

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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Title: The Second Chance Program: A Participatory Research with Formerly Incarcerated Community College Students.

Abstract approved:

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Approximately 600,000 individuals will be eventually released from the prison system and millions will be released from jails across the United States each year (Mukamal et al., 2015). Some of these individuals will make their way to a local community college to make a better life for themselves. There is a lack of student support services specifically designed for this population at the community college level. The Second Chance Program (SCP) at City College of San Francisco attempts to meet some of the unique needs of this specific student population. The SCP is designed to serve approximately 100-150 formerly incarcerated students per academic year by providing a variety of support services for academic success (Completion of a certificate, Associates degree, and/or transfer to a four-year university).

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the impact the Second Chance Program had on six participants. These participants expressed academic goals for attending City College of San Francisco. I also engaged these participants in reflecting on the components of professional practice aimed at enhancing student

support services to formerly incarcerated students at the community college level. This study uses a participatory action research method guided by Friere's emancipatory philosophy and literacy campaign for farm workers in Brazil to assess the impact (if any) of the SCP in supporting the participants as they were pursuing their academic goals. I engaged the participants in two sets of individual dialogues. The first set of dialogues was to identify common themes across their experiences using SCP services. I specifically asked them to link challenges, barriers, and successes to their backgrounds of incarceration. The intent of the second set of dialogues was to elaborate on common themes identified in the first dialog and to critically reflect on their experiences at SCP with the intent of suggesting improvements in support services specifically designed for formerly incarcerated students at City College of San Francisco. These six individual accounts of SCP experiences identified the following common themes that they connected to their backgrounds that led to significant and protracted involvement with the criminal justice system. Theme One: *The affects of dehumanization from the prison system.* The participants linked this theme to experiencing physical and mental abuse in the prison, which caused fear, anger, and negative feelings, which sometimes manifested in negative behaviors. It was important for the participants to reconcile some of these issues through their participation in the SCP. Theme Two: *Feelings of low-self esteem and self-worth.* The participants connected this theme with the lack of preparation to successfully live once released from justice system and the importance of participating in different components of the SCP to feel a sense of community and to increase their self-worth to assist in completing their academic goals.

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The Second Chance Program: A Participatory Research with
Formerly Incarcerated Community College Students

By

James R. Macale

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

James R. Macale, Author

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The Second Chance Program: A Participatory Research with Formerly Incarcerated Community
College Students

James R. Macale

CHAPTER I: FOCUS AND SIGNIFICANCE

The United States makes up less than 5% of the world's population, yet has 23% of the world's incarcerated population (Spycher, Shkodriani & Lee, 2012). Although the world's prison population has declined for the third consecutive year (Carson & Golinelli, 2013), as of December of 2012, the U.S. prison population was 1,571,013 and the numbers for the federal prison population increased by 0.7% (Carson & Golinelli, 2013). According to Wagner and Rubay (2016), the "American criminal justice system holds more than 2.3 million people in 1,719 state prisons, 102 federal prisons, 942 juvenile correctional facilities, 3,283 local jails, and 79 Indian Country jails as well as in military prisons, immigration detention facilities, civil commitment centers and prisons in the U.S. territories (p.1)." During their incarceration, some of these women and men are provided with access to education and training, including vocational training and practice (West, 2011; Young & Mattucci, 2006; Prison Education, 2002; Hull, Forrester, Brown, Jobe & McCullen, 2000; Clark, 1991) as well as general education development (GED), basic adult education, and post-secondary coursework (Patton, 2012; West, 2011; Brazzell, Crayton, Mukamal, Solomon & Lindahl, 2009; Carrell & Stern, 2006; Torre & Fine, 2005; DuCloux, 2003; Steurer & Smith, 2003).

Unfortunately, adult education, including career and technical education (CTE) programs offered by most state and federal prisons have "not kept pace with the growing prison population" (Tolbert, 2012, p. 1). Upon release, formerly incarcerated individuals find themselves grossly underprepared for prisoner reentry, defined by Carrell and Stern (2006) as

“the numerous issues related to the process of a prisoner’s release from incarceration and his or her reintegration into the communities at large” (p.1).

Background for the Study

According to Carson and Sabol (2012), in 2011, the number of men and women released from state and federal prisons was 688,384 (p. 1), and according to the Durose, Cooper and Snyder (2014), approximately 67 percent of people are rearrested within three years of release. Visher (2005) and Petersilia (2003), who found up to 60 to 70 percent of formerly incarcerated individuals return to criminal activity, are rearrested, and face subsequent re-incarceration within one to three years of their original release date. Approximately 10 years later Mukamal, Silbert, Taylor, Lindahl, and Tassel (2015) further confirmed that approximately 60 percent of individuals are re-incarcerated within three years of release. Although the number of prisoners released of decreased slightly, Wagner and Rabuy (2016) further reported that approximately 636,000 people are released from prison but people go to jail approximately 11 million times each year. There is not one specific solution in reducing recidivism but obtaining an education can make contributions to possibly reduce the percentage of the revolving door of going in and out of prison.

The research on causation of such rapid and disproportionate recidivism typically points to several factors faced by parolees once they are released back into society. These factors include the inability to secure adequate housing; parolees often lack sufficient occupational skills; many are challenged by substance abuse problems; several are afflicted with physical and mental health issues; and the majority of parolees are poorly educated. While each of these factors are significant and work interdependently against the parolees’ chances of staying “straight”, of significant interest to this research is the factor of the lack of formal education.

In a society that is defined by how it treats its members, it becomes of great importance that the appropriate amount and type of education afforded the formerly incarcerated be both available and accessible. As can be seen in the statistics below, in a society that spends far more on prisons than on education, this is where a shift in philosophy, policy, and action should be made. President Barack Obama's budget request for the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) in 2013 was 6.9 billion (LaVigne & Samuels, 2012), one-tenth (10%) of the national discretionary budget available for public education, which was \$69.9 billion for the same year (USDEBO, 2013). U.S. taxpayers spend approximately \$50 billion dollars annually in prison costs per year (Petersilia, 2003), which more than covers the 2013 BOP budget request.

Much attention and spending is given to incarcerating individuals, but far less attention has been given in educating this population. For example, the spending for an individual inmate in California has increased to approximately \$65,000, while spending for a higher education student has stayed relatively stagnant at \$4,500 since 1995 until 2012 (Mukamal et al., 2015). This inequality has possibly contributed in some instances to unsuccessful reentry for the formerly incarcerated, high recidivism rates, and problems consistent with the prison-to-community transition. Toward the close of a 2004 state of the union address, former President George W. Bush summed up the need to assist in the reintegration of the growing population of formerly incarcerated individuals, asserting:

In the past, we have worked together to bring mentors to the children of prisoners, and provide treatment for the addicted, and help for the homeless. Tonight I ask you to consider another group of Americans in need of help. This year, some 600,000 inmates will be released from prison back into society. We know from long experience that if they can't find work, or a home, or help, they are much more likely to commit more

crimes and return to prison. So tonight, I propose a four-year, 300 million dollar Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative to expand job training and placement services, to provide transitional housing, and to help newly released prisoners get mentoring, including from faith-based groups. America is the land of the second chance and when the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life (Faith Based Initiatives segment, para. 4).

Four years later, the Bush Administration's Second Chance Act (SCA), HR 623 (SCA, 2004), was established to facilitate the transition of ex-offenders from prison to the community by providing "the resources necessary to not be one of the 66 percent of people whom [sic] are rearrested within three years..." (Purpose section, para. 1). In support of proposed initiatives and the SCA, acknowledgement of the recidivism issue was made by the current Obama administration when HR 1529, the Second Chance for Ex-Offenders Act of 2009 and HR 2065, the Second Chance for Ex-Offenders Act of 2011, were signed into law, reiterating the belief that "when reentry fails, the costs – both societal and economic – are high" (The White House, ONDCP, 2013, para. 6).

Due to the societal costs to the nation when prison continues to be the final destination of the recidivist, and because of the evidenced benefits of education for ex-offenders, it becomes imperative that more support be given to programs designed to educate and train parolees. Furthermore, policies and practices should be put in place so that recidivism rates are reduced by a parolee's better access to all types of formal education. Throughout the reentry stage(s), formerly incarcerated individuals returning to the community depend on several different resources outside of prison in order to ensure they will not end up back in prison. Although there are a number of non-educational programs that serve the needs of this population, such as substance abuse programs, transitional housing programs, and faith based organizations, there is

a notable lack of support for the formerly incarcerated in accessing educational training opportunities (Mukamal et al., 2015). Furthermore, the ones that offer educational training and support specifically for the formerly incarcerated often report long waiting lists effectively shutting out hundreds and perhaps thousands of potential participants (Mukamal et al., 2015).

Community colleges promote a mission of open access for the general public and are a possible pathway for formerly incarcerated individuals to exercise the opportunity to start or continue their formal education. Pursuing a community college education may involve getting GED certification, an Associate's degree, or transferring to a four-year institution. Moreover, wherever formerly incarcerated students start or restart their education, they will need the necessary support to pursue their educational goals.

For some motivated parolees, community college education can be beneficial in two ways: contributing to the success of their integration as productive members of society (Zhang, Roberts, & Callanan, 2006; Steurer & Smith, 2003; Torre & Fine, 2005) and facilitating to decrease the stigma of being formerly incarcerated (Tietjen, 2013; West, 2011; Owens, Jr., 2009; Copenhaver, Edwards-Willey & Byers, 2007). Together these benefits can empower former incarcerated women and men in reshaping their pro-social identities (West, 2011; Ward & Maruna, 2007), while reinvesting or getting a return on the investment in human capital which results in improving the welfare of society as a whole (Spycher, et al., 2012; Owens, Jr., 2009; Travis & Visher, 2005). Also, these benefits may provide an incentive for ex-offenders to stay out of prison thereby reducing recidivism rates (Nally, Lockwood, Knutson & Ho, 2012; Swimpson, 2008; Zhang, et al., 2006; Case, Fasenfest, Sarri & Phillips, 2005; Beard, Johnson & Kemp, 2003; Wilson, Gallegher & MacKenzie, 2000). Many of the benefits of educating the

formerly incarcerated are evidenced and documented in the literature and will be thoroughly discussed in the literature review.

Focus of the Study

Through its Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS), City College of San Francisco (CCSF) offers the Second Chance Program (SCP). Designed for formerly incarcerated women and men. The SCP recruits, takes referrals for, and enrolls these individuals in an academic support program which provides orientation to the college, advises on available programs and services, and other EOPS supports. The SCP also provides ongoing individual counseling in support of short and long-term academic and career plans (CCSF, 2015). The focus of this research study will be on formerly incarcerated students who have participated in the SCP and how it has impacted their experience as community college students.

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this study is to describe the experiences and knowledge of formerly incarcerated community college students who have participated in the SCP at CCSF. The primary objective is to find out from formerly incarcerated students participating in the SCP if the program has had an impact on their success educationally and personally. The primary question for this participatory research is as follows:

What effect does participation in the SCP have on formerly incarcerated students in pursuing their educational goals at the community college level?

Further, the following four questions will guide the participatory research process using dialogue, critical inquiry, and reflection:

1. What issues and challenges are formerly incarcerated students confronted with in attending a community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?

2. How do these issues and challenges affect formerly incarcerated students in completing their education at a community college?
3. How has the SCP had an impact in addressing the issues and challenges that formerly incarcerated students experience in pursuing education at the community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?
4. What recommendations do the SCP program participants have to improve the SCP?

The United States prison system is operating at its largest capacity in history, and formerly incarcerated individuals are released from prison with a variety of barriers stemming from a lack of economic mobility, lack of work experience and opportunities, substance abuse, mental/physical health issues, the stigma of being formerly incarcerated and having a lack of formal education. The community college can play a significant part in addressing the lack of education that affect current and formerly incarcerated individuals. This is further confirmed by California Bill, SB 1391 of 2014 (Inmate Education / Community Colleges). The purpose of the bill is to provide educational opportunities and career technical education programs to inmates in an effort to increase job skills and employability upon release from prison (Hancock, 2014). Furthermore, a main component in funding inmate oriented programs will be provided by the California Community Colleges (Hancock, 2014). The motivation for this legislation was sparked by a RAND corporation that reported findings that for every dollar invested in inmate education can potentially result in \$5 saved in future prison costs (Davis, Boznick, Steele, Saunders, and Miles, 2013).

The community college's mission of open access can have a positive impact in easing the transition of formerly incarcerated individuals into society by providing opportunity and meaningful support necessary to help parolees obtain a post-secondary education or training.

Providing educational access will not be enough for these students as the community colleges will also need to provide well-designed support services. The results to the above research questions will provide evidence on what works well and what does not work well with the SCP, which is specifically designed for this population.

Significance of the Study

This study has the potential to help identify the need for student support programs designed specifically for formerly incarcerated students enrolled at the community college. The findings of this study have potential significance to post-secondary educators, community college leaders, formerly incarcerated students, and to society-at-large. When formerly incarcerated students participating in such a program obtain an education, it can be expected that there will be potential for greater public safety and reduced costs for society. In addition, the added access to education may be an incentive for parolees to stay out of prison. With the completion of post-secondary education or training, formerly incarcerated students will have the potential to become economically self-sufficient, increase their self-esteem, make better life choices, and increase their ability to be contributing members in society.

Although in the last five years there has been legislation such as SB 1391 in California to increase educational and support programs for currently incarcerated individuals there is still a lack of student support services for formerly incarcerated students at community colleges, it is important to share the experiences of those students who have received those support services. Currently, there are eleven noted California campus programs that support formerly incarcerated students (Mukamal et al., 2015). In addition, the authors also note three notable out of state programs of formerly incarcerated students. The insights to formerly incarcerated students' experiences participating in the SCP may produce an interest in creating and institutionalizing

more of these types of services at community colleges. Given the steady growth of people being released from U.S. prisons, along with high recidivism rates, this study can potentially contribute to the body of knowledge regarding formerly incarcerated students' participation in a student services programs specifically designed for their needs. In addition, this research is intended to improve upon the practice of working with formerly incarcerated students at CCSF and those attending the handful of institutions nationwide which have these types of programs. This research can also potentially serve to identify best practices and to create an awareness of how organized support for formerly incarcerated students can assist in their successful reentry to society.

There are four major factors contributing to the importance of the proposed study: (a) the evidence of decreased recidivism rates and greater desistance from crime that is the result of obtaining an education; (b) the existence of many support service needs of formerly incarcerated students that the average student does not have; (c) the general lack of student support services necessary to address and service these needs; and (d) expanding the knowledge in facilitating the success of formerly incarcerated students attending community colleges.

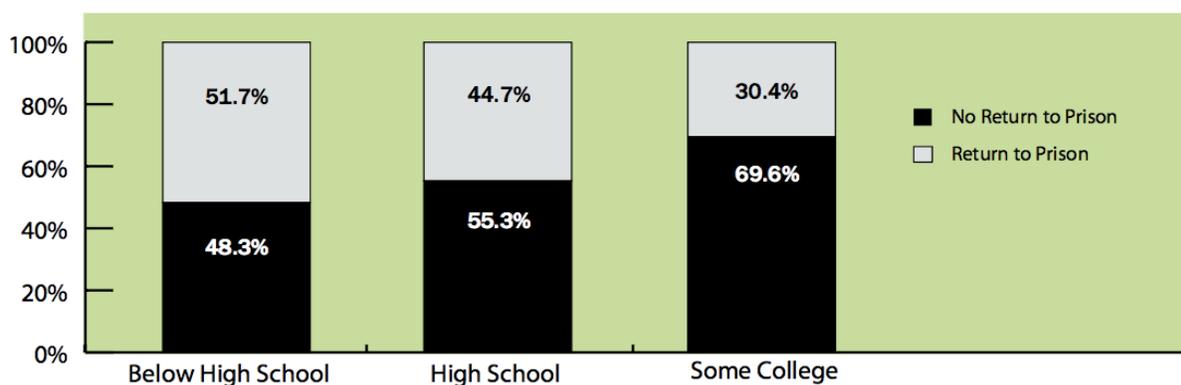
Obtaining an Education Leads to Lower Recidivism

According to James (2015) and Mukamal et al., (2015) approximately 40 to 70 percent of formerly incarcerated individuals return to criminal activity, are rearrested, and face subsequent re-incarceration within one to five years of their original release date. There are also several studies on prisoners who participate in prison education programs and how this participation leads to lower recidivism rates (Mukamal et al., 2015, Nally, Lockwood, Knutson & Ho, 2012; Swimpson, 2008; Zhang, et al., 2006; Case, et.al., 2005; Torre & Fine, 2005; Beard, et al., 2003; Steurer & Smith, 2003; Wilson, et al., 2000). Several studies indicate that even small decreases

in recidivism can be cost effective for society (Moore, 2012; Ownes, 2009; Torre & Fine, 2005). If formerly incarcerated students are able to achieve their educational goals, it can lead to opportunities of meaningful employment and the potential to be a contributing member of society. Moreover, educational success for formerly incarcerated students may contribute to their abstention from further crime because of the opportunity and incentive to stay crime free (see Figure 1).

Chart 1

Recidivism among releasees incarcerated for drug offenses



Note: Adapted from Nally, J. M, Lockwood, S., Ho, T, and Knutson, K. (2012). The Post-release Employment and Recidivism among Different Types of Offenders with Different Level of Education: A 5-year Follow-up Study in Indiana. *Justice Policy Journal*, 9(1).

In the United States, approximately 600,000 formerly incarcerated adults are returning to the community each year (Mukamal et al.; Petersilia, 2003), and the overwhelming majority of the nation's community colleges lack student programs designed to address their needs. For example, in the state of California, with the largest community college system in the world and with 113 colleges and 72 districts, it has been cited that only eight programs provides a student support program for formerly incarcerated (Mukamal et al., 2015). Worse yet, the SCP at CCSF can accommodate between 100-120 students per academic year, though the state of California releases approximately 110,000 adults from prison each year (Department of Justice., 2015).

Due to the large numbers of prisoners leaving prison, community colleges will find formerly incarcerated students enrolled at their campuses. For example, through the State of California's criminal justice realignment plan, signed into law by Governor Edmund G. Brown and made effective October 1, 2011, there is a mandate that individuals sentenced to non-serious, non-violent, or non-sex offenses will serve their sentences in county jails instead of state prison (Beard, 2015). Due to this transferred responsibility of prisoners from the state to county, there has been a significant increase of the formerly incarcerated under the supervision of parole or probation. Part of their reintegration process likely includes pursuing educational and training programs. A source for affordable and accessible education for these individuals is often found at the local community college.

Based on numerous discussions had with formerly incarcerated students attending CCSF, this population is usually released to the county in which their offense occurred. Some of these individuals will attempt to access the local community college and many will do so with a lack of knowledge, skills, and support needed to gain access and to achieve their individual academic goals. Some formerly incarcerated students often feel uncomfortable in a community college setting because they will need to disclose their parolee status (e.g., through the admissions application process, to the financial aid office, in academic counseling sessions, and in some instances, to their instructors), a status that sometimes comes with prejudice from many on campus, including staff, faculty, administrators, and peers.

When these students experience unrelenting barriers in returning to school or in attending college for the first time, their self-esteem and self-worth may be adversely affected, leading some students to drop out and return to the life of crime, factors contributing to high recidivism rates for jails and prisons alike. Creating more and effective student support programs to

facilitate academic success can ease the transition of attending college, which can in turn have a positive impact on those individuals and on society at large (Mukamal et al., 2015).

Formerly Incarcerated Students have Many Support Service Needs

Unfortunately, many formerly incarcerated individuals still will have been released from prison lacking not only the cognitive skills necessary to maintain successful reentry (Tolbert, 2012), but also the necessary educational prerequisites and preparation required to enroll at a community college. The formerly incarcerated students who attempt to attend a community college may find themselves ill-prepared to tackle the rigors of a college or a vocational training program. Many will be confronted with a plethora of unmet basic needs, such as adequate housing or suitable gainful employment, while others are released from prison with substance abuse issues or physical and mental health issues. Too often, few have family or friends who can provide the positive support network the parolees need to help them reenter society.

There is data on offender demographics, educational attainment, current offenses, and time served, but the data does not capture other important information. There is little data regarding offender medical histories, the receipt of health or educational services during incarceration, or the circumstances of their return to the community (Mukamal et al., 2015). The lack of attention to parolee reentry needs and barriers to fulfilling those needs leaves researchers in a position of speculation or estimation. Such estimates can be significant to formerly incarcerated students attempting to get a college education. For example, according to Petersilia (2003), parole officials say housing is the biggest need for parolees, which is “more difficult and more important than finding a job” (p. 120). In some states, parolees are given a two- to four-week voucher for cheap and short-term housing; other states, like California, parolees receive \$200 cash and a bus ticket to the county where they committed their original offense (Macale,

2014; Petersilia, 2003). Given the rising cost of housing remains the primary and elusive need, particularly in large urban areas, it has been found that 54% that have used a shelter report being formerly incarcerated (Cooperation for Supportive Housing, 2009).

Based on what given data there was at the time of or prior to the offenses leading to incarceration, the statistics regarding the formerly incarcerated identify several factors that inhibit the formally incarcerated from returning successfully to the community. At the state level and at the federal level, 33.9 percent and 23.6 percent of offenders, respectively, were engaged in drug use/abuse at the time of their offense. Over 21 percent of the state level offenders and over 15 percent of the federal level offenders were committing their offenses to acquire more drugs to sustain their habits. Almost five percent of the state level offenders and over two percent at the federal level offenders had unstable housing at the time of the arrest. Over 10 percent of the state level offenders and almost five percent of the federal level offenders were homeless at the time of or had been homeless up to twelve months prior to the time of their arrest. In addition, over 30 percent of offenders at the state level and over 32 percent at the federal level had health problems at the time of their incarceration, and over 8 percent of the state level offenders and nearly five percent of the federal level offenders had a mental or emotional condition at the time of incarceration (Petersilia, 2005, p. 26).

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) (2015), as of 2004, approximately 60 percent of formerly incarcerated individuals do not have their GED or high school diploma, and they often lack the financial support to fund their education. Similarly, 60 to 70 percent of ex-prisoners will return to prison as they are not prepared to be released from prison to reenter the community due to the lack of funds, access to housing, family support, suffering poor physical

and/or mental health, substance abuse, and lack of skills and knowledge to acquire and sustain adequate employment (Mukamal et al., 2015).

Expand Professional Knowledge Regarding Formerly Incarcerated Students

This research can assist in expanding the professional knowledge and expertise of student service professionals working with formerly incarcerated students in the SCP at CCSF. First, this research can potentially guide decision-making and practices regarding program design and implementation. Second, this research will enable student service professionals who work with the formerly incarcerated to formally address how the SCP addressed the issues and barriers of this student population as they experienced community college as students. Finally, this study can potentially assist formerly incarcerated students in gaining knowledge in achieving a formal education and furthering their quality of life.

By way of this participatory research with the formerly incarcerated, decisions and practices for program outcomes and implementation can be modified for future change or improvement. Stake (1986) asserts that change can occur through new experiences which cause an organization to reexamine current issues or problems. Herr and Anderson (2005) further explain that meaningful change in an organization or program takes place through internal conviction or ownership rather than outside coercion or external demand (i.e. student learning outcomes or college accreditation).

This internal conviction is influenced by a combination of “personal understanding and personal feeling or faith (voluntarism)” (Herr and Anderson, 2005, p.62). Through the research process of dialogue and reflection, the participants and I will be able to heighten critical consciousness of the issues formerly incarcerated students are confronted with when accessing higher education. I will come to better understand what this student population needs from the

community college to support their success outside of prison or jail and I assert this research will give voice to these citizens who are often marginalized by society.

Finally, this participatory research will enable a scholarly address of how the SCP assisted students with the issues that are unique to ex-offenders attending community colleges. As a researcher and practitioner, along with the co-participants /researchers, both I and the students will be able to explain in a thematic manner how the SCP provided support for their success. A practitioner's knowledge of practice is often not considered valid by those institutions or policy makers who produce knowledge (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Foucault (1980) coined a phrase for this: "subjugated knowledge".

Subjugated knowledge is important because it values the voices of formerly incarcerated students and their diverse perspectives. The voices of these students need to be heard and legitimized because doing so will provide a "naturalistic" or "direct and vicarious experience" (Stake, 1986). Their experiences can potentially help student services practitioners be able to assess what works, what needs to be improved, and from a holistic perspective, what needs to be changed or added to the SCP. This research will give attention to those effective practices which allow for as many pathways as possible for successful transition of ex-offenders into society through formal education. On the contrary, the research may also identify elements of ineffective practices in engaging with and supporting formerly incarcerated students.

To engage in praxis is to have the ability to put together relevant theories and reflections in order to put them into action or practice (Freire, 2000; 2002). This action research study can assist current and future formerly incarcerated students in educational goal completion and in furthering their quality of life. This study has the potential to improve learning outcomes with this student population by informing, encouraging, and supporting increased persistence and

academic goal attainment. Since the research will be conducted with parolees as co-researchers, the findings of this study might prompt the praxis to create themes which current and future students can refer to as they manage their educational process. This may lead them to evaluate and reflect on those actions that may lead them to evolve as they gain new knowledge.

It is the hope that the dialogues with formerly incarcerated students in the SCP will start a plan of action at CCSF to improve what is already in place and to improve the SCP via ongoing dialogues and new information. This research will be important in expanding my expertise when working with this unique student population and with the program that serves them. It may also add to research on this population by employing positivist, interpretive, and critical approaches in SCP and like programs. The ultimate goal of this study will be to assist formerly incarcerated students in accessing and engaging in education as a significant part of their larger plan for successful re-entry into society.

SECTION II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature is intended to facilitate the exploration and investigation of theory, concepts, characteristics, and phenomena central to the research. This includes an overview of social and human capital theory, capital deficiency theory, social identity theory, formerly incarcerated community college students, and benefits of education for ex-offenders. The overview of published scholarly literature relevant to the research topic provides definition, description, conceptualization, summary, and analysis of the body of knowledge related to the education of the formerly incarcerated and the benefits of education in the reentry process for this population.

The review of literature was guided by a central two-fold question: what are the benefits of post-secondary education as they address and resolve reentry issues for formerly incarcerated

individuals 2) how does post-secondary education factor into overcoming the barriers to reentry? In light of these questions, a key issue that emerged from the literature points to the need for more or enhanced support services designed specifically for students who are ex-offenders. The literature review identifies literature that supports the purposes and questions of this study, informs the study's design, and affirms the need for further research on this topic.

Search and Selection Process

To conduct the literature review, various electronic databases were accessed, including Academic OneFile/Gale, Academic Search Premier/ EBSCO host, Dissertation Abstracts, and JSTOR. Searches were completed using Google, Google Books, Google Scholar, and the Oregon State University (OSU) Library search engine. The following keywords and keyword phrases were used in the searches: barriers to prisoner reentry; benefits/advantages of education and prisoner reentry; capital deficiency theory; college/community college and ex-offenders/formerly incarcerated; community reentry; education; formerly incarcerated students; parole and reentry; policy/Second Chance Act, prisoner reentry; prisoner reintegration; post-parole college students; social and human capital theory and former prisoners; social identity theory and former prisoners; and student ex-offenders.

The criteria used to select relevant scholarly works included literature that had insights from formerly incarcerated persons re-entering society, that informed ex-offender-sociological theory, and that guided post-parole education philosophy. These criteria allowed for the breadth and scope necessary to investigate issues, challenges, and successes of parolees, as well as justify educational support programs for this particular population.

Organization of the Review of Literature

The literature review is organized around three themes: who the formerly incarcerated are when they re-enter society; the benefits as well as the barriers to higher education for the formerly incarcerated; and the existence and the paucity of college support services designed specifically for this population. To cover the scope of these themes, the literature review is structured with three major headings: 1) the formerly incarcerated: demographics; 2) the benefits of education for the formerly incarcerated; and 3) college support services for formerly incarcerated students. These are extended to include subheadings that provide the background, texture, comparative values, and theoretical underpinnings which inform the study.

The Formerly Incarcerated: Demographics

Mukamal, Silbert, and Taylor (2015) assert that 96 percent of all state prisoners will eventually be released. According to James (2011) incarcerated individuals are released into society by way of two primary mechanisms: 1) “having served most of their sentence in prison and released on parole to finish their sentences in their communities under supervision; [or] 2) having served their entire sentence in prison and released unconditionally into their community” (p. 3). If released on parole, they have been released based on the following conditions: a) statutory-based; b) administrative-based decision for release, or c) according to statutory law determining the date and condition(s) of their release (James, 2011).

Severe Physical and Mental Health Problems

Prison inmates are the “only U.S. citizens with a constitutional right to healthcare” (Petersilia, 2003, p. 51), although the “lower courts have held that the Constitution does not require that the medical care provided to prisoners be perfect, the best attainable, or even very good” (p. 50). A study by Ritchie (2001) found that “most women offenders enter prison with

serious medical problems, and despite access to in-prison healthcare, many are released with their health needs unmet” (p. 27). These women reenter society with the possible complications of AIDS, HIV infection, asthma, diabetes, hypertension, and reproductive health problems. Gates, Artiga, and Rodowitz (2014) further confirm that as recently as data gathered in 2011 that chronic disease is still highly “prevalent among the population with higher rates of tuberculosis, HIV, Hepatitis B and C, arthritis, diabetes, and sexually transmitted disease compared to the general population (p.2).”

According to Opportunity Agenda (2006), “multi-year data are largely unavailable, a large percentage of inmates have untreated substance abuse or mental health problems” (p. 97). Petersilia (2006a) indicated that in California alone “about 65 percent of the state’s parolees have drug problems” (p. 2). Richie (2001) found most women incarcerated have been taken in for drug-related crimes, [and] most have “histories of serious long-term substance abuse problems” (p. 26), yet while incarcerated, most of these women have had no access to substance abuse intervention programs. The few prisoners who have had access and participated in these programs know that the programs are short-term, prison-based interventions that “[do] not adequately prepare them to abstain from substance abuse or manage their addiction once they are released into the community” (p. 26). This perspective was based on the lack of access to drug treatment programs upon reentry.

Mental health problems for formerly incarcerated women have a significant impact on their reentry, including lack of or improper diagnosis and lack of treatment. In the 2001 study by Richie, a majority of formerly incarcerated females reported that:

...even acute major psychological problems were not diagnosed, let alone cases of depression, behavioral disorders, or learning and developmental disabilities, as well as

symptoms and emotional issues including disorientation, forgetfulness, and other chronic difficulties associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (p. 29).

This lack of care results in a reentry process plagued by severe diagnostic-treatment needs for mental health problems. Richie (2001) asserted that this amounts to “...serious barriers to successful reintegration into their communities” (p. 30). In addition to this study, Hoke and the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) (2015) found that more than half of all inmates, or over than 1 million people have a mental illness compared to 11% of the general population.

For both female and male formerly incarcerated individuals, it is redemptive policy that might be the saving grace, as these policies “treat problems of drug addiction and mental illness through public health responses designed to help people conquer these problems” (OA, 2006, p. 98). However, “designers of redemptive policies view incarceration as an opportunity ending event [emphasis added]” (p.98), yet opportunities for those with substance abuse or mental health problems are by default denied such public social services to the extent of their need. Only 1 of 3 prison inmates and 1 of 7 jail inmates receive any form of mental health treatment (Hoke, 2015).

Broken Ties

Petersilia’s 2005 review of prisoners’ family relationships yielded two consistent findings: male prisoners who maintain strong family ties during imprisonment have higher rates of post-release success; and men who assume husband and parent roles upon release have higher rates of success than those who do not. Petersilia (2005) revealed that 24 to 27 percent of exiting prisoners are separated or divorced. Richie (2001) found that the majority of the formerly incarcerated interviewed reported that their ties with family members had been severed, largely

due to their participation in illegal activity. The National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated fact sheet (2014) reported that more than 2.7 million children in the U.S. have an incarcerated parent which is approximately 1 in 28 children.

A lack of child advocacy and family reunification for formerly incarcerated women prevents the needed family ties for the released inmates (Richie, 2001). While children suffer the complications of broken relations, limited opportunities, financial hardship, and emotional distress while their mothers are in prison, they and their loved ones reportedly continue to suffer after their mothers are released. These issues are corroborated by the National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated (2014) especially given that the complex issues related to custody, relationship reparation, parenting, and family reunification and stabilization are urgent, stressful, and often never resolved.

Barriers to Successful Reentry and Transition

Formerly incarcerated individuals are faced with numerous barriers to successful reentry. Tolbert (2012) found that many “lack the cognitive skills to solve problems and the reason to address the challenges of reentry” (p. 1). Lacking basic skills such as reading and writing is a major barrier to successful reentry. For instance, “half of [California’s] inmates read below a sixth-grade level” (Martin, 2005, p. 2), but computer-based literacy programs for parolees are capable of helping only 209 formerly incarcerated individuals at one time (Martin, 2001). Tolbert (2012) found that many formerly incarcerated individuals also lack basic education levels, with 40 percent of federal and state prisoners lacking even a high school diploma.

Additionally, formerly incarcerated individuals cited education, job training, and employment as “vital needs not generally met during incarceration or after release” (Tolbert, 2012 p. 2). Richie (2001) reported that of the forty-two inmates participating in her study, a

majority also reported they "...did not have the academic or job-related skills or experience to support themselves once they were released" (p. 32). Richie continued to describe the implications of the lack of education in thwarting "disconnects", resulting in the lack of "coordination and communication among the institution and community-based programs and their service-providing partners" (p. 2). Such disconnects include differing standardization of curricula and assessment, lack of articulation agreements between educational institutions and prisons, poor depiction of student profiles, poor tracking of students, broken links, and duplicated efforts around data systems. This has led to policymaking and correctional authority negative attitudes regarding educating prisoners, subsequently leading to limited funds and inadequate training opportunities.

Parolees lacking skills and academic transcripts are blocked from trying to pursue higher education, and the few who can and do reach college campuses are the rare exceptions to the rule which seems to dictate that "punishment for a crime does not end when a felon leaves prison... [but instead] forecloses opportunities to attend college" (Patton, 2012, p. 10).

Barriers to reentry education are also significant for formerly incarcerated juveniles and in a study by the Georgetown Human Rights Institute reviewed by Zubrzycki (2012), it was found that a number of both personal and institutional barriers confront formerly incarcerated youth returning to school. The study interviewed 118 students, teachers, correctional officers, and other stakeholders in Los Angeles County's juvenile system. This study found that in order to avoid the ex-prisoner's lack of skills, education, and credentials some schools "simply refused" to enroll/re-enroll them (p.6). Such outright refusal has been informed by the need to raise school achievement levels in compliance with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation put in place by then President George W. Bush in 2004. In instances where formerly

incarcerated students were low achieving before their arrest and remained low-achieving at the post-release re-application time, the institutions' student success rates would apparently be damaged.

Such rejection elicits from the formerly incarcerated youth feelings of being stigmatized and unwanted (Zubrzycki, 2012). More striking is how these youth and their families mistake school authorities as having the final and legal word regarding education and do not pursue the issue or push for their legal right to free and appropriate educational access. Regardless, school policy in some states is prohibitive for reentry students and juvenile detention center school facilities are often part of and run by the state school districts in which the correctional facility sits. As Zubrzycki (2012) reiterated:

The responsibilities of the various agencies and schools involved in the transition [from prison to school] are often not clearly defined by state or local regulation, and students are left to navigate through vague procedures and cope with a lack of educational continuity without clear guidance or support (p. 6).

Paroled youth are often released from correctional facilities with the need to access the public school systems, and they are also faced with the stigma of being a threat to school safety and to contributing to the lowering of school achievement records.

What They Do on Campuses

The review of the literature clearly identified a dearth of information on current formerly incarcerated students on college campuses. However, a survey of current higher education programs across the nation designed especially in support of this student population's academic efforts will demonstrate those needs. White's (2013) article describes the Hour Children, a New York based program designed to keep formerly incarcerated women and their children together,

a program that works in collaboration with LaGuardia Community College by way of a multi-phase pre-employment configuration approach. In training for reentry to the workplace, formerly incarcerated women go through a multi-phase program: Employment Assessment, Skill Development, Goal Setting, Experiential, Job Search and Retention.

The women are referred by the program to local community colleges, GED, or vocational programs. At the same time, they live at the Hour Children residential facility, where they are required to participate in a 20 hour per week training program that includes computer skills development, résumé building, and job search. The participants then use the acquired skills to log practical hours at an Hour Children site of their choice: offices, thrift shop, day care, or the food pantry. At LaGuardia Community College (LCC) the women might gain internships, access donated computers, represent LCC at conferences, or participate in LCC workshops. In addition, these college students may volunteer and do internships at local hospitals, offices, or retail shops. According to White (2013), the women in this program have a low recidivism rate of 3.5%.

Through the Chicago Department of Fleet Management and in partnership with Chicagoland Youth and Adult Training Center (CYATC) at Kennedy-King College, formerly incarcerated women and men attend vocational automotive classes, life-skills training, and other programs to earn up to twenty college credits. According to the Office of the Mayor, City of Chicago (2010), “[b]y the time they graduate, the students have up to 40% of the skills necessary to be a mechanic” (para. 12). Johnson (2009) identified a program at Alabama Southern Community College as being among the first of several Life Tech Institutes where formerly incarcerated students participate in programs offering training in life skills and technical skills. The disciplines in which they’re training include carpentry, computer skills, dry wall and

painting, masonry, plumbing, residential electricity, technical reading and writing, vocational math, welding, workplace skill development, and other adult education coursework (Johnson, 2009).

For more than two decades formerly incarcerated Native Americans in Rapid City, South Dakota have been the focus of reentry educational efforts through the career development project called Fresh Start (Johnson, 2009). With Fresh Start, participants receive training that includes anger and stress management skills, commitment-making and responsibility-taking strategies, communication and coping skills, time-management techniques, and work ethic development. These students are part of the inmate population who enroll on pre-release terms while working on conditions of their parole. Finally some of these individuals will move on to extensive training to learn skills for job placement and job retention.

In California, some formerly incarcerated students might have participated in such correctional education programs as San Quentin's coveted Prison University Project where inmates gain credits that can be used toward an associate's degree once they return to their communities (Greenblatt, 2008). Formerly incarcerated students are then eligible to participate in programs offered at 20 different sites throughout the state under the Re-Integration of Ex-Offenders (RExO) project (Leshnick, Geckeler, Wiegand, Nicholson & Foley, 2012). Through RExO, ex-offenders participate in a work readiness program, while they work on basic computer skills, career exploration, financial literacy development, health education interviewing skills, job search and interview strategies, résumé building, and life skills. They may also participate in educational and vocational training programs which include GED programs offered on community college campuses and vocational training for commercial trucking, forklift operation,

hazardous materials handling, landscaping, Microsoft Office training, and Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) regulations (Leshnick, et al., 2012).

Benefits of College Education for the Formerly Incarcerated

Ample amounts of literature exists for discussions of the intersection of prisoner reentry and issues of housing, health, work, and public safety (West, 2011, p. 46), yet there is limited literature on prison reentry and post-release education. In addition, there is not sufficient literature that accurately assesses the success or failure of prison reentry programs (Brazzell, et al., 2009, in West, 2011, p. 48). West (2011). Lichtenberger and Ogle (2006) identified possible reasons for the paucity of post-release education outcome literature, including the weaknesses inherent in data collection methods, lack of access to data results by administration(s), and the lack of “accessibility and availability of pre-release and post-release outcome data [which] usually dictates the scope of...program evaluation” (Lichtenberger and Ogle, 2006, p. 231). However, what literature does exist is useful in informing positive post-release outcomes of ex-offenders’ educational attainment in general.

Education Eases the Social Stigma

Participation in post release education and/or programs can assist in easing the social stigma of being formerly incarcerated. Tietjen (2013) identifies two components of stigma that are particular to the experiences of the formerly incarcerated that are released into the community, which includes labeling and stereotyping. Subject to labeling and stereotyping, the formerly incarcerated individual is locked into the “them” of the “us and them” category and differentiated as the “bad” of the “good versus bad” category. Often stereotyped even after release, the formerly incarcerated individual is still “...in a situation [of being] disqualified from social acceptance” (Copenhaver, et al., 2007, p. 269).

Negative social stigmatizing symbols "...draw attention to a debasing identity with a consequent reduction in our valuation of the individual" (Goffman, 1963, pp. 43-44, in Owens, Jr., 2009, p. 319). The continuing stigmatization of the individual forces him or her to apply stigma management strategies to cope (Copenhaver, et al., 2007), strategies which may be done in secrecy, withdrawal, and in preventative telling as avenues to stay hidden or out of the mainstream (Owens, Jr., 2009).

The stigma that is linked with criminal history, combined with having financial barriers and low self-esteem, contributes to the challenges of moving forward in their own lives. Copenhaver, et al., (2007) illustrated that real or perceived, the stigma that inmates experience once released is "enough to keep many from developing social, professional, or educational ties and seeking life-enhancing opportunities" (p. 268). However Copenhaver, et al., (2007) noted that those who were more determined, manage their stigma by continuing rehabilitative efforts through education.

Behind the management or removal of stigma for ex-offenders are identified contributing factors that include the initial lack of knowledge on the part of faculty and fellow students of the formerly incarcerated person's past (Copenhaver, et al., 2007). Through institutional acceptance at colleges, when formerly incarcerated students are allowed to engage in college life, there is an opportunity to allow for a change in the perception of the ex-offender as part of the campus community. An example of institutional acceptance may include a college wide message from the administration that encourages the educational and emotional support of formerly incarcerated individuals' participation on campus. The campus community can then "...see beyond the myths of prison and [can] see this population as the people that they truly are on the inside" (Copenhaver, et al., 2007, p. 280).

Owens, Jr. (2009) found the college experience helps formerly incarcerated persons to overcome stigma as education helps by “working as a mechanism to counter the effects of stigma” (p. 318). Non-stigmatized identification can be “constructed or deconstructed via interpersonal interaction” (p. 320, citing Loftland, 1969), and the college as a social institution can be “...adept at constructing mainstream identities for people marked by stigma” (p. 320). Thus, the college “...may function as a means of notable social transformation that is particularly consequential for former prisoners” (pp. 318-319). This reconstruction of the individual’s identity extends positive destigmatizing outcomes for the individual with the college degree who now can use this transformation (and achievement) to get an interview, get a job, and to keep that job (Owens, Jr., 2009).

Empowerment Through Pro-Social Identity Shaping/Reshaping

When formerly incarcerated individuals are stigmatized, their identity is perpetually compromised. With rehabilitative approaches that are strengths-based or desistance-focused, there is the chance of “a new generative identity...[as opposed to an] unwilling...reinforcing [of] the passivity and fatalism of the old [stigmatized] identity” (Ward & Maruna, 2007, p. 24). Through reentry education, what can be allowed to develop is what the authors determine as “...an alternative, coherent, pro-social identity” (p. 24). This can potentially assist these individuals in “justify[ing] and maintain[ing] their desistance from crime” (p. 86), but also cuts through the stigma and empowers formerly incarcerated individuals in a transformational process that works inversely at the same time. In essence, participation in education empowers them to cut through the stigma. Ward & Maruna (2007) noted the individuals’ sense of identity emerges from their “...basic value commitments, the good they pursue in search of a better life” (p. 110).

In this respect, the pursuit of education after incarceration also contributes to a pro-social identity that transcends stigma.

Investing in Human Capital and Public Welfare

The practice of college learning can include curricula that facilitates learning to be ethical, responsible, caring, and to have core values such as integrity, respect for others, and self-discipline (West, 2011 p. 4). Participation in college learning can also cultivate such personal qualities as coping skills, self-sufficiency, and increased self-esteem. These core values and personal qualities gained through educational participation to empower the individual student are synonymous with formerly incarcerated student empowerment. According to West (2011), through educational participation, the ex-offender is psychologically empowered to overcome the external oppression of labeling, stereotyping, and stigmatization.

Formerly incarcerated students that also find access to education helps them internalize a sense of control, worth, or power. Such psychological and social empowerment of the individual lends to investment and improvement of social capital, resulting in improved social outcomes both in public safety and in the individual who is formerly incarcerated (Moore, 2012; West, 2011; Owens, Jr., 2009; and Travis & Visher, 2005).

In a study on the outcomes of in-prison education by Case, Fassefast, Sarri, and Phillips (2005), it was determined that education provides not only the ability to obtain or improve job skills that increase post-release employability, but also provides an opportunity for socialization, which increases self-esteem and social functioning. Similarly, Travis and Visher (2005) found prison secondary education programs, which exist in 80 percent of all prisons nationwide increases human capital, leading to the assumption that post-release college education can do the same. Travis & Visher (2005) analogize “the basic building block of well-being is human

capital,” Also noting that a primary form of “personal resources the individual brings to the social and economic marketplace... is education” (p. 186). Higher education for formerly incarcerated persons is an investment in social capital which allows the opportunity for increased levels of human capital, enabling increased opportunities for legitimate employment, and at the same time reducing the burden on taxpayers and governments (Moore, 2012; Owens, Jr., 2009). In-prison education can have slight or better outcomes on recidivism for formerly incarcerated individuals as opposed to those who do not participate in such programming.

Reduces Rates of Recidivism

Travis & Visher (2005) point to the possibility of “high levels of ‘churning’ of returning and exiting prisoners” as recidivism that may lead to further diminishment of social capital (p. 102). Recidivism is found to occur in two-thirds of formerly incarcerated individuals released and is likely to happen within three years of release which is due in part to criminal histories (James, 2011) but also due in part to the unavailability of social supports, and the many barriers, restrictions, or “collateral consequences” confronting released prisoners (Archer & Williams, 2006, p. 4)

Nally, Lockwood, Ho, & Knutsen (2012) conducted a five-year study (2005-2009) to discover the impact of ex-prisoners’ level of education and post release employment on recidivism. The researchers found that recidivists were more likely to be unemployed and under-educated. More specifically, the recidivism rate was lower among individuals who have higher levels of education, while the recidivism rate was between 60 to 70 percent among those who had an education level lower than high school. Nally et al., (2012) found that the level of education was a predictor for how long an ex-prisoner was employed: the longer that these individuals were employed the less likely they would recidivate. Certainly, ex-prisoners have a

variety of barriers to overcome to successfully reenter society, however the study indicated that access and attainment of higher education can contribute to reducing recidivism.

Other researchers have identified similarly low rates of return for inmates in post-secondary education programs attended in prison compared with non-participants. Research from Archer & Williams (2006) found human capital (institutions and support) can reduce recidivism and education, and a strategy to increase human and social capital can in turn reduce recidivism. This same finding has been evidenced by the following collections of literature: Nally et al., 2012; James, 2011; Swimpson, 2008; Archer & Williams, 2006; Zhang, et al., 2006; Torre & Fine, 2005; Beard, et al., 2003; Steurer & Smith, 2003; and Shuler, 2002.

Several studies exist to evidence the reduction of recidivism rates facilitated by work training, work placement, drug counseling, and housing assistance (James, 2011, 2015). Several more studies cited the relationship between correctional education and reduced recidivism rates; and more recent research has correlated lowered recidivism rates to post-release education in general. A quantitative study by the Criminal Justice Policy Council (Martinez and Eisenberg, 2000) of Texas's correctional system's Windom School District correctional education program concluded educational achievement as a key contributor to reduce recidivism. Their study evaluated over 25,000 inmates that were tracked in the community after release from prison to determine the number that were re-incarcerated after two years and how educational achievement during their most recent incarceration may have impacted their recidivism. The recidivism outcomes of 25,980 Texan prisoners within two years of being released found that only 16 percent returned to prison while 84 percent did not recidivate in the 1996 to 1998 period of the study. The study recommended the allocation of in-prison resources to inmates with the most educational deficits. Furthermore, the study found that educational achievement is associated

with higher post-release employment rates and higher wages (Martinez and Eisenberg, 2000). A meta-analysis of 33 independent experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations of in prison education, vocation, and work programs found that “program participants recidivate at a lower rate than non-participants” (Wilson, Gallegher & MacKenzie (2000) p. 347).

In a three-state recidivism study by Steurer & Smith (2003) of 3,170 correctional education participants and non-participants (885 in Maryland, 1,051 in Minnesota, and 1,234 in Ohio) found that those who participated in prison education had significantly lower rates (48%) of re-arrest than did non-participants (57%). Those who participated in prison education had significantly lower rates of re-incarceration (27%) compared with the 35% re-incarceration rate of non-participants. The authors note that the in-prison education programs contributed to overall lower recidivism rates in the different states. They also noted that their analyses had a potential weakness in studying only recidivism. The authors described the need to study other positive outcomes such as family stability, workforce participation, and cost savings/benefits to society. “Motivation did not predict recidivism and was not a biasing influence on the outcomes studied” (Steurer & Smith, 2003 p. 16). In addition, in another current meta-analysis of programs that provide education to incarcerated adults – including adult basic education, GED and high school courses, career technical training and college courses, Davis et al., (2013) found reduces the formerly incarcerated recidivism by 43 percent. Finally, Mukamal et al., (2015) report and even more impressively that those who participated in an in-prison college program were 51 percent likely to recidivate than those who did not participate.

In Torre & Fine’s (2005) 4-year qualitative and quantitative study of 27 college-prison participants at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in Bedford, New York led the researchers to conclude that “prison without college [education] exacerbates the likelihood of return” to

incarceration (p. 581). Torre and Fine's study found that women without in-prison education were almost four times more likely to be returned to custody than women who participated in college while in prison. This reinforced the conclusions from other studies that education and literacy programs are "much more effective at lowering recidivism rates than either boot camps or shock incarceration" (p. 578). While that study looked at inmates' educational experiences inside prison, our participatory study looked at the educational experiences of formerly incarcerated students outside of prison.

Finally, in a quantitative evaluation and analysis by Zhang, Roberts, & Callanan (2006) of the Preventing Parolee Crime Program (PPCP), a multidimensional parole-based project initiative set in place by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) confirmed reduced return-to-prison rates fostered by drug rehabilitation and treatment, employment and education (math and literacy), or training services provided by the Computerized Literacy Learning Center Network. The study evaluated recidivism rates for those who completed the program goals of PPCP and for those who did not participate in 19 sites across the state of California (Zhang, et al., 2006). Even though the research's findings were positive, it is important to note the drawbacks of using the data despite their large sample size, primarily because of the PPCP participants' motivation and the parole agents who handpicked parolees to participate in the program as the agents assumed those chosen would be more likely to succeed in the program.

Swimpson's (2008) quantitative study looked at whether or not there was a relationship between post-release recidivism and in-prison education participation. The study of data from a proportional sample of 201 released formerly incarcerated females from Washington D.C., suggested that in-prison education participation "impacts recidivism positively" (p. 94).

Swimpson (2008) found that in addition to economic benefits to the individual, education imparts knowledge, positive judgment, and well-developed wisdom while facilitating the realization of self-potential and plays a significant role in reducing recidivism rates. The researcher acknowledges other variables that may contribute to lower recidivism rates, such as participation in other support programs (substance abuse rehabilitation, faith based treatment) and motivation. As a result, the researcher suggested that further research should be done on female post-release recidivism, and that practitioners and correctional professionals conduct a more thorough analysis of programs.

College Support Services for Formerly Incarcerated Students

James (2011) described the following phases for general reentry programs: 1) programs used during incarceration to prepare inmates for release into their communities; 2) programs in place for the release period, implemented to “connect ex-offenders with the various services they require;” and 3) long-term programs at work during the ex-offenders’ reintegration process, put in place to assist, support, and supervise (p. ii). Throughout the nation, there are few post-secondary programs in place to support formerly incarcerated individuals and these post-secondary educational programs are one piece of the reentry puzzle to support other essential needs such as substance abuse rehabilitation, housing, employment, and reconnecting with family members. James (2011) described these programs in terms of services offered, but this research lacked in-depth studies in terms of return to prison outcomes and descriptions of how these programs successfully support these individuals. Further studies are needed to inquire about how formerly incarcerated individuals are supported and how they gain strategies to successfully stay out of prison.

Support Programs Specific to California

Specific to California, there are several programs that support different aspects of formerly incarcerated needs, primarily offered through community based and faith-based organizations. The programs' information is provided through various formats, such as brochures and web page content, but the information lacked outcomes-based evidence in their effectiveness of program success. The programs throughout California include mental and physical health support, prison diversion programs, employment needs, housing, and reconnecting with families and community.

A comprehensive quantitative and qualitative study by Rose & Nyre (1979) collected data from prisoner and formerly incarcerated education programs in California, which included the following: (1) correctional education institutions and post-secondary institutions; (2) surveys from the formerly incarcerated, correctional employees, and faculty from participating colleges; (3) parolees who participated in education programs while incarcerated; and (4) case study visits to in-prison programs as well as formerly incarcerated programs offered by post-secondary institutions. Rose and Nyre's (1979) research found that while several universities and community colleges provided Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) for students, only two of the 13 California community colleges had a "self-contained formerly incarcerated student support program [which existed] independent of EOPS" (p. 96). One program, Project LIFT (Life in Focus for Tomorrow), was started at Sacramento City College in 1976 and was designed specifically for formerly incarcerated students; it was dismantled three years later, the same year the study was done. Today CCSF is the only California community college that has continued to serve formerly incarcerated students through the SCP.

Rose & Nyre (1979) further described nine California State University (CSU) state university programs that existed to support formerly incarcerated persons. The various CSU

programs reported various outcomes that supported formerly incarcerated students such as numbers served, educational attainment and types of services offered. SFSU's Project Rebound, begun in 1967, is the only CSU that continues to support formerly incarcerated students and continues to perform outreach to ex-prisoners with support services to support their educational retention and attainment. CCSF, which began with the SCORPIO program in the 1970s, still supports formerly incarcerated students through EOPS with the Second Chance Program (SCP). However, the study was unable to identify outcomes of post-secondary participation in education and recidivism. In addition, the comprehensive study is also dated and new research should revisit the current landscape of state post-secondary programs that supports ex-prisoners. There is a need for more updated research of post-release education programs for formerly incarcerated students.

According to the CCSF EOPS website (CCSF, 2015) the SCP is designed for formerly incarcerated women and men, and the EOPS SCP outreaches, recruits, and assists students with completing their educational goals. The students are provided orientation to college, academic and training programs, student services, academic counseling, ancillary support (i.e. food cards, book and supplies vouchers) and education planning. The program further supports this population with specifically designed courses to further their development as adult learners in the community college.

Lack of Education Support Service Availability as a Barrier to Post-Incarceration

Education

There is clearly a limited amount of literature in post release education programs for formerly incarcerated individuals. Petersilia (2003) describes how society hinders reintegration for formerly incarcerated people and identifies a variety of barriers to successful prisoner reentry

which includes the lack of housing, employment, and several more legal and practical barriers. Formerly incarcerated individuals are confronted with these first-level barriers; but are also then struck by the collateral consequence barriers (stigma, low self-esteem, lack of education, instigated recidivism) at a second level. They are further challenged by the scarcity or absence of education reentry support as barriers at another level of support.

Case et al., (2005) describe how for formerly incarcerated women, a “singular failing of most prison-based programs is the lack of any post-release continuity and support” (pp. 148-149). Roy-Stevens (2004) described how formerly incarcerated youth often experienced barriers in returning to school due to a lack of an effective reenrollment system. Conversely, Romney (2005) highlighted for formerly incarcerated individuals the barrier to educational opportunity often begins with the required admission of convict history on the application to some educational institutions. In addition, ex-prisoners also face psychological barriers in certain questions of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) pertaining to prior drug offenses.

Assessment, Review, and Discussion of Support Services for the Formerly Incarcerated

The literature reiterates that prisoners and ex-prisoners as a group have multiple educational needs. Beard (2013) acknowledged that numerous studies provide evidence that there is a clear link between education and reduced recidivism rates and the high recidivism rate of California compared with those of other states. The CDCR Review Panel has outlined several ways several areas of in-prison and post-release education can facilitate effective reentry and reduced recidivism. These include, but are not limited to, ongoing assessment and subsequent refinement of existing prison education programs, and the expansion of new programs providing education in reception centers and re-entry services. Given this information, such programs can be institutionalized in the community college system.

Summary

This literature review is a good start at identifying best practices efforts at reentry education. However, the studies have shortcomings when relying upon virtually non-existent data of post-release education successes, which in turn reflects an implied lack of services to facilitate post-release education success for ex-offenders. Clearly, there are not enough programs developed for formerly incarcerated students at universities and community colleges. There continues to be a gap in implementing effective practices of support for formerly incarcerated college students in appropriate programs that began in the 1970s. It is my opinion that most of these programs have been dropped throughout the past thirty years (Due to budget restraints and policies that affect incarceration). However, Mukamal et al., (2015) confirm that during the 1990's that inmates could no longer benefit from the Federal Pell Grant which provides funding to low income students. As a result, inmate college programs were decimated minus a few programs that served from a non-profit perspective. There is a lack of literature

about where tracking of such programs stops, and with only a few rare exceptions there is a current lack of proof that support services in education designed for and dedicated solely to the formerly incarcerated continue to work to counter stigmatization, rehabilitation, and to overcome a criminal past and identity. Finally, there is a lack of education support programs to serve and empower motivated formerly incarcerated individuals, assisting them in increasing their human and social capital.

SECTION III: DESIGN OF STUDY

The purpose of this section is to describe the philosophical approach for this study, a participatory research study with formerly incarcerated college students. This section describes the research method that was used, the data required, the information regarding the selection of study participants, the data collection and analysis procedures, the strategies to ensure the soundness of the data, and the plan for protection of human subjects.

Philosophical Approach

The philosophical approach to this study is from the Critical Social Science (CSS) perspective, the purpose of CSS is to find out the underlying meanings of situations that will allow for social change. Neumann (2003) describes the purpose of CSS as the ability to smash myths and to provide people the knowledge to change their reality. The SCP is specifically designed to support the unique needs of formerly incarcerated students at the community college. The aim of the program is to guide, inform and empower them through the college process to eventually reach their academic goals.

In this research study, formerly incarcerated students critically reflected on their experiences participating in the SCP and how those experiences have contributed to their academic success at the college. As the participants and co-researchers shared their experiences,

they were able to provide input on how to improve the SCP. By sharing their experiences through dialogue (speaking and listening), the participant researchers helped improve student service programs that are unique to formerly incarcerated community college students. The study also critically explored the experiences of being formerly incarcerated community college students and how they may be able to become conscious and aware of their own plight and potential to transform their lives.

The CSS approach contributed evidence to further define the open access mission of community colleges for formerly incarcerated students and other marginalized groups. As formerly incarcerated students expressed the barriers to their success and what assisted them in progressing towards their academic goals, post-secondary institutions and their student services and academic programs can be shaped and implemented to meet the needs of ex-offenders. Habermas (1971) explained that an emancipatory interest acquaints the researcher toward the release of human potential and the investigation of ideology and power within the organization and society. The goal of this research approach is to emancipate participants from the dictation of tradition, habit, or self-deception (Carr & Kemmis, 1986), and through the process of self-reflection, the participants would access their experiences through further examination, ultimately leading to personal transformation (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

As Lichtenberg and Ogle (2006) asserted, society cannot afford to not properly evaluate post-release education programs. Moreover, such evaluation should be both formative during the program's development and summative once the program has been completed. The formative approach will lend to the qualitative data, as well as the quantitative data that contributed to the overall summative assessment (STFM, 2010). More specifically, this study invited the participants to become co-researchers in the process and in turn, impart important knowledge

that contributed to the knowledge of practitioners working with formerly incarcerated community college students. Herr & Anderson (2005) described this as building “a knowledge base that can inform the research community about the actions and beliefs of practitioners and a knowledge base that is otherwise unavailable” (p. 34). This type of research should be conducted to uncover the experiences of formerly incarcerated students participating in a post-secondary program that supports their needs.

Assumptions and Criteria for Truth

Critical social theory encompasses the objectives to study, understand, provide explanation for, and thus to transform society. It also comes to bear by way of several useful theories and assumptions. Action theory is a functionalist approach that provides a catalyst for change (Braaten, 1991). Social identity theory is an approach of prerequisites for individual survival and well-being in interaction with others (Goffman, 1963, in Copenhaver, et al. (2007). In these two contexts combined, critical social theory becomes contingent upon the understanding of normative values, self-identity as validated, and the practice of communicative observation, among others.

For example, a contributing assumption is that of social norms and the extent to which an individual will be qualified for or “disqualified from social acceptance” (Goffman, 1963, in Copenhaver, et al., 2007, p. 269). A second assumption then sees the individual in society as subsequently either self-identified as included or socially accepted, or if disqualified, the individual experiences depersonalization and will behave in ways that are consistent with the stereotyping, prototyping, and labeling done by society before, during, and after the social acceptance procedure (Burke & Stets, 2000). However, if an individual is qualified and accepted they likely will have a positive self-identity, will undergo a self-verification process, and have

the ability and potential to transform into a pro-social identity (West, 2011; Ward & Maruna, 2007; Burke & Stets, 2000).

Strengths and Limitations

There are some strengths and limitations to the critical theory perspective approach to this research. A strength that encompasses CSS includes elements that supply people with the tools needed to change their own world view (Neumann, 2003). As mentioned in the first section of this study, with praxis, there is a continuous interaction between thought and action. Gadamer (1979) explained this as a process that involves interpretation, understanding and application in “one unified process” (p. 275).

There are limitations to CSS and critical theory, including its subjectivity and it being value-laden in regards to the issues being researched. Habermas (1971) argued that the production of knowledge is never neutral, but instead is always pursued with some interest in mind (i.e. value-laden). In addition, critical reflection can be influenced, constrained, or distorted by power relations.

Personal Disclosure

As a community college counselor for 11 years, I have become aware of the increase of formerly incarcerated students enrolling in post-secondary institutions. For some ex-prisoners, they are enrolling in community colleges because of its affordability, availability and accessibility. In California, approximately 100,000 people are released from prison each year (BJS, 2015). The SCP at CCSF is impacted due to budgetary constraints and is consistently unable to meet the needs of the many students that are eligible for the program, but remain on waitlists. As an academic counselor, I see the potential for anyone to achieve “success” at the college and to make a better life for her or himself. This success may not equate to the state

mandates of achieving a certificate, an Associate's Degree, or a transfer to a university, but instead come in other forms: completing the terms of parole or probation, obtaining employment, reconnecting with family members, becoming clean and sober, or staying out of jail or prison.

My concern for formerly incarcerated students is getting the necessary institutional support to assist this population's success at the community college. In addition, the social stigma of identifying as a formerly incarcerated student often contributes to the mistreatment (or non-treatment) that they have received at other parts of the college district and its campuses. These formerly incarcerated students have served their time, but have been marginalized due to a criminal history that they cannot evade.

My motivation in conducting critical research comes from my experience in working with formerly incarcerated students and wanting to improve their chances at successful reintegration into society. I believe the successful pursuit and completion of an education is a critical piece of the prisoner reentry puzzle that assists in transforming lives. There are a variety of issues that affect this population, including mental health issues, substance abuse, barriers to educational attainment, meeting conditions of parole or probation, and an array of other issues that affect individual ex-offenders. Because of this, I believe additional "wrap around" services are needed to fully support this student population.

I am passionate about assisting formerly incarcerated students in achieving their academic and life goals. I believe that a well-developed student support program can assist in addressing the unique needs of ex-prisoners, enabling them to reach their academic and life goals, accomplishments which lead to self-empowerment. Based on my self-disclosure statement and my admitted passion about this work, I am instinctively drawn to the social critical methodology at the core of this study.

Research Method: Participatory Action Research

The method selected for this study is participatory action research (PAR). Consistent with CSS and critical theory, the PAR method seeks to make connections with unresolved social and personal issues in order to bring about social change by way of collective and collaborative inquiry. Due to the collaborative nature of this inquiry, PAR comes from a social and a community orientation for which the emphasis is on research that is emancipatory and leads to positive change for the co-participants in the society-at-large (Creswell, 2005).

The aim of PAR is to improve the quality of people's organizations, communities, and lives (Stringer, 1999). This study used PAR to engage the co-participants and myself in dialogues on the following research topic: "The Second Chance Program: A Research with Formerly Incarcerated Community College Students." Beyond the standard interview or conversation, the dialogues with the co-participants allowed for a collaborative and safe environment where they were able to clarify, elaborate, and reflect on their own experiences with the research topic. Park (1989) explains that in some instances, participatory research should include the disenfranchised so they have the opportunity to transform their own lives.

Purpose

Participatory action research is characterized as taking on a two-pronged task: the action component is intended to bring about "improvement of practice, social change, and the like" (Anderson & Herr, 2005, p. 5), and the research component is meant to create valid knowledge about the practice (p. 5). The overall purpose of this study was to assist current and future formerly incarcerated individuals in educational goal completion and in furthering the quality of their lives. This study will potentially improve learning outcomes with this student population by informing, encouraging, and supporting their increased participation, persistence, and goal

completion. In addition, the research was conducted with formerly incarcerated students as co-participants, thus the findings of this study will prompt the creation of themes to which current and future students (and practitioners) can refer as the students engage in their own educational process, evaluating and reflecting on those actions they put into practice.

Procedures

PAR is the process of engaging the participants as co-researchers in the production of new knowledge, to develop a deeper critical consciousness, and to use this new found knowledge towards positive actions. Maguire (1987) indicated that PAR allows the people to create knowledge and to use that power towards social transformation. Using the PAR methodology, the co-participants and I participated in the following activities: (a) an exploratory face to face dialogue that lasted approximately 90 minutes per session and (b) a follow up session that lasted approximately 60 minutes provide an opportunity for student participants to further clarify and reflect on dominant themes that emerged from the initial dialogue. Both dialogues were digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim, and the transcriptions were sent to the research participants for their review for accuracy and to provide a final reflection before their subsequent dialogue session.

Participants and Site

There were ten students chosen for an invitation to the study, all were formerly incarcerated students who participated in the SCP and completed their academic goals at CCSF. The preferable participant gender ratio was 50% (i.e. three female and three male participants), and ideally, the participants would come from underrepresented groups. The first six invitees who responded to the recruitment letter via e-mail and met the demographic criteria were selected. Of the first six participants that were selected three are male and three are female. Five

of the students are of students of color. Access to the student data was negotiated by formally asking permission from the current SCP program director to conduct a PAR with SCP students. The necessary steps were taken to address any stress to the student participants that may have arisen from this type of study. The data collection took place at a reserved conference room at CCSF after hours or on the weekends.

Questions to Guide the Initial Dialogues

The primary question for this participatory research was: What effect does participation in the SCP have on formerly incarcerated students in pursuing their educational goal at the community college level? Along with the initial research questions mentioned in Section I, the initial dialogue included the following questions to encourage critical inquiry, development of new knowledge, and reflection through the participatory action research process.

The following four questions guided the PAR process using dialogue, critical inquiry, and reflection:

Research Question #1: What issues and challenges are formerly incarcerated students confronted with in attending a community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?

1. What were the specific issues and challenges you were confronted in attending community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?
2. What were your feelings and thought process before attending community college?
3. What was your experience like in attending City College of San Francisco?
4. How did you overcome the specific issues and challenges that you faced as a formerly incarcerated student?

Research Question 2: How do these issues and challenges affect formerly incarcerated students in completing their education at a community college?

1. How did the challenges you described affect your experiences as a student at CCSF?
2. Now that you have completed your education at CCSF, what have your experiences been?

Research Question 3: How has the SCP had an impact in addressing the issues and challenges that formerly incarcerated students experience in pursuing education at the community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?

1. How did the SCP assist you in achieving your goals at CCSF?
2. Tell me more about your experiences in the SCP with the following services: counseling, tutoring, ancillary support services, peer advising?
3. What component of the SCP helped you the most? Why and how?

Research Question 4: What recommendations do the SCP program participants have to improve the SCP?

1. What recommendations would you make to improve the SCP?
2. What recommendations would you make to improve the academic counseling and advising services?
3. Would you recommend the SCP to other formerly incarcerated community college students? Why or why not?

Data Collection Techniques

Creswell (2005) indicated that the PAR data collection procedures should be a collaborative and “enquiring” effort between the researcher and the co-participants in analyzing

the verbatim initial dialogue transcriptions to capture significant generative themes (p.564). The second dialogue, which took place approximately one week after the initial dialogue, the second dialogue was focused on a plan of action in clarifying and further elaborating on the emerging generative themes from the first dialogues. Like the first dialogues, the second dialogues were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. The purpose of the second dialogue was recursive or dialectical and was “focused on bringing about change in practices” (Creswell, 2005 p.556).

Data Analysis

After the initial dialogues were transcribed verbatim, with the co-participants, the researcher identified themes of understanding, values, and experiences. Freire (2002) referred to these complex thoughts and reflections as generative themes. A copy of the first dialogue was provided to each participant to allow for them to individually reflect on the conversation. The verbatim dialogues represented the identification of generative themes that allowed the identifying praxis issues in which these students might reflect on their own reality and then engage in action that can transform their own reality (Freire, 2002).

The first two dialogues of the research are the first loop of what Stringer (1999) explains are continuous spirals of reflection and action. When the researcher and co-participants reflect on their roles in an organization, they will try an action and then another, always referring back to the central question of what they learned and accomplished because of their actions. For the purpose and boundaries of this research project one loop of dialogues was completed: a) knowledge reflected upon and learned from the first dialogue, and b) a second dialogue to further reflect on knowledge gained from the initial dialogue. The dialogues were conducted professionally with the utmost respect and with consistent check-ins for understanding from the

co-participants. Finally, extra care was taken to conceal the identities of the subjects and to maintain confidentiality.

Strategies to Protect Human Subjects

To ensure strategies to protect human subjects, approval was requested and granted by Oregon State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Since the potential subjects were students and staff at other institutions of higher education, I observed the IRB rules and regulations for protecting human subjects. I also used the principles of the Belmont Report, which included the moral standards of research involving human subjects: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005) the following are definitions of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice:

1. The principle of respect demands subjects enter the research voluntarily and with adequate information about the experiment's procedures and possible consequences.
2. Under the principle of beneficence, researchers are enjoined to secure the well-being of their subjects. Beneficent actions are understood in a double sense as avoiding harm altogether and if risks are involved for achieving the study's goals.
3. The principle of justice insists on fair distribution of both the benefits and burdens of research. An injustice occurs when some groups (e.g. welfare recipients, the institutionalized, or particular ethnic minorities) are overused as research subjects because of easy manipulation or their availability.

CHAPTER IV: Findings of the Study

Introduction

This study attempted to investigate the experiences of formerly incarcerated community college students who participated in the Second Chance Program (SCP): a student support service specifically designed to assist members of this student population in achieving academic success at City College of San Francisco (CCSF). Together with the co-participants we utilized the participatory research model of investigation in which I engaged the participants in the process of dialogue (Herr & Anderson, 2005). The dialogical process provided the opportunity to discuss various aspects of their experience of how the SCP assisted them in reaching their academic goals at the community college level. The discussions also allowed the co-participants and me to discuss how the SCP could be improved for future formerly incarcerated community college students. In relation to the major research questions the topics included the challenges they encountered as formerly incarcerated students, their transition into higher education, and the academic and life challenges they experienced, as well as the effects of being formerly incarcerated had on achieving their academic and life goals.

The primary focus of this study was to find out how, the Second Chance program (SCP) played a role (or didn't play a role) in supporting formerly incarcerated community college students in reaching their academic goals. The participants and I conducted two sets of dialogues. Several themes emerged from the two dialogues. The first set of dialogues entailed discussions in which the participants identified the problems and struggles they face as formerly incarcerated individuals. Specifically from their perspectives as students, the co-participants discussed their experiences as prisoners and formerly incarcerated individuals and how it had a negative impact on their reintegration and adjustment back into society. They also described their relationships

with family and peers, and several challenges, barriers and successes that they encountered being formerly incarcerated community college students. Some of the themes included the experiences of abuse and oppression they lived through while being imprisoned and how the experiences affected their well-being, which adversely impacted their adjustment when they were released from the prison system. They also spoke of their life experiences in regards to what led them to become incarcerated. During the second set of dialogues we discussed a deeper understanding of the prison system and its effects on the participants. We also discussed how people released from prisons are generally not prepared to successfully stay out of the prison system which accounts for the high percentage of recidivism. Finally, the participants made recommendations on how to improve the SCP, and how to assist future formerly incarcerated individuals in their pursuit of a higher education.

This chapter includes three sections. The first section provides profiles of the participants in the study. The second section provides the findings of the study based on the generative themes that were discovered from the two dialogues. The final section summarizes the findings and reviews the most common themes from the dialogues of all of the co-participants.

Profiles of Participants

Although there were many students interested in participating in the study only six were selected as they met the criteria of having participated in the Second Chance Program (SCP) and successfully completed a community college educational goal (Certificate, Associates Degree and/or transfer to a four-year university). Given the time commitment to the study which included two dialogical sessions, they were still willing to participate with knowledge of the time commitment to the study. While reflecting on this study, the participants were eager to take part knowing that the SCP provided them an opportunity to support and pursue a higher education

after incarceration. In observing their eagerness and collective phenomena to participate in the study, it became evident that they felt that it was a way to give back what was provided for them. As one of the participants indicated, participating in the study might enlighten the administration, faculty, and staff to continually improve the program to better serve formerly incarcerated people entering community colleges. Another indicated that as a result of the study, more programs may be developed and designed to support formerly incarcerated students make a positive transition back into society and to improve their own lives.

Although the group accounted for a small size of the Second Chance student population, the six participants in the group reflected a wide range of diversity found in the group. To protect their identities I asked the participants to use pseudonyms instead of their real names.

The demographic information is presented in the table below.

Table 2

Demographic Information on the Participants

Name	Ethnicity, Gender Identified	Age	College Status	Major	Time In Jail or Prison
1. Johnny	Black, African American Male	46	Obtained Bachelor Degree Sociology	Sociology, Computer Networking Information Technology	Approximately 10 years
2. Mert	White Male	64	Senior Standing	Political Science	20 years
3. Prof C	Mexican Male	44	Bachelor and Master's Degree completed	Engineering	Approximately 6 years
4. Tee	African American Female	42	Junior Standing	Social Work	Approximately 20 years
5. Sam	White Female	46	Bachelor Degree completed	Social Work	Approximately 10 years
6. Becky	African American Female	60	Senior Standing	Women's Studies	Approximately 10 years

Johnny

Johnny is 46 years old and identifies as Black, African American from South America who participated in the Second Chance Program from spring 2005 through the fall 2007 semesters. He completed his A.A. in Liberal Arts & Sciences, served as a peer mentor, and transferred to SFSU as a Sociology major. He graduated with a Baccalaureate degree in Sociology in May 2012. Before attending college and as a new immigrant, Johnny owned his own printing business. The financial instability of owning a business and his nature of “helping” employ people “who are not able to get employment” from the inner city neighborhood led to him to becoming involved in illegal activities to make more money (Macale, 2014, p.204). Johnny spent approximately ten years cycling in and out of prison five times before making a change to stay out of prison. He described his stay in prison as being a part of a system that does not rehabilitate but fosters behaviors to network with other prisoners and “draw up plans to make money” when released (Macale, 2014, p.204). When he was attending college, he initially was pursuing majors in the natural sciences before he switched to Sociology. He made the switch in majors because of the positive experiences he had in community college giving back through voluntarism, being a peer mentor, and working as staff member at the college. Johnny’s commitment to the community is evidenced by his mentorship and employing youth males of color in the San Francisco bay area through his non-profit organization that bridges the disparities in technology with extremely low income communities. His goals are to continue to assist low-income communities of color to become more aware and involved in the vast opportunities of the technology field.

Mert

Mert is a sixty four old white male and was a participant in the Second Chance Program from spring 2010 through spring 2013 semesters. He completed his A.S. degree in Paralegal Studies, served as CCSF's graduation valedictorian, and transferred to SFSU with a major in Political Science at the beginning of fall 2013. He has obtained his Bachelor's degree from SFSU and is in his second year of graduate school in Public Administration. Shortly after high school, Mert moved to San Francisco and became involved in the hippie music and drug culture of the late 1960's. This lifestyle choice led him down a path of being involved in the selling of drugs, which eventually led to a second degree murder charge. He had realized how much he drifted away from how he was raised. As Mert explained, "it wasn't until the shooting happened that I realized how far I'd gotten away from middle class values and what I truly believed in (Macale, 2014, p. 15)." The conviction led to Mert spending more than twenty years in prison. Due to his long stint in prison he had encountered many emotional challenges and has been able to cope through therapy and his spirituality practice in Buddhism. After being released from prison he continues to adjust from his emotional challenges but has been a hardworking and outstanding student. He also volunteers time in the community advocating for the reduction of violence in the community. He also works at an environmental non-profit organization. His immediate goals are to attend graduate school and make contributions to policy change in regards to current state of the prison system.

Tee

Tee is a 42 year old African-American female and was a participant in the Second Chance Program from fall 2011 to the spring 2014 semesters. She graduated with two Associate's degrees in the Liberal Arts & Sciences emphases. She transferred to the four-year university as a Social Work major. At three years old and "too young to remember", Tee

witnessed her father murder her mother. The void of having no parents led to Tee being raised by her grandmother whom she loved very much until her death in her teenage years. Tee emphasized that she grew up in a working class family and takes full responsibility of her actions of abusing drugs but also mentioned that she may have gotten involved with drugs “to run away from the pain” of her grandmother’s death and lack of a father figure. Tee explained, “that she had done her retirement up front” and that she was tired of the troubling life of addiction (Macale, 2014, p 35). Before enrolling in community college, she conceded that she had not been in the workforce for twenty years and she was determined in returning to college instead of trying to obtain employment without being college educated. She entered a treatment facility for six months before returning to college. She completed her community college education with a 3.93 GPA and like Mert before her was the student speaker for the commencement. She will complete her Bachelor degree at the end of the of the 2016-2017 academic year. She has aspirations to work beyond the job scope of a social worker and enter politics to make a positive impact in her community through effective policy change.

Prof C

Prof C is a 44 year old Latino male and was an intermittent participant in the Second Chance Program from spring 1990 to spring 1998 semesters. He transferred to the four-year university at the beginning of fall 1998 and has since obtained a bachelors and master’s degrees in Electrical Engineering. Although academically talented and recruited to attend a prestigious private high school, Prof C grew up in extreme poverty with a single parent in which English was not the first language in the household. Prof C often had to take on the interpreter role with his mother in his youth in regards to interacting with government agencies, schools, and other environments which required an adult. In addition, his community was inundated with drugs,

violence, and pressures to join gangs. The pressure of attending an expensive university and the lack of knowledge in options, led to a conviction in drug sales and incarceration. A mental health misdiagnosis while incarcerated exacerbated his involvement in the justice system and he was subsequently reincarcerated while pursuing attending college. With the assistance of the Second Chance Program and becoming involved with on campus organizations he was able to make the adjustments necessary to complete his education. He went on to work in private industry working as an Engineer for companies such as Boeing and Rose Electronics. After experiencing consistent subtle racism in the private sector, he decided to transition his talents in becoming a professor in higher education. He enjoys working with students and serving as a resource to inspire students of underrepresented backgrounds to succeed in math and other fields in the sciences.

Sam

Sam is a 46 year old white female and was a participant in the Second Chance Program from fall 2008 through spring 2012 semesters. She completed her A.S. degree in Social Sciences in spring 2012 and transferred to the four-year university as a Social Work major. Like Prof C, Sam grew up in a predominately African American neighborhood that suffered from “geographic racism” (Macale, 2014, p.78) and blight. In addition, she grew up in a household where both parents suffered from addiction and her mother was a prostitute. As a result, Sam became involved in a lifestyle of addiction, abuse and being involved in prostitution. As she pursued her community college education, she did so as a single mother of four children and grandmother of one. In the Second Chance Program, she served as a peer mentor, recruiting new prospective students, providing intake services and serving in a mentor role to welcoming new Second Chance Program students to the college. She found pride in assisting students with the same

formerly incarcerated background reach their academic goals. She spent three years at the community college before transferring to a four-year university. Sam recently obtained her Bachelor's degree in social work and is currently employed with a homeless outreach team in San Francisco. Finally, she has aspirations of pursuing a Master's degree in social work.

Becky

Becky is a 60 year old African American female and was a participant in the Second Chance Program from the spring 2009 to the spring 2013 semesters. She completed her A.S. degree in the Social Sciences in 2013 and transferred to the four year university pursuing a degree in Women Studies. Before starting her pursuit of higher education, Becky suffered from substance abuse and physical and mental trauma for twenty three years. The abuse of drugs began as “just partying” with the crowd but was later determined that she was sexually abused repeatedly as a child. The last ten years of her addiction was a downward spiral of a constant return to drugs and alcohol, which led to committing acts of crimes such as prostitution and stealing that caused her to become incarcerated numerous times before being sentenced to a prison for approximately a year. Becky explained that the prison sentence would be her first and last due to the inhumane treatment while in prison. She explained: “They treat you like an animal, worse than animal and it causes a lot of the women to turn on the other women in prison” (Macale, 2014, p. 272). After her prison sentence she endured a few more months of returning to her lifestyle until she experienced a near death experience. This near death experience led her through a difficult path to becoming sober. However, with her own resiliency, perseverance, and hard work she was able to complete her Associates degree and went on to transfer to a four-year university. She graduated at the end of the fall 2015 semester with a Bachelor's degree in

Women Studies. She has aspirations of entering graduate school and would like to work with empowering women in overcoming gender and racial oppression to improve their lives.

Generative Themes

The research questions that structured the dialogues and the spontaneous unstructured questions which emerged during the dialogues spawned a number of generative themes and subthemes that constituted two broad categories: a) issues and challenges, and b) participation in the Second Chance Program. After discussing and analyzing the first dialogues with each of the participants, the generative themes were identified. The first category related to issues and challenges includes: (a) lives leading to incarceration, (b) systemic prison oppression, (c) internalized oppression, (d) gender oppression, and (e) post-release challenges and higher education: challenges and successes. The next category, participation in the SCP, includes (a) concerns about entering college, (b) SCP advising and counseling; (c) co-participants recommendations.

Through the dialogues, the participants spoke about their experiences with the Second Chance Program (SCP) and how it assisted in alleviating the pressures attending college as formerly incarcerated individuals. Also, all of the participants articulated how the SCP provided a welcoming community for formerly incarcerated people to participate in higher education and assist in completing their academic and life goals. They also placed emphasis on the encouragement, support, and assistance they received from the SCP counselor, the rest of the Extended Opportunity Programs & Services staff and faculty, and ancillary services to help them reach their academic goals.

Lives Leading to Incarceration

All six participants in this study had unique experiences which led them to a life of crime and subsequently incarceration. Four of the participants came from low-income, poverty stricken, backgrounds and all became addicted to or involved in drugs which exacerbated the increase in their crime activity. Although all the participants come from very different backgrounds, they shared their similar stories of lives that led to becoming incarcerated and cycling in and out of the justice system. All described how their lives leading up to incarceration began a downward spiral in destroying their lives.

Coming from working class and/or low-income family backgrounds, Tee, Prof C, Sam, and Becky described how their lives led to becoming involved with drugs, becoming addicted, and getting immersed in a life of crime. Tee, coming from a working class, African American family was raised in the Bayview district in San Francisco. She describes what may have triggered her beginning stages of using drugs by losing key members in her immediate family.

She also describes how she was able to maintain a strong appearance for a number of years while abusing drugs: “I always had a stable residence, and was able to keep a job here and there or whatever” (Macale, 2014, p. 33). Tee, in a matter of fact way explained what may have triggered her drug use:

What really took flight with my drug use... my grandmother... my father killed my mother when I was three years old. We moved after my mother's death. I went all the way to the eleventh grade, I always excelled and my grandma was my biggest cheerleader. Then when I turned 16, she was diagnosed with cancer. My grandmother was a person who had a third grade education, but she always advocated education. You would have never known that she only had a third grade education... She died within four months and I lost my will to live... Don't get me wrong, I was drinkin',

smokin' weed before she was diagnosed with cancer but I clearly remember tellin' her, 'I hope I die before you die.' I wasn't usin' the harder drugs yet. When she died all bets were off. (Macale, 2014, p. 33)

She describes how the drug use continued with older male figures due to the absence of a father from the young age of three years old:

I was a fourteen year old datin' a twenty five year old...STATUTORY RAPE! But were also in that lifestyle, not in terms of usin' drugs but sellin' drugs and hangin' out with a loose, wild crowd, partyin' all the time, you see somebody do it (drugs), then you try it. I'm not goin' to say average individual...they can try it and it doesn't affect them and then walk away... For me... The moment I tried it, it was on and poppin! (Macale, 2014, p.33)

Tee continues on to describe how her drinking and drug use intensified: "From that point it took off, I was already hangin' with the wrong crowd that was lacin' their weed with cocaine, snortin' cocaine, and you know eventually you being around it so much and you got these problems you going thru' and it's like you don't want to deal with these feelins' then ok (pauses)... you try some too... and it just stuck... (pauses) for twenty plus years" (Macale, 2014, p. 33).

Coming from a low-income, poverty stricken, first-generation college student background, Prof C described being accepted into a university after high school. His single mother did not speak English and Prof C often served in a parental role. In addition, Prof C lived in a very violent part of San Francisco. When Prof C was attending an inner-city middle school, he was considered one of the top three students in his class. Prof C was recruited to attend a prestigious private high school on a full scholarship and described the situation as a "double

edged sword” attending the ‘rich’ part of town to be with the “cream of the crop because now everybody I’m attending with is a top academically performing student” (Macale, 2014, p. 59). He goes on to describe how his self-esteem was affected with the convergence of different backgrounds of a low-income student than that of a student coming from a privileged background:

I think one of the things was knowin’ whether I could actually do the work. I was like can I really do this college work because I struggled so hard after the tenth grade. I wasn’t failing my classes but I guess one sometimes ponders more on the failures than you do your successes. I think my English class was probably the most difficult. In there they had us reading Shakespeare even though I enjoyed it and a lot of American literature and trying to find the analogies in which I think maybe the other students they related to American history because maybe that’s something that their parents talked about at home... (pauses) At my home we really didn’t talk about that per se. (Macale, 2014, p. 59)

Prof C described in coming from a low-income, first generation background a child may not have the full access and resources in succeeding in a private school system that is catered to more affluent families. However, Prof C was able to do well in the math and sciences obtaining passing grades but describes an experience that students don’t face in a public school setting:

Right after my second semester of my senior year I was kicked out of the private school for getting two Ds, so I had to finish up my last semester at Lincoln High School (Public high school in San Francisco). At Lincoln they put me in all the AP classes and I pretty much had all my requirements done. (Macale, 2014, p.60)

In attending a private school environment most of his peers were slated to attend colleges and universities all over the United States such as University of California, Berkeley or Ivy League Colleges. Prof C still had the same dreams and aspirations as his peers. He wanted to attend a university that accepted him but had the pressures of financing his education:

Well what it was is that I needed money, one, and I really wanted to do the whole college thing having got into the University of Arizona and kinda' fulfilling that path of all the work that I did up to that point by attending private schools, summer programs but still came up short in regards to my money. (Macale, 2014, p. 57).

The financial pressures of attending college were exacerbated when his lack of experience and knowledge of navigating college admissions was misdirected by a counselor that he was working with in which he had to pay for her services. Students applying for federal financial aid or scholarships do not need to pay for such services:

She had me spend a hundred dollars on this non-profit to see if they could come up with... their whole goal was to find financial aid and scholarships for me. That's what their mission was, to find a scholarship but they couldn't come up with anything... to find nothing. (Macale, 2014, p. 57)

That experience of being misled by an authoritative figure that should be trusted led to the desperate choice of obtaining college finances through other means:

So from there I had a friend who I didn't really grow up with, but befriended maybe in tenth grade. We used to hang out a lot at Pier 39, and he would come up to my high school and what not. He was actually more excited about me getting to the University of Arizona because he thought he was going to come visit. He said I'm going to come visit, and meet all the young ladies and that sort of thing. He had already become involved in

selling drugs and what not, and that's what a lot of the folks within our neighborhood started to do because it was very lucrative, you didn't really need any training, and even a fourteen-year-old could be out there doing it and making a thousand bucks a night or what not. (Macale, 2014, p. 57)

Prof C continued to express his ambivalent feelings on choosing the method to create funding for his college expenses. While being involved in the culture of selling drugs he also described how his conscience did not allow him to follow through on the violent actions necessary to sell drugs:

He suggested maybe this is the way you do it. You're five thousand dollars short. That seemed to be the plan, and in a sense I think once he became incarcerated, then a certain level of structure just left, because I was just kind of following him per se, but then I had to become on my own. Then I just kind of drifted into maybe not concentrating too much on money, because what I'd do would be at night I would do my stuff and then in the morning try to attend class. I didn't want to let that (academics) go. I guess I wasn't very good at it either, because there's a certain level of violence that you have to be ready to do, especially if the drug users don't come with the money they're supposed to have or if you have someone working for you and they run off with your money and... (pauses) I don't think I was really ready to do that much violence as I saw other folks do in this culture, and then I just got caught I guess. (Macale, 2014, p. 57-58)

Similarly to Prof C, Sam described the poverty and depressing nature that afflicted her growing up in her neighborhood. Sam grew up in public housing in inner-city San Francisco that was primarily African-American and found that she always had to prove herself due to her Caucasian background. Sam also described how growing up in a community and neighborhood

constantly filled with systemic trauma was a natural pipeline to the prison system or other morbid means: “You’re living in an area where it’s just like... (pauses) total geographic racism and we only have a corner store marketing candy, junk food, alcohol, and cigarettes; a McDonald’s and the witnessing all of the violence, the combination of all of that was a platform for disaster and it’s a road to prison or death” (Macale, 2014, p. 79). Sam also described a life growing up in a neighborhood in which crime was common place and acceptable. Sam continued:

I think it’s the desensitization to... uh knowing what’s right and what’s wrong and you know normalize. Selling drugs, we could talk about it in my house growin’ up like it wasn’t a criminal offense. I want a pair of Nike Cortezes so I’m going to sell crack and I’m going to get a pair and that was nothin’. I’m gonna go sell soap and make it look like crack and sell it in the Army Street projects so I can get fifty dollars and get a fifty shot to sell and sell that in Hunters Point (another housing project in San Francisco) to get some real crack to get to some tennis shoes and so that was normal. That’s how you were going to get a pair of shoes. (Macale, 2014, p. 78)

Sam continued to describe the standard practice of her peers in participating in criminal activity:

There wasn’t really wasn’t this... (pauses) moral compass, it was just you’re in this group you go follow the group. That’s just what you do and you talk about murders or talking about someone got shot. It didn’t cause fear. Someone got shot! Wow, my nephew got murdered last week and that’s just crazy to me now reflecting back on it. You become desensitized to the serious effects of the trauma and you know like the tragic things that you see, the sexual violence. All kinds of stuff that you just become desensitized to that

you lose that human connection... this is traumatic and there's just no sensitivity plus the other thing is that you're fighting to meet your basic needs. (Macale, 2014, p. 78)

Sam described how supporting her drug addiction to escape the pain of living her life led to continued criminal behavior which finally led to a prison conviction:

I spent years out as a junkie and a prostitute and pulling licks (crime such as stealing) with my partner. That was my life. My mindset was really to stay high. It was really not to face these social issues and not to have to look at myself and look at the whole machine. I didn't understand it. I didn't feel part of it. It really led me to me to become incarcerated for eight months. (Macale, 2014, p. 84)

Similar to Tee's description of the when she started using drugs and alcohol, Becky started to abuse substances by being influenced by those around her: "It (drug use) actually started with my relationships because the person that I was dating... that I was wit'... he drank and smoked marijuana" (Macale, 2014, p. 112). Again, in relation to Tee's situation Becky described how the substance abuse started to escalate:

You know, um, the area I'm in, they'd do a little cocaine, and - and at first I was like, I'm into the drinking only, you know, a little bit, um, and, uh, I smoked a little marijuana, but, you know, eventually it... cocaine kind of grew on me, so I tried it and I liked how it made me feel. It took me out of myself and how it made me feel superior. Um ... And so, it got to the point where it was just weekends, you know, for a long time. And then it was starting to, you know, happen on a Monday, and then it happened on a Tuesday, and it's each day, it just progressed to where it was every single day. (Macale, 2014, p.112)

Similar to Tee's situation, Becky described how she was able to maintain living her daily life abusing drugs until she transitioned to one in which it changed her behavior toward her family:

My mother would tell anybody this, I still went to work until I just couldn't work no more. Until I started smoking crack, that one did it! Um, it started affecting how I functioned with my children, um, how, um, my demeanor changed... And I became abusive to them, physically and emotionally. (Macale, 2014, p. 112)

Becky's mother observed that she was neglecting her children took action upon herself to ensure the safety of her grandchildren:

She stepped in. She said no more. What did it for her was she went to pick up my kids from school and my daughter had on a dress that was dirty, that had not been washed, that hair wasn't combed, that they were hungry. Fact is, CPS (Child Protective Services) did not get involved in the school. (Macale, 2014, p. 114)

She continued:

When they left to go to school, they never came back, and I was devastated, because I thought someone took my children. Um, I was looking for them, high and loaded, I was still looking for them, and then finally that night, um, my brother came over, and he served me with the papers. HOW DARE YOU! (Macale, 2014, p. 114)

Becky continued: "He said, you can't do this to the kids. They don't deserve this because you chose another life" (Macale, 2014, p. 114). Becky goes on to describe how the downward spiral of addiction really started to take affect:

I got mad with her for taking my children. How dare you do this to me? I went down really fast. I left San Francisco, tryin' to get away, saying if I go someplace else, it would

stop. So I moved up to Nevada, and almost died up there, got sick, got alcohol poisoning. (Macale, 2014, p. 114)

At this point, Becky already had been arrested several times in San Francisco and was fully immersed in the revolving door of incarceration. However, the time in prison had helped her get sober and get past the anger with her mom for taking her children: “That was the best thing she could have done for me, uh, in a sense she played a part in helping save my life and get myself back together” (Macale, 2014, p. 114). Similar to Tee and Sam, after becoming sober in the prison system she described how there were other underlying aspects of her life that caused additional trauma and exacerbated her habit of abusing drugs and alcohol:

I still had emotional issues of my own. See, I'm an incest survivor, so that contributed to my using because I did not want to feel what happened to me as a child coming up. All along, I used my mother taking my children away as an excuse to use the drugs and anything that would take me out of myself where I didn't have to feel those feeling and emotions and I did it all from crack to heroin to, to mushrooms and ecstasy. (Macale, 2014, p. 114)

During this time she never reconciled the abuse that she endured as a child and her addiction was a major factor in continuously cycling in and out of the criminal justice system. No matter what she did she continued to relapse and had been incarcerated numerous times:

I have been institutionalized a number of times already and when I went to the women's prison system, I was prostituting myself. When I got arrested there (Nevada) and told I would be serving significant time, then some glimmer of light went to me and I started thinking about my children. (Macale, 2014, p. 114-115)

Systemic Prison Oppression

A prevalent theme that occurred was that all the participants of this study alluded to their mistreatment in prison by some of the correctional officers. Through the dialogues with the participants, a constant distressing theme that occurred was how oppressive their prison experiences were before being released from prison. Although some of the participants acknowledged that they take responsibility for the crimes they committed, they described their anger, sadness, and frustration in response to the dehumanizing treatment they were confronted with while incarcerated. Furthermore, the participants described how the experience of being imprisoned actually encouraged more crime through the network with other prisoners and the abuse they experienced. The participants also critically analyzed that the system was structured in a way causing high rates of recidivism through its oppressive treatment of its prisoners.

Dehumanization. Johnny, Mert, Tee, and Becky reflected how their time being involved in the penal system created a dehumanizing environment for themselves and other inmates. With malicious intent or not, the participants described how authorities (correctional officers, parole and/or probation officers, and police officers) in the criminal justice system treated them or their families in an inhumane manner. They described how the dehumanizing treatment they received made them feel and how it may have manifested itself into self-destructive behavior and affected their self-esteem and their feelings about themselves as human beings.

Johnny, who did five different stints in federal prison over a ten year period, described where each time he got “violated” (did not meet the conditions of probation or parole) was really for “minor” infractions to place him back in the prison system to continue to “run the machine” and “make money for the prison system” (Macale, 2014, p.207). During his first release from prison, he described being allowed to stay at a brother’s house. He described a humiliating

situation in which police officers entered and ransacked the whole house: “the officers turned the place upside down ripping drawers out and knocking things over” (Macale, 2014, p. 207). This situation contributed to causing friction and conflict within his family: “Now my brother is mad at me and doesn’t want me to come back when I am released again” (Macale, 2014, p. 208). He indicated this violation of his parole was due to a “kitchen knife that was in the kitchen drawer” and with a monotonous response he said, “my crimes are not for violence” (Macale, 2014, p. 208).

Now angry and back in prison for a second stint he described the way prisoners are treated:

You are shackled like an animal and stripped down naked in a line with other prisoners. You are made to split your buttocks so they can probe your rectum and lift your genitals. Sometimes they will do the feeling for you. After you have touched your private parts you are now told to lift your tongue after you touch your butt. I take responsibility but it is very dehumanizing. (Macale, 2014, p. 210)

In Johnny’s prior stints in prison, he described that he mostly steered clear of prison guards so he could avoid being treated badly, however, he did witness a lot of dehumanizing behavior onto other inmates: “don’t get me wrong, some of the inmates might deserve the treatment because of how they become violent but something must have brought them there” (Macale, 2014, p. 222). In this statement he seemed to be ambivalent of the physical abuse the inmates were receiving. Johnny further described: “a lot of these guys (inmates) have mental health issues and they should not be getting their teeth knocked in... they should be getting treatment” (Macale, 2014, p. 221). The treatment from the prison guards seemed to perpetuate a system that creates more anger, emotional distress, and discontent within the inmate population

and he described it in the second dialogue as: “Treat them like animals so their belief system is to act like one” and to “continue doing it so the prisons stay filled” (Macale, 2014, p. 223).

For Mert, who did a long consecutive sentence, my questions triggered some intensely poignant descriptions of dehumanization in prison and the dialogue started with a long pause: “I’m not sure if I could articulate that in any real meaningful way” because just like any group of people “they (Correctional Officers) are some real good people just doing an honest job and some of them come with a whole lot of issues and take on this type of job because of those issues” (Macale, 2014, p. 147).

Without describing the elements of the treatment, Mert explained the long term effect this type of treatment can have on people:

Dehumanization wears on individuals over time and I was able to distance myself most of the time from it but often wondered if it were true. You know... (long pause with Mert’s eyes beginning to well with tears). There were definitely times when I had doubts that I was human. (Macale, 2014, p. 178)

Mert reflected on an analogy of prison dehumanization to a blind study of children who were told they were high level students and began to perform in such a manner as compared to children who were not told they were high level. The children who were told they were high level students began to perform in such a way. Mert critically reflected on this analogy:

If they are told they are worthless they will begin to start to lose worth and then they actually believe they are worthless and then they begin to act in ways of what’s expected of them. I have seen this play out in the prison system by severe violence, inmates doing crimes, abusing drugs to forget the pain of the dehumanization (Macale, 2014, p. 148).

Tee who had served numerous times in jail and prison expressed her disgust about prisoner treatment in the system: “The strip searches, I don’t mean to give too much information, you be on yo’ monthly and they all up in you (displays fingers thrusting like she’s probing)” (Macale, 2014, p. 170). She continued: “I wasn’t livin’ the classy lifestyle or nothing like that but the type of degradation while you’re incarcerated is at a whole nutha’ level!” (Macale, 2014, p. 49).

She continued:

You have men strip searchin’ women... you know... the men guards comin’ at you with total disrespect... don’t get me wrong, it wouldn’t be betta’ if a woman did it but you’re not even seen as a human being. ANIMALS GET TREATED BETTER! (Macale, 2014, p. 171).

According to Tee this type of treatment really leads to destroying a person’s emotional well-being. In the second dialogue, Tee critically reflected if the correctional officers should be treating a segment of the prison population in a degrading way:

Regardless of what crime I was participating in and I didn’t do no violence on nobody... (pauses) like I get it! Did the crime do the damn time! But somehow I don’t think the treatment (bad) of inmates is not working too well because there’s more crime goin’ on behind bars than it is on the streets (Macale, 2014, p. 171).

During the last part of the dialogue, Tee described some of prison guards’ inhumane treatment in the following way: “I’m gonna take any little self-esteem you have away from you. If there is any part of humanity that you have inside of you, we gonna make sure that we take that away from you too” (Macale, 2014, p. 171).

Becky, like Tee, was in and out of jail numerous times before she served her one and only prison sentence. The time spent in jail and prison was short but she described them as a long sentence even though she only did short stints: “It was a vicious cycle of me going in and out for about twenty three years” (Macale, 2014, p. 186). She described her first and only stint in prison and the utterly abhorrent treatment that she received upon her arrival:

When they chained all of us together and stripped us naked and checked into every hole we had...I was devastated. I was humiliated. I was shamed. I was angry. I was bitter. I was hurt (crying at this point) of how they was treatin’ us women. And when they took us over that threshold in that county (drawing a line with her finger) and once that door closed I knew my life was over. (Macale, 2014, p. 187)

She described how difficult it was to steer clear of trouble and the difficulty of acclimating to the system:

I stayed out of the way of gangs. I stayed out of the way of being initiated. I stayed out of the way of being a girlfriend. I had to learn how to defend myself on my own. I even got me a job cookin’ in the cafeteria for the guards and the correctional officers. And when I leave there I had to worry what was gonna happen when I get back. I had to get ok with taking a shower and they watchin’ us. The cracks was like this (showing the size of with her fingers) and they were above in the tier and they was lookin’ down from above us (Macale, 2014, p. 187)

Becky continued to express the difficulty of escaping the culture of dehumanization within the prison walls and the attempts at compromising her with threats of sexual assault and to narcoticize you so you can be controlled:

The guards could rape you in there. Sexual favors for cigarettes (voice cracking). You know they pay big money for prison, the dope come in and I really had to stay from that cause I knew once I got caught up in that it was a done deal. I don't know if I would even be there if I woulda' done that. They tried to force dope on me. They wanted me to take some in the kitchen. Once you refuse. They know you going to get it when you try to get back to your cell. (Macale, 2014, p. 187)

Becky described how she was coerced by the prison guards into trying to get another inmate in trouble. When she did not comply she described the consequences of not cooperating when she returned to her cell: "They cornered me and was sayin' why did you tell? That wasn't mine and I'm not going down for anybody in here" (Macale, 2014, p. 188). Nonchalantly, she described how the prison guards stood idly by and allowed for her to get raped: "I got raped. I was like here we go again someone taking up my body that someone else took when I was child. They didn't care... and they knew, now that's inhumane!" (Macale, 2014, p. 189)

She further described:

One thing I refused to do was sleep with the guards. You have no rights and they strip you of every fiber in your bone and that relates to dehumanization. I felt like shit and I like a ragdoll, I felt like a puppet! You can do whatever you want to me and you best not complain or say anything because if you do I treat you like the animal you are! You didn't care about gettin' in here so we gonna treat you like that. You don't have no rights. You forfeited them rights when you entered prison. (Macale, 2014, p.190)

Continuing Oppression. Through the process of the dialogues, Johnny, Prof C, Tee, and Sam described how the prison system assists in continuing to perpetuate an environment meant to create emotions of anger and resentment. This type of abusive environment leads to lowered

self-esteem and leads to behaviors that manifest negative outcomes. These distressing situations highlight the struggles that formerly incarcerated people are faced with when spending their time in jail or in prison.

During our second dialogue, Johnny described in detail how the criminal justice system is meant to keep people imprisoned even after they are released and how difficult and frustrating it is to stay out of the system: “It’s interesting that when your inside, there are the correctional officers and others (professionals) in there will never tell you or how to stay out of prison” (Macale, 2014, p. 201). Most of the time, he was met with situations that foster and encourage criminal behavior. Before reentering prison he acknowledged that he was already trying to prepare how he was going to improve upon doing his crimes better. Of course, he wanted out of this lifestyle but did not know how: “There is nothing inside prison that allows for people to stay out. You got the COs abusing people and it makes us want to do more bad things and keeps you in that prison mentality” (Macale, 2014, p. 198). Once inside, his connection with the other inmates was his source of knowledge to do more crime:

You network with people inside because it’s a revolving door and this mindset is normal. You get inside and there is nothing else to do. You can only read so much and if people tell you if they read all day they’re lying to you. A lot of prisoners are illiterate anyway. That’s when you meet people (other inmates). You’re going to start talking because people are always going to ask you how you got here. People are fascinated and you discuss your next plans of criminal activity. You literally start drawing up your plan and I remember I had a notepad because you calculate... how much money I want to make a week or a month. (Macale, 2014, p. 202)

Johnny described how ex-prisoners have limited opportunities to succeed and resort to conducting themselves in a negative way. This lack of opportunity for employment often leads to self-destructive behaviors:

We are creating jobs for ourselves because we don't have jobs anyway. We are not creating legitimate jobs and it's a criminal enterprise. When you're involved in something like this sometimes people get hurt. There is no hope for a lot of guys so we end up doing bad things. It doesn't make it right but sometimes the system makes it seem like we have no choice. (Macale, 2014, p. 202)

Prof C described how the first time of serving an extended sentence and after his first release led to behaviors that were deemed to be dangerous by the criminal justice system when he did not receive the assistance needed to adjust to life outside the prison: "I spent two and a half years in there. It was interesting, like even crossing the street bother me, scared me. I remembered not having any money in my pocket and her just leaving me and that created some aggression" and "it was difficult to adjust" (Macale, 2014, p. 51-52). Prof C continued: "There was no type of professional counselor or mental health person that would actually speak to me and see how I was doing" (Macale, 2014, p. 52). He described how he entered a program in which he was misdiagnosed which led him to think he was truly mentally ill:

This program put me in a facility and I couldn't get out from there. From there they kind of diagnosed me and that sort of thing. What's still funny now, but at that point they asked do you hear voices. To me, not having ever been exposed to folks that were in that condition, I thought they meant real conversations. Yeah, I hear voices and uh... from there the doctor end up prescribing whatever they use, one of them was Haldol, which is supposedly one of the strongest medicines that they don't prescribe anymore. From that,

just like taking any other drug, it just compounds even more. I lost a lot of weight.

Eventually, after two months of being in there, I was taken out and put in an out-patient type of facility. I was there for three months and eventually returned to home. (Macale, 2014, p. 53)

There was no mutual understanding between the doctor and Prof C of what conversations meant. This misdiagnosis led to being prescribed medications that he should not have been on and it led to behaviors that justified the criminal justice system to put him back in prison: “Once I got on the medication, my parole officer started to get concerned and was ready to pull me back into the system for just the safety of my mom or whatever. I wasn’t being violent or anything. I was just zoned out kind of a thing and showing aggression” (Macale, 2014, p. 51). He goes on to describe the behavior adjustment between prison and life on the outside: “I just remember one instructor when I did something incorrectly, he just scolded me for like ten minutes and really just discouraged me. This might cause aggression which will lead to going back (to jail) or not even come back” (Macale, 2014, p. 51). Prof C continued: “Even being at the park, playing basketball and having some kid take the ball and then starting to think okay, if I’m inside I’m supposed to rush this guy immediately, but here I can’t and so all these mini-conflicts and not knowing how to really deal and it’s discouraging because all the abuse inside is built up and I may end up violent” (Macale, 2014, p. 51).

During our second dialogue, Tee acknowledged the cruel treatment in prison that impacts individuals and follows them when they are released from prison. She also described how she understands and acknowledges that prison is not supposed to provide a pleasant atmosphere. She adamantly described, “I get it...do the crime... do the GODDAMN time!” However, she also acknowledged how the constant abusive oppression impacts prisoner behavior:

You become socialized to the abuse and it's no different from uh a small child that you constantly telling him your bad... YOUR BAD... Instead of telling him I love you, I just don't like the behavior you're exhibiting. If you tell someone so many times that this is who they are they are gonna start internalizing and that's who they are going to become. (Macale, 2014, p. 169-170)

Tee commented on how the experience inside prison perhaps led her to behaviors that were not intentional: "I didn't realize how the inhumane treatment affected my behavior cause they was telling me I'm bad... then I acted accordingly...and that's not who I am (Macale, 2014, p. 170). Tee continued, "I am maintainin' the oppression, abuse me, I'm gonna abuse others, and be back where I came from (prison) (Macale, 2014, p.170)."

Sam critically analyzed how formerly incarcerated individuals' are afflicted by oppression due to being born into poverty and how the trauma of oppression continues in the prison system. Sam described how negative behaviors can manifest themselves in negative ways due to the oppression of living in such an environment:

Even if you have some positivity goin' on like school, the pressure can bring up stuff for some Second Chance students because a lot of them grew up being shamed because of the poor community where they came from. Then your hopeless cause there's no opportunities. Some end up on drugs. Doin' bad things like stealin' or sellin' themselves. When you are thrown in jail or prison you are treated less than human. You come back out to the same hopeless community and continue from where you left off. You get conditioned and you feel like even at your best your self-esteem can get compromised or you feel... Especially now I'm still in poverty so it still can consume you and you can get frustrated. (Macale, 2014, p.232-233)

Sam also described oppression as “prison for the consciousness” that consumes many communities of color and people living in poverty and how it has continued to “shackle and wrap its tentacles around poor people and won’t let go” (Macale, 2014, p.231). Sam continued by explaining how marginalized individuals are consumed by the oppressive nature of prison:

You have someone tryin’ who does time for doin’ drugs. Then in prison your treated like a piece of shit. Released to nuthin’... no hope... what’s next? Your gonna go back to what you know. I know I can prostitute myself. I know I can self-medicate to get away from the pain. I know... I know... IT’S A VICIOUS CYCLE! It’s the prison mentality. (Macale, 2014, p. 232)

Systemic Recidivism

Johnny, Mert, and Tee continued describing how the prison system is intentional in setting up a revolving door for individuals involved in the justice system also known as recidivism. Mert and Tee continue to explain how the dehumanizing treatment of people in prison contributes to recidivism.

In the second dialogues, while discussing the perpetuation of the prison industrial complex, Johnny immediately mentioned, “Correct! Exactly! Because inside you are networking with who... (pauses) criminals! They get infatuated with the crime you did and then when we come home we have jobs for each other because no one else is hiring us.” (Macale, 2014, p. 207)

Johnny critically reflected how the system is designed to generate money and the elements of its racism:

You have a prison system that is mad at certain part of the population. When I say mad they (policy makers and law enforcement) could care less about the majority of us (black

and brown people) because we go back for the petty things. That's why you heard they are trying to change the three strikes law. Somebody stole a candy bar because he's homeless and hungry, he got 25 to life... There is plenty of jobs for the prison industry because the more people you have in prison the more jobs your gonna have for a community that lives off the prison. California has another problem because they have to reduce crowded prisons but the prison union has a problem with that because its gonna mess with their income and it's a WAR ON THE POOR! (Macale, 2014, p. 208)

Johnny further critically reflects on a prison system that contributes to mass incarceration:

You have the private prison system. You have rural towns and cities that are mostly white and they are prison towns and those are all the people associated and work with the prison... Often when you live in a prison, they have their own zip code and the town benefits from the prison population because of the numbers. Susanville is good example, it is away from the freeway so if some of us are lucky to be visited by family they have to go out of their way to spend money. Sometimes they have to stay in the hotel. Someone is paying for the food for the system. Someone is dry cleaning the CO's uniforms. The list of ways to make money from the prison system goes on. (Macale, 2014, p. 208-209)

While reflecting on the "business of prison", Johnny further deepened his description of how prison jobs were lost by shipping them overseas: "It's a big money thing and we were making mailboxes in the Federal prison, but now we don't have those jobs at making fifty cents an hour because they shipped those jobs to prisons outside of America" (Macale, 2014, p. 209). He ends this part of the dialogue with "that is modern day slavery" where "it is justified and

within the law” to “incarcerate and enslave mass numbers of black and brown people” (Macale, 2014, p. 209).

In our second dialogue and similar to Johnny, Mert succinctly described how the communities directly and indirectly benefit from the business prison brings to them. Mert described how some of the ways that perpetuate recidivism do not make sense and that there are many factors that contribute to it:

There are some small places, like Pelican Bay, and Solidad. The town economically survives off the prison. It's the guards and their families who live there and spend money in the town. People come to visit the prisoners and stay in the hotels or motels. The economic survival of the town is dependent upon the prisons. There's a lot of this kind of inertia and mindlessness that makes the system self-perpetuating. Many years ago, about 30 years ago or maybe more, I don't remember just when it was, they instituted a change in good time credits. It was a little more than 30 years ago, because I believe it was when they went from indeterminate sentencing to having most sentences determinate. (Macale, 2014, p. 149)

As we discussed the many ways that contribute to recidivism, Mert described the impacts of reincarceration has on individuals and communities of color:

People of color, they're the bread and butter for the prison system. That's a self-perpetuating thing. In California, they try to keep the prisons more or less racially balanced, because it keeps down violence and stuff. Oddly enough, a certain amount of balance makes it stable. Again, it's self-perpetuating. Lock up enough people of color and it destabilizes the communities. Lock up enough of the healthy young men, adults from 20 to 40 or whatever... You lock up a lot of them, that destabilizes families. It increases

poverty, which increases crime, and gives them an excuse to lock up more of them.
(Macale, 2014, p. 150-151)

Mert transitioned the topic of recidivism and solemnly described its causes by how dehumanization affects many prisoners and how the topic is rarely discussed: “Although there was prison staff that were decent human beings there were some correctional officers that made many inmates feel less than human.” The impact of making prisoners feel less than human on a daily basis sometimes may have led or contributed to formerly incarcerated individuals to perpetuate crimes once they are released from prison. Mert sadly expressed: “that was what they were there for...they grew up maybe in an abusive family and had a chip on their shoulder and this was the job that fit them so they can abuse others.” (Macale, 2014, p. 149). Mert further summarized:

I think that’s one of the reasons that leads to the terrible recidivism (rate) because too many prisoners are told they are nothing but robbers or nothing but rapists then they get beat on physically and mentally everyday...Then they start to live up to that belief. The emotional part of it is rarely discussed in society. (Macale, 2014, p. 152)

In our second dialogue and similar to Johnny and Mert, Tee critically reflected on how the reduction of services for formerly incarcerated individuals is one element that leads to recidivism: “I’m well aware that a lot of the services that were provided specifically for the Second Chance program have been cut. Not only that, there’s not that many Second Chance programs. Two in the state maybe and that means less people get help they need” (Macale, 2014, p.152). Tee described how for individuals in the community, continued oppression of people limits options for them and describes a value that society puts on a certain segment of the population:

For me that's like a travesty because like I said before in my earlier transcript is when people are incarcerated, like everybody goes through life issues. But for people who are formerly incarcerated and getting out and trying to get back to school, they've got more issues to deal with because those issues that took you to jail, the issues that manifested while in jail don't just leave because they're now out of jail. Services being cut to those type of programs when there's not even that many of them makes a statement, a statement that you're not worth it. (Macale, 2014, p. 152-153)

Tee continued by discussing how the marginalized groups who have services cut to them will manage their survival in society through several other means.

People who are formerly incarcerated are what you would consider an oppressed population. No secrets about that. Most certainly by cutting those services or not having support services available to help formerly incarcerated individuals reintegrate back into society, certainly somebody is benefiting from that, from keeping those individuals oppressed. One thing about it, people are going to survive. They're going to do what they're going to do to survive whether it's legal or illegal. Most times they try to do what's right but when options run out, it's illegal and right back to jail you go! (Macale, 2014, p. 153)

In addition, Tee critically reflected how a certain segment of the population that holds power can continue to accomplish and reinforce and maintain the cycle of recidivism:

When we talk about trying to reintegrate them back into society, why not give them the services they need so they can become a productive member of society? That goes back to what I said, that certainly somebody is profiting from keepin' those individuals oppressed so why should we offer those services? Now you're threatening our power.

Now you're threatening our position because knowledge is power. Just to be real about it, that would mean one more me overcoming and claiming my rightful place in society. We can't have that because now you're threatening. You're supposed to just stay stuck where you're at. Now when the Second Chance program turns that potential student away... what you think she gonna do? Survive. Most likely illegally. (Macale, 2014, p. 153)

The Addictively Oppressed

Becky and Sam confronted years of addiction which involved many forms of oppression such as racism, institutionalized structures, and power in relationships. They discussed how the issues of addiction coincided with many forms of oppression in their daily living and how it had an impact in making sound decisions. They also all described how addiction was a form of oppressive behavior. They discussed the issues of addiction and its lasting effects in reintegrating into society and pursuing higher education.

Becky. In our dialogues, Becky initially discussed her involvement with drugs and alcohol was due to weekend partying and her dating relationships involved people who “drank and smoked marijuana” (Macale, 2014 p.114). However, later in the dialogues she described the reoccurring painful experiences from her youth that really triggered her addiction. Becky reflected how the addiction started to occur daily and how it overtook her life:

Every now and then they'd do a little cocaine. At first I was into drinkin', and smokin a little marijuana. Eventually the cocaine kind of grew on me so I tried it and I like how it took me out of myself and it made me feel superior and how it made me feel like I don't have a care in the world. It got to the point to where it was just weekends for a long time and then it was starting to happen on Monday and then it happened on a Tuesday and each day just progressed to where it was every single day. (Macale, 2014, p. 210)

After further reflection, she mentioned that she never dealt with “issues from when she was younger” and it was really something else that “I was runnin’ from” (Macale, 2014, p. 211). In a nonchalant description, Becky explained what really led to the addiction and how many drugs she used to get as far away from it as possible:

I had a whole lot of issues of my own. I’m an incest survivor so that contributed to my using because I did not want to feel what happened to me as a child coming up.

ANYTHING... that would take me out of myself where I didn’t have to feel those feelings and emotions I did, I used, I drank, I smoked. I did it all from crack to heroin to mushrooms, ecstasy. You name it I did it all. That’s how much I wanted to get away from feeling filthy and disgusted with my situation growin’ up. (Macale, 2014, p. 114)

Becky continued by describing how addiction was really a way to “escape” the trauma a “little girl feels” when victimized by rape (Macale, 2014, p. 114). She described the vulnerability of this situation and how it manifested in behaviors that does not describe her true identity. She critically described how her behaviors resulted in how she treated herself:

To get that high again, you do things that is not your being. I mean I was stealin’, selling drugs. I was prostituting myself. That is a form of self-hate. I got arrested for all those things. I was in this whirlpool. I didn’t know how to escape! This is not me! This is how bad the little girl wanted to get away from all that pain. It was really oppressive. (Macale, 2014, p. 114)

Becky also described how the addiction affects gender in terms of the types of crimes committed. She critically reflected how one of the crimes is gender specific and creates more harm in its after affects.

When you look at crime people don't look at what's behind it. They only look at the crime you did. For addicted men, they do things like steal, sell drugs. For women, we can prostitute. We can steal and sell drugs. It's not common for men to sell themselves. It's more common in women. When you give away yourself like that it takes from yourself. It's painful to your soul. When I was prostituting I was raped repeatedly. That power that someone else has over you...what's really behind the behavior? (Macale, 2014, p.177)

For Becky, she was oppressed by the addiction that is reflected by past trauma and power relationships that stem from prostitution. For Sam, the oppression from addiction stemmed from a community deep rooted in poverty, racism, and a societal structure that served the intention to perpetuate this type of system.

Sam. As a young adolescent and being the minority living in a predominately African American community in poverty, Sam found herself many vulnerable situations that would eventually lead her to a life of addiction and manifesting itself in many forms of oppression. At that time, she had many traumatizing experiences which couldn't even "be told in a story in Hollywood" (Macale, 2014, p.77). Sam recounted the experiences of her childhood, and how it eventually led to her life in addiction:

I think, broken home, my father was a drug dealer, lived in the projects um you know, I grew up in a real African-American neighborhood... (pauses) so it was like this sorta' fittin' in and having to prove yourself. Gangs are involved in my family. I experienced a lot of murder, witnessing a murder, suicide and my parents being drug addicts so basically the first five years of my life were basically spent in stress. (Macale, 2014, p. 77)

Sam described how being a witness of daily crime blurred the morality of right and wrong as she poignantly explained: “there wasn’t really a moral compass to go by” (Macale, 2014, p. 78). Sam further reflected how her surrounding community and the experience of trauma led to eventually getting addicted to drugs:

It was just you’re in this group (pauses) you definitely... you go follow the group. You talk about murders or talking about someone got shot. It didn’t cause fear. It’s just someone got shot. You become desensitized to the serious effects of the trauma and you know like the tragic things that you see, the sexual violence. All kinds of stuff that you just become desensitized and this is traumatic and there’s just no sensitivity plus the other thing is that you’re fighting to meet your basic needs. That type of pain will lead you to become addicted. (Macale, 2014, p. 78-79)

During our second dialogue, Sam critically reflected on the plight of her living environment and the people that lived in that community:

The living through all the trauma. At the same time, you’re hungry, you’re living in an area where it’s just like there is total geographic racism! We only have a corner store that markets alcohol and cigarettes and McDonald’s. Is that healthy? You’re eatin’ the bad food, getting bad information, the holistic combination is a platform for disaster and it’s a road to prison, it’s a pipeline straight there. (Macale, 2014, p. 277)

Furthermore, Sam critically analyzed how increasing one’s socio-economic status creates a “crabs in barrel” mentality and further keeps oppresses members within the community (Macale, 2014, p. 278):

There’s really the exceptions that make it out da’ hood but the other part is that in that environment, we are all happy with each other as long as we’re in the same place but

once you see someone tryin' to succeed, it goes deeper than that... (pauses) It then starts to create hate towards the person that's doin' better than us. It goes back to the very basis of this country of slavery, dividing, and it perpetuates itself. You feel like you're on the same team and were here to survive but really survival of the fittest and desensitize yourself to any of kind of sensitivity towards trauma. Instead you were the victim and then you become the predator and it repeats itself. How could that not lead people to addiction? (Macale, 2014, p. 79)

In finding her path to sobriety, Sam was able to process and explain how she was able to break the "mental shackles" of the thought process of her environment:

My thinking was basically the opposite of what it is today. I continued the oppression. I kept myself oppressed. I was ashamed, and social workers are good for making you ashamed that you're on welfare. I kept myself in that mode. That's what my thinking was, before coming to community college and being incarcerated for eight months. Before that I spent years out as a junkie and prostitutin' and pullin' licks (stealing) with my partner... What was my mindset? It was really to stay high. It was really not to face these social issues and not have to look at myself and not to have to look at the whole machine (society). (Macale, 2014, p. 83)

Sam continued:

I can say that my steps in community college, was the process of breaking down those old thoughts of oppression and developing new ones. This is the foundation. Before college started, this is what really helped me to really test everything that I was thinking from the get go and really look at it and say, what purpose is this oppression serving? How did it affect the lives of all of us? (Macale, 2014, p. 83-84)

Sam provided with keen insight, how the Second Chance program provided the essential support she needed to get started at the community college as a unique student coming from an extreme poverty and suffering from addiction:

I think the reason why that was so important was because I absolutely came in as a Second Chance student. Coming from the prison system, you're completely traumatized and you've been really abused. You're coming into a situation ... We don't trust anybody. When someone welcomes you without judgment and can TRULY empathize... That means a whole lot! (Macale, 2014, p.86)

Post Release and Higher Education: Challenges and Successes

In the previous sections, the dialogues with all of the participants confirmed the myriad of challenges and issues that they faced and are prevalent with many formerly incarcerated individuals who are attempting to enter college. When formerly incarcerated individuals are released from jail or prison it is well documented that few options are available for success. However, despite all of the barriers they faced they have managed to discover the opportunity to find their place in society through higher education by way of the community college system. The participants described how being underprepared to re-enter into society after being released from prison, and the obstacles they were confronted with at the beginning phases of entering college. They described how their immediate status of being low-income and living in abject poverty upon being released from prison created and exacerbated external barriers such as access to affordable housing and employment and how their issues of low self-esteem and self-worth consumed and compromised their emotional well-being.

Initial experiences with college. Due to the stigma that all of the participants were faced with being labeled an ex-prisoner and formerly incarcerated, they discussed their initial

experiences of feeling anxious and out of place when they entered into higher education. They also discussed the difficulty of adjusting to student life especially coming from the structured environment of the prison system and how their low-income socio-economic status was a constant barrier in the process of returning to college. However, through their own strategies of coping and surviving after being released from prison along with persisting, working hard, and receiving support from the Second Chance program they all discovered success in pursuing their academic endeavors.

In making a commitment to return to pursue higher education, Johnny found it very difficult emotionally when he first enrolled in college. He described his feelings of not deserving the right of going to college because of his past transgressions and how it consumed his consciousness as he tried to make the transition into college:

I felt out of place even though I knew people did not know my background. It was weird... I felt guilty, because in the beginning (in his youth), for example, you haven't taken education serious and now that the opportunity is there for you, you walk around and now you're on campus thinking you have freedoms. You always have, in the back of your mind, that you have been incarcerated. That ends up being kind of a burden or you feel kind of guilty about it. Those are things that can keep you away, and you think how hard it is to get back in society. Here I am excited to go back to school and in the end my mind is still imprisoned. I feel that I don't deserve to be here (Macale, 2014, p.1)

Due to the abusive nature of the prison system, Johnny commented how he learned not to be an advocate for himself in seeking the necessary resources to assist him as he made the transition back into society. He also describes how he consciously avoided situations that might involve conflict:

It's not that your tryin' to have people pamper you or guide you through everything, but just the fact that you have to go and do things in public. If you have been incarcerated for an extended time, it makes you kind of ... You feel isolated, just by asking questions.

Because you don't like to hear the word no or people being rude to you, you're trying to avoid those situations, this way you often don't ask questions and try to do what you can (on your own). This is how it was in prison. If it works it, it works, if not... (pauses) that's why I think a lot of Second Chance students leave. Now that I think of it, that's why a lot of students drop out. (Macale, 2014, p. 3)

Johnny then described how after revolving in and out of the prison system a few times, he was finally able to connect with student support services specifically designed for formerly incarcerated students such as the Second Chance program to successfully reintegrate into society. He describes how he realized that the prison system did not avail the services in his previous stints in prison that were necessary to successfully help him reintegrate:

When I was incarcerated over and over, I was getting the same result. Now that I think of it I was not getting referred to services at that time. There was... no help. The last time I was in prison I did get a flyer from the university about going back to school and support for people like me. They changed the admissions rules when I got out and referred me to the community college close by. Good thing for people like me they had the Second Chance Program. (Macale, 2014, p. 10)

The assistance that Johnny was now receiving was a catalyst in beginning to improve his life by pursuing and obtaining his education. Johnny explained the excitement of starting the process in his journey of his education and utilizing the resources now available to him:

Whatever it's going to cost me, I will get my education. As soon as I got my GED in Federal Prison, I came home, I contacted City. I went straight to Second Chance. I didn't feel like I would be isolated. The two individuals at the Second Chance, including the counselor that I had really ... They didn't judge me. They bend over backwards to help me out. I didn't feel that isolation anymore, and that made it a lot easier for me to actually continue. I started to feel free! (Macale, 2014, p. 2-3)

Mert explained how formerly incarcerated individuals would cope with the challenges of returning to college would vary. Both Mert and Prof C suffered with their mental health while adjusting to reintegrating into society and attending college. They both also describe the challenges of obtaining steady employment and struggling with their socio-economic status of living in poverty.

For Mert, who served more than a twenty year sentence, the adjustment to the outside world and returning to college was uncomfortable due to the differences of the prison and the college environment. Mert described the differences between the two environments through his experience:

Coming out of prison, I was in a structured environment. Even education programs in prison, they're much more structured. It's just such a radically different environment, just the discipline of getting places on time and finding time to be a student along with trying to survive. Earning a living and taking care of bills. This is stuff were not used to dealing with, especially depending on how long a person has been in prison. I have been in there for a while so the adjustment time for me took a while. (Macale, 2014, p.11)

Mert continued to describe the stressful time adjusting after release and suffering from his unstable mental health:

You make your adjustments right away or you don't survive. There's an adjustment period that last a couple of years probably before you really get settled. Coming out took longer because I'm older. Not everybody has been incarcerated as long as I was, that I think that has an effect on it. I have the classic symptoms of PTSD coming out of prison. The anxiety attacks, depression, loneliness and all of those things. (Macale, 2014, p. 11-12)

Mert continued:

It took probably a year before I started having anxiety attacks. I was under a new kind of stress, but I was under stress constantly for the first year, just trying to figure out how to survive. It was only after I about a year worth of adjustments where I was starting to get relaxed enough then I was suffering from post-stress, you know! (Macale, 2014, p. 12)

Mert continued to explain other aspects of challenges that affect formerly incarcerated people when they return to college such as obtaining employment: "Even though a full-time job has some structure, most formerly incarcerated people do not have that option where employers are standing in line to hire ex-cons" (Macale, 2014, p.11). He explained the amount of money formerly incarcerated individuals get when they are released from prison: "Once their sentence is served, they come out of prison with their \$200 gate money and that's it which explains all the recidivism" (Macale, 2014, p. 13). Despite all of the challenges, Mert explained how college would provide the structure similar to what prison brought and find the proper adjustment needed to:

Even while I was in prison I recognized that having some kind of a structure, like a full-time job, which was unlikely or going to school or something like that would be beneficial that would provide a framework that I can build the rest of life around, and it's

done that. It's given some structure to my day, my week. Even though my schedule varies from semester to semester, I've got certain days I've got to be at school at a certain time. College has been my way to cope and it's been great! (Macale, 2014, p. 15)

Like the other participants, Tee's initial experiences with higher education after being released from prison was an emotional struggle. Tee explained the negative self-worth formerly incarcerated individuals feel when they are released from prison and trying to positively reintegrate back into society: "When you tryin' to do somethin' like go back to school or find a job what you're left with after incarceration is low self-esteem, I now have a record and it's gonna affect the outcomes of those things" (Macale, 2014, p. 29). Tee recalled how formerly incarcerated students have difficulty in navigating the educational system: "Since most formerly incarcerated people don't have consistent education growin' up many do not know how to use the computer, not knowin' how to register for classes, and not know what type of financial aid you qualify for" (Macale, 2014, p. 29). Tee continued to explain her own experience of the challenges of entering higher education:

If you've been incarcerated, it's because you've been livin' a lifestyle that is not compatible with education. Now, you're left behind. I'm left behind in terms of how to use a computer and it's constantly changin'. When I came back to school, of course I knew what the internet was but it was like okay, what's a flash drive, how I do this short cut again, can I type any faster. Knowing how to be able to write an effective resume. Again you have these feelins', do I belong here? (Macale, 2014, p. 30)

Tee continued:

At the beginning, I always had feelins' like, do I really belong here? Not having any type of self-confidence in yourself. Most of the formerly incarcerated individuals that I came

across in the Second Chance Program are older people. I'm not sayin' there's no young people but you're dealin' with the age factor... it's mostly eighteen, nineteen year olds straight outta high school, now I ask myself again, do I belong here? (Macale, 2014, p. 31)

Tee critically reflected how difficult the transition is in terms of reintegrating back into society and the negative feelings that consumed her thoughts even though she was in a positive environment:

Just because you're in college and not incarcerated anymore does not mean that you're not livin' with the effects that incarceration has. I had an interview with someone in class and they asked me what was the one thing that I remember from being incarcerated and the one thing that I remember was bein' treated less than a human, just being devalued. It's in your mind and affects you even though you're going to school. We put the stigma on ourselves bein' formerly incarcerated individuals who are tryin' to get back into society. Some people may not be thinkin' it but we are. Not only do you have your own issues, you also have the issues that society places upon you long after you've been incarcerated. (Macale, 2014, p. 31)

Despite the myriad of challenges that affected her emotionally, she overcame that with the thought of returning to college and support that she would receive: "What I learned about myself, I love a challenge and college was that" (Macale, 2014, p. 29). Tee also overcame the negative feelings of returning to college fairly quickly: "Although I came in with this feelin' of how I was goin' to fit in, that was squashed right away and I forgave myself" (Macale, 2014, p. 39).

Tee continued to explain her experience of college and how she wanted to be treated as a regular student just like everybody else:

Never once did I feel excluded because all I felt when I returned to college was nuthin' but love, support, and encouragement. I've never used my past as a means of wanting people to feel sorry for me, to cut me a break, or to treat me any differently within the classroom because I've been through this traumatic past that you (instructors) got let me miss an assignment. I have received and continue to receive and have made some great connections and my college experiences have been positive from my classmates, counselors and professors and for that helped my success! (Macale, 2014, p. 38-39)

After her last stint of incarceration, and committing to returning to college, Sam had an awareness of the challenges she would face attending college because of her background: "I'm definitely not a traditional student and have a history of extreme trauma" (Macale, 2014, p. 76). She recalled her feelings of being inferior to the rest of her classmates: "When I was first here and when I was communicatin', the language that I use could be a little bit... I don't want to say subpar to a college student but maybe sometimes I misused a word here and there" (Macale, 2014, p. 77). She continued to describe the way she considered herself below the social class status of other students: "I was comparin' myself to students who had a core family unit and who just had different experiences in society so they developed differently... their proper language and it created this inferiority thinking in me" (Macale, 2014, p. 77).

Sam critically reflected the challenges of her place in society before returning to pursue higher education: "I felt trapped in a certain class or place in society" (Macale, 2014, p. 83). She continued to describe how her negative thought process continued to perpetuate the cycle of maintaining her current social status: "I did not think that education was the ticket or it could

some kind of life changer and that is probably why I continued on a self-destructive path” (Macale, 2014, p. 83). Sam described how those thoughts still consumed her during her initial experiences in college:

I kept myself oppressed. I was ashamed of the welfare and what others thought and I kept myself in that mode. I didn't understand and that was my thoughts when I first started City. I didn't realize my thinking was basically the opposite of what it is today. (Macale, 2014, pp. 83-84)

Sam described other initial challenges of attending college:

The other challenge was really, again, findin' a place to have social inclusion because I also have a background in substance abuse. Isolation and counter-culture, that's what I was all about. Whatever the things in my life that led me to that, I just never really looked at. Now I had to. It was a challenge at first to find my place in college or to see where it is that I be able to feel safe. (Macale, 2014, p. 77-78)

Sam progressed through her education at the community college, completed and matriculated to the four-year university. She reflected at her time at CCSF, and the impact that it had on her development as a student. She described the many elements that allowed her to become a successful college student:

I love City College and I wish I could have completed my bachelor's degree here also, seriously. I say that because when I look around, I see myself. I don't see a specific group of people and it is a melding of everybody. There's a place for everyone at City College, it's so eclectic and it seems like everyone matters. I think that's how I became so successful here. I started out so torn and battered and grew to be someone successful. I love that the tuition was affordable and I love professors. (Macale, 2014, p. 86)

Sam continued:

To this day, they touch me in such a way where it's like you inspired me for the rest of my life. What you gave me, I have forever. I just think the foundation of my education really was at City. It taught how to be a student. It taught me how to just really allow myself to be a student because there's not just one way to become a student. The professors we're definitely more supportive than at the four-year. (Macale, 2014, p.86)

Due to the vast support system at CCSF, Sam was able to point out the negative outcome that would have resulted if she had initially attended the four-year university:

I'm glad I got that extra support from Second Chance and built myself as a student at City cause it helped me to succeed at the university. There is definitely not that type of support at the university I attended. If I had started at the university, I definitely would have dropped and not finished my education. (Macale, 2014, p.86)

Becky, like Sam commented on her initial challenges and experiences in starting college as a formerly incarcerated individual: "I never thought that I would be able to attend City College of San Francisco because I had these strikes against me" (Macale, 2014, p. 103). Becky described the mental obstacle of initiating the college admissions application process: "I had a hard time even starting the application to get into school because I didn't even know where to start and I didn't even know if I was eligible or not because you see an ex-felon, people be like... umm, I don't know if we should accept her or it was just in my mind" (Macale, 2014, p. 103).

Becky continued to explain with the self-defeating thoughts she experienced when she started college:

I had this feelin' of how can I get into this school without havin' this stigma hangin' over me, wondering if I'm going to be found out. I was workin' so I initially didn't qualify,

but I had it in my head that I did not qualify because I had this feelin' that felon was written on my forehead. (Macale, 2014, p. 104)

Becky continued:

I still had that fear of not succeedin'. I still had that fear of would I ever make it. How can I get my records expunged? How can I get all of these labels off of me and become a successful person? I paid for my college for two semesters and took some time off then finally one day I was like okay I'm going to try it again. (Macale, 2014, p. 104)

Now that Becky was enrolled at college, she had a newfound understanding of the potential of what a college education could bring to the quality of her life. She still was still experiencing self-esteem issues regarding her academic ability but also described the happiness she felt that the college experience brought to her:

Even though I was feeling bad I was gonna keep going and I started support. I got financial aid and I petitioned for EOPS and that's when I found out about the Second Chance Program and he (counselor) explained what Second Chance would offer me. I was like okay, all right I was now getting the help I needed and there is others comin' from my same background. I'm going to take a couple classes, see if I like it. I knew there was a better way for me because then I started likin' it and I was just like I want to learn more. It made me want to keep coming back to school. (Macale, 2014, p. 104)

While trying to maintain her own needs she discovered the difficulty of persisting through her education despite getting the extra assistance from the several student support services. Becky explained her ambivalent feelings of needing to drop out of college to meet her needs or stay because how it boosted her self-esteem:

Even though I had some type support, you still dealin' with the other issues. The homelessness... the domestic violence history... reunification with your family. All of these were my challenges. The substance abuse. I was dealin' with the substance abuse but still had to maintain it. Between the schoolin' and bein' homeless and the abuse, I was findin' it difficult to stay afloat and go to school. I know that I should get my immediate needs met before goin' to school but goin' just made me feel good so I stayed. (Macale, 2014, p. 105)

All of the participants began their educational journey at the community college level with negative feelings of self-worth, questions about their ability in college and many other struggles. However, with their own immense resiliency, motivation and with the support of the Second Chance Program the participants persevered through her community college education and were able to reach their academic goals.

Participation in the Second Chance Program

The mission of the Second Chance Program is to support formerly incarcerated students in achieving their academic goals at City College of San Francisco (CCSF). With the understanding that the majority of formerly incarcerated students entering CCSF are low-income, test below college level math and English, and are underrepresented students, the Second Chance Program provided extensive student support services to support the completion of their educational goals (i.e. certificate, Associate's degree, and/or transfer to a four-year university). After verification and acceptance into the Second Chance Program, the participants met with a trained counselor at a minimum three times per semester, obtained priority registration, and received additional assistance in securing the majority of the books and materials for their registered courses to meet their academic goals.

In addition, the Second Chance Program provided other ancillary services as well such as free tutoring, free computer lab usage, occasional food assistance and a course dedicated to support the first year experience at CCSF. All of the services provided by the Second Chance Program played an important role in providing the comprehensive assistance necessary to support these students reach their academic goals at CCSF.

As these students began their journeys to improve their lives at the community college, they chose to utilize the services of the Second Chance Program to help in the transition to CCSF and support them in reaching their academic goals. While the participants endured a myriad of challenges and issues while attending CCSF, the Second Chance Program provided the bridge and support to guide them through completing their academic goals.

Second Chance Program Advising and Counseling

The participants described their positive experiences and critically reflected about the exemplary service they received from the SCP advising and counseling. The advising and counseling was a mandatory responsibility of the participants as they needed to meet with the SCP counselor a minimum of three times per semester to maintain their status in the program. It served two main purposes: a) To provide and advise the SCP participants the necessary guidance, academic advising, and counseling to complete their chosen academic goals such as a certificate, Associate's degree, or transfer to a four-year university; and b) To provide the personal counseling and referral service necessary to overcome the barriers and difficulties that prevent life and academic success and to address their self-esteem and self-worth.

Academic Advising: A key component of the SCP counseling served for the participants was the intentional nature of the educational planning and advising. Before participation in the SCP program, the students first were guided through the CCSF matriculation process with the

assistance of a peer mentor. The matriculation process included the college admissions process, English and math placement testing, and orientation. The students then attended a collaborative and interactive orientation led by the SCP coordinator and counselor that included the mutual responsibilities of the students and the SCP program and the general requirements of a certificate, Associate degree, and transfer requirements. The students then secured an appointment to work together with the SCP counselor to develop a realistic educational plan that outlines the requirements of their degree. The educational plan was based on an initial assessment based on the current aspects that may be affecting the student such as meeting parole or probation requirements, being a single parent, working through substance abuse issues and recovery, homelessness and an array of other issues affecting the student's current state. All of the participants described the value of the SCP academic advising, and how the counselor assisted in outlining their educational plans to meet their individual educational goals. For instance, Becky explained: "It was great and was sooo helpful... he took me under his wing and next thing you know he did my ed plan and started me with the basics from math E1, English K and L (remedial course work) all the way up to transfer. The plan gave me the big goal of transfer but even the smaller ones like getting' through the semester" (Macale, 2014, p. 105).

Similarly, Johnny, Prof C, Sam, and Becky discussed how working with the SCP counselor helped them in outlining a comprehensive plan to complete their academic goals at CCSF, and to demystify the requirements needed to sift through the barriers they faced in reaching their goals. Johnny explained:

It definitely helped me. It was like someone was holding me by the hand and showing all of the classes I needed to meet my goal. The world started to open up and even though I

failed a class here or there I knew I could push, push, and push through to reach my goal of transferring. I knew the support would be there.(Macale, 2014, p. 8)

Prof C, similarly to Johnny indicated how the SCP counseling was helpful in understanding the requirements his academic goal: “Even though I was into the sciences and after the counselor lined up the ed plan because I tested into geometry and even though I was in Trig in high school and what not, I had a clear path to that goal to transfer into the university” (Macale, 2014, p. 69). Prof C also noted how the SCP counselor was strategic in referring some instructors while acknowledging his emotional state of recently being institutionalized:

When I switched to the Second Chance counselor, it was more friendly I guess, more of what can we do to help you reach your goal, no judging. At the beginning of my plan, the counselor would refer courses of how the instructors would be helpful in certain situations. It helped me grow and in future semesters I could adjust to the classes where instructors might be hard on students. That plan helped me reach my goal. (Macale, 2014, p. 67)

Becky described how she transitioned from being uninformed about pursuing higher education to being able to feel confident in the direction her education was heading:

I had no clue. All I know is that I needed to start somewhere and that if that means starting from the basics than that’s where I had to start but I still had no clue at what I was good at and what I could do. The counselor was able to map it and to make things clear for me. (Macale, p. 2014, p.177).

In the same way, Sam described how the academic advising in the SCP was helpful in achieving her goals. She also commented on how her self-esteem grew by the support provided

by the SCP counselor and the non-judgmental, unconditional positive regard approach he utilized in the academic advising sessions:

The academic advising allowed me to find out what I wanted to do and pursue the education that I wanted. It helped me navigate the resources I needed to stay in school and not impose their agenda on me. What I appreciated was the counselor did not judge me or place shame on me. It helped me self-discover and when I found out what I wanted to do we mapped out the required classes so I can stay focused on my goals. It was so helpful! (Macale, 2014, p. 99)

Unconditional Positive Regard and Going Above and Beyond. Throughout the dialogues the participants described how the SCP advising and counseling services served as one of the main elements that assisted them in completing their academic goals at CCSF. In addition, the participants commented on the unconditional positive regard and genuine support that they received from their counseling sessions and how it assisted them in breaking down their anxiety, doubts, and negative emotions of returning and completing their college education. For example, Tee described how her counseling sessions were a way to discuss her personal issues so she could thrive in the classroom:

Being a part of the Second Chance program, you have to maintain three counseling contacts within a semester. This last semester they were laughing at me, I had 40 counseling contacts. It was more because, it wasn't just about the academic piece. It was about... When I first started, I had my phone ringing off the hook while I was in class because he (son) wasn't actin' right and talking to the counselor helped me get through some of my stuff. To have somebody genuinely wanting to hear what you have to say

and concerned about you in general, not just about the education piece was important.
(Macale, 2014, p. 44)

Tee continued to express how it was important for the counselor to have a built rapport and relationship with her so she didn't have to explain her story again to a new counselor working with her:

I needed someone who knew my history, who knew what my goal was, and was able to help me as opposed to going to a counseling department and meeting with a different person every time for five or ten minutes and them telling me take that class but not really maxing themselves out for me. (Macale, 2014, p. 44)

Tee also commented about the service the SCP counselor provided that went over and beyond to assist in reaching her goals:

Somebody who's constantly looking at how I'm doing in classes and seeing if I'm lacking, whatever it may be. Hypothetically speaking, just being able to have that relationship with a person who knows what your academic goals are and the things that are going on that could affect that. Sometimes that counselor becomes your unpaid therapist. They're doing double duty. (Macale, 2014, p.44)

Similarly, Johnny and Mert commented on the quality of the SCP counseling service provided in being able to discuss and explore personal and academic development simultaneously and going over and beyond in service provided. Johnny explained:

The Second Chance counseling was just like when you go to a psychologist, you can put all your cards on the table, and then you get advice. Not that they give you direct advice but they help you figure it out yourself. Sometimes, as individuals, that's all you need to do, is talk to someone and someone to listen. That was definitely a plus in my situation

with my counselor/mentor that it ... It helped. If a job is available, 'Hey, have you thought about this? Have you thought about applying there?' Even picking a major. (Macale, 2014, p. 8)

Similarly, Mert described how the quality of SCP counseling service provided to students:

Second Chance in particular, the academic counselor will spend more time with a student than general academic counselors will. A student walks in first day and just signs up to see an academic counselor, kind of that brand, without being attached to any particular program, it's really discouraging. The advantage of the SCP counselors in general just that they spend more time. (Macale, 2014, p.26)

Mert then reflected further on how SCP counselor possessed the necessary skillset to assist the unique issues that formerly incarcerated individuals bring with them while pursuing their academic goals:

I know the Second Chance counselor was overworked because we're simply more needy. We're less accustomed to what's expected. Many of us come out still having difficulty dealing with substance abuse problems. It's not the counselor's job to deal with that, but he or she has to recognize that those problems are there and work around it, even though that's something they address directly, and all that stuff. Not to take away from general counselors, the Second Chance counselor had that sense in being able to help us (Macale, 2014, p. 26).

Prof C highlighted the importance to have a counselor skilled in dealing with his specific situation: "It gave me a professional counselor that was not scared of what I was doing or maybe not even that, wasn't judging me, just more focused on helping me and he was like okay, you

have this issue here but we're trying to get you through school, so what can I do to help you with that sort of thing, so that's where it helped me as well" (Macale, 2014, p. 66). Despite the issues that Prof C was dealing with at that time, he described the importance of being able to disclose those issues with the SCP counselor: "They were still guiding me, regardless of whether I was getting violated and came back six months later, they were still trying to help me continue with my education without any judgement" (Macale, 2014, p.66-67).

Prof C further commented on how the SCP counseling was instrumental in provided accurate and helpful referral services:

Not that they knew all the answers, but they would refer me maybe to someone that had an answer for that particular issue. If someone was pregnant, let's say, one of the male counselors my not know exactly what the person is going through, but he would direct you to someone that may know or some other resource that may have a stronger understanding. I knew one of the students get help because of that situation. (Macale, 2014, p. 67)

Sam described the unconditional positive regard the SCP counselor provided in the counseling sessions: "A specific counselor invested in your life and making the difference knowing that you have the support and you have someone that genuinely cares whether you live or die which is something different that I have experienced in my entire life" (Macale, 2014, p. 82). Sam continued to comment how the counseling support provided went over and beyond the contexts of academic advising to assist in finding solutions to persist through her education:

When I say giving themselves, someone who really cared if I made it or didn't make it, it's really, giving me those experiences that I didn't have as a child to really understand, wow... To really provide me with direction and ways to obtain it to really make the

impossible really possible, to make this, wait, higher education is possible and to be treated as a human being, knowing the records of my past and knowing the person that I was, it's like, yeah, I'm a human being and I matter and it blew me away. (Macale, 2014, p. 85)

Sam also explained a moment in which she was able to utilize the counselor during a situation in which she was under so much stress, she was considering dropping out of college:

It was just like, okay, with that being said, in the moment of my digression, actually that was the first person I called because I knew that was going to be the motivation that I needed to just say hey, this is okay, you're human and now let's just move forward and finish your education (Macale, 2014, p.85).

Sam described the intentionality of the academic and career exploration work she did together with the Second Chance counselor, and how she was able to clearly define her educational goal and use the different resources to pursue her goals in a positive manner:

I've met with basic counselors with the school and was never asked, never elaborated, never looked deeper, never really asked me what I wanted to do. This is basically what it is... This is the path that you need to take to get there. Meetin' with the Second Chance counselor was just like this great interactive discovery and really along the way, that just what it kept bein' and it was just, I was actually directing my path and I was also bein' made aware of my options. (Macale, 2014, p.90)

Sam described how the Second Chance counselor was well versed and knowledgeable in referring the appropriate services to assist in working through some of the barriers that she was managing during different times of her educational journey: "My counselor would look into and

research different places to refer me to or should point me at to help me to get that, that just managed my life and it was so helpful (Macale, 2014, p. 90).”

Becky described how at times she had difficulty in meeting learning content in her courses and how the SCP counselor discovered, was able to process and skillfully found a successful way to meet her learning needs:

Yeah. I told the counselor about how good my niece was at math and he said why don't you have your niece tutor you? I was havin' a hard time with the math and I needed more than the one hour they was givin' me. My niece at my sister's house helped me tremendously. That's who I went home to every day to do math homework with when I couldn't get the one-on-one I really needed. I don't think I would have asked her to help if weren't for my counselor. (Macale, 2014, 175-176)

Becky also commented on how she benefited from other resources on campus due to the professional referral service of the SCP counselor:

I was able to choose my major in Women Studies, cuz' that's what I like to do is help women... The counselor helped me with choosing. The counselor also referred me to an extra support program called Math Bridge and even though I didn't go through them I was able to take Mr. H----- for Math. He was super helpful. I would not have been able to do these things if weren't for Second Chance. (Macale, 2014, p. 175)

Finally, Becky continued to describe the positive experience in using the counseling services. She was able to seek assistance outside of her living environment and allow herself to entrust in the counseling process. The counseling experience allowed Becky to reconcile her experiences in prison and redirect her life in a positive direction:

I utilized all the information that I've received from the counselors at the Second Chance Program. I trusted in another human being outside of my sector to guide me and direct me in the areas of my life where I could succeed. I had a place where I could come and talk about all my issues without being looked down upon. Matter of fact they kept building me up. That helped me get through the trauma I experienced in prison. He also took what I said and asked me how could I turn it around and make it work? How can I use it for the better? They helped me and guided me through my process and what it is I wanted to do because I was lost at first. (Macale, 2014, p. 177)

Second Chance Program Tutoring

The participants were eligible to receive tutorial services from the Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS) tutorial program in the courses that they were registered in during their participation in the SCP. Due to the participation in the SCP, students had priority in accessing these services. Of the six research participants, were able to mention and utilize the EOPS/SCP tutorial services. Johnny, Sam, and Becky described the benefits of being able to receive the tutorial services through the SCP. Johnny explained:

I liked the fact that they referred tutoring to us right away. And you have a longer time than the rest of regular students too. I thought that was great because I knew some of my classmates choosing to pay out of their own pocket for tutors to get the best grades. I used the tutoring for some of my harder science and math classes. It was very helpful.

(Macale, 2014, p. 8)

Sam emphasized that the how tutoring for the regular CCSF student population was so impacted that it affected the quality of the tutoring: "the tutoring for the other college students

was only fifteen minutes long and it was off to the next and I don't think some of the students was gettin' the tutoring needed to do good" (Macale, 2014, p. 91).

Sam commented on how the SCP tutoring was helpful in assisting her with completing her essays for a variety of courses leading up to reaching her academic goals and at the end also became a tutor:

There was tutoring that they have and that was one-on-one when I needed to write a paper and I was able to get the help that I needed. I used the tutoring for a lot of classes and helped me to finish my classes. I think it would have been very hard to do it on my own. Then I was able to become the tutor for that program. That whole process was really rewarding. (Macale, 2014, p. 91)

Finally, Becky discussed how it important it was to secure a tutor that would be able to work with her empathetically due to the emotional barriers she faced in the learning environment:

I definitely needed a tutor. I was turned onto the best tutors. I was like, okay you know I've got an issue with people and I don't want anybody looking down on me. I need a tutor that's going to work with me you know and because I'm a challenged person.

Second Chance provided tutors who understood my situation. (Macale, 2014, p. 175)

Second Chance Program Ancillary Services

All of the participants were able to describe how there was an array of extra support that the SCP provided in helping them reach their academic goals. Although each of the participants did not use all of the services at their disposal, each participant was able to comment on the extra services that were availed to them to support them to complete their academic goals. Johnny explained how receiving a book voucher (funding for text books depending on the yearly budget)

from SCP allowed him to use his federal and state financial aid for other educationally related items: “The book voucher was a life saver.... The books were not cheap and even though I couldn’t buy all my books it allowed me to use my financial aid to get a laptop and also help with to put food in my stomach” (Macale, 2014, p. 9).

Becky, like Johnny, commented on how she benefited from receiving SCP book services: “We get that extra boost... Matter of fact we get a little more extra than the regular students of City College get and they helped me with my books and oh my god! I didn’t pay for any books... The ones I didn’t get I got through the book loan program... Sooo grateful for that!” (Macale, 2014, p. 174).

Like many of the participants, Tee commented on how the SCP resources assisted her in overcoming potential financial and logistical barriers in reaching her goals:

They help you address other issues that could become a barrier to you bein’ successful in school, which is important because bein’ in school is about more than just showin’ up to class, doing your work, it’s about what factors you’ve got goin’ that’s going to impact your education. The Second Chance program helped me with the book vouchers, with scholarships and transportation.

Prof C also commented on the services received: “The Second Chance Program gave me extra resources to purchase books and tutors to help me towards my goals. It was a major help” (Macale, 2014, p. 69)!

In addition, Mert explained the benefits of receiving other services from the SCP: “There were certain aspects that I found particularly beneficial such as financial. There was quite a bit of financial help, there was the book money in addition to financial aid. As you know, college

texts can be expensive. Some semesters have been a lot worse than others” (Macale, 2014, p. 22-23).

Sam described some of the different barriers she encountered such as not having the appropriate materials and tools to be successful in college. She further commented on grant monies secured by the SCP that provided computers for the students and how it assisted her to obtain a computer for her studies. This particular ancillary service allowed her to the convenience to be able to continue her studies and she could pick up her son from school with piece of mind:

I couldn't afford a computer and a friend helped me piece together a computer. It was great until I couldn't really access anything on the internet. I was in school trying to do my work but I was also on the bus and I had to pick up my son. It was hard. There was funding that was sought by Second Chance to help people with computers and I actually got a computer. I didn't have to be stuck at the library until closing and I could do my work from anywhere. Its just (pauses)... Man, it made my school career that much more obtainable! (Macale, 2014, p. 96)

Sam also commented on the option of taking an Applied Psychology course affiliated with the SCP in which the curriculum's focus was on formerly incarcerated students. She described how it allowed for the students to self-reflect on their own behaviors and how she was able to benefit from such a course:

The counselor also gave us PSYC 26 (Applied Psychology) and it was great. It created the community and solidarity of the Second Chance students. It was optional and was just for the formerly incarcerated and it just got into the defense mechanisms and a lot of the psychological content and allowed us to look at us as second chance students and the

psychology behind it... What was the driving forces of our behaviors. It was basic level to where the professor was able to communicate it to no matter what level you come in at but it also builds upon whatever classes you need to take up your personal higher education. (Macale, 2014, p. 96)

Sam further commented how the course allowed her to learn Psychological terminology, which built a learning foundation for another course: “When I went to PSYC 1 (General Psychology) I already had the language and it helped build on other stuff” (Macale, 2014, p. 96).

Becky, like Sam also benefited from taking the Psychology course for formerly incarcerated students. Becky described the therapeutic nature that it provided the students and how it assisted in making a successful transition into college:

That’s what I loved about the Second Chance program, too because I took the class with all ex-felons that have been institutionalized and how we deal with our feelings and in the course of the class we address our inner demons. We talked about how we allow ourselves to be stuck inwards and not shine outwards. It helped us adjust to school. (Macale, 2014, p.189)

On the other hand, Mert did not find the class beneficial for him individually as a formerly incarcerated student. He described the student population of the class and how the group dynamic create an unintended outcome. Instead of entering the class with the knowledge that it provided a sense of community, it provided the opposite effect of making him feel alienated:

There was one class in particular that was specifically for second chance students, a Psyc class. That was kind of an odd experience because all had been incarcerated or at least almost everybody in the class had been. Some people had narrowly escaped any

reincarceration while in the class or were just on parole or something. For the most part, we had some experience with the justice system. (Macale, 2014, p. 18)

Before enrolling in the class, he had envisioned taking this course with the assumption that it would allow him to network with others with similar experiences and to create a supportive community. However, his experience turned out to be the opposite:

In a way, that was kind of a really isolating experience for me because so many of the people in the class were going through similar problems. They were really wrapped in just trying to survive. I think the thought of the people who put the class together the way they did, and my thought going into it was, that we would have enough in common to maybe build some friendships and find the support there. But it didn't work out that way.

It surprised me. But like I say, so many of the people involved in the class were under stress. None of us had time for each other. (Macale, 2014, p. 18)

Peer Advising. Mert, Tee, Prof C, and Sam commented on how instrumental the Second Chance peer advisers were helpful in making the transition and appropriate adjustment into higher education. Mert particularly found the peer advisers as a valuable resource: “The peer counselors were just invaluable to me. I could go in and see a friendly face... (pausing, eyes beginning to well) When I was feeling a little down, people would at least take a minute, even if they were really busy, would take a minute to say hi and shake hands. I could go in and vent about whatever was bothering me that day” (Macale, 2014, p. 23). On the other hand, Mert also found it beneficial to be reciprocal in regards to lending an ear to the peer advisers as well: “Or I could go in and listen to them, feel like I’ve done something useful by giving them a chance to do that” (Macale, 2014, p. 23).

Mert went on to describe how the after a few years of experience as a student and time away from prison, the peer advisers were able to apply skillful tact in assisting new formerly incarcerated students:

The peer counselors, they've all had a chance to be out a little longer. They're a little more established. Those are people that understand what it's like and they've got enough separation that they can kind of relate to it and be empathetic without being as terribly stressed themselves over the situation. (Macale, 2014, p. 18)

Similarly, Sam also commented on the assistance she received in matriculating at the community college. She also compared her experience in receiving peer advising from the SCP as different from a regularly admitted student: "Receiving the peer advising was a game changer. The interactions such as receiving services from a peer advisor really helped me get started in school. They didn't necessarily hold my hand but it allowed me to get a strong start. I don't think a lot of students get the strong start I did" (Macale, 2014, p. 97).

Sam continued to describe the positive experience in using the peer advising services and how the group fostered a welcoming community. Speaking from the perspective of a student not familiar with the college process:

The peer advisors made you feel a sense of belonging and a sense of giving back to your peers and helping them advance in their careers and education as well. The peer advisors were invested in you, and through them you discover different career paths and different options and different ways to be successful in school. You start to utilize that for yourself and you start to think, hey it helps you to better navigate stuff because you understand how to navigate it. It really does come full circle and it was a great experience. (Macale, 2014, p. 98)

Tee, Prof C, and Sam also described how becoming peer advisers allowed them an opportunity to give back to the community and also learn a skillset to build upon for their prospective careers. Tee described how she enjoyed helping others while providing exceptional service: “I loved supporting others as a peer advisor because I get to be part of that process I went through and I go above and beyond what I’m supposed to do” (Macale, 2014, p. 43). Tee also exemplified empathy in how she approached her duties as a peer adviser: “When I became a peer adviser I decided I was going to deal with them from the perspective of what I would have wanted coming into the program because I know it’s a hard adjustment” (Macale, 2014, p. 43).

Tee performed her peer advising duties in terms of being able to provide the necessary resources and skills a college student needed to have a successful start: “That’s what I’m goin’ to help them to do. If I have to show them how to use e-mail, how to get onto the web, connecting you to what other services are available on and off the campus. If you’re homeless... I’m a walking resource” (Macale, 2014, p.43). Right now the director asked me to create a student worker manual for the next peer advisers coming in so they know what to do” (Macale, 2014, p. 43).

Prof C also commented on the benefits of becoming a peer adviser and the opportunity it provided him for employment as it is difficult to become employed as a formerly incarcerated individual:

I think from personal experience, it ended up giving me a job, somewhere I started to build experience when I moved on to other positions, I was a peer advisor and outreach assistant doing presentations at some of the public schools and that sort of thing... It gave me skills so I could get more jobs in that arena, so it gave me that. It gave me skills (Macale, 2014, p. 69)

After a period of adjusting as a student, Sam also became a peer adviser and was able to utilize what she learned and to also tailor her knowledge to the formerly incarcerated population she was serving:

I became a peer advisor. We all just really took it to heart and we built on it and we really learned the tradeoff. We got to understand how the school system works and we knew financial aid like the back of our hand. I could tell you what classes you needed why you need it and where tutoring is. It really allowed us to give back and build upon it. We even started a referral board for homeless shelters. I wasn't hungry at the end of the month because I was getting paid too. It was just a blessing. (Macale, 2014, p. 98)

Participants Recommendations

The dialogical process allowed the participants to provide their input about the SCP in two general categories: a) The participants were asked if they would refer formerly incarcerated individuals who were considering returning to pursue their education at City College of San Francisco to the SCP; b) Also, the participants provided feedback and input on how to improve the SCP and its various services. The participants displayed feelings of excitement while speaking on behalf of the SCP, the participants provided insight on what other services it could provide to future students to assist in reaching their academic goals.

Referring Formerly Incarcerated Students to the Second Chance Program. All of the participants responded with enthusiasm when they were asked if they would refer the SCP to other formerly incarcerated students who were interested in pursuing their education at CCSF. For example, Prof C, passionately commented: "I would definitely refer the program because it's the only one of its kind... I really don't think there is another program out there in junior colleges really helping ex-offenders" (Macale, 2014, p. 74). Prof C continued by recommending

the SCP by emphasizing the lack of support for formerly incarcerated individuals after they are released into the community:

Again, I would definitely recommend it to other formerly incarcerated people because I don't think there's been any other program, REALLY! I've been through a lot of programs since the sixth grade that are actually helping you get through an educational goal and the Second Chance does that for people like us in our situation. (Macale, 2014, p. 74)

Prof C continued his perspective in referring the SCP and how it would be a supportive environment for the formerly incarcerated student population:

Not that I'm advocating getting locked up again but the service is there if you want to use it. It's always a place where formerly incarcerated people can feel safe. It's a community! Because when I got incarcerated a second time they were ready to kick me out of this one program and in the Second Chance program it almost seems, we have this information for you. If you're ready to take it now, cool, if you're not, I'm hoping you'll come back. That's the whole idea and that's what I am recommending. They didn't judge you and always welcome you back even if you were cut off from the other financial services. This group needs a place to come back to because some of us will be going back to prison... Not that we want to... Sometimes the system is designed in a way to make meeting requirements of parole hard. (Macale, 2014, p. 74)

Sam also enthusiastically recommended the SCP for other formerly incarcerated students explained what significance it would play in their lives: "Absolutely would recommend it to everybody who's previously been incarcerated that wants to pursue education or as an alternative to trying to find work or just as the platform to change their life" (Macale, 2014, p. 102).

Becky also explained how she would recommend the SCP to formerly incarcerated people returning to community college. She indicated how she refers the program often and explains to formerly incarcerated individuals what it has done for her academically and for her life:

It wouldn't be a why not. I would definitely recommend it! I share about how the program shaped and molded me to become the woman that God always knew that I could be. Had I not gone into that program... (eyes beginning to well) I'm not going to say I wouldn't have finished. If weren't for the program I wouldn't be where I am. (Macale, 2014, p. 195)

Tee enthusiastically referred the SCP due to the awareness the staff has in being knowledgeable of the challenges and issues that affect formerly incarcerated individuals. In addition, she also emphasized how the SCP staff and faculty work with the population with care and humanity:

The reason why I would is because they are specifically geared towards dealing with that population. If you're not formerly incarcerated, you can't be a part of the program. They are specifically geared toward working with the population because they know the challenges that the formerly incarcerated have to deal with. Also, they are not scared of us because for whatever reason other staff may be. For that reason, I recommend it to anybody and everybody in this situation. (Macale, 2014, p.46)

Finally, in the second dialogue Tee commented how the program humanely treats its participants and recommending the program provides an equitable platform to reach their goals: "If anything, I refer the program because I'm treated like I'm not an ex-offender. What I mean is that in this country because our sentence is over, doesn't mean our sentence is over. The program

treats me like my sentence is over and I mean with dignity and respect and that's what this population needs" (Macale, 2014, p.167).

While referring the SCP was overall positive, the participants did make recommendations to augment and to maintain the program's services.

Recommendations for the Second Chance Program

SCP Counseling and Advising. As part of the SCP requirements, all of the participants in this study met with an SCP and/or EOPS counselor at least three times per semester. In addition, all of the participants continued to seek out SCP counseling and advising services after they completed their education at CCSF. Overall, the responses to the counseling and advising services were very positive. However, the participants did not make recommendations based on the counseling and advising services itself, but rather on the resources that could be provided for the program to allow for more consistency in service. For example, Tee initially commented on the positive experience of the counseling she received but also noted turnover that seems to be occurring for the current position:

The counseling itself I would not change... That what was the best part of the program! But what I've noticed since being a client of the program and since being a peer adviser in the program is the turnover rate for the Second Chance counselors. Mr. R--- has always been there, but he's stepped away. I really can't speak to why it's been a couple counselors, but I think it has something to do with it not being a funded position. The program always gets put on the back burner and that's one thing that I've noticed. Or I don't know if it's burnout. (Macale, 2014, p. 48)

Tee continued to explain the importance of having a consistent person to meet with that serves a crucial position for the program:

I don't know. I think that's another way it can also be improved, the same way that the EOPS counselors have been consistently there. I think that a permanent position needs to be offered for the Second Chance counselor because coming from trauma it's important for us to see consistency. We need someone on the regular. One thing I haven't really spoke to is the relationship that you get to build, because there's also the fact of the trust issues we have. You can't really build that when the counselor is changing all the time. You know a lot of us got trust issues. (Macale, 2014, p. 49-50)

Similarly to Tee, Becky commented on the effect that the counselor turnover can have on the formerly incarcerated student population:

Only thing I would recommend is not to be... to stay consistent with the counselors. Because if I get a counselor for one semester or for half the semester and then I've got to get somebody for the other half, that doesn't work. That doesn't work because we not only become attached but this person knows me. I've had to reopen some wounds again to someone else that I don't know and that I don't trust because I don't know them and they don't know me. Granted, I'm not saying they they're not doing their job and don't know what they're doing. (Macale, 2014, p. 192)

Becky poignantly continued:

It's just that this person took me out of the pit of my pain, dusted me off and started making me shine. You know when you find that diamond and it's dirty and you dust it and then when it's shining you're like now that's it... Then all of the sudden you get halfway and you're counselor is gone, and then here I go again. I can't... That's too much for me. (Macale, 2014, p. 192)

Luckily for Becky, despite the turnover in counselors that provided the services, it yielded professional counselors that she was able to gain a healthy relationship with:

That's like when R---- took his leave, I was hurt, I cried and they gave me G-----.
He'll tell you. I was like, 'I don't know you. I don't trust you.' No. He earned our friendship. I love that man just like I love R-----. Those two men, beside P----.
Those three men are my mentors. I trust them with my life because they showed me that I can trust them. (Macale, 2014, p. 193)

The counselors in the SCP are usually fully booked with appointments for thirty minutes for a six to eight hour work day. Johnny described the time the SCP counselor spent with a student and depending on the situation being discussed would not limit the counseling sessions:

In my situation, because of my relationship with my counselor, I did get ... I don't have any changes there. Too bad that counseling sessions are only thirty minutes. You consider that there's so many students, you have to be considerate about it. But just because the thirty minutes were up doesn't mean that they just kick you out. If your goin' through something tough he would still spend more time with you. (Macale, 2014, p.10)

Mert echoed the same sentiment as Johnny when discussing the quality time that the SCP counselor spent with the students to ensure their needs were being met:

I don't know that I could actually recommend any improvements. To contrast with the academic counseling places other than EOPS, they spend a little more time...

A little more in-depth time with a person. EOPS in particular, the counselors will spend more time with a student than general academic counselors will to make sure they were taken care of. (Macale, 2014, p.25)

When initially asked if there were any improvements that he could make to the counseling and advising services, Prof C expressed positive feedback in describing the service: “That was the strongest thing, the counseling, the believing that yes, you can do it and the pats on the back like damn, that was good! I would not change that! That helped me finish” (Macale, 2014, p. 72)! However, Prof C did provide some insight in how a counselor can incorporate providing career related components and navigating a work force culture where potential workers will encounter racism and negative treatment:

I think one of the things that I have spoken to the Second Chance counselor, who is to this day a friend, we have conversations like okay, now you’ve got through your education, now you’re in corporate America, again, how do you deal with whatever comes up there, and personally for me I dealt with a lot of micro-aggressions like racism. (Macale, 2014, p. 73)

Prof C also provided some insight on how the SCP counseling and academic services could incorporate group counseling sessions as students exit the program and complete their certificate, Associate degree, and/or transfer to a four-year university. He also commented on how counselor can assist in providing tools to deal with situations in which graduates will encounter racism and discrimination: “Maybe I’m asking a lot here too but a focus group where you start talking about this is what I’m experiencing after finishing school, do you know how to handle the different situations, maybe the counselor can provide something like that” (Macale, 2014, p. 74).

Finally, Sam commented on the philosophies and skills that the SCP counselor should possess in order to serve a formerly incarcerated student population. She also described how the

SCP counselor could advocate for the formerly incarcerated student population and to continue the existence of the program in higher education:

I think that's the key to the counselor that you need. They also need a counselor that really understands social justice, understands the prison system, is willing to work with students and to help them feel human and to really be part of this movement and to really just to look at... (pauses) sometimes that means sticking your neck out to the academics that don't like our program don't like the students that come out of it and to really just to continue to work and make it inclusive into this whole piece of education. (Macale, 2014, p. 101)

Recommendations for Further Services

There was consensus amongst the participants that there were no specific recommendations to improve the services of the SCP. However, the participants did suggest making plans for maintaining and implementing additional services. Specifically, two participants recommended the need to increase institutional commitment and funding sources for the SCP. In addition, as formerly incarcerated students, two of the participants recommended that the SCP develop and provide career related workshops to assist in obtaining employment post-graduation.

Funding. Sam, Tee, and Mert made comments that the community college should maintain or increase its funding source. Sam described the difficulty for the program to provide the adequate services without a commitment of funding. Sam also had a keen sense of the resources required to fund such a program and the burden placed on the counseling services for formerly incarcerated students:

Keep it funded for one. Expand it and really it's so hard to work with limited funds. People don't recognize the value of the counseling even though that's not what the services that you think you're getting. They are key especially because you need these things but I think that to have the right counselors and to keep them funded and to keep them consistent and to keep really just building up a peer advisors. Bigger funds should go to peer advising to give job opportunities. (Macale, 2014, p.99)

As Tee was completing her education at the community college level, she noted the decrease in services being offered to formerly incarcerated students and how funding should be recommitted to the program:

Like I said, the only thing that I can think of to improve the program and it wouldn't have to do with the individuals working directly in the program but more resources being funneled back into the program. That's the only way I can think of the program being improved, honestly. I'm pretty sure it may be some other ways. I just don't know but the resources should be put back into the program because I see how it's been taken away. (Macale, 2014, p. 167)

Tee continued by describing in detail the specific resources that the SCP were losing: I'm talking about plenty. We were getting transportation vouchers. That's no longer available. They cut the funding for the laptop computers. Granted, not everybody was getting' laptop computers but it was a resource that was there. I'm talking about stuff like that. As far as I know right now they don't even have any peer mentors in there. Once I left there was no more peer mentors. Matter of fact I just left from over there before I came here. They don't even have any peer mentors in there. That's the only way I can see

that this program can be improved because as far as I can tell, even though it still bears the title Second Chance, it's just becoming a regular program. (Macale, 2014, p. 167)

Mert made a brief comment on his awareness of funding support for the program:

I understand there is some financial burdens right now that are stressing the program, but I can't think of any major changes I would make so make sure the program gets the funding that it needs. (Macale, 2014, p. 25)

College Tools for Success. The participants did not have specific recommendations to improve upon the current components of the SCP. However, they did make recommendations for adding additional services that can contribute to formerly incarcerated students success in higher education. In particular, two of the participants recommended services that impact formerly incarcerated individuals specifically.

Services Specifically for the Formerly Incarcerated. Johnny, Sam and Mert commented that the SCP implement services geared towards the student population's success. Johnny felt that formerly incarcerated individuals have the difficult task of meeting strict parole requirements and that the SCP working together with Parole Officers would benefit formerly incarcerated students:

One thing that I did not get was clear instructions of going to see the P.O. (Parole Officer). It's a hard adjustment from going structured to unstructured. I would recommend a part of the program to work with parole officers, the student, and making sure he makes all of his meetings with his P.O. That would be good to help in the steps for getting back in society and not going back. Most people go back within the time of parole (Macale, 2014, p. 9)

Sam commented on the importance of creating a community atmosphere for formerly incarcerated students on campus and suggested that the program function as an independent entity:

It needs to be its own program where they have a place to study and have computers and a printer and to connect with other people. You need to be able to in that way, relationship build. These people are most likely going to end up your professional peers. (Macale, 2014, p.99)

Mert recommended services that assist formerly incarcerated students with psychological, emotional, and trauma issues:

The only real suggestion that I have would also be terribly expensive I think, if they could expand psychological services. I that would probably be true for other students, for people who are ESL and stuff like that. (Macale, 2014, p. 24)

Similarly, Becky recommended services to formerly incarcerated students that working through substance issues while pursuing their educational goals. Becky commented further on having a support group work with students working through substance abuse issues and have a space to be able to acknowledge these issues:

I also feel that what would be a good area to work on is that people that are dealing with substance issues. They are here (college campus) and a lot of them. Really! Because I've notice this some time ago that we have adults that are really smart... Really smart... God knows they're smart. (Macale, 2014, p.189)

Becky continued:

I think if we can implement a program where we deal with substance abuse issues, not just deal with it more so about acknowledging it... How we deal with feelings and emotions and how we allow ourselves to be stuck inwards and not shine outwards. If we could have a class where we just addressing substance abuse or information. I think that would help some of the students that feel or think or maybe want to change but don't know how or never had the correct information about it without exposing them to the public. (Macale, 2014, p. 189)

Career Services. Due to the special circumstances that formerly incarcerated face in terms of different aspects of marginalization in society (obtaining employment, housing, etc.), Johnny, Prof C, and Mert commented on adding career related services that are specifically designed for formerly incarcerated students. Johnny provided a specific career related idea on how formerly incarcerated students might be able to find employment by posting jobs:

Of course, you can't employ everybody, but that would be something also to think about, how they can actually start advertising maybe job placements that are friendly to the program so that students can actually look at the bulletin board and go ahead and apply. I think that definitely would be a plus for some of the students because not everybody is a go-getter, but those that if you tell them, 'Oh, go on the bulletin board there. Help build a resume. Look at classes that you need, or There's a job posting there' I think that probably would help. (Macale, 2014, p. 9)

Johnny also commented on how the SCP could provide career related workshops for formerly incarcerated students. He provided specific examples that could be incorporated in workshops that specifically affect formerly incarcerated students:

We need some more workshops on career things for the formerly incarcerated. Not only the basics of dressing good for the interview, resume, but also being able to work with your record when you're going for your job. Can you get your records expunged? Also, when you get the job how to act in the job in certain situations and interact with your boss and ask for a raise and things like that. (Macale, 2014, p. 9)

Similarly, Prof C commented on the SCP being able to provide several options for students working through specific issues with felony record, and exposing students to different academic programs to kindle an interest in a particular field or program:

I think some life skills stuff and how to deal with the record after getting your diploma and working closely with other programs. Maybe not everyone is going to go into that path, but at least know about it when you find those students. (Macale, 2014, p. 71)

Prof C further commented on how the SCP can provide services to improve students' knowledge base in workforce culture and behavior:

On life skills too maybe knowing how to deal with the boss once you get that good job, what's the proper protocol? I think blindly we just kind of get a job and we just kind of look around to see what other people are doing, but maybe work the professional way of doing things. (Macale, 2014, p. 71)

Mert commented on the SCP possibly collaborating with potential employers to provide opportunities to employ formerly incarcerated students who are also attending college. Mert explained that the collaboration with employers could also potentially provide valuable career skills that could be incorporated into the students' resume. Mert provided this service in the following statement:

I think what would be more beneficial it could be done would be to partner up with private employers for part-time jobs while a person is going to school, even if it's just like 10 hours a week or 15 hours a week. A real job, so that on their resume it says, okay, I was going to school full-time but I was also working this part-time job for a hotel or a restaurant, whatever. It may not be much of a job, it could be stock boy at Safeway, or whatever it is. I think that would help the transition. (Macale, 2014, p.153)

Summary

The main objective of this participatory research project was to discover what effect participating in the Second Chance Program (SCP) had on formerly incarcerated students in pursuing the completion of an educational goal (Certificate, Associate Degree, and/or transfer to a four-year university at City College of San Francisco (CCSF)). The findings of this study reveal what circumstances and decisions in their own lives led to circumstances to become incarcerated, the personal issues and barriers that formerly incarcerated students encounter when released from the prison system, and the participants' thought processes before entering college. Furthermore, they provided insights to their struggles and successes they experienced as students at CCSF. The participants then reflected on their lived experiences such as utilizing the program's academic advising and counseling and other ancillary services that they were offered through the SCP. In conclusion, the participants offered their reflections on referring the program to other formerly incarcerated students and providing input on how the SCP could be improved.

In determining and reflecting on the critical responses from the voices of the six participants' status of being formerly incarcerated who are often marginalized or silenced, the findings of this study make known the positive effect the SCP has in guiding formerly incarcerated students to complete their academic goals, as well as in furthering their development

as college students, as well as in enhancing their possibility of academic success. In addition, all of the participants' critical reflections provided a positive affirmation the SCP has in acknowledging and assisting in reconciling the issues and barriers this student population contends with.

All of the participants also provided positive feedback when they were asked if they would recommend the SCP to other formerly incarcerated students interested in pursuing their education at CCSF. To this end, the participants referenced their recommendations on what would improve the SCP and its components and made specific recommendations to maintain and implement additional services.

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The final chapter of this dissertation recaps the statement of the problem and briefly reviews the rationale for this study. In addition, this section will summarize the following: a) Results of the study; b) Interpretation of the conclusions; c) Recommendations for institutional action and further research; d) and researcher's reflections.

The literature review acknowledges a number of studies of inmate participation in post-secondary education programs, educational attainment, and the reduction of recidivism (Nally et al. 2012; James, 2011; Swimpson, 2008, Archer & Williams, 2006; Torre & Fine, 2005; Beard et al., 2003, Steurer & Smith, 2003, Shuler, 2002). The success of post-secondary in prison programs that contribute to the reduction of recidivism are also highlighted in a study that tracked over 25,000 participants (James, 2011). Although there is much research of in-prison education programs, there is a scarcity of research and studies regarding programs that serve formerly incarcerated students at the community college level which this dissertation attempts to study.

The lack of research is highlighted by the reality that within the California Community College system, which is comprised of 112 colleges and districts, there are only two programs that explicitly serve this disadvantaged and underrepresented group, Santa Barbara City College and City College of San Francisco's Second Chance Program. Another program, Palo Verde College, provides an array of student services within the prison the system. However, the program does not provide direct services when students are released from the prison system.

The rationale for this study is based on the need to serve formerly incarcerated students that will enroll in community colleges throughout the United States of America when they are

released from the prison system. Providing additional support for this population could better assist formerly incarcerated students reach academic goals at the community college level. Also, programs in the higher education setting intent on serving formerly incarcerated students could also make positive contributions on the reduction of the massive costs of incarceration.

Ironically, it costs less to educate individuals than to incarcerate them.

Summary

Together with the six former SCP students who successfully completed a certificate, Associate degree, and/or transfer to a four-year university, this study applied a participatory research method to discover the critical reflections of the co-participants regarding their experiences and the effects of participation in the SCP. Throughout the process of the dialogues, the co-participants identified the circumstances that led them to become incarcerated. They also discussed the negative experiences they endured while being incarcerated and how that may have contributed to their challenges in attending and completing college. As the dialogical process evolved, generative themes pertaining to systemic prison oppression and the emotional feelings that they brought to their college experiences were discovered, discussed, and critically analyzed. The participants then provided their positive experiences in the SCP and how it assisted them in reaching their academic goals. Finally, they gave recommendations on how the SCP can be improved and provided further insight in regards to implementing additional support components.

Although the participants acknowledged and took responsibility of the illicit behaviors they engaged in, they expressed sadness, frustrations, and trauma they experienced with the prison system prior to entering higher education. They also felt a sense of guilt and remorse of the people that were affected in their circles such as victims, family members, and their

communities. Throughout the experiences of being imprisoned, they were confronted with abuse from the authorities within the prison system, were discouraged from seeking rehabilitation and had their sense of self-esteem and dignity constantly under attack. Even when released some of the participants found it very difficult to meet the conditions of the parole or probation. For example, some of the participants described that parole and probation officers it difficult to meet the conditions of their release, especially in circumstances while pursuing their education. They were critically aware of how the structure within the prison and justice system can contribute to some of the elements of higher recidivism rates and consequently, have served to perpetuate the oppressive conditions in low income and communities of color. However, through resiliency, hard work and determination they were able to not only reach their own academic and life goals but also demonstrated an awareness of consciousness to their families, friends, and communities.

The six participants in this study gave their positive testimonials of the SCP through the dialogic process and their critical reflections. They reflected on the encouragement and support that they received from the SCP. Besides the financial and material resources they received, the participants were especially cognizant of the importance and value of the support they received from the academic advising and counseling services component of the program. Furthermore, by taking part in the SCP they described a process of how their feelings of isolation turned into active involvement in the community, how they were able to reverse the negative experiences in prison into completing an educational goal, and how they were able to reconcile the negative aspects they endured as being part of the prison system through participation in the SCP.

Conclusions

The primary question for this research project was: “What effect does participation in the SCP have on formerly incarcerated students in pursuing their educational goal at the community

college level?” The findings of this study make known the positive impact that the SCP had on assisting formerly incarcerated community college students reach their academic goals.

Moreover, the study also gleaned the significant challenges and issues that formerly incarcerated students encounter while pursuing their educational goals at the community college level.

The following section explains the results of the four research questions that guided the study:

Research Question 1: What issues and challenges are formerly incarcerated students confronted with in attending a community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?

During the course of the dialogues the participants answered the above noted question from three perspectives that were interrelated in the following way: (a) the issues and challenges of being formerly incarcerated and being a low income community college student; (b) the dehumanizing trauma that they all endured while being part of the justice system; and (c) and for two of the participants being confronted with addiction and gender specific oppression.

Even though all of the participants come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and lifestyles, all of them experienced the same issues and challenges all formerly incarcerated students face when they are released from the justice system. Not only do participants experience dehumanizing treatment in the justice system, there was very little or no preparation when released. When exiting the prison system, all of the participants experienced financial issues to their instant low income status, lack of employment opportunities and securing housing, the exposure to the same criminal network when released, and in some cases, resources to deal with their substance abuse issues. They all reflected on the harsh circumstances they experienced and living through the trauma within the prison system.

All of the participants poignantly described the sadness, anger, and despair they experienced while serving their sentences in the justice system. However, they all acknowledged and took responsibility of the illicit activities that they took part of that led them to become incarcerated. The participants expressed the lack of rehabilitation, the perpetuation of abuse and oppressive conditions inmates experience. The participants were able to display a consciousness of the behaviors that manifest from abuse and trauma from the prison system. Also, they critically analyzed how in some cases the mistreatment of prisoners could potentially lead to the high rates of recidivism. They all shared in the sadness of how many of the prisoners are treated in an inhumane way and in many cases act out-accordingly.

Through dialogic process several unintended themes emerged. In addition to all of the challenges and issues that formerly incarcerated students are faced with, two of the female participants detailed their trials and tribulations of addiction. They critically discussed how addiction affected their self-esteem and how it manifests itself by living in low-income crime riddled neighborhoods, structural and social racism, and power relationships specific to gender.

Research Question 2: How do these issues and challenges affect formerly incarcerated students in completing their education at a community college?

Throughout the whole dialogical process the participants detailed long lists of challenges, issues, and obstacles they met while pursuing to complete their education at the community college level. In terms of the plethora of emotional feelings that were conjured up such as anxiousness and excitement of returning to college, while pursuing their education they faced so many challenges. Many commented on the difficulty of maintaining shelter or if they had a home described it as an environment that was not conducive to learning. All of the participants had to relearn how to navigate and adjust an unstructured education system, which is the opposite of the

very structured time they spent in a prison/jail setting. All of them also solemnly described the following challenges that they encountered while pursuing their education: a) The difficulty in supplementing their income because of their felony convictions; b) The lack of reentry or transitional services when they were released from prison; c) The inadequate health care in prison also contributed to ongoing physical and mental health issues that they had to continue to work through while in college. All of the participants also commented on the treatment in prison and how it affected them emotionally while pursuing their education.

All of the participants critically determined and reflected that the trauma and treatment they were recipients of or witnessed in prison as oppression that was then internalized. They were all keenly aware this oppression not only affects themselves, but affects their families, friends, and their surrounding communities. The participants also discussed how incarceration impacts and destabilizes communities and perpetuates some of the activities that occur in public spheres such as illicit activities, substance abuse, inequities in education, and poverty.

Research Question 3: How has the SCP had an impact in addressing the issues and challenges that formerly incarcerated students experience in pursuing education at the community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?

When the participants were asked how the SCP had an impact in addressing and reconciling the issues and challenges they experienced in pursuing their education and completing a certification, Associate degree, and /or transfer they all responded with positive affirmation. They described how the SCP provided a sense of community and welcomed them despite their backgrounds of being formerly incarcerated; camaraderie peer advising, and familiarizing them with the college community.

Although they described the extreme importance of financial resources that the SCP provided such as book voucher services, laptop services, and scholarships they all affirmatively reflected on the unconditional positive regard, encouragement, direction, and support they received from the counseling and academic advising. They discussed how the academic advising help them clarify their majors and how the comprehensive educational planning services assisted them in creating a clear pathway to completing their educational goals. All of the participants were appreciative of having a place where they were not judged of their past and where they can truly have a voice and feel supported in their academic and life endeavors.

Some of the participants described the importance of being able to utilize the SCP tutorial services. The participants that did use the services commented on the importance of being able to have one on one tutorial services for basic competencies such as math and English. Some participants who did not need the services commented that it provided a sense of ease knowing that these services were available. One participant also explained the positive opportunity it gave him as a tutor.

Research Question 4: What recommendations do the SCP participants have to improve the SCP?

The participants initially found difficulty in giving specific recommendations as they all gave positive feedback to the different service components of the SCP. The suggestion of providing a permanent coordinator and counseling position was recommended as to provide continuity for an emotionally vulnerable population. Furthermore, some of the participants also recommended that additional counseling services be provided to prevent burnout and workload on one counselor. Other recommendations centered on providing specific workshops to address

the career and life challenges that formerly incarcerated individuals will encounter after they complete their education.

A unanimous recommendation of all of the participants was to have an institutional commitment of the SCP. Many of the participants were adamant about not only maintaining the SCP and its services but also to drastically increase the funding provided to the program. All were keenly aware that programs provided to formerly incarcerated students in higher education were lacking and scarce and that City College of San Francisco was one of the few programs that provided a strong commitment to this population. Some of the participants were also aware that services were being drastically reduced and sadly expressed that many future students with similar backgrounds would not be able to benefit from such an impactful program.

Study Limitations

Although the data gleaned rich, dense, and descriptive data from the participants, it also should be viewed from its perspective of limitations. First, the data should not be generalized beyond the sample of the six participants of this study. The results of this study would have received different results if another PAR project were done. No two PAR projects would yield the same results. Another potential limitation is that social desirability bias has the potential to affect the data, however, the participants seemed to have a genuine, authentic, and responses to very sensitive issues that affect their lives in prison and the successes they achieved in college. Finally, the study is laden and subjective from an interpretive and critical context and perspective.

Recommendations for Institutional Action

The following recommendations for institutional action involve two components: a) From a programming perspective, provide the commitment to institutionalize the Second Chance

Program (SCP) and significantly increase funding levels; and b) From the state level, expand the discussion and commitment to implement student support programs for formerly incarcerated students in the California Community Colleges.

In prior years, City College of San Francisco (CCSF) and the California state program, Extended Opportunity Programs and Services provided the financial resources for the SCP to function and the bearing of its name. However, due to budget constraints, the SCP resources have been severely reduced and cut. The Second Chance Program is no longer identifiable by name. Initially prioritized, formerly incarcerated students now have to apply through the normal channels of the EOPS. Some of these students may not be admitted into the program. Currently, the EOPS counselor who previously serviced formerly incarcerated students now needs to see students on his own time. It is recommended that the funding be reinstated and institutional commitment to the program be reestablished. The reasons for this recommendation are the following: a) An equitable commitment be made to this vulnerable population; b) Providing an equitable and quality education makes an impactful difference to formerly incarcerated students, the community, and could potentially contribute to positive post-release transitions; c) The recommendations made by the participants (increased funding, counseling services, workshops) can be developed and implemented.

If the program is to be re-implemented, it is highly recommended to provide an office manager to assist in providing the necessary support to create and implement a database system to extract critical objective statistical data that can provide persistence, certificate, and educational goal completion rates. The office manager, could also provide the necessary duties of documenting the following transactions: a) book voucher services; b) counseling and tutorial

appointment management; c) county and community relations; and d) general office management.

As illustrated in the first chapter, the recidivism rates for formerly incarcerated individuals are modestly and/or significantly reduced when participating in in-prison education. Although not the “silver bullet” in massively reducing recidivism rates, post release opportunities in higher education can assist formerly incarcerated students successfully transition back to society. It is encouraged, that the California Community College (CCC) system provide innovative programming to address the 95 percent of individuals that will be released from the state’s prison system. It is highly recommended that the former SCP coordinators and counselors provide presentations and workshops at statewide CCC leadership association conferences and state policy committee meetings. The workshops may provide the motivation to foster discussions on the issues of ex-prisoner reentry and to possibly replicate the program.

Finally, if society truly trying to push for formerly incarcerated individuals to be fully integrated into society, leaders at the local, regional and national level need to commit policies that reflect protecting and providing equity to the most underserved populations. Do leaders at the community college level, local, and regional levels have the ability, courage, will to fund these types of programs? There is enough data to reveal that recidivism has not changed over the years and there are strong indicators that reveal a cost benefit to overall society. As a moral imperative, leadership at these levels can and should be able to change the context and narrative regarding this segment of the population. The voices of these individuals should be heard.

Recommendations for Further Research

One of the main aims of this study was to capture the critical reflections of six formerly incarcerated students who participated in the SCP program and successfully completed a certificate, Associate degree, and/or transfer to a four-year university. Although the participants faced a plethora of issues and challenges in pursuing their education, were there any specific innate conditions and other environmental influences that contributed to their ability to complete their education? Perhaps a research project that further examines resilient aspects of SCP students may add to the understanding of the academic success of this specific student population.

This specific study included a sequence of structured questions to guide the dialogical process. However, the dialogical process may move organically in different directions based on the nature of the conversations and its open-ended nature. One of the main themes prominent in the dialogical process was that of oppression and the participants' abusive and traumatic experiences within the prison system prior to starting their education at the community college level. The critical dialogues and conversations with the participants morphed in different directions and further inquiry is worth further review and inquiry. Perhaps another qualitative research project that includes the internalized oppression of formerly incarcerated students could further reveal the tremendous struggles, hardships, and challenges formerly incarcerated students face while pursuing their educational goals in higher education.

The researcher also recommends that a quantitative research study be conducted on the persistence, goal completion, and graduation requirements of formerly incarcerated students who have previously participated in the SCP. Given the nature of federal and state funding to require quantitative data that includes persistence and graduation rates in regards to student success, this

type of study could justify the need to provide student support services for this specific student population. Potentially, combining this type of quantitative study with this qualitative research project could contribute in implementing additional ‘Second Chance programming’ at other community colleges.

Researcher Reflection

For this dissertation, I had chosen a topic that was part of my professional career, working with formerly incarcerated community college students. Throughout my time in working with this student population, I had come to learn a great deal of their lives through my deep counseling interactions with them as a former counselor in the Second Chance Program. From my humble perspective and work with them, I have come to learn that despite already “doing their time” they are often treated as second-class citizens. As my interest peaked about the students I worked with, these thoughts later made sense to me as I gleaned additional knowledge from the literature. I came to find the extreme racial disparities within the prison system and the many challenges that people face being part of the justice system such as facing difficulty in the following areas: obtaining employment and appropriate housing, accessing healthcare, destabilizing communities, suffering from mental health issues, losing their right to vote, and being part of a system that continually incarcerates. Ironically, I have been witness to this treatment in the public sphere of higher education, a place that supposedly provides community for students. Through my training as a counselor, I was especially keen in providing the care, empathy, and rapport building required to work with students. I have come to experience a student population that wants to succeed if given a second chance.

As a former coordinator/counselor of the Second Chance Program, participating in the dialogical process with the six participants helped remind me of the counseling relationships that

I had with this student population. From the student population that were solicited and with the participants' knowledge of me being a former counselor in the SCP, and in working with some of the participants in some capacity at the college, establishing a rapport and participating in the dialogical process was seamless. This study was definitely an extension of the counseling process that expanded on the prior sessions that were mainly framed in an academic advising session. In the academic advising sessions, I encountered glimpses of the issues and challenges that formerly incarcerated students face. However, this research project allowed a space for the dialogical process to provide a deeper discussion and analysis of the enormous obstacles formerly incarcerated face and the successes they can achieve. Despite the vulnerability and sensitive nature of the experiences the participants faced, their generosity and with their sense of giving back to potentially improve upon the SCP and future students allowed for an environment to enable direct and honest dialogue and critical reflections.

Finally, I believe that this participatory research project gave the participants and myself a pathway to communicate our voices. Those voices communicated two distinctive points: a) it allowed to critically reflect on the structures that break down one's human spirit and high potential to exacerbate negative behaviors and b) it allowed to have a dialogical process that reflected that within a supportive and nurturing environment that provides a welcoming community, past traumas could be reconciled and one's humanity and dignity can be reestablished. The voices within this project created an understanding that the purpose of an education is to allow to critically reflect and to increase consciousness. The dialogical process also revealed that more needs to be done to not exclude formerly incarcerated people from integrating successfully in society. The dialogical process also examined the powerful influence and possibilities that an education could provide while giving formerly incarcerated students a

platform to succeed. The difficulty is that there is no simple answers or solutions. Education is one commitment that society can provide for successful societal transitions and to provide equity for all its citizens. With an emphasis on prison reform and public safety, could society not provide an emphasis on educating all people? Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration In the Age of Colorblindness*, provides a succinct statement on this topic:

If we say to ourselves that the problem of mass incarceration is just too big, too daunting for us to do anything about and that we should instead direct our energies to battles that might be more easily won, history will judge us harshly. A human rights nightmare is occurring on our watch. (Alexander, 2011, p.15)

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear Alumni Student,

I am writing to solicit your interest in participating in a study I am conducting for my doctoral research as a student in the Oregon State University Community College Leadership Program. The proposed topic of my dissertation is conducting a Participatory Research project with formerly incarcerated students. The study will provide a critical perspective on the role of the Second Chance Program played in supporting students' success (completion of a certificate, Associate Degree, and/or transfer to a four year university). The study will also attempt to gather information on how to improve upon the program for future formerly incarcerated students. I am seeking access to information of up to six alumni students who participated in the Second Chance Program through a series of individual interviews, reflection, and follow up interviews.

There is a lack of research on the role of specific services focusing on formerly incarcerated community college students. In addition, there is a lack of research on formerly incarcerated community college students in general. If you agree to be a participant in this study, we will work together in contributing to the research on formerly incarcerated community college student's experience and participation a program specifically to serve those needs.

Your participation in this study would involve a maximum of 4 hours. Our first contact will be by email or phone in which we will make arrangements for an interview. The first interview will last a maximum of 90 minutes and will be digitally audio recorded. The participant will receive the transcript of the first interview within two to three weeks to be given an opportunity to clarify, expand, and verify the transcribed interview. The second interview will last approximately 60 minutes and will be to further reflect on the first interview.

If you are interested in voluntarily participating in this research study, please contact me at jmacale@ccsf.edu or 415.310.3005. After confirming your interest, I will ask you review, sign,

and return an Informed Consent Document that describes your role and protection as participant in the study. Finally, I will schedule the first interview with you.

By sharing your experience as a formerly incarcerated community college student you have the potential to contribute significantly to the understanding of the role of a institutionalized student support service specifically designed for formerly incarcerated students. I hope you will consider participating in this research and sharing your unique experience as successful formerly incarcerated community college student.

Thank you,

James Macale

Doctoral Candidate

Oregon State University College of Education

APPENDIX B

James R. Macale
IRB Application
Protocol Section

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What effect does participation in the Second Chance Program (SCP) have on formerly incarcerated students in pursuing their educational goal at the community college level?
2. What issues and challenges are formerly incarcerated students confronted with in attending a community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?
3. What were the specific issues and challenges you were confronted in attending community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?
4. What were your feelings and thought process before attending community college?
5. What was your experience like in attending City College of San Francisco (CCSF)?
6. How did you overcome the specific issues and challenges that you faced as a formerly incarcerated student?
7. How do these issues and challenges affect formerly incarcerated students in completing their education at a community college?
8. How did the challenges you described affect your experiences as a student at CCSF?
9. Now that you have completed your education at CCSF, what have your experiences been?

APPENDIX B

10. How has the SCP had an impact in addressing the issues and challenges that formerly incarcerated students experience in pursuing education at the community college and/or transferring to a four-year university?
11. How did the SCP assist you in achieving your goals at CCSF?
12. Tell me more about your experiences in the SCP with the following services: counseling, tutoring, ancillary support services, peer advising)?
13. What component of the SCP helped you the most? Why and how?
14. What recommendations do the SCP program participants have to improve the SCP?
15. What recommendations would you make to improve the SCP?

16. What recommendations would you make to improve the SCP counseling and academic advising services?
17. Would you recommend the SCP to other formerly incarcerated community college students? Why or Why not?

interview for reflection and further thought before the second interview. The second interview will be approximately 60 minutes to give the co-participants an opportunity further reflect, clarify, and expand on the first interview. The approximate time commitment for the participants will be 4 hours.

Risks. The risks to the co-participants will be minimized by protecting their identities through confidentiality. In addition, the name of the institution will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be given to each participant and the names of the institution and organization will be changed. Other risks that may be involved include developing feelings of anxiety during the interview process in regards to their experiences of being a formerly incarcerated community college student.

Benefits. There may be no direct benefit to for the co-participants of the research project. However, there may be the potential for greater awareness of the role the student support service program had in facilitating formerly incarcerated students in reaching their academic goals. The co-participants have the potential to also develop their own critical consciousness in their role as formerly incarcerated community college students

Payment. There is no compensation for participation in this study.

Confidentiality. Within the context of the law, the records of participation in this research study will be kept confidential. A transcriber hired by the student researcher will transcribe the digital audio recordings. The student researcher will confirm the transcriptionists' professional ethics of confidentiality. All written and recorded information, including interview notes that are gathered during the project will be kept secure in a locked cabinet and office. James Macale, the student researcher, and Dr. Alex Sanchez will have sole access and the securely stored data.

Pseudonyms will be assigned to each participant of the study. The PI and the student researcher will have sole access to this list. In the event of any public report or publication from this study, your identity will not be disclosed.

Participants will be identified on digital audio by their pseudonym. Digital audio stored will be password protected. The digital audio will be transcribed by a professional transcriptionist show professional ethics require confidentiality

Voluntariness. Participating in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose to not participate at all. If you agree to participate in this study, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to take part, or if you stop participation at any time, your decision will not result in any penalty or loss anything beneficial that you may otherwise be entitled. You may request that any identifying information about you be destroyed. Finally, during the interview process you have the right and are free to remain silent on any topic.

Contact information: What if you have questions? The student researcher encourages questions.

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact: James Macale at 415.452.5125 or jmacale@ccsf.edu or Dr. Alex Sanchez, School of Education at sancheza@oregonstate.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB), Human Protection Administrator, at (541) 737-4933 or e-mail at irb@oregonstate.edu

Sponsor: There will be no sponsorship to this research and is unfunded.

APPENDIX D

**APPROVAL
 NOTICE**

Date of Notification	08/20/2015		
Study ID	6342		
Study Title	The Second Chance Program - A Participatory Research with Formerly Incarcerated Community College Students		
Principal Investigator	Shelley Dubkin-Lee		
Study Team Members	James Macale, Alex Sanchez		
Submission Type	Continuing Review Application	Date Approved	08/20/2015
Level	Expedited	Category(ies)	6, 7
Number of Participants	12 <i>Do not exceed this number without prior IRB approval</i>		
Waiver(s)	Documentation of Informed Consent		
Risk Level for Children	N/A		
Funding Source	None	PI on Grant or Contract	N/A
Proposal #	N/A	Cayuse #	N/A

The above referenced study was reviewed and approved by the OSU Institutional Review Board (IRB).

EXPIRATION DATE: 08/19/2016

Annual continuing review applications are due at least 30 days prior to expiration date

Documents included in this review:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol | <input type="checkbox"/> Recruiting tools | <input type="checkbox"/> Translated documents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consent forms | <input type="checkbox"/> Test instruments | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment B: Human materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assent forms | <input type="checkbox"/> Attachment A: Radiation | <input type="checkbox"/> Grant/contract |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative assent | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letters of support | <input type="checkbox"/> External IRB approvals | |

Comments: Study closed to enrollment; data analysis only.

Principal Investigator responsibilities for fulfilling the requirements of approval:

- All study team members should be kept informed of the status of the research.
- Any changes to the research must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to the activation of the changes. **This includes, but is not limited to, increasing the number of subjects to be enrolled.** Failure to adhere to the approved protocol can result in study suspension or termination and data stemming from protocol deviations cannot be represented as having IRB Approval.
- Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others must be submitted to the IRB within three calendar days.
- Only consent forms with a valid approval stamp may be presented to participants.
- Submit a continuing review application or final report to the IRB for review at least four weeks prior to the expiration date. Failure to submit a continuing review application prior to the expiration date will result in termination of the research, discontinuation of enrolled participants, and the submission of a new application to the IRB.