Assignment 04

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**Introduction**

The ex-offenders, even after completion of their sentence, face discrimination during the job search and economic insecurity, which labels them as unfit for the security. The aim of this research is to address the problems of an ex-offender, which he or she faces after release from prison. To effectively deal with recidivism, it is important to study the factors which influence the life decision of an ex-offender. It is observed that the ex-convicts face immense discrimination when readjusting in society. Most of the ex-convicts are not financially stable or well-educated, which makes it difficult for them to secure a job. People deny their chance to readjust and overlook their will and efforts to contribute to society. Criminal justice does not only supervise the delivery of justice in society but is also concerned about the rehabilitation of ex-convicts to prevent recidivism. After being rejected by society, the ex-convict engages in criminal activity again. Even those who were arrested, but not convicted adopt the path of crime.

This study aims to analyze the justice reforms on a wider scale as well as uncover the factors which negatively impact the decisions of ex-offenders. These factors minimize the chances of ex-offenders to become law-abiding citizens and promote recidivism.

**Discussion**

To conduct extensive research multiple academic journal articles and databases were reviewed. For credible information, sources for researched were retrieved through New Jersey State Library. The database includes reliable sources which emphasize on identifying solutions for problems that ex-offenders face in daily life. The most crucial issue among all is the reentry into the workforce. This research study encompasses selected sources that offer ample information required to uncover the obstacles an ex-offender faces while getting a job. Shortage of job opportunities for ex-convicts reduces the probability of an ex-offender to re-integrate into the society and work for its betterment. In 2019, Miller analyzed the reasons which limit employment opportunities for people released from prison. The study revealed that some of the factors include drug usage, inadequate educational qualification, lower intellect, and stigma of the criminal record (Miller, 2019). Another study by Corbett suggested that rehabilitation success and prevention of recidivism is possible through the provision of employment opportunities and better living conditions to the ex-prisoners. This article also suggests finding a link between educational programs and employment opportunities of ex-offenders. It is observed that low education is one of the obstacles of getting a job, so this research assumes that if the offenders improve qualification ad skill set, their chances of getting a job will increase significantly. After getting a job and improved living conditions, it is more likely that the ex-convict will not return to offensive behavior. In this way, the recidivism and crime rate will decrease radically. The educating programs and training will help the ex-convict be prepared for integration into society (Corbett, 2017). Another research carried out by Soeker in 2013 analyzed the perceptions related to a black ex-convict in search of a job. The research is based on the experiences of different ex-prisoners who experience difficulty while adjusting to society. The study reveals that many employers do not trust the ex-convicts and thus, deny them the job opportunity (Soeker et al., 2013). Inability to capacity building is also recognized as a risk affecting the employment opportunities. In 2016 Jolson conducted research to determine whether an ex-offender can become a successful employee or not (Jolson, 2016). In the same year, Weissert claims that to reduce the job opportunity, the organizations and employers are utilizing a blue box approach against ex-prisoners (Weissert, 2016). The chances for someone who has a criminal past, the chances of getting a job reduce drastically. While securing a job, the ex-offender faces multiple problems as society does not accept them. Both Jolson and Weissert identified the criminal record as the reason employers discriminate against the ex-offenders. Usually, employers consider the offense record. On this basis, they deny them job opportunities. However, Saunders and Stacer disagree to an extent with this factor and state that racial discrimination is the reason that ex-convicts are denied employment. As opposed to other articles that address the issues of all ex-convicts collectively, the study of Saunders and Stacer shows that racism is the reason behind a lack of job opportunities for ex-offenders. They claimed that only Latino and black ex-convicts are deprived of job opportunities. The ex-offenders face even more difficulty when judged on the basis of race. Saunders and Stacer recognized racial discrimination as the dominant factor which emasculates the chances for a black offender to get a respectable job (Solinas-Saunders & Stacer, 2017). This research highlights the fact that employment prospects for the ex-offenders vary depending on the race or social background. It can also be seen that minorities and immigrants face even immense discrimination after release from prison. The job opportunities and resources are unequally distributed across different races and ethnicities, and with the stigma of conviction, a search of the job becomes even more daunting (Decker et al., 2014). In research conducted in 2013, Blessed and Pryor analyzed the practical economic challenges for an ex-offender as they try to integrate into society. The research concluded that many organizations and firms are now focusing on workplace diversity by integrating people from different social backgrounds, races, and gender. However, the ex-prisoners are not yet included in these reforms (Blessett & Pryor, 2013). This study also supports the notion that ex-prisoners are not welcomed at the workplace. Flake confirmed through research that ex-offenders face discrimination based on their criminal records when they apply for a job (Flake, 2015). From this research, it is safe to assume that the main causes of denying a job to any ex-offender are past criminal records and an inability to trust an ex-convict. Their criminal record and offense become an obstacle in their way of getting the job and makes it difficult for the employer to trust them.

The sources provide adequate evidence to prove the fact if a person is convicted for an offense in the past, he is more likely to be banned from securing a job. The reviewed sources cover different aspects of the topic under discussion. After analyzing the literature sources, it is obvious that educational and developmental programs and policies, introduced for assisting the integration of ex-offenders in society are vital. The studies and researches also prove that the unnecessary restrictions on the ex-convicts reduces the chances of readjustment of an ex-convict. The educational program for the prisoners, which primarily focuses on strategies to overcome negative behavior, must be implemented (Von Bergen & Bressler, 2016). However, there is not enough data to compare between policies of different countries on the effectiveness of recidivism reduction (Yukhnenko et al., 2019). An article by Nelson provides the remedies which can potentially help the ex-offender to get a job (Nelson, 2019). Nelson is of the opinion that federal grants are the vital source for rehabilitation and readjustment of the ex-convicts. He recognizes fidelity bond by Michigan Talent Investment Agency as a realistic remedy in such cases. Moreover, Bergen and Bressler also provided tactics and approaches which can prove helpful. The blue box approach suggests that employers should focus on the skills and talent of a person instead of looking into the past criminal record.

All these researches support the idea that ex-offenders face immense discrimination and lack of opportunities based on low education, inadequate skillset, criminal record, lack of trust, race, and ethnicity.

**Conclusion**

From a review of past studies, it is evident that the ex-convict faces numerous significant challenges for job procurement after their release from prison. The criminal record, low education, the stigma of incarceration, and inexperience limit the job opportunities for ex-convicts. According to most of the state laws, employers reserve right to refuse job to people who were arrested, even if they were never convicted for that crime. The worker programs introduced for the ex-prisoners positively impact on the personalities, changing them from aggressive to well-behaved individuals who now prefer adopting legal means to earn. From the study, it is clear that prison education serves as an effective tool to reduce recidivism. The state is responsible for providing adequate job opportunities for ex-convicts so that they do not adopt the path of re-offense. People need even more financial and moral support than the rest, after conviction as settling back into society is more difficult. If the discrimination against them is reduced, and they are offered equal job opportunities, they will be able to start a better and respectable life. In this way, their offensive behavior is improved, and they can also contribute to the betterment of the country. The existing research on life patterns of convicts suggests that ex-offenders who are socio-economically deprived have higher to commit a crime again, and this time, they may indulge in more intense crimes. To promote positive and constructive behavior among the ex-offenders, providing them with jobs that lead to a stable career is vital. Access to economic resources can help the recidivism by the ex-convict who live in slums or deprived neighborhood. There is a need for future work to assess the cost-effectiveness of different types of programs for the ex-offenders. Future researchers must consider demographic factors while conducting this analysis.

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