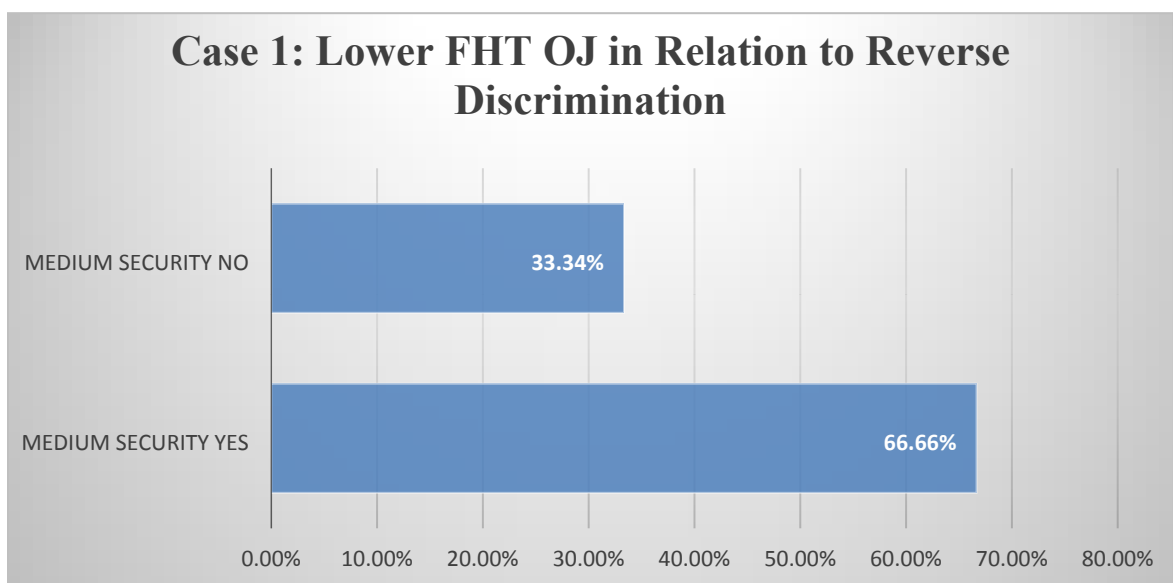


Of the eight participants associated with Grp1, 100% of the participants (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) reported they heard or witnessed behaviors that met the criteria of retaliatory behavior and/or negative workforce climate regarding the use gender-based HRMS.

FHT and Reverse Discrimination. The dataset below depicts the statistics of officers reporting lowered FHT OJ and reverse discrimination regarding gender-based affirmative action policies. Of the six participants associated with a medium-security prison reported they felt both trust loss and unfairness (FHT organizational justice), four (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, and Grp1M6) felt a sense of reverse discrimination, and two (Grp1M2, and Grp1M8) did not (See Figure 20).

Figure 20

Case 1: Lower FHT OJ and Reverse Discrimination

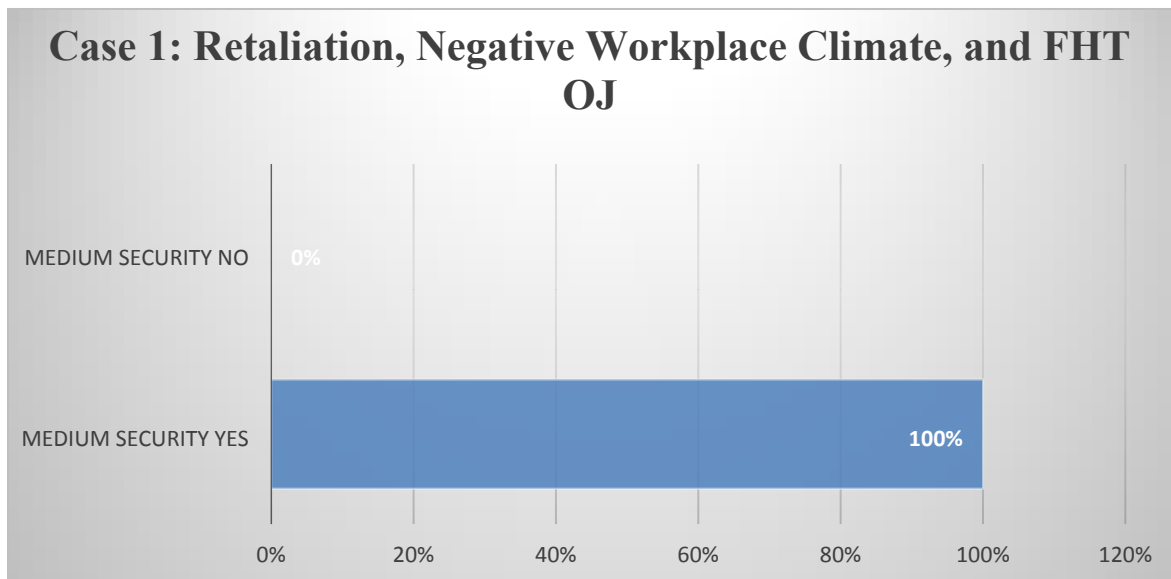


Of the six participants associated with Grp1 and reported they felt both trust loss and unfairness (FHT OJ), 66.66% of the participants who reported they felt both trust loss and unfairness (FHT organizational justice; Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, and Grp1M6) reported reverse discrimination regarding the use gender-based HRMS. In contrast, 33.34% of the participants reported trust loss and unfairness (FHT organizational justice; Grp1M2 and Grp1M8).

Retaliation, Negative Workplace Climate, and FHT OJ. The dataset below depicts the statistics about the perception of retaliation and negative workplace climate in relation to FHT OJ regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. All six participants (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, and Grp1M8) associated with a medium security prison that reported both trust loss and unfairness (FHT OJ) reported behaviors that met the criteria of retaliation (See Figure 21).

Figure 21

Case 1: Retaliation, Negative Workplace Climate, and FHT OJ



Of the six participants associated with Grp1 and reported they felt both trust loss and unfairness (FHT OJ), 100% of the participants (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, and Grp1M8) reported behaviors that met the criteria of retaliation/negative workplace climate regarding the use gender-based HRMS.

Thus, Case study 1 revealed three subgroups of themes related to RQ3. Those were (1) hearing or witnessing behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior or experienced a negative workforce climate when a female came on shift with the appearance of a gender-based advantage, (2) the perception of retaliation in relation to organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT) regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies, and (3) retaliation and a negative workplace climate in relation to reverse discrimination regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. Subgroups 1 and 2 supported, and subgroup 3 below contradicted previous findings presented by Boateng and Hsieh (2019), Morton (2019), O'Brien and Rickne (2016), and Submitter and Komari (2020).

O'Brien and Rickne (2016) conducted a study regarding gender quotas and women's political leadership. It concluded the sense of injustice leads to retaliation among the dominant group. They further suggested that the male officers who felt this discrimination believed that the female officers did not earn their post. It was evident that reverse discrimination among the dominant group when 'gender-quota' affirmative action HRMS was utilized.

Boateng and Hsieh (2019) conducted a study regarding prison officer misconduct, job stress, and organizational justice. This research revealed that perceptions of objective and fair criteria used in promotions reduce emotional effects and negative work behaviors like retaliation, leading to lowered organizational justice (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). Such a perception of injustice and stressful environments created through retaliatory behavior leads to higher turnover, reduced employee engagement, reduced organizational commitment, and lower job satisfaction (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). It was further concluded that an influx of negative emotions in conjunction with a sense of betrayal, creating a sense of imbalance on the justice scale (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019).

Morton (2019) conducted a study regarding "the dark side of diversity" and dominant group blowback. In this study, Morton (2019) collected data from a manufacturing plant's employees, which showed that employees with higher perceptions of unfair treatment were more likely to see ORB from coworkers. This study found that the employees who participated in ORB engaged in them through the "get them back" justification regardless of the moral application (Morton, 2019). This study concluded that these gender-based policies could be viewed as an unfair advantage, which creates a negative impact on the dominant group leading to reduced organizational citizenship, higher turnover, unethical behavior and can result in reverse discrimination among the dominant group (Morton, 2019).

Submitter and Komari (2020) conducted a study regarding the relationship between organizational justice and counterproductive work behaviors. They found that toxic actions and behaviors will spread throughout the workplace like a virus (Submitter & Komari, 2020). This virus, or problem, starts with one person. Over time, coworkers may start behaving or acting differently and/or believe that their organization has a greater tolerance regarding this behavior.

Leibbrandt et al. (2018) conducted a study regarding the back lash against women regarding gender quotas. This study found that even though 'quota-based' HRMS intended to reduce or eliminate discrimination, scholars have linked backlash effects and stigmatization toward females and minorities when the dominant group felt it was used.

For subgroup 1, 100% of the participants (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior.

The following statements show support for this phenomenon. Grp1M5 stated, "there are negative behaviors when gender is a factor. I did see a lack of confidence, dismissiveness and second-guessing of her orders or plans" and "it creates strife toward the female who was promoted as well as lack of motivation and lower moral based off those promotions." Grp1M7 stated, "I have heard a few people make comments because about female that promoted. Um, I think some people unofficially retaliated because that one female was an absolute train wreck" and "my experiences of negative behaviors or workplace climate on shift is when a female is promoted, it has caused negative climate." Grp1M8 stated,

there were times when the males that lost out on promotions due to gender, they made sly comments about the female that was promoted over them. Off-handed comment like 'you did not deserve the promotion,' but an apology usually follows these comments. In

corrections, everyone knows everyone and depends on each other at some point, so fences must be mended.

For subgroup 2 revealed a relationship regarding the perception of retaliation in relation to organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT) regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies.

For subgroup 3, 50% of the respondents (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, and Grp1M6) revealed a relationship between reverse discrimination caused using gender-based affirmative action policies and perceived retaliation and a negative workplace climate. In support of this phenomenon, Grp1M3 stated, “quotas always are discriminatory in nature, in some way, shape or form” and “we don’t talk about it” regarding retaliatory behavior. Contradictory to that, 50% of the respondents (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) did not. In fact, they reported no sense of reverse discrimination related to using gender HRMS. The following statements showed a contradiction of the phenomenon. Grp1M4 stated, “I do not feel that the use of unofficial ‘gender quotas’ has created a sense of discrimination against you or a coworker. I believe we may have almost half females some positions they are gender specific and that’s sometimes.” Grp1M7 stated, “no” regarding reverse discrimination. Stating, “I think using gender is actually needed sometimes depending on the type of prison that you are at.” Grp1M8 stated,

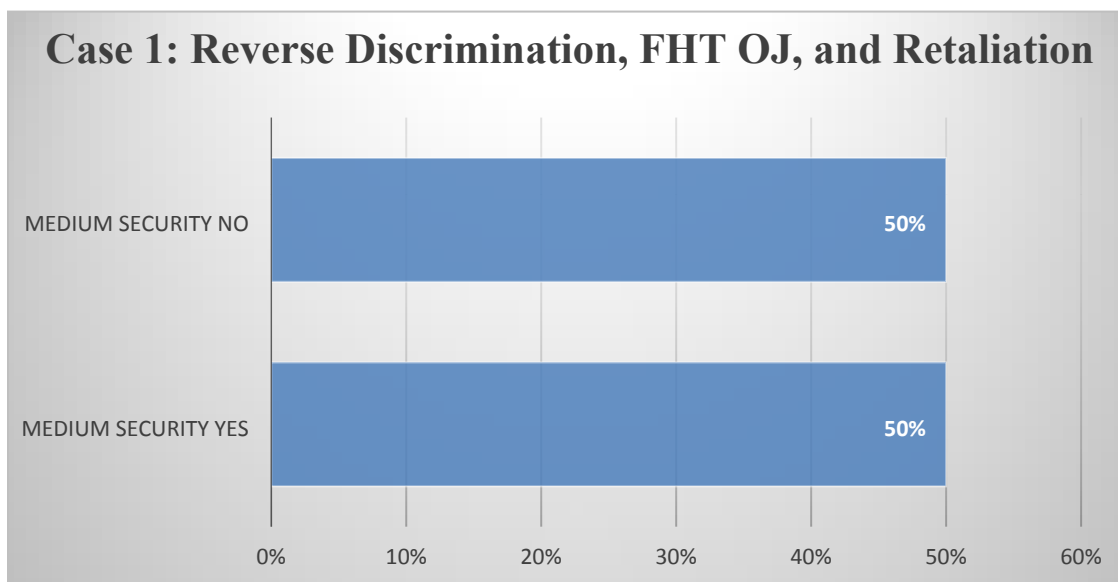
Despite being ‘passed over’ for promotion, there is usually quite a bit of support for the new supervisor because of the intimate nature of the work. Don’t get me wrong, people get upset, but those who understand their self-worth know that their time will come soon enough regarding reverse discrimination.

Reverse Discrimination, FHT OJ, and Retaliation. The dataset below depicts the statistics about participants that met all three criteria: reverse discrimination, FHT OJ, and

retaliation regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. Of the eight participants associated with a medium security prison, four (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, and Grp1M6) met all aspects of the specific problem, and four (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) did not (See Figure 22).

Figure 22

Case 1: Reverse Discrimination, FHT OJ, and Retaliation



Of the eight participants associated with Grp1, 50% of the participants (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, and Grp1M6) met all aspects of the specific problem regarding the use of gender-based HRMS. Whereas 50% of the participants who reported they felt both trust loss and unfairness (FHT OJ; Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) did not.

Case study 1 results showed three subgroups of themes under the umbrella related to RQ3. Those were (1) hearing or witnessing behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior or experienced a negative workforce climate when a female came on shift with the appearance of a gender-based advantage, (2) the perception of retaliation in relation to organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT) regarding the use of gender-

based affirmative action policies, and (3) retaliation and a negative workplace climate in relation to reverse discrimination regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies.

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For subgroups 1 and 2, the following statements supported this phenomenon. Grp1M5 stated, “there are negative behaviors when gender is a factor. I did see a lack of confidence, dismissiveness and second-guessing of her orders or plans” and “it creates strife toward the female who was promoted as well as lack of motivation and lower moral based off those promotions.” Grp1M7 stated, “I have heard a few people make comments because about female that promoted. Um, I think some people unofficially retaliated because that one female was an absolute train wreck” and “my experiences of negative behaviors or workplace climate on shift is when a female is promoted, it has caused negative climate.” Grp1M8 stated,

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For subgroup 3, the following statement showed support for this phenomenon. Grp1M3 stated, “quotas always are discriminatory in nature, in some way shape or form” and “we don’t talk about it” regarding retaliatory behavior.

For subgroup 3, the following statements showed contradiction for this phenomenon. Grp1M4 stated, “I do not feel that the use of unofficial ‘gender quotas’ has created a sense of discrimination against you or a coworker. I believe we may have almost half females some positions they are gender specific and that’s sometimes.” Grp1M7 stated “no” regarding reverse discrimination. Stating, “I think using gender is actually needed sometimes depending on the type of prison that you are at.” Grp1M8 stated,

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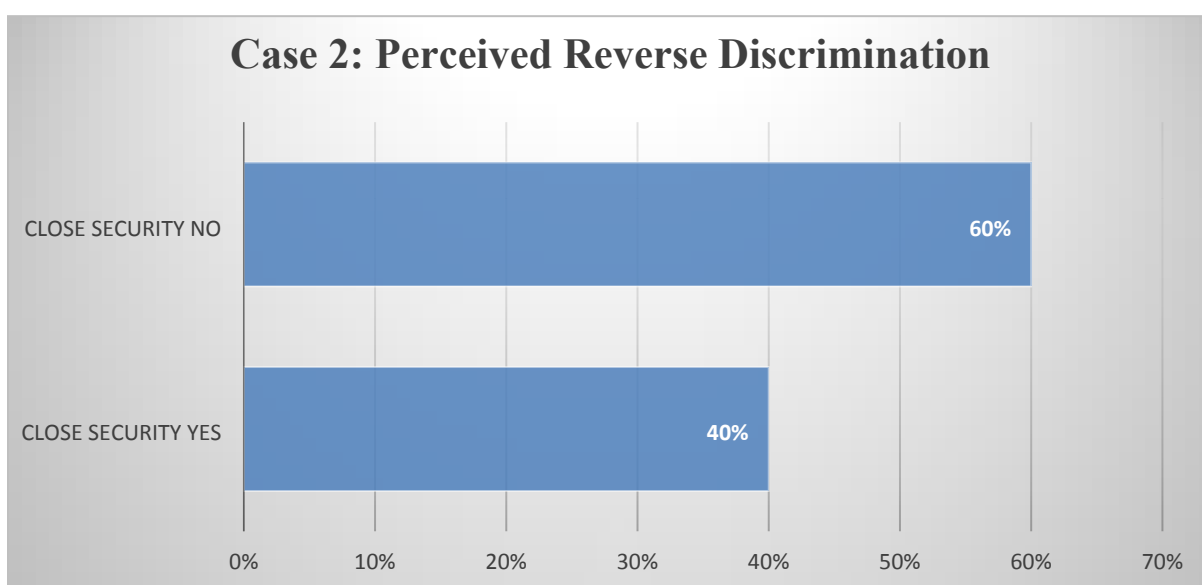
Case Two. Case one comprised five officers associated with a close security correctional facility and were identified with Grp2 in as the first four digits in their identifier.

Research Question One. RQ1. To what extent, if any, does the implementation of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS impact male correctional officers’ experiences regarding reverse discrimination?

Reverse Discrimination. The dataset below depicts the statistics about the perception of reverse discrimination regarding using gender-based affirmative action policies. Of the five participants associated with a close security, two (Grp2M1 and Grp2M4) participants reported a sense of reverse discrimination, and three (Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5) did not (See Figure 23).

Figure 23

Case 2: Perceived Reverse Discrimination



Of the five participants associated with Grp2, 40% of the participants (Grp2M1 and Grp2M4) reported reverse discrimination regarding the use of gender-based HRMS. Whereas 60% (Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5) felt they did not experience reverse discrimination or were neutral on the subject contradicting previous findings presented by Russen et al. (2020), Seierstad (2016), Wilkins et al. (2015), and Yu (2018).

Wilkins et al. (2015) conducted a study on the zero-sum beliefs of 181 participants regarding the perception of anti-male bias. It concluded that gender ‘quotas’ led to anger and

resentment towards women, leading to feelings of victimhood and loss, and feeling that they are targets of anti-white or anti-male rhetoric (Wilkins et al., 2015).

Seierstad (2016) conducted a qualitative interview with 19 females who worked in the capacity of non-executive board members regarding the need for both utility and justice rationales for increasing the share of women on boards. During these interviews, it was found that 'quota' policies have created the phenomenon of reverse discrimination amongst the dominant group and the belief of preferential treatment when the organization implements hiring decisions and promotions based on 'quotas' (Seierstad, 2016).

Yu (2018) conducted a study regarding 201 Protection Border Patrol agents to highlight proactive efforts regarding the recruitment of females and explored the recruitment practice in federal law enforcement. This study revealed these policies led to an influx of reverse discrimination suits from men, led to the denunciation of dominant, majority, group discrimination, reverse discrimination, and further implied that 'preferential hiring' is paradoxical (Yu, 2018).

Russen et al. (2020) conducted an experiment design that recruited 87 hotel managers to examine the perceptions of managers regarding gender-based promotion strategies regarding gender discrimination and fairness. Their study found that many males perceive those steps, such as using gender 'quotas' taken to alleviate inequality, have also led to unfair or biased treatment towards them and found that anti-male bias has played a role in the perception of gender discrimination.

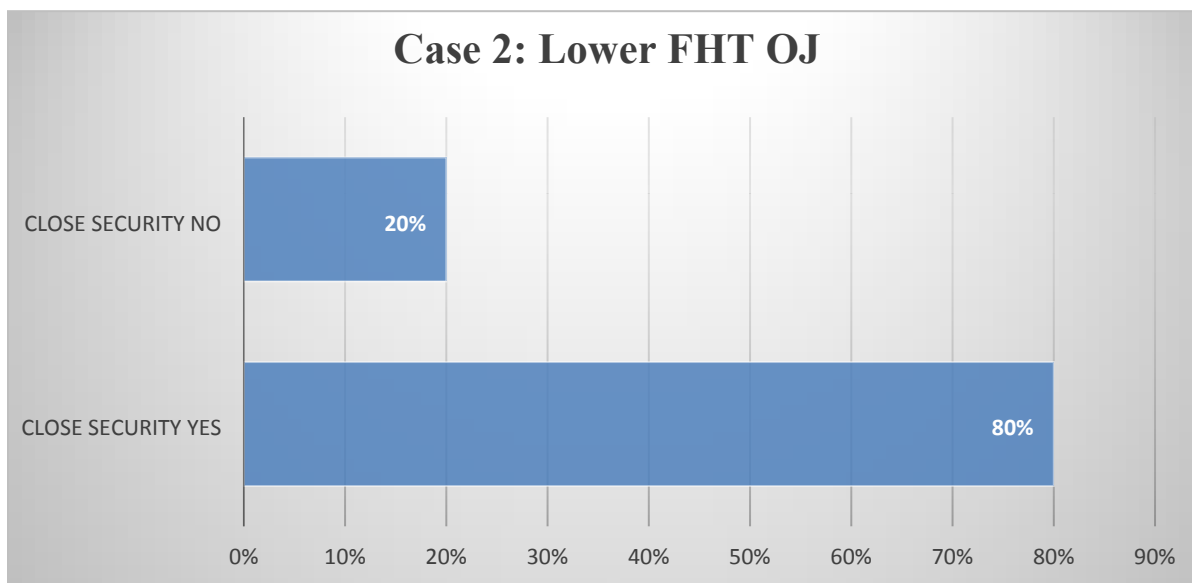
Though some agreed with the idea of reverse discrimination (as found by the above-mentioned studies) and found them unfair because "and promote based on tenure, experience, and attitude as well as attendance to the job and performance of duties (Grp2M5), 61.5%

participants of this study did not provide notations of these findings. In fact, the below statement indicated a lack of reverse discrimination from these policies. Grp2M4 stated,

For the most part, it is a necessity. Because no matter how advanced we become as humans, you will always have those people who are racist or sexist. Unfortunately, it is not always so obvious. Without these policies, we could be missing out on some (explicit word) good officers and see more discrimination.

Research Question Two. RQ2. To what extent, if any, does the attitudes of male correctional officers towards the use of ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS impact their perception of organizational justice?

FHT OJ. The dataset below depicts the statistics of officers that reported lowered organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT OJ) regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies: of the five participants associated with a close security, four (Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) participants reported lowered organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT OJ) and one participant (Grp2M3) did not (See Figure 24).

Figure 24*Case 2: Lower FHT OJ*

Of the five participants associated with Grp2, 100% of the participants (Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) reported lowered organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT OJ) towards the use gender-based HRMS supporting previous findings presented by Boateng and Hsieh (2019), Dorrough et al. (2016), Morgenroth and Ryan (2018), and Russen et al. (2020).

Dorrough et al. (2016) conducted a study regarding the side effects of quota rules on group operations. This study revealed a relationship between the use of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS and organizational justice of the dominant group. Additionally, this study found that a sense of injustice leads to resentment and conflict (Dorrough et al., 2016).

Morgenroth and Ryan (2018) conducted a study regarding the side effects of quota rules on group operations. This study found that affirmative action strategies led to a perception of an unjust system by other groups (i.e., males and Caucasians) because they felt that these policies delivered an unfair or unjust advantage.

Boateng and Hsieh (2019) conducted a study exploring job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational justice among prison officers. This study indicated that gender-based affirmative action policies cause an influx of negative emotions in conjunction with a sense of betrayal, creating a sense of imbalance on the justice scale (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). Thus, creating lowered organizational justice among the dominant group (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). This study further revealed that correctional officers dislike ambiguous or random organizational treatment.

Russen et al. (2020) conducted an experiment design that recruited 87 hotel managers to examine the perceptions of managers regarding gender-based promotion strategies regarding gender discrimination and fairness. The results of this study found that an employee evaluates an organization's actions, and how those actions are associated with the behavior and attitude of an employee is the focus of organizational justice (Russen et al., 2020).

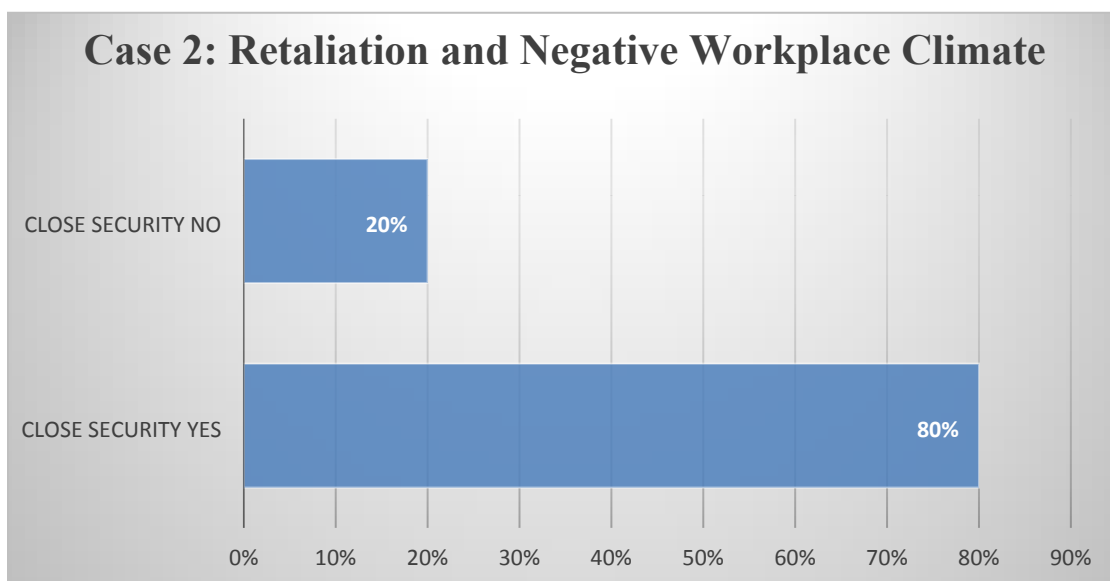
Though some participant responses were aligned with the above studies in relation to reverse discrimination, most of the responses provided insight that supported lowered organizational justice in relation to the use of gender-based HRMS tools, finding them both unfair, leading to moral, loyalty, and trust issues. All of the four participants that found these practices unfair also reported a loss of trust (Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5). The following statements indicate a loss of trust and perception of unfairness from these policies, meeting the criteria of FHT organizational justice. Grp2M4 stated, "Not Fair when using gender as recruitment or promotion, I find it a fair practice only if gender is not the only factor" and "Loss trust in the system." Grp2M5 stated, "I believe gender should not play a role in hiring or promotion" and "Who wouldn't (regarding loss of trust)."

Research Question Three. RQ3: How has the implementation of 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS influenced retaliation among male correctional officers?

Retaliation and Negative Workplace Climate. The dataset below depicts the statistics about retaliatory behavior and/or negative climate regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. Five participants associated with a close security, four (Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) participants reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior, and one (Grp2M1) was neutral on the subject (See Figure 25).

Figure 25

Case 2: Retaliation and Negative Workplace Climate



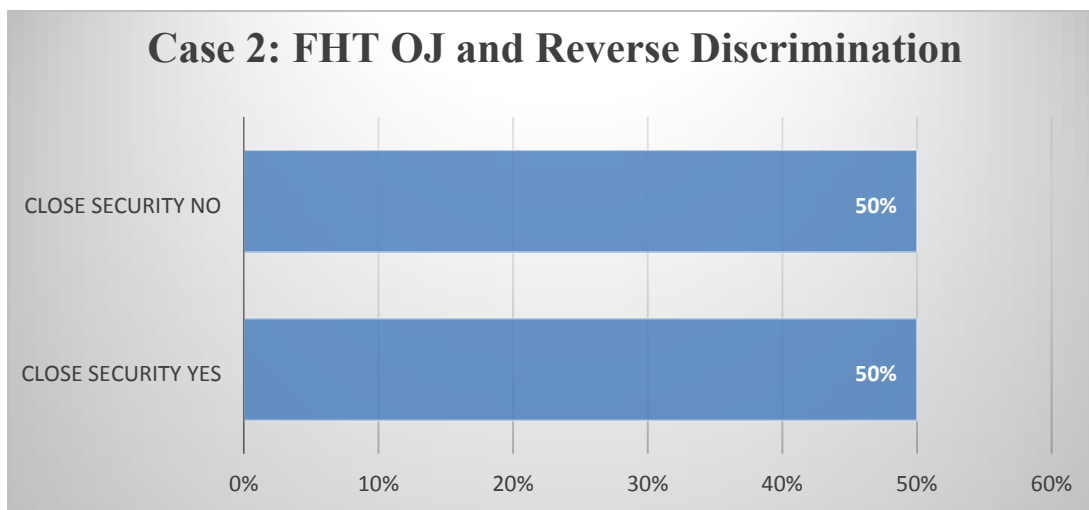
Of the five participants associated with Grp2, 80% of the participants (Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) reported they heard or witnessed behaviors that met the criteria of retaliatory behavior and/or negative workforce climate regarding the use gender-based HRMS supporting. In contrast, 20% of the participants (Grp2M3) were neutral on the subject.

FHT OJ and Reverse Discrimination. The dataset below depicts the statistics of officers reporting lowered organizational justice in relation to trust and fairness (FHT OJ) and discrimination regarding gender-based affirmative action policies. Of the four participants

associated with a close security who reported lowered organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT OJ), two participants (Grp2M1 and Grp2M4) reported a lowered sense of reversed discrimination, and two (Grp2M2 and Grp2M5) reported they did not (See Figure 26).

Figure 26

Case 2: FHT OJ and Reverse Discrimination



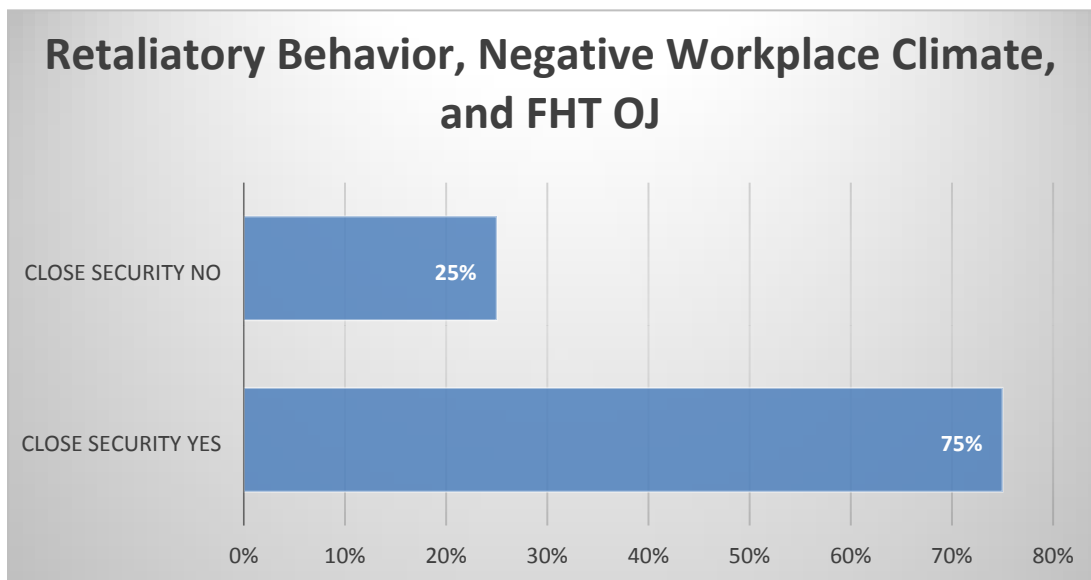
Of the four participants associated with Grp2 and reported they felt both trust loss and unfairness (FHT OJ), 50% of the participants (Grp2M1 and Grp2M4) reported reverse discrimination regarding the use of gender-based HRMS supporting. Whereas 50% of the participants who reported they felt both trust loss and unfairness (FHT organizational justice (Grp2M2, and Grp2M5) did not.

Retaliatory Behavior, Negative Workplace Climate, and FHT OJ. The dataset below depicts the statistics about the perception of retaliation and/or negative workplace climate in relation to trust and fairness (FHT OJ) regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. Of the four participants associated with a close security who reported lowered organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT OJ), three (Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) participants reported they did experience behavior that met the criteria of

retaliatory behavior and/or negative workplace environment and one (Grp2M1) participant reported did not (See Figure 27).

Figure 27

Case 2: Retaliatory Behavior, Negative Workplace Climate, and FHT OJ

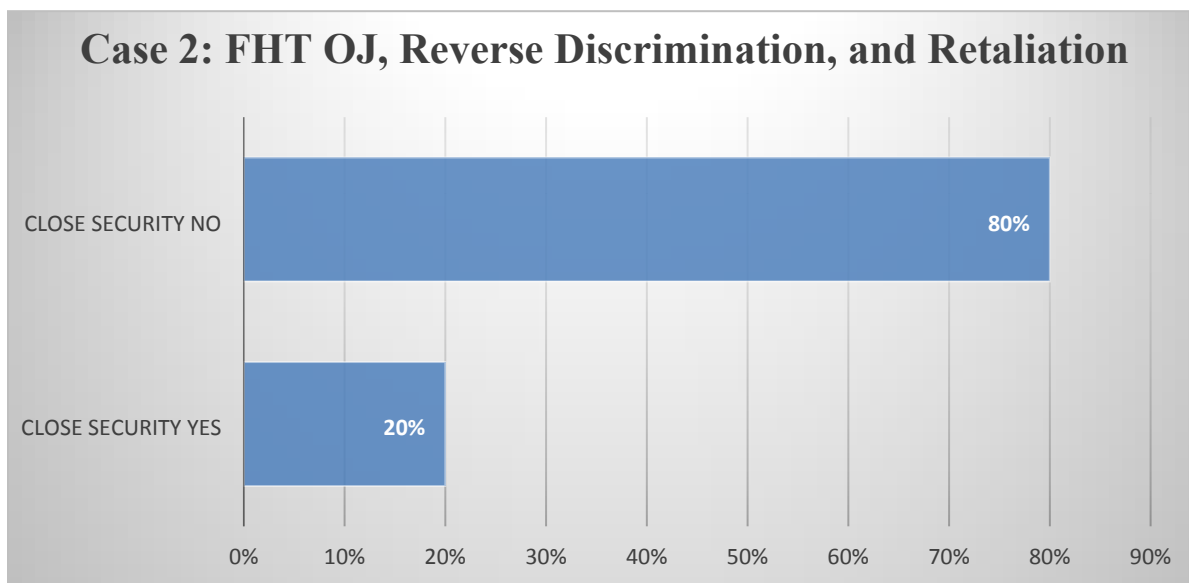


Of the Grp2 participants who reported they felt both trust loss and unfairness (FHT OJ), 80% (Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) reported behaviors that met the criteria of retaliation/negative workplace climate regarding the use of gender-based HRMS. In contrast, 20% of the participants (Grp2M1) did not.

Reverse Discrimination, FHT OJ, and Retaliation. The dataset below depicts the statistics about participants that met all three criteria: reverse discrimination, FHT OJ, and retaliation regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies. Of the five participants associated with a close security, one participant (Grp2M4) reported information that met all aspects of the specific problem, and four participants (Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5) did not (See Figure 28).

Figure 28

Case 2: FHT OJ, Reverse Discrimination, and Retaliation



Of the five Grp2 participants, 20% (Grp2M4) met all aspects of the specific problem regarding using gender-based HRMS. Whereas 80% of the participants (Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5) did not.

Case study 2 results showed three subgroups of themes under the umbrella related to RQ3. Those were (1) hearing or witnessing behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior or experienced a negative workforce climate when a female came on shift with the appearance of a gender-based advantage, (2) the perception of retaliation in relation to organizational justice in relation to both trust and fairness (FHT) regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies, and (3) retaliation and a negative workplace climate in relation to reverse discrimination regarding the use of gender-based affirmative action policies.

Subgroups 1 and 2 supported, and subgroup 3 contradicted previous findings presented by Boateng and Hsieh (2019), Morton (2019), O'Brien and Rickne (2016), and Submitter and Komari (2020).

O'Brien and Rickne (2016) conducted a study regarding gender quotas and women's political leadership. It concluded the sense of injustice leads to retaliation among the dominant group. They further suggested that the male officers who felt this discrimination believed that the female officers did not earn their post. It was evident that reverse discrimination among the dominant group when 'gender-quota' affirmative action HRMS was utilized.

Boateng and Hsieh (2019) conducted a study regarding prison officer misconduct, job stress, and organizational justice. This research revealed that perceptions of objective and fair criteria used in promotions reduce emotional effects and negative work behaviors like retaliation and lead to lowered organizational justice (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). Such a perception of injustice and stressful environments created through retaliatory behavior leads to higher turnover, reduced employee engagement, reduced organizational commitment, and lower job satisfaction (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). It was further concluded that an influx of negative emotions in conjunction with a sense of betrayal, creating a sense of imbalance on the justice scale (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019).

Morton (2019) conducted a study regarding "the dark side of diversity" and dominant group blowback. In this study, Morton (2019) collected data from a manufacturing plant's employees, which showed that employees with higher perceptions of unfair treatment were more likely to see ORB from coworkers. This study found that the employees who participated in ORB engaged in them through the 'get them back' justification regardless of the moral application (Morton, 2019). This study concluded that these gender-based policies could be viewed as an unfair advantage, which creates a negative impact on the dominant group leading to reduced organizational citizenship, higher turnover, unethical behavior and can result in reverse discrimination among the dominant group (Morton, 2019).

Submitter and Komari (2020) conducted a study regarding the relationship between organizational justice and counterproductive work behaviors. They found that toxic actions and behaviors will spread throughout the workplace like a virus (Submitter & Komari, 2020). This virus, or problem, starts with one person. Over time coworkers may start behaving or acting differently and/or start to believe that their organization has a greater tolerance regarding this type of behavior.

Leibbrandt et al. (2018) conducted a study regarding the back lash against women regarding gender quotas. This study found that even though ‘quota-based’ HRMS intended to reduce or eliminate discrimination, scholars have linked backlash effects and stigmatization toward females and minorities when the dominant group felt it was used.

For subgroups 1 and 2, the following statements supported the phenomenon. Grp2M2 stated, “others try to challenge her more and question her judgment.” Grp2M4 stated,

If it is obvious based on who all boarded, well, morale goes down. You can feel it in the air—lots of quietness. The inmates see that. They know when the officers are playing on the same team. It can be dangerous in that aspect.

Grp2M4 also stated,

I mean like you hear people talk. I mean, once a male officer told his female sergeant that ‘I wish I was a woman then I could suck (explicit word) and get a promotion.’ Also heard officers call that particular woman an affirmative action hire. I mean you have things like talking about her behind her back to disregarding orders. Walking off from her.

For subgroup 3, the following statements were in support of the phenomenon. Grp2M4 stated,

I know equality is needed and that we need policies to make sure discrimination is not present. But to say oh. Sorry dude we need a chick to fill this spot. Piss on your time and dedication. Maybe next time. Is that not discrimination.

Grp2M4 also stated,

I mean like you hear people talk. I mean, once a male officer told his female sergeant that 'I wish I was a woman then I could suck (explicit word) and get a promotion.' Also heard officers call that particular woman an affirmative action hire. I mean you have things like talking about her behind her back to disregarding orders. Walking off from her.

Contradictory to that, the next few statements showed a contradiction to the phenomena. Grp2M2 stated, "I am not aware," regarding reverse discrimination. Grp2M3 stated, "no" regarding reverse discrimination. Grp2M5 stated, "I do not have any recollection of a coworker or myself being discriminated against because of gender."

Analysis. For the cross-case analysis, the researcher limited the findings specific to the research problem concepts. Those were perception of fairness, reverse discrimination, organization justice (trust and fairness), and retaliation (to include workplace climate).

Fairness: This cross-case analysis revealed that four (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M5, and Grp1M8) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional facility and four (Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility perceived using gender as an affirmative action tool as unfair. Contradictory to that, one (Grp1M7) of the eight participants associated with a medium security facility and zero of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility perceived using gender as an affirmative action tool as fair. Nevertheless, three (Grp1M3, Grp1M4, and Grp1M6) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional

facility and one (Grp2M3) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility perceived using gender as an affirmative action tool as neutral or fair if used to hire based on the gender of the inmate population within the facility.

Reverse Discrimination: Second, this cross-case analysis revealed that three (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, and Grp1M6) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional facility and two (Grp2M1 and Grp2M4) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility perceived a sense of reverse discrimination in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool. Contradictory to that, five (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) of the eight participants associated with a medium security facility and three (Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M5) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility perceived no sense of reverse discrimination in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool fair or neutral towards the subject.

FHT OJ: Third, this cross-case analysis further revealed that six (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, and Grp1M8) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional facility and all five (Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4, and Grp2M5) of the participants associated with a close security correctional facility experience lowered FHT OJ in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool. Contradictory to that, two (Grp1M4 and Grp1M7) of the eight participants associated with a medium security facility did not experience lowered FHT OJ in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool or neutral towards the subject.

Retaliation: Fourth, this cross-case analysis revealed that eight (Grp1M1, Grp1M2, Grp1M3, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M6, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional facility and four (Grp2M2, Grp2M3, Grp2M4,

and Grp2M5) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool. Contradictory to that, one (Grp2M1) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility reported they had not heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior and/or in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool or neutral towards the subject.

Reverse Discrimination and Retaliation: This cross-case analysis revealed that three (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, and Grp1M6) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional facility and one (Grp2M5) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility reported they had felt a sense of reverse discrimination and heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior and/or negative workforce climate in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool. Contradictory to that, five (Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) of the eight participants associated with a medium security facility and four (Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M4) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility reported they had felt a sense of reverse discrimination and heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior and/or negative workforce climate in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool or neutral towards the subject.

Reverse Discrimination, FHT OJ, and Retaliatory Behavior: This cross-case analysis revealed that three (Grp1M1, Grp1M3, and Grp1M6) of the eight participants associated with a medium security correctional facility and one (Grp2M4) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility met all three criteria of reverse discrimination, FHT OJ, and retaliation in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool. Contradictory to that, five

(Grp1M2, Grp1M4, Grp1M5, Grp1M7, and Grp1M8) of the eight participants associated with a medium security facility and four (Grp2M1, Grp2M2, Grp2M3, and Grp2M4) of the five participants associated with a close security correctional facility met all three criteria of reverse discrimination, FHT OJ, and retaliation in relation to using gender as an affirmative action tool or neutral towards the subject.

The Conceptual Framework. The conceptual framework used as the foundation of this study was a combination of two theories. Those theories were FHT and ORB. Given the phenomena being studied, it was imperative to understand the separation of justice and fairness since justice does not always equal fair treatment. Additionally, understanding how social exchange and perceptions of fairness apply to organizational justice is vital because it shapes the relationship between the two entities and influences organizational behavior, such as ORB and job commitment.

FHT focuses on the relationship between distributive justice and procedure justice while understanding that fairness and justice are not always seen as the same. Goldman and Cropanzano (2015) defined fairness as the individual's perspective of "reasonable and without contradiction" of the output/input ratios. In addition, the FHT allows for heuristics or "mental shortcuts" to the rules of information processing when making judgments (Grandori, 2015). Thus, allowing split-second judgments based on assumptions and not "knowing" the full situation, substituting fairness and trust for justice. For this study, the assumption is that a female was hired or promoted based on gender and the use of unspoken or unofficial 'gender quotas.' This study revealed using FHT fairness of gender as an HRMS in relation to loss of trust in the authoritative power created a sense of justice. Thus, the theory explains how the effect of procedural justice affects the perception of fairness.

Furthermore, this study used the principles of ORB to add to fairness perceptions in relation to organizational justice. The idea of the theory is some action that initiates the relationship, the relationship, and a response (Cropanzano et al., 2017). This response can lead to organizational citizenship behavior or counterproductive work behavior, one of which is organizational retaliatory behavior (ORB). Pan (2018) defined retaliatory behavior as negative employee behaviors that result from perceived injustice or unfairness regarding his or her employer. Pan (2018) added that the relationships between the employee and employer are developed through mutual trust and faith that the other will uphold their part of the obligation. In relation to this study, injustice or unfairness is the use of gender as an HRMS strategy resulting in lost opportunities for oneself or another resulting in a loss of trust in the organization. A common theme throughout this study was unfair perceptions and loss of trust. Many participants reported both unfair perceptions and loss of trust feelings in addition to stories of lost opportunities and inadequate promotions.

When asked if the participant felt using gender as an HRMS:

Grp1M5: "I don't feel gender-based recruitment is fair or necessary."

Grp1M6: "Nope a woman should not be promoted just because she is a woman. Same to be said of a man. It is biased and shouldn't be allowed."

Grp1M8:

I feel that women have made great strides in the equality of the workplace. But I don't feel that just because someone is a woman they should be chosen over a man who may be better suited or qualified for the job.

Grp2M1:

I think that it's important to welcome women into a field that is predominantly men, but I don't believe that a female should get hired or promoted over a male based solely on the fact that she is female and not based on qualifications and job performance.

Grp2M5:

I believe gender should not play a role in hiring or promotion. That being said there, women seem to be preferred over men for the role Warden at a female correctional by the DOC. However, I knew a Warden at a female facility who would strongly disagree with this practice. He once said, the fact is when you have a female in control of other females there is going to be conflict.

When asked about the loss of trust:

Grp1M5: "Promotion based on affirmative action alone is a slippery slope and will lead to moral, loyalty, and trust issues between the administration and those adversely affected by the promotion."

Grp1M6: "Yea it would."

Grp1M8: "Hard to trust an unfair system."

Grp2M1:

I have learned that it doesn't always matter how qualified you are when a job opportunity or promotion is available. There are a lot more politics in place and gender as well as 'who you know' plays a large part in promotion opportunities. Cannot trust a system like this.

Grp2M5: "Who wouldn't?"

When asked about lost opportunity:

Grp1M5: "Promotion based on affirmative action alone is a slippery slope and will lead to moral, loyalty, and trust issues between the administration and those adversely affected by the promotion."

Grp1M6: "Yea, it would."

Grp1M8: "Hard to trust an unfair system."

Grp2M1:

I have learned that it doesn't always matter how qualified you are when a job opportunity or promotion is available. There are a lot more politics in place and gender as well as 'who you know' plays a large part in promotion opportunities. Cannot trust a system like this.

Grp2M5: "Who wouldn't?"

When asked about inadequate promotions:

Grp1M1:

There was one. She got to captain and then lost it. I don't know if anything said out loud but in private, they were this (explicit word) got the promotion (explicit word). Cocky Lil (explicit word). Things are so bad and getting worse.

Grp1M2: "Yes, we recently have had a female promoted to Sergeant and get a desirable post but hasn't held a true security post."

Grp1M7: "Another female got promoted over a male coworker and that female was an absolute train wreck and everyone knew it."

Grp2M4:

There was a female that got promoted. She was horrible to work under and when she failed, she supposedly blamed her lack of experience and the fact she got the job for

doing acts. If you know what I mean. Funny story on that, she ended up getting caught up with bringing in contraband in and got arrested.

Grp2M5:

Put in for sergeant. She topped the board, but by this time I had realized she was an educated idiot. Well, the next sergeant board she blew it away. First again. I picked around her. By this time, I knew she was an idiot. Third sergeant, board she blew it away again. I got to thinking, now if it gets out that this girl finished #1 on three straight promotion boards and I picked around her three times it's going to look like discrimination. So, I promoted her. She came right out of the gate doing stupid (explicit word). Letting one officer count a building, doing and not doing any paperwork, or getting the inmate checked by medical then I don't remember the other situation, but it was something to do with handcuffing an inmate in lockdown. So, she was still on working test and I took her stripes. Well, she appealed it, and her only defense was that she was sorry. Do you believe they made me give her rank back?

When asked about negative behaviors:

Grp1M5: "Yes, there are negative behaviors when gender is a factor. However, I have never observed retaliation towards a promoted female. I did see a lack of confidence, dismissiveness, and second-guessing of her orders or plans."

Grp1M7:

Yea I have heard a few people make comments because about female that promoted. Um, I think some people unofficially retaliated because that one female was an absolute train wreck. Well, rumor was there were two that made less than true comments to HR about her touching them because they did not want to be on her shift. And that worked.

Grp1M8:

There were times when the males that lost out on promotions due to gender, they made sly comments about the female that was promoted over them. Off-handed comment like 'you did not deserve the promotion,' but an apology usually follows these comments. In corrections, everyone knows everyone and depends on each other at some point, so fences must be mended.

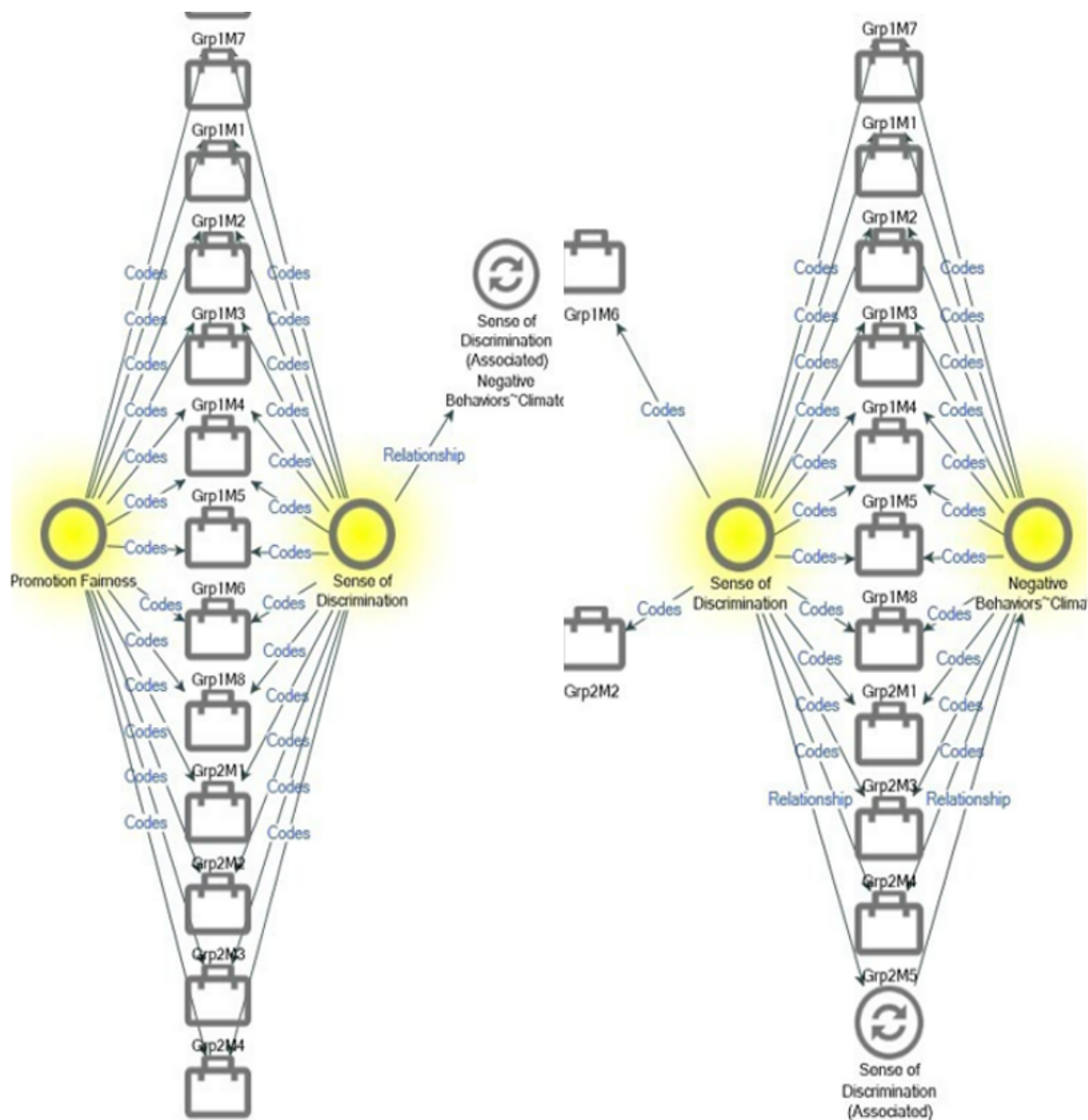
Grp2M2: "Yes. Others try to challenge her more and question her judgment."

Grp2M4:

I mean like you hear people talk. I mean, once a male officer told his female sergeant that 'I wish I was a woman then I could suck (explicit word) and get a promotion.' Also heard officers call that particular woman an affirmative action hire. I mean you have things like talking about her behind her back to disregarding orders. Walking off from her. How can you respect someone who is only holding any sort of bars because of something like being a man or a woman? Sometimes it is hard to be mad or take it out on her when really it is those higher up.

Figure 29 below represents the study's findings in relation to the full conceptual framework submitted in Section 1.

Figure 29

Conceptual Framework Relationship

Anticipated Themes. This researcher anticipated themes concerning the use of unofficial ‘gender quotas’ as an affirmative action HRM strategy were a perception of reverse discrimination, lowered sense of justice based on unfairness and loss of trust, and retaliatory behavior. Most of these themes were seen in the data. For example, eight of the 13 participants

reported that this practice was unfair, and all eight of the 13 participants reported a loss of trust. Additionally, eight of the 13 participants reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior. However, they did not feel what they had witnessed or heard was retaliation but “bad” or “negative” behavior. However, there was one theme found lacking in the study data. That theme was reverse discrimination. Only five of the 13 participants reported any feelings of reverse discrimination.

When asked about feelings of reverse discrimination about the phenomena:

Grp1M2: “Not currently towards myself.”

Grp1M4: “I have not experienced or witnessed retaliation towards a female officer.”

Grp1M6: “Not for gender. I feel this is more likely to be used promoting an ethnic group.”

Grp1M8: “Despite being “passed over “for promotion, there is usually quite a bit of support for the new supervisor.”

Grp2M1: “I haven’t felt gender quotas affect me personally based on the low number of women coming into the job field.”

Grp2M5: “I do not have any recollection of a coworker or myself being discriminated against because of gender.”

The Literature. The objective of a literature review is to synthesize and critique existing research, offer transparency in the data collected (Kraus et al., 2020), provide a framework of empirical developments, and outline literature relevant to the researcher’s respective field of study (Rukmini, 2019). The literature relevant to the current study included legal framework, affirmative action and diversity, reverse discrimination court cases, theoretical orientation, Department of Corrections, and thematic analysis. The thematic analysis is focused on how the

findings relate to the literature, including similarities and differences. For example, the literature revealed the following themes: HRMS and reverse discrimination, ‘gender quotas’ and reverse discrimination, fairness and judgment judgments, and retaliation and balance.

Gender HRMS and Reverse Discrimination. According to Yu (2018), there has been an increase in the use of targeted female recruitment in law enforcement. Theoretically, HRMS should generate highly sought-after results. However, some organizations have been left with inadvertent challenges. Murphy (2018) proposed that this is the increased confusion of “voluntary affirmative action” and affirmative action requirements. However, organizations have failed to consider reverse discrimination. It has been concluded that these organizational policies and laws implemented to address the discrimination of underrepresented groups have prompted reverse discrimination claims (Murphy, 2018). It is theorized that dominant groups have been receiving discriminatory or unfair treatment resulting from this ‘voluntary affirmative action’ (Murphy, 2018).

‘Gender Quotas’ and Reverse Discrimination. The literature revealed that the idea of ‘quotas’ is to reach a selection of people to a position based on quantitative goals of group membership (Louw, 2019). These have been labeled “constructive discrimination” (Christensen & Muhr, 2019), “positive action or discrimination,” “equal opportunities promotion,” and “affirmative action hire” (Madison, 2019). Wilkins et al. (2015) found that gender ‘quotas’ led to anger and resentment towards women, leading to feelings of victimhood and loss and feeling that they are targets of anti-white or anti-male rhetoric. In agreement, Seierstad (2016) conducted a qualitative interview with 19 females who worked in the capacity of non-executive board members. During these interviews, it was found that ‘quota’ policies have created the phenomenon of reverse discrimination amongst the dominant group and the belief of preferential

treatment when the organization implements hiring decisions and promotions based on ‘quotas’ (Seierstad, 2016). According to Russen et al. (2020), anti-male bias has played a role in the perception of gender discrimination on various levels of the promotion process due to the feeling of missed opportunities regarding their female counterpart receiving promotions over them.

This research participant pool felt the HRMS policy was more related to gender targeting than a ‘quota.’ Additionally, this study was contradictory to the literature mentioned above, as it revealed that most participants did not feel a sense of reverse discrimination. Eight of the 13 participants expressed that they did not have a sense of reverse discrimination or felt neutral on the subject. The common themes regarding the group’s perception of reverse discrimination were profanity, not experienced, experienced first/second hand, and officer gender should match inmate population gender. There was an overwhelming gap in the ratio, looking further into the data at the cross-case analysis. Contradictory to the literature review, five of the eight participants associated with a close security facility and three of the five participants associated with a medium security correctional facility perceived no sense of reverse discrimination in using gender as an affirmative action tool fair or neutral towards the subject.

Fairness and Justice Judgements. Fairness perception is multidimensional and consists of two major categories: fairness outcomes (i.e., distributive justice) and fairness process (i.e., procedural justice; Russen et al., 2020). These perceptions are rooted in social comparison (Syed et al., 2020). Particularly, when a person reacts to a situation, that person considers not only his/her situation but the situations of others as a comparable reference. As a result, people tend to be sensitive to fair treatment and decision-making fairness about opportunities and find them just as important as outcomes when engaging with the employee/employer relationship. Studies have shown that fairness perception is associated with positive and negative emotions and attitudes

(Syed et al., 2020). However, research has shown that the perception of unfairness is substantially stronger than fairness (Syed et al., 2020).

The above correlates with the data found in this research. The common themes regarding the group's fairness perception of gender targeting HRMS were not fair, should not be used, less qualified, negative, 'even out' the numbers, should be equal recruitment, caused a strain, gender or any other descriptor not fair, creates strife, and very poor and problematic. The common themes found among the group's perception regarding trust and the use of gender as an HRMS were trust loss in the system, no trust when it is about 'who you know,' there are always trust issues when anyone is given an unfair advantage, there is a loss trust in the promotional system, and some felt neutral on the subject.

This study revealed that eight of the 13 participants perceived using gender as an affirmative action tool as unfair. It also revealed that 11 of the 13 participants felt a loss of trust about using gender as an affirmative action tool in what they perceived as an "unfair manner." Furthermore, the data revealed that 11 of the 11 participants felt using gender as an affirmative action tool was unfair in totality or unfair in what they felt was unfair. In other words, all participants that felt any sense of unfairness also lost trust.

Retaliation. Affirmative action policies, such as 'quota' usage, might elicit these behaviors from the dominant group due to the perception of the unfair or unjust advantage the minority group obtains (Dover et al., 2016). Employers that foster distrust or negative relationships find they are repaid with ORB or other deviant behaviors (Ugwu & Anhange, 2015). The range of retaliatory behaviors an individual can use in response to injustice is vast. These unethical behaviors can range from serious behaviors like vandalism and theft to minor atrocities like gossiping (Khattak et al., 2020).

This study aligned with the idea of injustice and, negative behaviors, retaliation. The common themes regarding the group's perception of negative behavior were off-handed/sly comments, explicit words related to the female/situation, social media, not witnessed, gossip, starting rumors, dismissive, second-guessing orders, created lies, moved shifts, challenging behavior, and labeling. The common themes regarding the group's perception of the climate were negative, annoyed, low morale, anger, worry for safety, unhappy, happy if deserving, quietness, inmates feel/know this, dangerous, loss of respect, and bad attitude.

The Problem. The problem is the potential creation of reverse discrimination using affirmative action Human Resource Management Strategies (HRMS), resulting in lowered organizational justice and retaliatory behavior among the dominant group. Employers, such as correctional agencies, have used affirmative action HRMS to avoid the liability of disparate impact among minorities (Fa, 2016) and women (Dorrough et al., 2016). However, recent research indicated that these policies have resulted in reverse discrimination (Jankowski & Marcinkiewicz, 2019) and lowered organizational justice among the dominant group (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). The sense of injustice leads to resentment, conflict (Dorrough et al., 2016), and retaliation among the dominant group (O'Brien & Rickne, 2016).

Summary of the Findings

The presentation of findings presented the themes found in the data, how the findings addressed the problem being studied, the purpose of the research, and the research questions. The purpose of this multiple case study was to investigate and assist the business of correctional facilities in grasping the effects of affirmative action HRMS regarding male correctional officers' perception of fairness, discrimination, and justice. The data from the interviews were analyzed as indicated in the previous section. Four major themes emerged from the data: career

motivation, affirmative action, gender HRMS perceptions, and behavior/climate. Additionally, three cross-case themes emerged: reverse discrimination, fairness and trust perception, and behavior/climate. Finally, the data were used to answer the research questions related to the phenomenon.

The findings of this study revealed that male correctional officers perceived using gender as an HRMS to be unfair, create injustice (lowers organizational justice), and lead to retaliatory behavior. In addition, the study revealed that using these HRMS resulted in a negative workplace climate/environment. The concluding results of the study revealed: (1) 84.6% of the participants labeled gender-based HRMS unfair altogether or if not used based on inmate population, (2) 100% of the participants that labeled gender-based HRMS unfair altogether or if not used based on inmate population revealed a loss of trust associated with the organization, (3) 61.5% of the participants did not feel a sense of reverse discrimination, (4) 61.5% of the participants reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior, and (5) 92.3% of the participants reported that gender-based HRMS resulted in a negative work environment. Additionally, it is important to note that this study showed that most officers did not report feelings of reverse discrimination and that the findings were primarily based on fairness perceptions as it relates to trust and justice.

Application to Professional Practice

This qualitative multiple case study sought to understand the problem of the perceived creation of reverse discrimination using affirmative action Human Resource Management Strategies (HRMS), resulting in lowered organizational justice and retaliatory behavior among the dominant group. The findings of this research presented five major themes and three cross-case themes developed through data analysis. This section expands these themes into practical

lessons that can improve general business practices and provide potential application strategies for organizations that utilize gender as an HRMS tool.

Improving General Business Practice

This study's results can have a direct impact on improving the general business practice regarding HRMS. Specifically, it can provide insight on successfully implementing gender targeted HRMS to assist in reducing disparate treatment in male dominated career fields. Though female integrating into workforce is not a new concept, female integration into corrections has gained prominence over the last 70 years (Dorbin et al., 2016). According to Collica-Cox and Schulz (2018), it was not until the 1980s that female officers were truly integrated into the workforce at male facilities. Since the '80s, female correctional officers in the United States have seen intense growth (Dorbin et al., 2016). According to Collica-Cox and Schulz (2017), female staff now comprise 48% of private correctional officers, 13% of federal correctional officers, 26% of state correctional officers, and 29% of 'first-line' supervisory positions. This growth has been accredited to multiple advances in legislation regarding diversity, inclusion, and equal rights (Batton & Wright, 2019), such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of the 1970s (Collica-Cox & Schulz, 2020).

While the notion of affirmative action strategies is not a new concept, it has been linked to backlash effects and stigmatization toward females and minorities when the dominant group felt it was used (Leibbrandt et al., 2018). Additionally, research has indicated that these policies have resulted in reverse discrimination (Jankowski & Marcinkiewicz, 2019) and lowered organizational justice among the dominant group (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019). Therefore, the results of this study in conjunction with the current body of knowledge, a direct application to improving general business practices regarding affirmative action HRMS.

Even though this study failed to prove a link between gender based HRMS and reverse discrimination, it did show support towards the effects of using gender based HRMS on organizational justice, retaliation, workplace climate, and backlash. Of the 13 participants, 92.3% felt a loss of FHT organizational justice, 92.3% experienced a negative workforce climate, and 69.24% of the participants reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior, when it was perceived that a female was promoted because of a gender-based advantage. Thus, revealing room for improvement regarding the use of gender based HRMS within the corrections industry.

In addition, one of the common business practices found that could help improve the general business practice was the use of clear and consistent procedures. The findings in this study demonstrated that the male dominated group found more understanding when policies and procedures regarding hiring and promotions were clear and consistent. In addition, it is important to note honesty and openness regarding those practices should be used added to the acceptance of the hiring/promotion outcome. Moreover, participants expressed this acceptance with statements such as “I don’t find them fair. But I understand why they are used. However, due to the smaller number of qualified females that apply for law enforcement jobs, I understand their case” (Grp1M2) and “Be clear, be consistent, and yes take into account affirmative action policies” (Grp2M4). Furthermore, Grp 1M5 stated “Affirmative action hiring, it is important to have representatives reflective of the community an agency serves” and Grp 2M4 stated “for the most part, it is a necessity. Because no matter how advanced we become as humans. You will always have those people who are racist or sexist,” showing the understanding these policies are needed.

A second common business practices found that could help improve the general business practice was continuous diversity training/education. This study revealed a lack of understanding of affirmative action, diversity, discrimination, and retaliation in the 21st century. For example, Grp1M7 revealed that he was unaware the organization had any affirmative action policies and further suggested that he thought affirmative action was over. This response itself suggests that training and education regarding affirmative action, diversity, and discrimination should not be limited to new hire orientation or annual training/certification requirements. This should be a continuous process that reinforces guidelines that focus on reducing discrimination, bias, and prejudice in the workforce. In addition, this study suggested that many participants did not understand, or they did not equate certain actions or behaviors met the definition of retaliation. For example, Grp1M4 and Grp1M6 suggested they did not witness retaliation but commented that the climate changes towards the negative.

Finally, though it was not a common revelation from the study, this researcher felt it was necessary to highlight a suggestion made by one of the respondents. Grp2M1 suggested that the industry should “look at what makes it such a male-dominated organization and see how you can make it more appealing to women whether it’s safety concerns, job security, work-life balance, etc.” Though this concept was not specific towards the researcher’s study, it is still one of the most important things revealed by the participants. Even if the industry can overcome the stigma and bias of female officers, the correctional industry needs to understand how to recruit and smoothly integrate them into this male dominated world and understand what it will take to entice them to stay. To do that, the organization will need to determine why females are not applying for the job, why females are leaving the job, and what they can do to prevent this.

Potential Application Strategies

This study serves as a method of awareness for male-dominated fields (e.g., corrections) to understand how incorporating gender into HRMS affects the dominant group. It also serves to provide insight into possible flaws in HRMS. Organizations can leverage these findings to develop or improve fair HRMS and provide a more inclusive, gender-neutral recruitment of promotion strategy. Academics and professionals should consider the following lessons learned to assist in balancing the perception of fairness and irradicating negative behavior and/or climate:

Fairness of Practice and Recruitment. Many participants reported using gender as a fair recruitment HRMS but not as a promotion HRMs.

Honesty and Clarity. Participants stated that clear communication would reduce their negative opinion and fairness perception of gender HRMS.

Fair Promotion Inclusivity. Participants reported that gender was not an issue if those that were promoted deserved the promotion. Promotions should be dependent on skill, experience, performance, and competence.

Encourage Support. Develop strategies to encourage support of female officers through development programs and programs that support an open platform for officers to voice concerns.

Gender Inclusivity and Training. Once leaders are promoted, effectively address ramifications of violations of retaliation to include training on what constitutes retaliatory behavior.

Team Building Initiatives. Team building initiatives when a female is promoted could allow those serving under her the opportunity to see how she will lead with those higher up observing.

Encourage Men to Speak Out. Participants felt they did not have a voice or if they spoke out it would be seen as sexism. Offer a neutral safe place that encourages male officers to have a judgment free voice.

The key take away is understand how the use of gender HRMS affects the dominant group and implement clear, concise processes and procedures. This includes honesty from the organization and focusing on fair gender based HRMS initiatives. In other words, to balance the scales of gender in corrections, look at filling spots based on inmate population. That would thin the line of perceived fairness because there is honest justification on why a female was promoted over a male. Simply put, female leadership is needed in a female prison based on the gender population constraints.

Summary of Application to Professional Practice

Through the implementation of “voluntary affirmative action” strategies in the guise of Title VII to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, employer and legal tension has ensued. Organizations have failed to consider reverse discrimination. It has been concluded that these organizational policies and laws that were implemented to address the discrimination of underrepresented groups have prompted claims of reverse discrimination (Murphy, 2018). It is theorized that dominant groups have been receiving discriminatory or unfair treatment resulting from these “voluntary affirmative action” (Murphy, 2018), such as ‘quota strategies.’ For example, a male plaintiff may declare he suffered gender discrimination despite gender majority. Murphy (2018) ascertains that the current political climate increases such legal claims.

Further research has indicated that this led to a perception of an unjust system by other groups (i.e., males and Caucasians) because the sense of injustice leads to resentment, conflict (Dorrough et al., 2016), and counterproductive work behaviors such as retaliation towards an

individual or the organization and generating a hostile environment (Syed et al., 2020). Research has also shown that many feel these policies delivered an unfair or unjust advantage (Morgenroth & Ryan, 2018) and violate the value of merit, and the individual deemed more qualified or possessing greater skills and aptitudes for the job is overlooked (Yu, 2018).

The data gathered in this multiple case study reflected the use of using gender as an official HRMS (gender quota or gender targeting). The findings uncovered four main themes and three cross case study themes. These themes included (1) career motivation, (2) affirmative action, (3) gender HRMS, and (4) behavior/climate. According to Yin (2017), emerging patterns and themes within a multiple-case study design allowed the researcher to investigate the data within and across both cases. Those themes included (1) fairness and trust perception, (2) reverse discrimination, and (3) behavior/climate. The application of professional practice addresses these themes and provides insight on lessons learned and improving professional practices.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study serves as a method of awareness for male-dominated fields (e.g., corrections) to understand how incorporating gender into HRMS affects the dominant group. It also serves to provide insight into possible flaws in HRMS. Organizations can leverage these findings to develop or improve fair HRMS and provide a more inclusive, gender-neutral recruitment of promotion strategy. The outcomes of this study demonstrated that HRMS, though needed, can lead to negative outcomes if these strategies are not implemented effectively. Additionally, the outcomes of this study demonstrated the need for gender based HRMS need to be valued and understood by all employees, not just female officers. In other words, male officers need to not only understand how these policies work but ‘buy-in’ and support them.

Therefore, academics should consider the following recommendations for future studies regarding gender based HRMS: (1) include private and/or federal prisons, (2) further impacts on employees' performance, (3) impact on other minority groups, (4) impact on turnover, and (5) generational bias.

Reflections

The topic of this study selected resonated with me on a personal level because I had firsthand experience with the backlash of gender, promotion, and male dominance. I can relate to the fairness perception aspect, the discrimination, and the retaliation. This researcher experienced firsthand insubordination, sabotage, and name calling because male officers felt that the promotion was based on gender and not the skills, knowledge, and abilities that this researcher spent time and energy in honing. In fact, that experience is what drove the desire to research the topic. This researcher wanted to step outside her role and experience to gain understanding from the perspective of her 'Brothers in Blue.' The desire was for this researcher was able to relate her personal experience in addition to her thirst of understanding to discover potential bridges to overcome the historical. This section will discuss the researchers' reflections on personal and professional growth in addition to Biblical integration.

Personal & Professional Growth

This research project has provided insight leading to personal and professional growth. From a personal standpoint, this researcher was able to use this research topic to allow herself to be more open minded and release some personal bias. By discussing perceptions and feelings of the dominate group when they felt they were at a disadvantage or worked for something they felt they earned but was passed over because of their gender, this researcher found empathy for the subject. This researcher had experience retaliation and name calling. She also experienced the

looks and comments by her peers. However, after taking a moment to listen to the other perspective without carrying that bias, this researcher was able to find understanding in the struggle of feelings that come with that unjust feeling. Feeling like the hard work and dedication that was given to an organization was overlooked, that the loyalty, time, and energy focused on doing the job meant nothing to them. It is not an easy feeling.

Women have been fighting this injustice and still fight this injustice today. They have desired and continue to push the preverbal glass ceiling of unequal pay, unequal benefits in hope of not only shattering it but breaking through the stigma that comes with being a woman in a male dominated world. Though these situations are vastly different because of the historically white male dominated Corporate America, this researcher found herself humbled in the experience. She found a stronger a desire to push harder for women but to not lose sight of her male counterparts that work just as hard in their respective fields holding no judgement or prejudice towards females working beside them. We all have obstacles in the workplace. We all desire to find success in what we do. Therefore, affirmative action and diversity polices are very much needed and should be the fundamental cornerstone of HRMS. However, we all need to find that middle fair ground of equality. Where neither male nor female are being held back in an unjust manner.

Furthermore, this researcher has begun her journey of writing a book regarding her journey through life with complex post-traumatic stress disorder. Though the topic of the book is not specifically related to the subject of this study, the key lessons learned about letting go of the rigid thinking and unconscious bias resulting from the traumas in her life and finding understanding from the opposite perspective will be an invaluable gain. She will be able to use the ability to open her mind and not only focus on one perspective but offer insight into what

those involved in her trauma had been through and why they were who they were. This could help with her personal journey of healing and hopefully the healing journey of those who read her book.

Integration for Biblical Integration

Discrimination goes against God's plan for humanity. Scripture points out, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (King James Bible, 2017, Galatians 3:28). Scripture further states, "For as the woman is of the man, even so, is the man also by the woman; but all things of God" (King James Bible, 2017, 1 Corinthians 11:12). If God himself stated He shows no partiality (King James Bible, 2017, Romans 2:11), then humanity should do the same. Through growth and understanding of how 'gender quotas' affect the dominant group, organizations can grow in Christ and apply HRMS with a strong Biblical foundation.

This section explores scripture and the Biblical truth in relation to business and HRM. Specifically, the Biblical integration for this study involve implementing fair and just HRMS using Biblical ethics in relation to inclusion, diversity, and gender discrimination. Additionally, it will focus on acknowledging that all humans, male and female alike, should be treated with love and respect as equals in Christ, employers need to show faithfulness to their workers, balance diversity and justice, and the importance of fairness.

Human Rights. The Christian worldview instructs Christians to not only be stewards of the world He created, but to care and improve it. In Isaiah 1:17 (NIV), God calls Christians to "seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, and plead to the widow's cause." In fact, Keller (2012) stated the following about being a Christian in business.

To be a Christian in business, then, means much more than just being honest or not sleeping with your coworkers. It even means more than personal evangelism or holding a Bible study at the office. Rather, it means thinking out the implications of the gospel worldview and God's purpose for your whole work life – and for the whole of the organization under your influence.

Human rights should be standard regarding HRMS. According to the United Nations (UN),

human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. These rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights.

Keller (2012) stated the following regarding human rights.

Together with the supremacy of love, Christian faith gives us another resource for ethical behavior – a specific basis for If every person is made in the image of God, he or she has inviolable rights, regardless of that person's race, class, gender, lifestyle, or moral character.

These human rights and inclusivity need to be at the forefront of our HRMS policies. However, organizations need to find a way to apply these policies while negating ramifications brought on by lowered sense of organizational justice by the dominate group and the aim of this study.

Inclusion and Diversity. Inclusion and diversity are almost as old as time. It can be seen in the creation story. God made both male and female in His image (NIV, Genesis 1:27). Through this, gender diversity began and became essential to human nature. Going further, God acknowledged His creation and noted that “it was good.” This shows that not only was this

essential, but it was good for creation (NIV, Genesis 1:31). Going beyond creation, God allowed diversity growth from the creation of Adam and Eve towards what is now labeled as race, nationality, and so on. Since all of mankind was created in His image (NIV, Genesis 1:27), all races and ethnic, gender, and national groups have equal status and value. This is seen in the teachings of Paul. According to Paul (NIV, Acts 17:26-27),

From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.

The Bible teaches that no individual is greater or better than the other. John 13:16 (NIV) teaches that neither the servant nor the master is greater. Galatians extends inclusion and diversity toward mankind's redemption. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (NIV, Galatians 3:28). In fact, Jesus gave Christians a job. In Matthew 28:19 (NIV), His followers were told, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." These teaching show that God desires equal treatment regarding employment. He calls for HRMS to be equal and fair among all staff members.

Fairness, Faithfulness, and Justice. Both employees and employers were created equal in His image and were given dominion over the Earth (NIV, Genesis 1:26-27). Meaning mankind has equal value and is worthy of respect (NIV, Colossians 3:11). Matthew 7:12 (NIV) teaches, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets." In addition, Ephesians 6:9 (NIV) teaches, "And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours

is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.” In addition, Colossians 4:1 (NIV) teaches, “Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.” From the Biblical perspective, employees should be treated in a fair and just manner with no partiality.

Proverbs 22:29 (NIV) states, “Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before officials of low rank.” This passage teaches that skilled workers should be rewarded for their success. This includes promotions. Since promotion policies are part of HRMS, these passages reinforce God’s plan for human resources and the creation of HRMS.

Proverbs of Solomon. The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

For gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight; for receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair; for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young—let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. (Proverbs 1:1-6)

Two main lessons can be learned and applied to HRMS through this passage. First, receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity. Second, let the wise listen and add to their learning. Employers must seek and be open to receiving wisdom, justice, judgments, and equity. In addition, they need to be open to listening and learning. These two lessons can assist employers in creating and improving their HRMS.

Summary of Reflections

Affirmative Action should provide equal access and fairness to achieve success for an underrepresented group. Historically, there has been a deep level of systematic discrimination in

society not only for women but even more so regarding people of color. These two underrepresented groups have been placed into positions that do not allow for them to reach their maximum potential, creating a disadvantage when judgement is based solely on qualification. The truth that there is white male privilege in the workplace. The purpose of this paper is not to deny that but to better understand how affirmative action affects the dominate group and find a way to overcome those obstacles.

Summary of Section 3

The purpose of Section 3 of this study was to provide the applications to professional practice and implications for change. This section includes an overview of the study, presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, recommendation for further study, and reflections regarding the study. The field study findings assisted the researcher in addressing the problem being studied regarding the perception of male correctional officers between the ages of 18 and 60 in Northwest Georgia regarding the use of unofficial ‘gender quota’ affirmative action HRMS to reduce the disparate of female officers and the potential these policies have in creating reverse discrimination. In addition, to addressing how the perception of reverse discrimination impacts fairness, justice, and retaliation. After analyzing and transcribing the data collected from participant interviews, the organization publicly available data, and reviewing current scholarly literature, four cross case themes emerged from the data collected from the participants perspectives. These themes helped the researcher answer the research questions created prior to the study. The four themes were: (a) reverse discrimination, (b) fairness and trust perception, and (c) behavior/climate within the correctional industry. The findings assisted the researcher in address the problem being studied, the purpose of the research, and the research questions.

After the research, it was noted that officers' perception of fairness and justice had directly influenced employee behavior when employees believed that a female was promoted using gender based HRMS. Though it was revealed that most officers believed that the number of females needed on shift was based on unofficial number requirements, heuristics was used to fill in that belief regarding organizational justice. Though the research did not back previous research regarding gender based HRMS and reverse discrimination, it did reveal that there was a relationship between gender based HRMS, FHT organizational justice, and retaliation. Out of the 13 participants in this research study, regardless of which case they were assigned too, only six participants supported the reverse discrimination theme. Whereas eight participants did not. On the other hand, of the 13 participants, regardless of which case they were assigned too, 11 participants supported the loss of trust and fairness theme regarding the use of gender based HRMS. Furthermore, 12 of the 13 participants supported the theme regarding negative behavior/climate (retaliation) in relation to the use of gender based HRMS.

Furthermore, it was agreed that the employees' perception and attitudes to unfair promotions can be linked to lowered FHT organizational justice, negative workplace climate, and retaliation. Many of the participants reported they witnessed firsthand or secondhand retaliation when officers believed that a female was promoted over a male because of her gender. Therefore, the perception of the female's promotion and a direct effect on the shift she was assigned to. However, it is important to note that when it was believed that a female was promoted in a fair manner and not related to her gender, there was not a negative rection. Many of the officers reported support for the female officer and the need to have female officers working in the correctional system. One participant stated "if a female is a decent candidate for the job hire or promotes her. But that needs to be based on their ability to do the job and not their

sex.” Another stated “if it is clear the woman got promoted because she deserved it. The entire shift is happy.” Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that when male officers perceived a female earned her promotion based on her gender instead of her merit it negatively impacts the outcome of the shift’s climate, officer behaviors, and officer attitudes.

The findings of this study and current literature demonstrated that diversity and affirmative action HRMS are needed to ensure a well-rounded multi-cultural workforce. Although this study did not demonstrate that the male dominate group felt a sense of reverse discrimination when gender based HRMS were used, it does not mean that it does not exist. This study discovered, though minimal, that some officers did feel sense of reverse discrimination. Though the idea of separating discrimination from reverse discrimination seems irrelevant. This researcher felt it was necessary to do such. Historically the white male dominate group has been the privileged class. It would be unfair to the protected class to group the privileged class with them. It would infer that the white male privileged class faced the hardships and biasness that he protected class has. Which would not be fair to those less privileged classes who had to fight for the rights and freedoms that is seen today. Keeping in mind that these rights and freedoms are still not equal 100% across the board because there is still discrimination and biasness in the world and why affirmative action HRMS are needed in today’s world. In fact, this study supported that conclusion. One participant stated, “I dislike any affirmative action policies but understand the need.” Another stated, “Affirmative action hiring, it is important to have representatives reflective of the community an agency serves.” Finally, another stated,

I think, for the most part, it is a necessity. Because no matter how advanced we become as humans. You will always have those people who are racist or sexist. Unfortunately, it

is not always so obvious. Without these policies, we could be missing out on some (explicit word) good officers and see more discrimination.

Lastly, the findings demonstrated that a fair, clear, and concise hiring/promotion policies are imperative regarding the dominate groups acceptance and the affects it has on the shift's climate/behavior. Therefore, resulting in positive organizational outcomes regarding fairness, justice, and behavioral response. Additionally, the researcher discussed how the results of this study can improve general business practices and the potential application strategies the organization can use to leverage the findings of this study. The results of this study generated three common business practices that could help organizations manage officer's perceptions and attitudes. These are (1) use of clear and consistent procedures, (2) continuous diversity training/education, and (3) the recruitment and retention of female officers.

Furthermore, the researcher identified and further discussed seven potential strategies organizations can use to leverage on the findings of this study: (1) Fairness of Practice and Recruitment, (2) Honesty and Clarity, (3) Fair Promotion Inclusivity, (4) Encourage Support, (5) Gender Inclusivity and Training, (6) Team Building Initiatives, and (7) Encourage Men to Speak. The researcher learned that a poorly managed HRMS will be a disadvantage for the correctional industry. The organization needs to learn how to leverage these strategies with an understating that continuous change and growth is a necessity. Though change will not happen overnight, human resource managers need employee buy-in to these strategies with an understanding that continuous reassessment is needed to ensure they are still working.

In the last part of Section 3, the researcher reflected on her research journey. Though she understood what she was getting into and that the subject itself was a bit taboo, she was not prepared for the resistance in recruiting participants. She felt that her background as a

correctional sergeant who understood the taboo nature of the phenomena, she would be able to illicit more recruits who were not hesitant regarding honesty. However, that did not work out as planned. She found that many were hesitant because they were still within the field and feared repercussions if their identity and comments were discovered. As the study moved forward, it was discovered that most of the participants felt uncomfortable discussing their thoughts on gender recruitment and promotion strategies even in 2022. Despite my work experience as a female correctional sergeant who faced many of the biasness, comments, and retaliation, this researcher found the experience humbling. Therefore, allowing this researcher to grow as an individual and professional. I learned how important it is to take a moment and see the other perspective and use that to become a better leader, person, and Christian when dealing with controversial issues and strong feelings of unfairness or discrimination.

Summary and Study Conclusions

The general problem to be addressed in this study was the potential creation of reverse discrimination using affirmative action Human Resource Management Strategies (HRMS), resulting in lowered organizational justice and retaliatory behavior among the dominant group. Throughout this research study, the researcher was trying to explore and understand participants' perspectives regarding the impact of gender based or 'gender quota' HRMS in corrections. Current literature demonstrated that some of these HRMS can potentially result in the dominate group feeling discriminated against, feel lower sense of organizational justice, and engaging in or experiencing negative workplace climate/retaliatory behavior. Though this study supported previous literature regarding the effects gender based HRMS has on organizational justice and engaging in or experiencing negative workplace climate/retaliatory behavior, it did not demonstrate that the dominate group felt any sense of reverse discrimination.

Throughout this research and literature review, the researcher discovered that females now occupy 57% of the total workforce, according to the U.S. Department of Labor (2017). This resulted in the need for affirmative action and diversity legislation to incorporate an inclusive and equal opportunity workforce within the 21st century (Barbosa & Fonseca, 2019). From this legislation, employers, such as correctional agencies, have used affirmative action HRMS to avoid the liability of disparate impact among minorities (Fa, 2016) and women (Dorrrough et al., 2016). As discovered in the literature review, many research studies indicated that these policies have resulted in reverse discrimination (Jankowski & Marcinkiewicz, 2019) and lowered organizational justice among the dominant group (Boateng & Hsieh, 2019), leading to resentment, conflict (Dorrrough et al., 2016), and retaliation among the dominant group (O'Brien & Rickne, 2016).

The researcher conducted the research within the geographical region districts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, and 14 in the Northwestern Georgia area. The researcher identified the population of 11,533 GDC correctional officers currently employed. The researcher considered 335 officers for this research study because they met the geographical region requirement. Using purposeful sampling, the researcher identified a participant pool of 13 male officers. This included eight male officers who have worked in a medium security prison and five that worked in a closed security prison. The purpose of using this method was to allow participants to be chosen according to characteristics relevant to the study (Palinkas et al., 2015) and to prevent oversaturating the data to the point where additional information or themes could no longer be observed through the interviews (Boddy, 2016).

As explained in the presentation of the findings, this research study revealed that male correctional officers perceived using gender as an HRMS to be unfair, create injustice (i.e.,

lowers organizational justice), and lead to retaliatory behavior. In addition, the study revealed that using these HRMS resulted in a negative workplace climate/environment. The concluding results of the study revealed: (1) 84.6% of the participants labeled gender-based HRMS unfair altogether or if not used based on inmate population, (2) 100% of the participants that labeled gender-based HRMS unfair altogether or if not used based on inmate population revealed a loss of trust associated with the organization, (3) 61.5% of the participants did not feel a sense of reverse discrimination, (4) 61.5% of the participants reported they had heard of or witnessed behavior that met the criteria defined as retaliatory behavior, and (5) 92.3% of the participants reported that gender-based HRMS resulted in a negative work environment. Additionally, it is important to note that this study showed that most officers did not report feelings of reverse discrimination and that the findings were primarily based on fairness perceptions as it relates to trust and justice.

Though the idea of separating discrimination from reverse discrimination seems irrelevant. This researcher felt it was necessary to do such. Historically the white male dominate group has been the privileged class. It would be unfair to the protected class to group the privileged class with them. It would infer that the white male privileged class faced the hardships and biasness that he protected class has. Which would not be fair to those less privileged classes who had to fight for the rights and freedoms that is seen today. Keeping in mind that these rights and freedoms are still not equal 100% across the board because there is still discrimination and biasness in the world and why affirmative action HRMS are needed in today's world. In fact, this study supported that conclusion. One participant stated, "I dislike any affirmative action policies but understand the need." Another stated, "Affirmative action hiring, it is important to have representatives reflective of the community an agency serves." Finally, another stated,

I think, for the most part, it is a necessity. Because no matter how advanced we become as humans. You will always have those people who are racist or sexist. Unfortunately, it is not always so obvious. Without these policies, we could be missing out on some (explicit word) good officers and see more discrimination.

In summary, this study and current literature demonstrated that diversity and affirmative action HRMS are needed to ensure a well-rounded multi-cultural workforce. Though the research did not back previous research regarding gender based HRMS and reverse discrimination, it did reveal that there was a relationship between gender based HRMS, FHT organizational justice, and retaliation. Therefore, it is important to note that officers' perception of fairness and justice had directly influenced employee behavior when employees believed that a female was promoted using gender based HRMS. Furthermore, it was agreed that the employees' perception and attitudes to unfair promotions can be linked to lowered FHT organizational justice, negative workplace climate, and retaliation. Many of the participants reported they witnessed firsthand or secondhand retaliation when officers believed that a female was promoted over a male because of her gender. Therefore, the perception of the female's promotion and a direct effect on the shift she was assigned to.

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Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter**LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.**
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

March 22, 2022

Rebecca Patterson
Kimberly Johnson

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY21-22-770 A Multiple Case Study: Male Correctional Officers' Experiences and Attitudes Regarding 'Gender Quota' Human Resource Management Strategies in Corrections

Dear Rebecca Patterson, Kimberly Johnson,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at

irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research

Research Ethics Office

Appendix B: Recruitment Flyer

Research Participants Needed

**Multiple
Case
Study:
Male**

Correctional Officers' Experiences and Attitudes Regarding "Gender Quota" Human Resource Management Strategies in Corrections

- Are you a male between 18 and 60 years of age?
- Are you a current or former correctional officer who works/ has worked (within the last 5 years) at a correctional facility in the Northwest Georgia area?

If you answered **yes** to both of these questions, you may be eligible to participate in a research study.

The purpose of this research study is to gain understanding of the male correctional officer's perception regarding the use of unofficial 'gender quotas' in hiring and promotions policies. Participants will be asked to complete a demographic survey (10 minutes) and participate in an audio-recorded interview (30- 45 minutes). Participants will have the opportunity to review their interview transcripts for accuracy.

Consent information will be provided.

The study is being conducted via Skype/WebEx or in-person at the local library in Chickamauga Georgia.

Rebecca Patterson, a doctoral candidate in the School of Business at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Please contact Rebecca Patterson at xxxxxxx@liberty.edu for more information.

Appendix C: Invitation Email

Dear XXXX,

Thank you for your interest in my study. I am emailing you to let you know that you have been found to be an eligible participant. It would be my privilege to include you as a participant in this research study.

I am conducting a small number of interviews (12-15) with male correctional officers as part of my doctoral dissertation research project for my Doctor of Business Administration. The audio-recorded interview session will take approximately 30-45 minutes. After the recordings are transcribed, participants will be emailed a copy of their interview transcript to review for accuracy. Participants can choose to participate in either a face-to-face interview or a virtual interview via Skype/WebEx.

To participate, please reply to this email with a date and time that would work for an interview.

A consent document and a demographic survey are attached to this email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and the survey and return both to me in person or via email at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,
Rebecca J. Patterson
Liberty University Doctoral Candidate

Email: xxxxxxxx@liberty.edu

Appendix D: Consent to Act as A Research Subject

Consent

Title of the Project: A Multiple Case Study: Male Correctional Officers' Experiences and Attitudes Regarding "Gender Quota" Human Resource Management Strategies in Corrections

Principal Investigator: Rebecca Patterson, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a current or former (within the last 5 years) male correctional officer in the Northwestern Georgia geographical area between the ages of 18-60. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to examine reverse discrimination created through gender targeted hiring and promotion strategies used in corrections. I am interested in understanding the male perspective. It is often suggested that gender targeting or 'gender quota' policies inadvertently create discrimination against male officers, and this study may provide insight into the evolution how it affects their sense of fairness and justice. In addition, I am conducting this study to understand how male correctional officers can receive more support while adhering to affirmative action requirements.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. First, you will be asked to complete an emailed demographic questionnaire, which may take 10 minutes.
2. Participate in an audio-recorded interview, which may take 45 minutes to an hour. The interview can be in-person or virtual via Skype/WebEx.
3. A follow-up email with an attachment of the transcribed interview will be sent after the interview process has been completed.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include awareness on how gender targeting, or 'quotas,' affect male officers and the impact it has on the organization. Additionally, this study will add to the research of discrimination in hiring or promotional practices from the dominant group perspective.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of codes. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.
- All non-electronic data will be stored in a safe and only the researcher will have access to it. All non-electronic data will be transferred to a password-protected file on a password-protected computer. The hard copies of the non-electronic data will be immediately destroyed after the transfer to the computer.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Rebecca Patterson. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at xxxxxxxx@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Kimberly Johnson, at xxxxxxxx@liberty.edu.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

Appendix E: Participant Demographic Questionnaire

Identifier Assigned: _____

Please specify your marital status.

- a) Single
- b) Married

Please specify your age.

- a) 18-24
- b) 25-34
- c) 35-44
- d) 45-54
- e) 54-60

Please specify your ethnicity.

- a) Caucasian
- b) African American
- c) Latino or Hispanic
- d) Other

Please specify the highest degree or level of education you have completed.

- a) High School
- b) Trade School
- c) Associate Degree
- d) Bachelor's Degree
- e) Master's Degree
- f) Ph.D. or Higher

If applicable, please specify your religion.

- a) Christian/Catholic
- b) Judaism
- c) Buddhism
- d) Judaism
- e) Islam
- f) Hinduism
- g) Atheist/None
- h) Other:

Length of Time in a Correctional Setting: _____

Current Position/Rank: _____

Appendix F: Interview Questions

Research Questions:

RQ1. To what extent, if any, does the implementation of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS impact male correctional officers' experiences regarding reverse discrimination?

RQ2. To what extent, if any, does the attitudes of male correctional officers towards the use of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS impact their perception of organizational justice?

RQ3. How has the implementation of unofficial 'gender quota' affirmative action HRMS influenced retaliation among male correctional officers?

Opening Questions:

1. Why did you choose a career in the field of corrections?
2. What has your career in corrections been like?
3. How would you describe your motivation for seeking employment within your organization?
4. How would you describe your motivation for seeking promotion opportunities within your organization?

Interview Questions:

1. How would you describe your perception of fair-recruitment and promotion policies?
2. When using gender as a recruitment or promotion tool, do you find that it is a fair practice towards you and/or your male coworkers? Why?
3. Do you feel that gender has had an impact on your or a coworkers' progression to leadership roles? If so, in what ways?
4. How do you feel about using unofficial 'gender quota' or gender-targeted recruitment and promotion policies for correctional officers?
5. Do you know of a situation where a female was promoted over a male that seemingly had more experiences or qualifications? If so, please explain.
6. Do you feel that the use of unofficial 'gender quotas' has created a sense of discrimination against you or a coworker? If so, in what ways? If not, why?
7. How would you describe your experiences of negative behaviors or workplace climate on shift when a female is promoted?
8. Have you experienced or witnessed retaliation towards a female officer because you or others thought her gender impacted the hiring or promoting process? If so, in what ways?
9. What lessons have you learned as a male officer regarding affirmative action hiring/promoting policies?
10. What recommendations do you have for male-dominated organizations regarding the use of affirmative action policies?

Appendix G: Follow-up Email

Dear XXXX,

Thank you for your participation in my study. I am emailing a copy of the transcribed interview (see attachment). Please take a moment to review the document for accuracy. If you have any comments or would like to expand, clarify, or provide additional insight on the interview questions please respond to this email with such information.

Sincerely,
Rebecca J. Patterson
Liberty University Doctoral Candidate

Email: xxxxxxxx@liberty.edu