

AN ANALYSIS OF THE POSTPRISON EMPLOYMENT
PROBLEM OF MALE ADULTS IN THE GREATER LANSING
MICHIGAN AREA

Thesis for the Degree of M. S.
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and

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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF THE POSTPRISON EMPLOYMENT PROBLEM OF MALE ADULTS IN THE GREATER LANSING MICHIGAN AREA

By

Vincent A. Apruzzese and Gordon N. Zelez

The role of citizen participation is critical to the corrections effort, to the proper functioning of the criminal justice system, and to the ultimate success and worth of our American society as a whole. Despite any degree of success which our correctional system purports to achieve with individuals within the system, the ultimate and meaningful test of its societal success occurs when an offender is released from incarceration and attempts to assume or resume a normal life in society.

The importance of immediate and continuing employment for the released offender cannot be overstated. The authors feel that unemployment may very well be the principal cause of recidivism and that the acquisition of employment is a critical step toward the successful rehabilitation of each released offender.

The authors believe that a favorable public attitude, coupled with the knowledge by the corrections

sub-system of this fact, is vital to a released offender's success with regard to the acquisition of immediate, self-satisfying, and gainful employment.

The primary purpose of this study was to identify and examine the attitudes of employers in the Greater Lansing, Michigan area vis-a-vis the hiring of adult male released offenders. Additionally, to identify and evaluate what personnel in the criminal justice system in the same geographical area, believed these attitudes to be. Moreover, to determine what specific measures were necessary to favorably change or modify existing employer attitudes, in order to coincide with correctional philosophy and rehabilitative programs within the Greater Lansing area.

In addition to the above, seven ancillary purposes were developed in order to enhance the overall value of the study and to provide a degree of insight into peripheral aspects of the problem.

The research reported herein is primarily correlational, or descriptive, and is intentionally focused on the existing relationships among released offenders, employers, and those correctional programs designed to assist released offenders in the acquisition of gainful employment. A descriptive type questionnaire consisting of 30 items was utilized as the basic vehicle for the collection of data. A total of 360 questionnaires, 180 each to employers and criminal justice personnel, were

distributed on a stratified random sample basis within the Greater Lansing area.

The questionnaire was specifically designed to provide data input in three separate and distinct categories: (1) general knowledge and opinions regarding the criminal justice system; (2) existing and past attitudes and policies toward the hiring of released offenders; and (3) personal data to be used as variables for evaluating survey findings. Those randomly selected to complete the questionnaire were requested to render their personal, honest, and biased opinions. All individual respondents to the survey were anonymous in order to insure the reliability and statistical sufficiency of the data received, and in order to concentrate on a detailed analysis and evaluation of the major study objectives.

A total of 246 (68.3%) usable questionnaires were returned; 121 (67.2%) from employers and 125 (69.4%) from criminal justice personnel. The authors attribute this high rate of usable returns primarily to the fact that virtually all of the questionnaires were personally delivered and handed to the respondents.

Although approximately forty significant findings resulted from this study, the following seven conclusions and recommendations briefly and generally summarize the most important of those significant findings.

Conclusion 1. Employment of released offenders is a serious problem which directly effects recidivism and has received little or no formal, organized attention in the Greater Lansing area.

Conclusion 2. If the criminal justice system in the Greater Lansing area can produce a released offender who is qualified to do a job, and a job vacancy exists, the employers are willing to provide employment.

Recommendation 1. Criminal justice personnel, particularly those working in corrections, should determine what skills and qualifications are needed by employers in the Greater Lansing area, and should exert every possible effort to provide the necessary training to offenders during incarceration.

Conclusion 3. Employers in the Greater Lansing area consider the purpose of prisons (and jails) to be rehabilitation and are willing to hire released offenders on an experimental basis.

Recommendation 2. Corrections personnel should identify the specific employers who have exhibited the willingness mentioned above, perhaps with the assistance of selected criminal justice students and faculty members from Michigan State University, in an effort to elicit their assistance not only for the ultimate employment of released

offenders, but also for any and all possible assistance which the employers might provide with training programs and the equipment necessary for such training.

Conclusion 4. Unions, licensing requirements and company policy do not constitute a barrier to offender employment as the criminal justice personnel believed.

Recommendation 3. Labor unions in the Greater Lansing area should be approached in an effort to determine what possible assistance they might render regarding the training and ultimate job placement of offenders.

Conclusion 5. Communications gaps exist among the five sub-sections of the criminal justice system addressed in this study as well as between the criminal justice system as a whole, and the businessmen in the Greater Lansing area.

Recommendation 4. Criminal justice personnel should exploit every possible means of insuring accurate communications among themselves in an effort to overcome compartmentalization.

Recommendation 5. Someone, possibly in the executive office of the Michigan Department of Corrections, should assume or be assigned the responsibility of initiating and maintaining close and continual coordination with the

businessmen in the Greater Lansing area. This responsibility should include discrete publicity campaigns to make businessmen aware that other employers have hired released offenders, and have had good experiences. These campaigns should utilize existing civic and businessman's groups and organizations to "sell their product."

Conclusion 6. Both released offenders and employers in the Greater Lansing area are relatively uninformed regarding each other.

Recommendation 6. An education program should be instituted for the purpose of informing offenders who are approaching release time of the relative importance which employers place on such things as: (a) attitude, (b) qualifications, (c) type of crime, (d) references, (e) parole officer assistance, (f) personal interview, (g) disclosure of the criminal record, (h) preference for hiring local personnel, and numerous other critical factors which this study revealed.

Recommendation 7. An education program should be instituted perhaps as part of Recommendation 5, for the purpose of informing employers of such factors as recidivism rates, cultural shock, and similar items which should ultimately

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provide employers with a better understanding
of the problem.

Conclusion 7. There is a need for additional research
regarding this problem in the Greater Lansing area.

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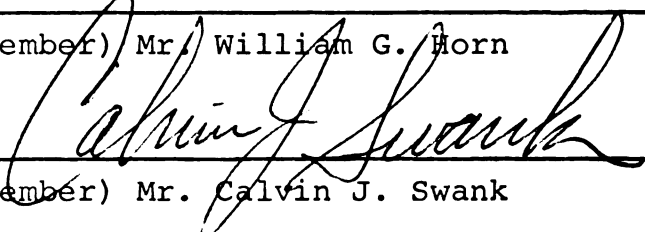
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the employers in the Greater Lansing area as an expression of our appreciation for their cooperation and assistance during the course of this study, and to the authors' hope that their future generosities will include support of correctional rehabilitative programs directed toward the resolution of the societal dilemma discussed herein.

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We wish to acknowledge our indebtedness to those who helped make this thesis possible.

To our employer, the United States Army, we extend special thanks and our deep appreciation for making this graduate education possible.

We are indeed grateful to the employers and criminal justice personnel throughout the Greater Lansing area who gave freely of their time to complete our questionnaire.

We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to the members of our thesis committee, Mr. William G. Horn, Mr. Calvin J. Swank, and particularly to our chairman, Doctor Robert C. Trojanowicz, for the encouragement, advice, and hours of personal assistance which he provided during the conduct of this study.

To our wives, Sandra and Lynne, and to our children, we extend special thanks for their untold hours of devotion, tolerance, and understanding.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Introduction

One of the basic tenets upon which our American form of government was founded is that of "liberty and justice for all." Today, nearly 200 years later, although there is little doubt as to the inherent social worth and democratic philosophy behind this fundamental concept, the citizens of our great nation are demanding its reality in fact. In this present era marked by phenomenal technological advances, rapid social change, and concomitant crime, significant and highly vocal segments of our society have identified the inadequacies of the past and present, and recognize the necessity for pragmatic solutions in order to achieve justice.¹

The riots and civil liberty issues of the 1960's starkly surfaced a myriad of social, economic, and political ills that have long plagued our nation, and ever increasingly pose serious threats to our very survival.

¹"Justice on Trial," Newsweek, March 8, 1971, p. 16.

Indeed, today as never before in the history of America, justice is on trial.²

Historically, Americans have looked upon the criminal justice system; the police, the courts, corrections; as the governmental instrument which would automatically provide a concept of equal justice to all. Unfortunately, the criminal justice system has proven to be an inefficient instrument to impose the good life on others. It is too overburdened to deliver more than the roughest justice--and too ragged really to be called a system. In effect we have a non-system, marked in time by total neglect, attempting to accomplish miracles, and barely able to tread water, while societal concern deepens and governmental demands multiply. The system is in trouble, and Americans have only slowly begun to awaken as to their personal responsibility vis-a-vis putting justice right.³

In 1967, the President's Crime Commission rendered an in-depth study and analysis of law enforcement and the administration of justice.⁴ Subsequent to these reports, innumerable authors have proffered similar views and recommendations concerning problems of crime and injustice

²Ibid.

³Ibid., pp. 16-17.

⁴President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967).

throughout America. Most of the remedies proposed thus far, although certainly needed, are long range in terms of complete implementation, and even then cannot be viewed as a panacea. Generally they entail more funds, more manpower, increased education and training, law reform, and an overall improvement in the quantity and quality of the criminal justice system. Remarkably, however, one of the most significant and critical recommendations proposed has gone virtually unnoticed. In 1968, in his inaugural address, President Nixon touched on this when he said,

We are approaching the limits of what government alone can do (to reduce crime and provide justice), we must reach beyond the government and enlist the legions of the concerned and the committed. The tradition of this nation is founded on the voluntary participation of its citizens in solving great problems.⁵

The significance of the President's remarks relate to yet another basic tenet of our constitution and to that of our very heritage--the concept of "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." Here is where the real answer lies. The criminal justice system is not organized, equipped, or capable of insuring justice. It is only through the concerted dedication of all agencies, public and private, coupled with the direct involvement and cooperation of all citizens, that we can

⁵Leland Stewart and Wentworth Clarke, Priorities for the 70's--Crime (New York: John Day Company, Inc., 1971), p. 77.

hope to reduce and eventually control crime, thereby insuring equal justice under the law.⁶

It is readily apparent that the criminal justice system is merely an extension and useful tool of the society which it serves. It was designed and given life to do no more. The ultimate control of crime and the provision of equal justice; however, depends to a large extent on the interaction and cooperation between the total community and the criminal justice system. The total reliance on the criminal justice system to deal with these problems is totally unrealistic in that it imposes an impossible burden on a societal institution, ill-equipped to cope with the tasks involved. Moreover, it admits a public refusal to face the fact that wide-spread crime and injustice implies a failure by the whole of our society.⁷

It is basic, well documented logic that the best way to control injustice is through prevention. In this regard, the sub-systems within the criminal justice institution have very real and meaningful functions to perform. The police, and to a lesser extent, the courts, have clearly defined roles and missions, relatively unchanged by time. Conversely, the corrections sub-system has been marked by obscurity and only in the recent past has it recognized its potential contributions in the area of

⁶Ibid., pp. 77-78.

⁷Ibid.

prevention--when the long-standing correctional philosophy changed from that of punishment to rehabilitation. It is significant to note that this basic change in philosophy has not been unanimously embraced by the public, or even within the corrections sub-specialty field itself. Many Americans today, professionals, intellectuals, et al., still ascribe to the archaic notion that by hurting, humiliating, and harassing offenders we can somehow morally and socially improve them. Moreover, there remains a segment of our society that knows it does not favor punishment, yet remains unsure as to the functional efficacy and overall value of rehabilitation. It is a truism, however, that all our citizenry agree that when a prisoner is released from incarceration--"he should be better off than when he went in."⁸

The years ahead will bear witness to the success or failure of the contemporary philosophy of rehabilitation. The writers contend that correctional emphasis and dedication toward this philosophy can be fruitful only if all Americans realize its impact relative to our unified quest for justice and join together to work as an integrated team.

⁸Statement by Professor W. A. Goldberg, Ph. D., ACSW, in a lecture presented to a class studying the Administration of Correctional Institutions, at Michigan State University, October 25, 1971.

Statement of the Problem

At any one time, about one quarter million persons in the United States are serving sentences in state and federal prisons. We know that 99 per cent are released, most within a year. But what no one knows is how many are rearrested and confined again, or even how soon the average rearrest occurs. More importantly, there is a total lack of empirical evidence as to what can be done to reduce the probability that released prisoners will commit another crime.⁹ It is a common mistaken belief that recidivism reflects the failure of the corrections sub-system. It is clearly evident, however, that the incidence of crime is not simply a function of penal practice. There is no evidence that the volume or rate of crime is so related to correctional policy that it is dependent upon, and varies with, changes in correctional programs and practices.

A considerable amount of evidence is available, however, which reveals that the amount and rates of crime are related to such factors as: the density and size of the community population; the age, sex, and racial composition of the population; the economic status and relative stability of the population; the strength and efficiency of the police force; and even seasonal weather

⁹Daniel Glaser, The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1964), p. 3.

conditions. All these things are outside and beyond the control of penal administration. To attribute an increase in crime to corrections policy is therefore like holding an umbrella responsible for the rainfall. We therefore conclude that recidivism reflects a failure of society rather than the failure of the correctional sub-system. It is another common misconception that approximately two-thirds of the men released from prison are ultimately reimprisoned. Calculating the rate of recidivism is a totally undeveloped science. A multitude of errors present themselves in even the most scholarly of attempted calculations. The plain fact is that no one really knows the true extent of recidivism.¹⁰ For the purpose of this study, the exact rate of recidivism is unimportant. Of more pertinent significance, is the generalization that recidivism is excessive and that it can be reduced substantially through the implementation of effective rehabilitative programs.

In recent years there have been substantive developments toward this very end. A host of innovative programs, techniques, and ideas have permeated the milieu of corrections. Some of these include; the increased use of parole, halfway houses, and work release programs, to mention just a few. All such efforts have two basic factors in common. They all appear to be sound based

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 13-35.

upon their initial success rates, and of particular importance, their ultimate success will depend largely upon the extent of support and cooperation by the public.

The role of citizen participation is critical to the corrections effort, and as mentioned heretofore, to the entire criminal justice system and society as a whole. Each time a citizen fails to report an offense, declines to take common sense precautions against crime, is disrespectful to a peace officer, shirks his duty as a juror, or refuses to employ a technically qualified individual because he is a past offender, he contributes his mite to crime.¹¹

Despite any degree of success which the criminal justice system purports to achieve with persons within the system, the ultimate and meaningful test of its societal success occurs when the offenders are released from incarceration and attempt to assume or resume a normal life in society.

It appears that an individual's real punishment may well begin when he leaves prison and attempts to return to a position or role guaranteed him by our Founding Fathers in consonance with the rhetoric of our Constitution. The kind of climate that society provides and maintains for the released offender is critical to the concepts of individual liberty and justice. As the released prisoner

¹¹ Stewart and Clarke, op. cit., p. 89.

departs imprisonment, the question of societal acceptance or rejection is the basic issue of consequence, and it weighs heavily on his mind. Quite naturally, the physical needs for food, shelter, and clothing are of continual importance. Of over-riding importance to his successful rehabilitation, however, is the oft-times elusive achievement of social acceptance by his fellow man.¹²

With regard to the acquisition of his physical and social needs, the ex-prisoner is dependent upon money earned while incarcerated, his savings, any support provided by family and friends, and employment. Prison systems normally provide minimal essentials, a suit of clothing, a bus ticket, and perhaps a few dollars to start him on his way. Numerous studies and opinions of leading correctional authorities assert that this period immediately following release, is the single most critical phase which will ultimately determine whether a man will become a recidivist.¹³

The importance of immediate and continuing employment for the released offender cannot be overstated. As a consequence, it is senseless for prisons throughout America to exert major efforts to train prisoners when and where no programs exist to assist them in gainful

¹²Norman C. Colter, "The Feasibility of Instituting Subsidization of the Released Inmate" (unpublished Master's thesis, Michigan State University, 1970), pp. 1-2.

¹³Ibid., pp. 2-6.

employment.¹⁴ Further, it is indeed tragic, and costly, both socially and monetarily, for our prison system to train men to develop skills that are not in demand by the agricultural, commercial, and industrial sectors of our society. It is essential that organizations, both public and private, and individuals as well, involve themselves actively in the task of reintegrating offenders into the life style and stream of community living.¹⁵

The writers feel that unemployment may very well be the principal cause of recidivism. Certainly, the kind of job a person holds, determines to a large extent, the style of life he leads. This is true not merely because employment and income are directly related, but also because work is a major prerequisite in terms of social position and acceptance, both in the eyes of others and of himself. Accordingly, it is essential that employment for released offenders be awarded its rightful place of emphasis in the overall goals and objectives of the correctional process.¹⁶

This study will serve to critically examine the problems related to postprison employment and discuss

¹⁴ Stewart and Clarke, op. cit., p. 80.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 77-78.

¹⁶ President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, Task Force Report: Corrections (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 32, citing Glaser, op. cit., pp. 328-329.

existing obstacles and dilemmas concerning this crucial phase in the rehabilitative process.

Purpose of the Study

Employment for released offenders has been shown to be critical to their successful rehabilitation. This assertion cannot be denied when we know, pragmatically, that gainful employment is an important and necessary criterion in evaluating adequate life adjustment in American society. It involves an economic factor which expects the individual to provide the basic necessities of life for himself and his dependents. It also has a psychological component which suggests that an individual's personal worth is directly related to his ability to earn money and accumulate wealth. Thus, there is a sociological expectation that views employment as a necessary form of social behavior. The social emphasis on employment also permeates the rehabilitative philosophy of corrections.¹⁷

The writers believe that a favorable public attitude, coupled with the knowledge by the corrections subsystem of this fact, is vital to a released offender's need and success with regard to the acquisition of immediate, self-satisfying, and gainful employment.

¹⁷James J. Ryan and others, "Offender Employment Resource Survey" (unpublished report prepared by the Minnesota Department of Corrections, January, 1966), p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

The primary purpose of this study is to identify and examine the attitudes of employers in the Greater Lansing, Michigan area vis-a-vis the hiring of adult male released offenders. Additionally, to identify and evaluate what personnel in the criminal justice system, working, instructing, and studying in the same geographical area, believe these employer attitudes to be. The critical question that follows, logically, is whether the employers' attitudes are in fact what criminal justice personnel think they are? And if not, as the writers suspect, the results of this study will serve to reveal empirical data that can be utilized to bridge an existing communication gap in order to resolve a major societal problem area while working together on a knowledgeable basis as an integrated team.

Moreover, of particular importance once these employer attitudes are identified, what can be done, if necessary, to favorably change or modify these attitudes in order to coincide with correctional philosophy and existing or proposed rehabilitative programs within the Greater Lansing area.

In addition to those discussed above, the writers have developed a number of ancillary purposes which, in our opinion, will substantively contribute to the overall value of the study and provide a degree of insight into peripheral areas of the problem which can be utilized as a starting point for additional research. These ancillary

purposes are as follows: (a) to ascertain the varying degrees of leniency of employers with regard to past and present hiring practices involving released offenders; (b) to determine the extent of employer knowledge regarding correctional philosophy, employment programs, and employment opportunities for released offenders; (c) to discuss the rehabilitative ramifications of inconsistencies between actual employer attitudes and criminal justice personnel predictions; (d) to reveal the extent of job opportunities available for released offenders in the subject area; (e) to examine and discuss the degree of applicability of research findings in the Greater Lansing area to other similar geographical areas and the national problem of released offender employment; (f) to draw meaningful conclusions based upon study results and propose recommendations which will serve to facilitate the availability of adequate job opportunities for released offenders; (g) to design the study methodology in a manner which will best illustrate the dire necessity for a total community effort in order to eliminate or minimize the problem of postprison employment.

Scope of the Study

The problem of postprison employment is both national and international in scope. In the United States it exists at all demographic, geographic, and political levels (city, county, state, regional), and even in small

municipalities and rural areas. In fact, even when a man is released from a local lock-up, he is confronted with the identical problem of seeking, acquiring, and maintaining gainful employment.

While the importance of employment to rehabilitation is generally accepted, as of this date the problem from the aspect or viewpoint of the employer has been studied only to an extremely limited degree.¹⁸ Accordingly, the subject of employer attitudes in the Greater Lansing, Michigan area, is the major concern and specific scope of this study.

This particular geographical area was selected for the following major reasons: (a) a study of this nature has never been conducted in this area; (b) released prisoners entering this locale emanate from federal, state, and county correctional institutions and facilities; (c) the composition of the society is diverse and truly representative of numerous other communities throughout the United States (e.g., ethnic, social and economic classes, employment diversification, industrial, agricultural, and commercial composition, education, population density, as well as many similar factors); (d) choice of the writers due to immediate availability, limitations in terms of time and money, and personal preference.

¹⁸J. P. Martin, Offenders as Employees (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1962), pp. 1-2.

In view of the above, it is understood that empirical conclusions and generalizations obtained as a result of this study cannot be totally applied beyond the limits of the defined Greater Lansing, Michigan area. At the same time, however, the writers assert that the implications derived from the study can, indeed, be applied in varying degrees of applicability, to other similar geographical areas, and perhaps to employers, criminal justice personnel, and citizens throughout America. Certainly, the survey results, conclusions, and recommendations contained within this study can be utilized as a basis for additional research and findings throughout our society as a whole.

Definition of Terms Used

Adult. A person who has reached the age of maturity. For the purpose of this study, the exact age is 18 or over, in accordance with Michigan law.

Attitude. An attitude is one's position or manner indicative of feeling, an opinion or intention toward a person or thing.

Employment. This term is used in its broadest sense. Simply stated, employment is the state of being engaged in the performance of work duties for which a salary or other form of compensation is received.

Expiration of Sentence. The specific time when an offender is permanently and unconditionally discharged from a prison or jail. It entails neither selection for

eligibility nor supervision in the community as do parole and mandatory release.¹⁹

Greater Lansing Area. This is a specific geographical area within the State of Michigan. For the purposes of this study, it is comprised of the cities of Lansing and East Lansing, and the nine surrounding townships as portrayed on the map provided in Appendix A.²⁰

Incarceration. This term is meant to indicate the state of being confined or imprisoned. Persons on parole, probation, or other forms of moral restraint are not included within the term.

Mandatory Release. A form of release sometimes referred to as conditional release. This form of release, as the term implies, is mandatory by statute, and occurs when the accumulated good conduct time and other extra institutional credits are deducted from the date of expiration of sentence.²¹

Offender. For the purpose of this study, an offender is any person who passed through a sequence of arrest by a police agency and was subsequently sentenced by a court. This term includes a person convicted of a

¹⁹American Correctional Association, Manual of Correctional Standards (Washington: The Association, 1966), p. 115.

²⁰Information provided to the authors by the Lansing, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, April 29, 1972.

²¹American Correctional Association, op. cit., p. 114.

misdemeanor or a felony. An individual is considered to be an offender even though the court may have suspended his sentence.

Parole. This term is defined as the post-institutional care of a released offender which is legally compulsory and usually lasts for an extended period of time. It is a period of qualified freedom for the offender, based on the assumption that, on the one hand, he no longer needs to be incarcerated, but on the other, is not yet prepared to assume a full role in society without a trial period of observation and supervision.

Prison. A place of confinement or physical restraint utilized to provide for the safe custody and rehabilitation of offenders. For the purpose of this study, the physical facilities include federal and state institutions as well as county jails.

Probation. A method of rehabilitating an offender whereby he is granted qualified freedom rather than incarceration. This status is similar to parole in that the offender is placed under correctional supervision for a legally prescribed period of time.

Recidivism. The habitual or chronic relapse, or tendency to relapse, into crime or antisocial behavior patterns. For the purposes of this study it includes all offenders who have been sentenced by a court and subsequently commit another offense or violate the conditions of parole or probation.

Released Offender. For the purposes of this study, this term is limited to an individual who was previously incarcerated in a prison or county jail and has subsequently been released as a result of expiration of sentence, mandatory release, or parole. The term is not meant to include those persons who have received suspended sentences or have been granted probation.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

In order to insure a thorough understanding of the study and direct the reader's attention to the many factors which have a significant bearing on the problem, Chapter II is devoted to a detailed discussion and explanation of the postprison employment problems of male adults, primarily in the United States. Included therein is a brief summary of the most significant findings and related implications of several of the more important studies which have been previously conducted as well as a general review of the literature directly related to the problem. Chapter III is concerned primarily with the methodology which was employed to acquire the data for this study, to include the writers' justification for its particular direction and overall intent. Chapter IV is devoted to a compilation of the results of this study and to a detailed analysis and evaluation of the data which were acquired. Chapter V provides a summary of the writers' conclusions and recommends specific actions for correctional

officials which should alleviate the problem in the Greater Lansing area. Finally, the implications, as well as the overall value of the study are discussed and specific recommendations for additional research are made.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Correctional researchers and authors generally agree that gainful employment is of critical importance to the rehabilitation of offenders. The lack of employment opportunities is one of the most serious and frequently formidable obstacles which confronts an offender attempting to establish or re-establish a normal, non-criminal role in society.²² This is particularly true for offenders who have been incarcerated in correctional institutions. Despite the fact that most of the voluminous correctional literature acknowledges the problem, it was surprising to find that virtually all of the literature merely mentions the problem in passing. That small amount of literature which exclusively addresses the employment of released offenders is almost totally included in the bibliography. Other than Martin²³ and

²²President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, Task Force Report: Corrections, op. cit., p. 32.

²³Martin, op. cit.

Lykke,²⁴ no one has seen fit to devote an entire book to the problem. Although Glaser²⁵ devoted fifty pages to various aspects of the problem, he relied heavily upon articles extracted from periodicals and unpublished works; for that is where the majority of the pertinent literature exists.

Although interest in the employment of released offenders was documented as early as 1562, the first literature appeared in the 1930's.²⁶ Since that time a great deal of literature has been generated; unfortunately, most of it is redundant. In effect, instead of having forty years worth of literature, we have one year's worth of literature forty times. This remark should not be construed as a criticism of those authors. It is merely meant to emphasize the paucity of pertinent literature on such a critical problem.

To a great degree the redundancy of literature can be attributed to the pragmatic purposes and needs of the individual authors and the specific communities involved. Funding and time elements have obviously taken their toll. Unfortunately, this thesis was beset by the same

²⁴Arthur F. Lykke, *Parolees and Payrolls* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Company, 1957).

²⁵Glaser, op. cit.

²⁶Robert W. Pryor, "Offender Employment Research" (unpublished paper presented to the School of Police Administration and Public Safety, Michigan State University, 1969), p. 7.

limitations, and as a result, the scope of the study by necessity was limited to the Greater Lansing area.

Many of the authors who have contributed original research, represented, and were funded by, government agencies at all levels including city governments. Their efforts were apparently ultimately aimed toward combining the existing knowledge with the results of their particular study in order to implement or improve their own correctional and rehabilitative programs.

As a consequence, it appears initially that the applicability of those studies is limited primarily to those specific areas which they were designed to influence. This observation must be discarded, however, in favor of the likely possibility that the conclusions may well be applied in varying degrees to other geographic areas depending upon the size of the community, industrial and commercial composition, and similar factors. The ultimate implication of the research conclusions then, is realistically not one of applicability, but rather one of the degree of applicability.

The intent of this chapter is to examine the pertinent research findings concerning the employment of released offenders. In an effort to present these findings in a logical and meaningful sequence, the remainder of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the critical factors bearing on the problem and a capsulized review of the most significant findings of similar studies which have been conducted.

Magnitude of the Problem

In 1965 the average daily adult male population of state and federal prisons and county jails throughout the United States totaled 362,900. An additional 571,282 were under correctional supervision in the communities throughout the nation.²⁷

Approximately 99 per cent of those who are incarcerated in the United States are released, most of them within one year.²⁸ Every weekday an average of nearly two hundred inmates regain their freedom.²⁹ When this figure is multiplied by the number of weekdays in a year the sheer physical dimensions of the problem become apparent in all their stark reality.

Criticality of Employment

The kind of job a person holds determines to a large extent, the kind of life he leads.³⁰ This is true not merely because work and income are directly related, but also because employment is a major factor in an individual's position in the eyes of others and indeed of himself. Employment is therefore directly related to

²⁷President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, op. cit., p. 1.

²⁸Glaser, op. cit., p. 3.

²⁹Martin, op. cit., p. ix.

³⁰President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, op. cit., p. 32.

the goals of corrections.³¹ Glaser concluded that "unemployment may be among the principal causal factors in the recidivism of adult male offenders."³²

It is difficult for released offenders to find jobs. They are frequently poor, uneducated, and members of a minority group. They may have personal disabilities, behavior disorders, mental retardation, poor physical health, or overwhelming family problems.³³

A study of federal releasees conducted in 1959-60 showed that during the first month after release, only about one out of every four releasees was employed at least 80 per cent of the time, and three out of ten were unable to secure jobs. After three months only about four out of ten had worked at least 80 per cent of the time, and nearly two out of ten still had not been able to find employment of any type.³⁴

There are some indications, perhaps up until the last few years or so, that there have been retrogressions in employment opportunities for released offenders as a result of changes in job structures, increased emphasis

³¹Ibid.

³²Glaser, op. cit., p. 329.

³³President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, op. cit., p. 32.

³⁴Ibid., p. 32.

on education, and a compelling need for increased and improved security measures.³⁵ Other studies suggest that while there are formidable obstacles, there are also opportunities for increasing employment of offenders, if the parameters of the problem are understood and if specific information is available concerning the capabilities and limitations of the employing enterprises.³⁶

Stigmatization and Stereotypes

Approximately fifty years ago, Winston Churchill declared that the mood and temper of the public in regard to crime and criminals is one of the unfailing tests of the civilization of any country.³⁷

Unfortunately corrections is the part of the criminal justice system that the public sees the least and knows the least about. It seldom gets into the news unless there is a jail break, a prison riot, or a sensational scandal involving corruption or brutality, in an institution or by an official. For the most part institutions are located in remote rural areas or in the basements of police stations or courthouses. Offenders on parole are widely, and on the whole invisibly, dispersed

³⁵ Robert Evans, Jr., "The Released Offender In a Changing Labor Market," Industrial Relations (May, 1966), p. 61-63.

³⁶ Lykke, op. cit., p. 7.

³⁷ Karl Menninger, The Crime of Punishment (New York: Viking Press, Inc., 1968), p. 250.

throughout the communities. Corrections is not only hard to see, but traditionally, society has been reluctant to look at it. Many of the people with whom corrections deals are the most troublesome members of society; the misfits and the failures, the dishonorable and the irresponsible. Society has been well content to keep them out of sight.³⁸

That there is a definite stigma attached to those who have served prison sentences cannot be denied. Employers feel that they cannot place full confidence in an offender. The public, with the help of the news media (radio, TV, newspapers), the movies, and other sources, has formed a mental image of an offender just as it has formed stereotypes of college professors, Army officers and other classes of people. The stereotype of a released offender is not a flattering one. The public visualizes him as a grim-visaged, conniving type of individual, with a shaven head, low forehead, shifty eyes, and the habit of talking out of the corner of his mouth--a man usually "desperate" and "completely untrustworthy."³⁹

In his book, The Crime of Punishment, Menninger described the public attitude toward offenders in the following words:

We cast larger alms to the beggar; we put a new coat of paint on the slave quarters. We shine up the tools. But our heart is not in it. We don't

³⁸Colter, op. cit., p. 3.

³⁹Lykke, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

really care. Keep 'em out of our sight; keep 'em quiet. Let up on the brutality; feed 'em. Keep 'em busy, but watch 'em. Don't let 'em escape.

We don't love criminals. We hate them. We despise them. We regard them as disagreeable, dangerous failures. And we do not really believe, most of us, that they can be rehabilitated, that they can change for the better, or that it is worthwhile making the effort.⁴⁰

In 1942 MacCormick declared in his Handbook of American Prisons that "the success of the released prisoner in free life depends not only on his own attitude and effort but also on the degree to which society gives him the opportunity and the encouragement necessary to success."⁴¹

It is not too difficult to believe that a man's real punishment begins when he returns to society, and it is time all of us working, studying, and teaching within the criminal justice system become actively concerned with the kind of climate society maintains for the released prisoner.

Employment or Recidivism

It is generally accepted that released offenders are confronted by a considerable degree of "cultural shock." To transfer a man from a hermetically closed cell to the full liberty of the released offender, is like

⁴⁰Menninger, op. cit., pp. 242-243.

⁴¹Menninger, op. cit., pp. 240-241, citing Austin H. MacCormick (ed.), Handbook of American Prisons and Reformatories (5th ed.; Vol. II; New York: The Osborne Association, 1942), pp. 203-204.

making an invalid, who has been bedridden for several years, get up and go out to run in the open air.⁴²

The released offender reenters a world totally unlike the one he has been living in and also dissimilar to the one he left some years before. In his new world, aside from a few uneasy relatives and questionable friends, he is surrounded by hostility, suspicion, distrust, and dislike. He is a marked man--an ex-convict. Complex social and economic situations that proved too much for him before he went to prison have grown no simpler. The unequal tussle with "smarter," "nicer," and more successful people begins again. Proscribed for employment by many concerns, and usually unable to find new friends or ways of earning a living, he tries to survive. The first friendly face that such an individual is likely to see is that of some crony of the old days who has been waiting for some help to do a little "job."⁴³

The released offender has paid his debt to society, according to our system of justice, and is once again viewed as a human being, albeit a handicapped one at best. He needs all the things that the rest of us need and a little more. The man who has been in prison needs immediate and continual assistance; he suffers not only from whatever made him commit a crime in the first place, but

⁴²Martin, loc. cit.

⁴³Colter, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

he now has what the prison did to him, and in addition, all that society holds against former transgressors. He carries a heavy burden.⁴⁴

The first year, and especially the first six months, just the period when their rehabilitation experiences might be expected to have the greatest deterrent effect, have been shown many times and in many countries to be the period when the risk of reversion to crime is at its height. If a man does not know where he will eat or sleep, his anxiety is focused on survival and not on the other positive approaches to his re-establishment in society. Colter concluded that the resources available for material assistance are minimal, and barely serve to keep a man alive. This is the crucial period when half those destined to become recidivists, again run foul of the law.⁴⁵

Colter concluded that the majority of offenders leave prison with fifty dollars or less. He felt that this was not enough for bare existence or survival, considering the cost of food, clothing, shelter, and the support of his dependents. It should not be forgotten that many released offenders have old debts to pay, or debts incurred by their families during their imprisonment. Upon release their immunity from pressure to pay these

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 31-37.

debts ceases, and before they have even solved the problem of survival they are under pressure to pay up. Often their personal belongings or family furnishings have vanished, or have been used to eke out an existence for their dependents. In many cases even when the offender has a job to go to, it may be three or four weeks before he receives a full paycheck. Colter concluded that most offenders start out in the "red" and stay that way.⁴⁶

To most offenders doing time means losing time. Many men feel a driving need to make up for the lost years. So much of living has gone by, so much loss of earnings, so much employment, so much opportunity, that the tolerance for frustration can become minimal. There is an urge to acquire visible symbols of success, such as expensive watches and automobiles. Another manifestation is the desire for a "good front" depicted by stylish and expensive clothes. Unless things break right and quickly, the temptation is ever present to revert to known habit patterns and do it the easy way. Linked with this is often a "chip-on-the-shoulder" defensiveness, which expects discrimination, and projects it even to the most sincere helping efforts if they do not immediately produce the desired results.⁴⁷

Considering all of the foregoing it is evident that most offenders are not only insolvent the day they are

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

released, but they are also beset by a host of monumental problems. If reasonable provisions are not made for their needs at this critical point, we may well be leaving them in circumstances conducive to a return to crime.

Barriers to Employment

Unions

When viewed as a whole, the literature is replete with indications that labor union policies and regulations are a formidable barrier to offender employment. Obviously some unions have been hostile toward providing opportunities for offenders, and others have merely been indifferent to requests for assistance. However, where union and correction officials have attempted to discuss the problem and work toward solutions, the results have been gratifying. In the states of Connecticut, New York, Ohio, and Washington, unions have been found sympathetic to the employment of offenders, and some have taken positive steps to provide assistance. Several unions and national business firms have established training programs for offenders in institutions. With the use of donated machinery and equipment, inmates have acquired vocational skills and have acquired documented qualifications for use after release, and in many instances, the released offenders have been hired by the firms who helped in the establishment of the training programs.⁴⁸

⁴⁸President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, op. cit., p. 33.

The President's Crime Commission concluded that training programs offered either directly by unions or by employers with union approval, have been especially valuable in the development of positive relationships between correctional officials and employers.⁴⁹

In his book, Lykke devoted ten pages to the rehabilitative value of unions as placement offices for released offenders. He stated that in his experience he found very few union locals which would reject an applicant solely on the basis of a felony conviction. Lykke concluded that most rejections by unions were based on the offender's lack of the required skills, or experience, or on the absence of sufficient employment opportunities in the trade to warrant the admission of additional members.⁵⁰

Bonding

Several studies and newspaper accounts indicate that the difficulties which released offenders experience in obtaining bonds can be a substantial obstacle to employment in certain lines of endeavor. Bonding against theft by employees is a common practice in larger retail and service businesses, usually through blanket bonds covering all employees.⁵¹

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Lykke, op. cit., pp. 24-33.

⁵¹President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

Both employers and offenders often assume that all bonding automatically excludes individuals with criminal records, and some employers probably use bonding requirements as an excuse to turn away applicants with criminal records. In some cases, bonding requirements do automatically bar offenders, and in others offenders have difficulty in satisfying the bonding company of their reliability. The President's Crime Commission verified the belief that bonding is a problem for released offenders, particularly in clerical, sales, and commercial occupations.⁵²

Several research studies and experiments have been and are currently being conducted in an effort to indicate that the criteria for issuing bonds to people with criminal records should not be arbitrary and presumptive, but should be interpreted realistically in terms of a "whole man" test. Further, to show that government, foundation, or nonprofit organization financing of bonds is particularly effective in eliminating the bonding problem as a barrier to the employment of past offenders.⁵³

Licensing

As with bonding the same need for elimination of blanket or irrational restrictions on offenders exists with respect to regulatory and licensing laws relating to employment and other activities, ranging from law and

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid.

medicine to barbering and undertaking. Conviction of specific offenses may well be relevant in some cases to the protection of the public through such regulation. It is certainly relevant to the offenses they have committed to revoke the licenses of a lawyer convicted of embezzling the funds of clients, and a teamster convicted of vehicular homicide. But it is hard to see why, on the other hand, a man convicted of larceny should not be permitted to cut hair or run a restaurant.⁵⁴

Nonetheless, licensing laws and authorities usually do not confine restrictions to situations in which there is a rational connection between the offense and the practice of an occupation. Licensing laws, in many cases, are primarily revenue measures or products of pressure by unions or trade associations, in order to limit access to an occupation. In other instances they may indeed serve the purpose of protecting the public through the establishment of standards of competency and honesty, but they may well rely on excessively broad prohibitions to do so. Licensing authorities may interpret a general requirement such as "good moral character" as a flat proscription against all offenders. A general overhaul of all state and local licensing and employment regulations, to eliminate such irrational barriers, would greatly assist in the reintegration of offenders as useful citizens.⁵⁵

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid.

Traditionally, local and federal governmental agencies have barred offenders from employment. In doing so, they have raised serious questions about their commitment to the rehabilitative efforts of other public agencies and have set a conspicuously poor example for private employers.⁵⁶

Recently, the federal government has significantly modified its position. The Civil Service Commission will now accept applications from persons who have criminal records and will employ those offenders who are considered to be good risks. A number of state governments have recently revised their policies toward hiring offenders and numerous local governments are reexamining their existing policies. The new standards which are being implemented are based on individual evaluations of each applicant. Initial reports indicate that the experiences to date have been quite good.⁵⁷

Despite the fact that these steps are encouraging, much more progress needs to be made. Every level of government should revise its policies to provide offenders a reasonable opportunity to acquire gainful employment.

Disclosure of the Criminal Record

To whom, in what manner, and to what extent should the offender reveal his criminal record, if at all? This

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

is probably the most difficult problem to be faced by men leaving prison and seeking employment. The question is filled with emotion for all prisoners and most often increases in intensity according to the type and extent of criminal behavior each individual has to reveal or conceal, ranging from a comparative low in the once-arrested first offender sentenced on a minor charge, to extreme heights in those possessing long and serious police records with several penitentiary sentences. There are exceptions, though, even to this general statement; for there are minor offenders who are violently averse to revealing their single brush with the law, as there are men with long and serious records who seem casual about, or in some cases eager to be completely factual about their arrests and convictions. It apparently depends on the individual and his plans for, or fears of the future.⁵⁸

Lykke phrased the question in this simple fashion, "Should an offender reveal his record and probably have the door slammed shut in his face, or should he reveal it, get the job and the opportunity to prove his trustworthiness, so that the employer would have this to weigh against his record, should he later discover it?"⁵⁹

One of the fears an offender has regarding the revealing of his criminal record, is that it will not be handled in a confidential manner, but will become common

⁵⁸Lykke, op. cit., p. 74.

⁵⁹Ibid.

knowledge in the plant and next throughout the community. Lykke claims that in his experience he never met an employer who did not share the offenders feeling that such matters should be regarded as confidential, and kept from all except key personnel. Most employers will go to great lengths to protect this confidential material, often to the point of keeping "ultra-private" files in such cases.⁶⁰

What the individual offender prefers to say about his record to fellow-employees is, of course, his own business. Most men prefer to keep the matter secret to all, even to close associates.⁶¹

There is no question but that there are many types of jobs where employers never raise a question about criminal records. A man reports on the job-site, has skills which fill an existing vacancy, then simply rolls up his sleeves and goes to work.

Not all such jobs are of the unskilled or menial type, either. Many highly skilled construction workers, for example, may never feel any need to reveal such records, as often no questions are asked excepting those regarding the degree of skill or experience possessed. But it is also common knowledge that most large firms with well-organized and well-developed techniques for hiring new employees, are interested in knowing as much

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 75.

⁶¹Ibid.

as possible about all applicants. Many require the fingerprinting of every employee, airmailing the prints to the Department of Justice for a full report on police records, sometimes placing the applicant on temporary duty and sometimes simply deferring action until the report is received. Others have comprehensive application blanks which must be filled out in detail, with questions specifically referring to past criminal history. The work record section of these blanks are carefully studied, and if a period of one, two, or three years is not accounted for, the question is then raised as to why this period was left blank. For the man desirous of concealing his record, that leaves but one choice, to falsify the record for the period of time he was imprisoned. If and when this is discovered it does nothing to convince the employer of the applicant's trustworthiness. In fact, some employers consider this a serious offense.⁶²

As long as employers have the right to select their own employees by their own methods, job applicants must be prepared to meet the employer on the employer's terms, abiding by his rules and regulations. Not all employers want complete records nor do all situations require complete revelation of prior criminal records.⁶³

Lykke concluded that offenders should meet the problem in the following manner,

⁶²Ibid., p. 78.

⁶³Ibid., p. 80.

For stop-gap employment of an unskilled temporary nature, where no great responsibility or temptation is incurred, the offender should not mention the matter unless that specific information is requested; but when applying for a job that the offender wants very badly, and was particularly well suited to him, and all indications point to security, promotion, and permanence, the offender should reveal his criminal record whether or not it was requested. This should be done to lay the groundwork for mutual respect, as at least partial evidence of sincerity and good intentions, and lastly as a protection for the offenders future with that firm and that employer.⁶⁴

Significant Findings of Similar Studies

Considering that the employment of released offenders is such a key problem to correctional officials, it is amazing how little scientific research has been done in this field.⁶⁵ An exhaustive search of the pertinent literature revealed that only four studies were reasonably available to the writers of this thesis. In an effort to avoid redundancy and limit the physical bulk of this study to a manageable level it was decided that the Hayner and Rogers study would be discussed in detail and that only the significant differences in methodology and findings of the other studies would be mentioned.

The Hayner and Rogers Study⁶⁶

The purpose of this project was to survey the attitudes of employers in Washington State toward the

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Martin, op. cit., p. 1.

⁶⁶Norman S. Hayner and Joseph W. Rogers, "Attitudes of Employers Toward Hiring Parolees," Proceedings of the Eighty Eighth Annual Congress of Corrections (Washington: American Correctional Association, 1958), pp. 306-313.

hiring of parolees. The population studied was a statewide random sample of manufacturers stratified as to size of organization and type of industry. Copies of a questionnaire containing ninety items were mailed to 755 employers. Four hundred and eight questionnaires were used in the data analysis. Although 62 per cent of the questionnaires were returned, 8 per cent were not considered usable.

Eighty per cent of the employers would consider a parolee for employment. Thirteen per cent of those willing to hire a parolee, indicated that this was a matter of fixed company policy. Eighty-nine per cent of the respondents believed that a parolee must be judged by his present actions rather than by his past mistakes. Seventeen employers commented that they would want to make a special study of each case before deciding whether or not to hire.

Seventeen per cent of the employers would not consider a parolee for employment. Three per cent did not answer the question. Twenty-seven per cent of the combined "no" and no-answer groups agreed that "My particular type of business precludes their employment," 20 per cent checked "I don't feel that I could ever trust them," and 18 per cent checked "I have had unsatisfactory experience with them in the past." Thirty-eight per cent of those unwilling to hire a parolee, indicated that this was a matter of fixed company policy. One respondent remarked: "we consider that a newspaper is no place for

a person with a criminal record." Another stated: "We feel that a parolee would have a better chance where his work and social life are not as closely associated as in a very small town."

The study revealed that 27 per cent of the employers had hired persons knowing at the time that those individuals had parole records. On the other hand, 25 per cent had hired persons not knowing at the time that they had parole records.

A question was asked about the types of positions for which an employer would knowingly hire a parolee if he were qualified. Fourteen per cent said they would hire for administrative positions, 33 per cent said they would not, and 53 per cent gave no answer. An average of 24 per cent said "yes" for professional, office, sales, and foreman positions; 26 per cent, "no"; 50 per cent, no answer. For skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled positions, there were the most "yes" answers, averaging 66 per cent; for the "no" response there was an average of 10 per cent; no answer, 24 per cent.

When evaluating an offender for possible hiring, the employers rated each of 26 offenses. Three degrees of intensity were used: (1) This offense makes little difference (it is of minor consequence); (2) Unfavorable to employment, but might hire anyway (it is of some consequence); (3) Would not hire under any circumstances (it is of great consequence). Only three offenses were rated "of

great consequence" by less than 20 per cent of the employers--joy riding (defined as temporary auto theft), simple assault, and petty larceny. In contrast, reaction against four offenses--narcotics selling, child molesting (under age 15), forcible rape, and murder--was so strong that 70 per cent, or more, of the employers would not hire under any circumstances. Three more--homosexuality, habitual drunk arrests, and narcotics using--received 50 to 70 per cent of the ratings in the great-consequence category. It is interesting to note that three of these strong-negative-reaction crimes are sex offenses, two are other crimes against persons, and two are "crimes against self." None of them are crimes against property. These statistics are particularly interesting when recidivism rates indicate that murderers have excellent and sex offenders have reasonably good chances for success on parole. For these cases the high percentage of success is not, by itself, an adequate criterion for parole selection.

The study also revealed that many employers felt that the offense was the "key factor." "Hiring a parolee depends on the type of crime," wrote one employer. "We would not hire anyone if we knew he was of violent temper, a murderer, embezzler, burglar, or a molester of women." In another organization "repeated morals offenses preclude placement on some jobs from company policy." For still another firm: "I am strongly opposed to rape cases and

more so against narcotics sellers." Strong negative reactions against recidivists were noted by several. Examples include: "The fact that so many criminals are repeaters makes it difficult for all parolees," and "Would not consider a 'two-time loser'."

Seven per cent of the employers required of job applicants a history of their arrests, while 8 per cent required the complete criminal record; but, significantly, 52 per cent asked for neither. In fact only 37 per cent maintained either a work record or a personnel file on each employee. In 5 per cent of the firms all employees were required to have a surety bond; in 25 per cent, some of them; and 68 per cent, none. Lykke has pointed out that although as a rule, bonding companies do not wish to bond parolees, they do "consider applications from them and give them every consideration warranted by all the circumstances." Lykke quotes from a bulletin, mailed from the national headquarters of the association of bonding companies, to the effect that "probably every surety company has fidelity bonded some known offenders under circumstances of full disclosure of the facts, independent investigation, and the exercise of underwriting judgment and techniques in the specific cases."

It was discovered that labor union membership was required for all employees by 18 per cent of the industries studied; for some employees, by 33 per cent; not at all, by 48 per cent. One respondent remarked; "we are

a small firm and have to hire union help, or can hire men and they have to join the union, so the union attitude would have a good deal to do with the men we might hire."

The study revealed that once an employer had learned that an employee had a criminal record, 48 per cent believed that this information was simply between him and the offender; 34 per cent would share it with a select group of department heads; 8 per cent would give it to department heads on down to include foremen; but only 4 per cent believed that it should be made public to all co-workers. If other employees had knowledge of a prior criminal record, 38 per cent of the employers thought that the co-workers would discriminate against the parolee, and 51 per cent thought they would not. If an employer had hired a parolee and the other workers failed to accept him, only 5 per cent would discharge the parolee. Forty-three per cent would attempt to change the attitudes of their employees; 33 per cent would take no immediate action, waiting to see if the situation would straighten itself out; while 12 per cent would, if possible, place the employee in another work group.

A significant finding was that if an employer had hired a man who proved to be a satisfactory employee, later discovering that he was a parolee, only 1 per cent would be likely to discharge him. Ninety-six per cent indicated that they would not be likely to discharge him. Furthermore, if an individual with a known criminal record

had been hired and had shown skill, stability, and leadership potential, only 2 per cent of the employers would bar him from advancement in their firms. Ninety-four per cent would not bar him.

If a person with a criminal record applied to an employer for work 11 per cent stated that they preferred that the knowledge of the record come to their attention only from the offender himself; 3 per cent, only from a professional such as a parole officer; 36 per cent from the applicant first and later from the parole officer; 10 per cent from the parole officer first and the applicant later; 34 per cent from both, but "it doesn't make any difference who tells me first," stated one respondent. When evaluating him as a potential employee, a parolee's actual work experience in prison was considered an asset by 69 per cent of the firms in the study. Twenty per cent thought it was not an asset.

The relative importance of six items bearing on the employer's decision to hire a parolee was studied. It was found that sympathy was not considered important; scarcity of applicants, not too important; desire to aid in rehabilitation, letters and statements of recommendation, and references whom an employer may contact personally, important; qualifications to do the job, most important.

Sixty-seven per cent of the employers had never had personal contact with a parole officer regarding job placements. Seventeen per cent had seldom contact; 12

per cent, occasionally; less than 1 per cent, often. Of the employers who had contact, 52 per cent reacted favorably to the officer; 38 per cent were undecided about their reactions; 10 per cent reacted unfavorably. Seventy-eight per cent of the employers had never had contact with members of a parolee's family regarding a possible job for him. Twelve per cent had seldom contact; 5 per cent occasionally; only one employer, often. Reactions to these contacts were somewhat less favorable than to the officers. The percentages were 46 per cent favorable to the relatives; 37 per cent, undecided; 18 per cent, unfavorable.

Hayner and Rogers concluded that a large proportion of manufacturers were willing to consider the employment of parolees. This willingness was tempered by the type of offense, the job qualifications, and the level of entry position. The employer sample made it clear that most of them were not interested in parolees who were convicted of narcotics selling, child molesting, violent rape, or murder; that they consider a man's ability to do a satisfactory job of primary importance; and that the parolee must be willing to start with a lower-echelon position.

The fact that two-thirds of the employers had never had personal contact with a parole officer suggested a job to be done in public relations. However, 95 per cent of the employers who had experienced favorable contacts with parole officers indicated that they would consider hiring a parolee--a finding of considerable potential. When

information about the criminal is given, four out of five of them want it from both the parolee and the parole officer. It seemed obvious therefore, that field and institutional parole officers are in a position to supply employers with pertinent facts and prognoses about parolees. Some of the parolees least likely to be considered by manufacturers may actually be worthwhile risks. The final conclusion was of special significance to parolees. It was discovered that practically all employers respect the confidential nature of an individual's criminal record.

The Minnesota Study⁶⁷

This study was conducted in 1965 by the Minnesota Department of Corrections in an effort to develop a more efficient placement program. The specific aims of the study were:

- (a) To determine the attitude of employers toward hiring parolees and probationers;
- (b) To locate job openings available for placement of offenders;
- (c) To survey the skills which employers require of employees;
- (d) To determine peak employment seasons;
- (e) To determine what employers' experiences with employment of offenders has been; and
- (f) To inform employers about the potential manpower resource available in the offender group, and acquaint them with the correctional program in the state.

Because it was not economically feasible to survey all employers in the state, it was necessary to develop a selection procedure which would yield data representative

⁶⁷Ryan and others, op. cit.

of the major types of businesses with which the job placement program was most concerned. These selection criteria were:

- (a) Business must be located in or adjacent to areas of population concentrations of not less than 2,500. This would minimize problems in arranging for the transportation and living situations of the offenders;
- (b) Business must have no less than 25 employees since those with fewer employees would not usually yield significant numbers of job opportunities;
- (c) Businesses such as banks, loan offices, detective agencies, and others, where employment often precludes hiring of felons because of the security risk involved, were excluded;
- (d) Businesses where employees were predominantly female were excluded since job finding for female offenders was not a current problem;
- (e) Businesses whose personnel hiring practices were determined in out-of-state headquarters were also excluded. It was felt that developing job opportunities in these businesses would be too time consuming; and
- (f) Businesses which had recently indicated unwillingness to employ offenders were excluded.

The businesses which were surveyed were classified into eight categories based on the U. S. Census of 1960. They are as follows:

- (a) Manufacturing of durable and non-durable goods, and food processing;
- (b) Construction--Engineering--Mining;
- (c) Transportation--Warehousing;
- (d) Public Utilities;
- (e) Wholesale trade;
- (f) Retail trade;
- (g) Business, personal, and repair services; and
- (h) Other.

A total of 3843 questionnaires were mailed to the businesses. Of the 1021 which were returned, 983 (25.6%) were usable. Automatic data processing was utilized to compile the results of the study.

Almost 40 per cent of the employers indicated at least a general reluctance to hire offenders for any position. Another 28 per cent would hire them for specific jobs only. Only 10 per cent of the respondents indicated that they had some degree of formal written restrictions against hiring offenders, although approximately 64 per cent who had no formal restrictions expressed reluctance in hiring offenders. Approximately 40 per cent of the firms were "closed shops" requiring union memberships for employment. There appeared to be a direct relationship between the severity of offenses and employers unwillingness to hire offenders. Sexual and assaultive offenses, as might be expected, ranked highest in offenses which employers indicated were barriers to employment. Almost 57 per cent of the respondents had employed offenders in the past and approximately 24 per cent now had offenders in their employ. There was general agreement that offenders whom respondents had employed performed satisfactorily on the job as well as in the community. Perhaps the most encouraging finding of the study was that 62 per cent of the respondents were willing to meet with Department of Corrections representatives and discuss the possibility of offender employment.

The Louisiana Study⁶⁸

This study was conducted in 1955 by the Louisiana Department of Institutions in an effort to establish a practical and realistic vocational training program for prisoners.

It was assumed that the best opportunities for stable, long-term employment could best be found in certain manufacturing industries. The study, therefore, was aimed at estimating the overall attitudes and specific vocational needs of employers in the manufacturing industries. The specific purpose of the study was to gain an approximation of the industries and occupations in which released offenders might best gain steady employment in order that prison administrators might plan and adjust their vocational training programs accordingly.

A total of 2,126 questionnaires were mailed to employers. Only 420 (20%) usable questionnaires were returned. The returns were numerically representative of the types and sizes of state industries.

Most industries indicated a willingness to hire offenders on a merit basis. Only a very small percentage gave definite negative replies. Race of offenders made very little difference in employer attitude as reflected by company policy; however, there were slight preferences

⁶⁸D. A. Dobbins and Bernard M. Bass, "The Louisiana Ex-Prisoner--Employment Opportunities" (unpublished report prepared by the Louisiana Department of Institutions, June, 1956). (Mimeographed.)

for whites over Negroes. Small and large companies did not differ significantly in stated policies toward hiring offenders. Various types of industries did differ, but not significantly.

Highly significant differences were found in the distribution of offenders employed by different sizes and types of industry. Offenders were hired more often by medium and large companies and by the lumber, stone, clay and glass industries.

The study revealed that employment opportunities decreased sharply as the number of prior offenses increased, but small companies were significantly less lenient toward multiple offenders than larger companies. Company size made no difference in the opinions toward different classes of offenders, but the type of offense was itself highly significant. Thieves and simple burglars, assaulters, and murderers were preferred over robbers, aggravated burglars, narcotics violators and sex offenders.

The study concluded that employment opportunities are apparently related to company size, type of industry, past experiences with offenders and the number of job vacancies.

The Martin Study⁶⁹

No discussion of the problems of offender employment could be considered complete without at least a

⁶⁹ Martin, op. cit.

brief mention of the extensive study conducted by J. P. Martin in Reading, England in 1961. The specific aims of the study can be summarized as follows:

- (a) To ascertain the attitudes and practices of a sample of employers in Reading towards the employment of men previously convicted of criminal offenses. The subsequent employment history of such men, if employed, was included under this heading;
- (b) To ask similar questions regarding men, already employed, who were suspected or convicted of committing criminal offenses, whether or not the offenses were connected with their jobs;
- (c) To relate these answers to information about the firm, to the circumstances of the possible employment, to what was known about the man as an individual, and, so far as possible, to compare the treatment of offenders with the normal practice of the firm.

Rather than using a questionnaire, Martin employed interviewers to conduct the survey. A detailed and lengthy interview response form was utilized. The firms surveyed were divided into two basic groups--large firms (employing twenty or more men) and small firms (employing between two and nineteen men). Fifty large and fifty small firms were surveyed.

Martin's study concluded that at least two-thirds of all the firms in Reading had hired offenders at one time or another; however, many firms had not inquired about criminal offenses and thus did not realize that they had hired offenders. The service type of industries employed relatively few offenders, while the manufacturing industries hired considerably more. Although Martin's sample tended to include only the smaller construction firms, the study confirmed that construction generally employs a

relatively large number of offenders. Employers' knowledge of their mens' previous sentences was about the same for the larger and smaller firms. Over a third did not know what the previous sentences had been. About a quarter of the offenders employed by the firms had previously been incarcerated. The previous offenses for which the offenders had been convicted included all the main types, and the proportions were not strikingly different from those that would have been expected. The fact that about a fifth of the offenders had been convicted of stealing from previous employers indicates that this offense is not a total bar to employment.

The larger firms had a markedly higher proportion of ex-offenders still in their employment than had the smaller firms. About 55 per cent of the ex-offenders stayed in their jobs for at least six months, and 45 per cent for a year or more. The proportion of ex-offenders assessed as good employees was higher in the larger firms (29%) than in the smaller firms (17%). Only about 8 per cent of the ex-offenders left because they had been convicted again and sentenced to imprisonment, but a further 7 per cent left their jobs under suspicion of having committed offenses. Of the ex-offenders who left their jobs, 80 per cent did so for reasons other than dishonesty.

Martin discovered that there appeared to be little relationship between a man's previous sentence and his

success as a worker. It seemed that the ex-offender's general background and previous history were of greater importance. Sex offenders, embezzlers and men convicted of fraud seemed to be slightly more successful as employees than other workers. Men employed on building sites were more often regarded as unsatisfactory than those employed elsewhere. Larger firms were much more successful than smaller firms in detecting that a man had a criminal record. In general, firms making this discovery after a man had been working with them for some time seemed prepared to judge him on his record as a worker. Just under 20 per cent of the offenders who had been hired by the larger firms had been "sponsored" by correctional officers, or other welfare workers. For the small firms this figure was somewhat less than 10 per cent.

Although many of the factors described in the literature which have been discussed in this chapter do no more than hint at the forces which influence an employer and shape his attitudes toward hiring released offenders, it should provide the reader with a solid foundation which will facilitate understanding of the remainder of the study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The initial planning and direction of this study began almost imperceptibly. Several informal discussions between the authors and local correctional officials indicated that wide differences of opinion currently exist concerning the amount of difficulty experienced by released offenders attempting to acquire gainful employment in the Greater Lansing area. Armed with the initial idea for this study and with this apparent dichotomy of correctional opinion, Glaser's writings, concerning the criticality and grave societal implications of released offender employment,⁷⁰ served as the catalyst which prompted the authors' decision to proceed with this thesis.

As a result of the foregoing events, coupled with additional information gathered by talking with various criminal justice personnel as well as with several local employers, the authors were able to delineate several areas which appeared worthy of empirical examination and evaluation. These specific areas, which were expressed as

⁷⁰Glaser, op. cit.

the primary and ancillary purposes of this study, were discussed in detail in Chapter I.

The specific design of this study includes certain advantages and limitations which must be clearly stated at the outset. The principal advantage is that it should reveal, for the first time, the general attitudes of employers in the Greater Lansing area, toward the hiring of adult male released offenders. Further, it should serve to identify any existing communication gaps between criminal justice personnel and the total community, particularly with the employers within the community. Moreover, it should provide an indication of the knowledge and experience of those employers regarding the problem of offender employment, to include what they regard as the factors which they must consider when faced with employment decisions. Information regarding these points is relevant both to the formulation of official correctional policy in general, and to the rehabilitative efforts of the correctional personnel who are actually working and dealing with the released offenders who are seeking gainful employment.⁷¹

What this study cannot do, by its very structure, is determine the specific number and type of jobs available for released offenders in the Greater Lansing area. Nor is it intended to reveal the specific firms which

⁷¹Martin, op. cit., p. 2.

would hire those released offenders who are faced with the problem of obtaining employment. It is also beyond the intent of this study to show how many rejections a man had to endure before he finally acquired employment. Unfortunately, the limitations of time and money precluded indulgence in the luxuries of extensive and individual case type research.

In view of these considerations, a research technique was required which would produce reasonably quick, accurate, and essentially broad results. As a consequence, the research reported here is primarily correlational, or descriptive, and is intentionally focused on the existing relationships among released offenders, employers, and those correctional programs designed to assist released offenders in the acquisition of gainful employment.⁷²

Method of Data Collection

In this study, a descriptive type questionnaire was utilized as the basic vehicle for the collection of data. As in similar studies at the graduate level, the realities of monetary and time limitations have taken their toll. During the initial planning it became readily apparent that these limitations, along with the research objective of obtaining a representative and statistically sound sample, would severely reduce the authors'

⁷²Glaser, op. cit., p. 4.

flexibility and severely limit the number of specific methods which could be utilized for data collection.

Ideally, the authors' would have preferred to conduct personal interviews; however, operating under the stated restrictions and with the above described objective in mind, it was decided that the questionnaire approach was the best possible alternative. Pragmatically, the expenditure of time and money to interview large numbers of employers and criminal justice personnel would have been beyond the stated purposes of the study. The authors decided, therefore, that the primary purpose of ascertaining general attitudes would best be served by distributing questionnaires to a stratified random sample of employers and criminal justice personnel in the Greater Lansing area.

In choosing this area, the authors were consciously limiting the survey to an exploratory role. The aim was to discover what substantive results could be obtained in this specific geographical area.

In this regard, dependent upon the overall value and significance of the results, it would appear to be a relatively simple task to revise and improve upon the design of this study in order to conduct subsequent additional research in this area or in other similar geographic areas.

The Greater Lansing area is an employment center of considerable magnitude in its own right, and although a few people commute to other areas, they do not constitute a

significant proportion of the working population. In March 1972, the area had an unemployment rate of 5.7 per cent. The State of Michigan average at that time was 9 per cent. Employment totaled 150,400, which represented an increase of 4,000 jobs over March, 1971. According to the Michigan Employment Security Commission only 9,100 people were unemployed out of a total work force of 159,600. Of those employed, 37,800 were engaged in manufacturing; 96,500 in non-manufacturing, including 44,000 working in state, federal, and local governments; 13,200 self-employed; and another 2,900 engaged in agricultural pursuits.⁷³

It is important to note that this study was restricted to the postprison employment problem of adult male offenders. The writers felt that there would be relatively few women offenders released in the entire State of Michigan, and in addition to the fact that female offenders are not confronted with the problems of the "ex-con" stigma and stereotype, it was unlikely that employers in the study area would have had enough experience to answer questions posed regarding the employment problems of female offenders. Juvenile offenders were also excluded from consideration in that they were distinguished as separate and apart from the complexities of finding suitable employment for adult male offenders discharged from correctional institutions.

⁶³"Tri-County Jobless Rate Dips," The State Journal, Lansing, Michigan, April 22, 1972, p. A-3, col. 1.

Finally, it must be emphasized that this methodology does not purport to provide an exhaustive discussion of the problem area. It is simply an account of a survey which attempts to make a small, yet meaningful addition to existing knowledge.

Design of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire entitled "Employer Survey" was developed by the writers and consisted of 30 multiple choice type questions. It was specifically designed to provide input data which would be directly relevant to the primary and ancillary purposes of the study. A total of 360 identical questionnaires were prepared and utilized; 180 for employers and an additional 180 for selected criminal justice personnel who work, live, or study in the Greater Lansing, Michigan area. Two separate cover letters signed by the authors were also prepared to provide the appropriate instructions to both the employers and the criminal justice personnel, and asking the latter to predict the employers' responses. A copy of the questionnaire and both cover letters comprise Appendix B of this thesis.

The decision by the authors to distribute 180 questionnaires to employers and 180 questionnaires to criminal justice personnel was based upon the desire to obtain a minimum return of 100 questionnaires from both groups. This minimum number of responses was deemed

critical in order to insure the reliability and statistical sufficiency of the sample.

Those randomly selected to complete the questionnaires were requested to render their personal, honest, and biased opinions. All responses to the survey were intended to be completely anonymous as stated in the cover letters.

The questionnaire was specifically designed to provide data input in three separate and distinct categories: (1) general knowledge and opinions regarding the criminal justice system; (2) existing and past attitudes and policies toward the hiring of released offenders; and (3) personal data to be utilized as variables for evaluating survey findings.

The 30 multiple choice questions which ultimately comprised the questionnaire were constructed and selected by the authors. The criteria for question selection were many, a few of which were: relevancy and importance to survey objectives; brevity; clarity; comprehensiveness; and respondents' latitude and flexibility for response selection. A mix of both factual and hypothetical type questions were used in consonance with their individual objectives.

The writers purposely avoided, to the maximum extent possible, the use of standard responses such as: agree, strongly agree, and disagree, in order to better depict the real meaning and significance of the respondents' attitudes in words which hopefully would approximate their own.

Prior to the final printing and distribution of the questionnaire, the authors conducted a random test in order to insure the validity of the test instrument itself. A total of 36 personnel (18 employers and 18 criminal justice personnel) were requested to review and complete the questionnaire in order to discover which questions could effectively be asked and answered and to reveal any administrative type problems. As a result of this pre-survey test, several minor modifications were made in the wording of the final questionnaire.

The Employer Sample

As stated earlier, the authors decided that it was neither feasible nor necessary to survey all employers in the Greater Lansing area. Consequently, it was of paramount importance to develop a selection procedure which would yield data representative of all major fields of employment. It was decided that a sample of 180 firms would be more than sufficient to provide representative data in accordance with the specific direction and intent of the study.

Necessarily, two specific guidelines had to be applied to the selection procedure in the interests of consistency, reliability of data received, and overall accuracy of the study.

The first requirement was that all of the firms to be surveyed had to be physically located within the geographical confines of the study area. Secondly, within

this area it was decided to sample only those firms which obviously employed five or more adult male personnel.

The method of sampling was essentially a compromise. The alternatives from which to choose were: (a) a random sample of firms irrespective of numbers employed (subject to the limits already discussed). This would provide an equal chance of inclusion in the sample to a firm with one vacancy a year, as well as to a firm with 200 vacancies; (b) a random sample of establishments based on the number of personnel employed. This would mean that although larger firms were relatively few in number, they would have a high chance of being included; smaller firms, however, though very numerous, would individually have a low chance of being included.⁷⁴

The choice between these alternatives appeared to be merely the authors' interpretation and assumption of what released offenders would most likely do; to wit, would they seek employment in small or large firms? After considering this dilemma, the authors acknowledged that no way of making this determination existed. Therefore it was decided to resolve the issue by selecting a random sample of small, medium, and large firms in each of the pre-designated categories of employment. It was also decided that the actual number of personnel employed was unimportant statistically and that a realistic, valid

⁷⁴Martin, op. cit., p. 8.

sample could best be achieved in terms of a diversification of employment categories.

The 180 firms which were surveyed were classified into 12 distinct categories. These categories were selected by means of a review of the yellow pages in the Greater Lansing area telephone directory and closely paralleled those designated in the United States Census of 1970. The 12 general categories were:

- (1) Industry/Manufacturing
- (2) Food Service
- (3) Retail Sales
- (4) Financial
- (5) Recreation
- (6) Clerical
- (7) Construction
- (8) Education
- (9) Government
- (10) Medicine
- (11) Public Safety
- (12) Service

Additionally, each of the 12 categories were further divided into 15 sub-categories which served to identify the major types of firms to be surveyed. A complete listing of these sub-categories is included in this thesis as Appendix C.

In summary, the employer sample consisted of 15 questionnaires in each of 12 employment categories for a

total of 180. The representativeness of this sample is self-evident. It is important to note that a completely random sample was conducted. The 15 questionnaires in each of the sub-categories were identified by the type of firm to be sampled (e.g. barber shop, lumber company, large factory, etc.). The specific firms receiving the questionnaire were not determined beforehand.

Being a random sample, the firms surveyed in each of the categories were intended to be representative of their category as a whole; however, since the employer returns were completely anonymous, the possibility exists that some of the categories of employment were under-represented. The significance and primary limitation of the above was that although the authors could generalize as to the results of the employer sample as a whole, it was impossible to provide a detailed analysis or even generalized conclusions concerning any particular category of employment. The authors acknowledge that this limitation undoubtedly eliminated the availability of "nice to know" information; however, it was decided to sacrifice these particular fringe benefits of the study in order to concentrate on a detailed analysis and evaluation of the major study objectives.

The Criminal Justice Sample

The research design of this study was specifically formulated in order to provide for input from selected

criminal justice personnel groupings working, teaching, and studying in the Greater Lansing area. The basic intent was to solicit the assistance of criminal justice sub-specialty personnel, faculty, and students in order to prove or disprove our personal convictions that a significant communications gap exists between employers and those of us who labor within the milieu of criminal justice.

In order to test the validity of this opinion, draw meaningful conclusions, and make recommendations for corrective action, a random survey was conducted, as qualified below, of 180 criminal justice personnel. These personnel were requested to complete the identical questionnaire which was distributed to the 180 employer firms; however, they were instructed, by separate cover letter, to complete the questionnaire--not on the basis of their personal knowledge or personal opinions--but rather they were asked to predict how the employers would respond.

The selection procedure was restricted by the following guidelines: (1) criminal justice personnel surveyed would be physically domiciled, employed or studying in the Greater Lansing area; (2) within the sub-specialty fields of corrections, police, and courts, only those individuals in responsible, supervisory type job positions would be requested to complete the survey; and (3) the student sample would be drawn from criminal justice students at the graduate level only. The decision to

include criminal justice graduate students within the sample was based upon the authors' personal knowledge of the students' advanced level of professional expertise, coupled with the fact that many had been or were currently working in responsible criminal justice sub-speciality positions throughout the study area.

The 180 criminal justice personnel surveyed were classified into 5 distinct categories which corresponded with their occupational status and/or sub-specialty field. The numerical break-out of questionnaires allocated to each of the 5 categories was based upon the total number of personnel in each category and the authors' intent to conduct a 100 per cent sample wherever possible. In those cases where a 100 per cent sample was precluded by the limitations of time and funds available, the largest possible random sample technique was employed. The five general categories and the number of questionnaires allocated to each are indicated below.

- (1) Police--30
- (2) Courts--20
- (3) Corrections--30
- (4) Students--80
- (5) Faculty--20
- Total--180

Regarding the police and the courts, a random sample was obtained by means of a review of the yellow pages in the Greater Lansing area telephone directory.

Due to the small number of criminal justice faculty members in the subject area, it was decided to conduct a 100 per cent sample in order for their responses to be of statistical significance. Regarding the student category, a random sample was taken by skipping every fourth name on the Michigan State University School of Criminal Justice Graduate Student roster. The decisions relating to the criminal justice sample were also influenced by the authors' desire to distribute a number equal to that which was utilized in the employer sample, in the interests of research design, simplicity and consistency.

In summary, the criminal justice sample taken in this study consisted of a total of 180 questionnaires emanating from 5 categories. The representativeness of this sample is self-evident. It is important to note that a completely random sample was taken, wherever possible. The questionnaires distributed in each of the 5 categories, with the exception of the faculty and students, were not assigned to specific individuals. In fact, in accordance with the authors' desire to conduct a random survey wherever possible, all criminal justice survey returns were completely anonymous. Without compromising this anonymity, each questionnaire was inconspicuously marked in order to indicate which of the five categories the respondent represented. This was deemed necessary in order to reveal any variations of predictions within the criminal justice sub-systems. The authors hoped that this

technique would provide specific insights pertaining to any existing communication gaps between criminal justice sub-specialty areas and the total community.

Method of Distribution

The authors considered that the physical distribution of the 360 questionnaires was a critical phase in the conduct of this study. Based upon the preparation time expended in the development of this primary study instrument, coupled with the testing of the pilot questionnaire as discussed heretofore, the authors were confident that an effective tool was in hand which could provide the data base needed to accomplish the overall study objectives. The problem then evolved into one of not only distributing the employer questionnaires on a random basis, but also of insuring representativeness throughout the entire Greater Lansing area. Additionally it was essential to obtain a large enough number of usable returned questionnaires to provide a data base sufficient to satisfy the primary and ancillary purposes of the study. As a consequence, it was decided, wherever possible, to personally deliver the questionnaires to all the employers throughout the Greater Lansing area. The authors felt that this technique would greatly facilitate the accomplishment of the objective of acquiring at least 100 usable returned questionnaires from employers and an equal number of returns from criminal justice personnel. It was also felt that this method of distribution would

enable the authors to effectively conduct a representative sample of small, medium, and large employer firms throughout the study area.

In this regard, all 180 employer questionnaires, along with the appropriate cover letter and addressed, postage-paid envelope, were personally hand-delivered to employers over a two week period. Although this procedure was time consuming, the reception by the firms randomly sampled was excellent. In most cases the employer surveys were handed personally to the proprietor, personnel manager, or employment manager, as applicable, along with a brief oral explanation of the research objectives, emphasizing the anonymity of their response, and requesting their cooperation. The fact that their replies were anonymous, along with the authors' personal contact with the actual respondents, gave credence to the belief that the authors would receive the employers' honest, biased attitudes and opinions, thereby increasing the validity of the survey results.

This method of distribution enabled the authors to achieve true representativeness of employer firms, both as to firm size and physical location in the Greater Lansing area. Approximately half of the employer questionnaires were distributed in the city limits of Lansing, with the remaining half dispersed throughout the cities of East Lansing, Holt, Mason and other surrounding municipalities. Of the 180 firms sampled, only three refused to

accept the questionnaire. For each of these establishments, a similar firm was substituted.

It is important to reiterate that the specific firms were not selected prior to distribution of the questionnaire. The authors had only predetermined the specific type of firm to be surveyed within each of the twelve employment categories. The actual firms surveyed were selected randomly in consonance with the study design.

The 180 criminal justice questionnaires were distributed in an identical manner over the same two week period, with three exceptions.

First, the faculty category consisted of a 100 per cent sample due to the fact that their entire number was only twenty, and the authors' desire to provide a representative sample of their predictions of existing employer attitudes. Employer surveys with the appropriate criminal justice cover letter of instructions were personally handed to all faculty members.

Secondly, the sampling technique utilized for the criminal justice graduate student category, of necessity, varied from the norm. The representative random sample of students was based upon a student roster as described earlier in this study. The questionnaires with cover letter were handed personally to the designated students by the authors wherever possible. In addition, as time was growing short, assistance was solicited from three

other graduate students to distribute the final 32 student questionnaires.

The third and final exception applies to the criminal justice category of corrections. Here the sample was divided into two groups, 5 questionnaires for the administrators of the Ingham County Jail and 25 questionnaires for the Michigan Department of Corrections. The Ingham County Jail questionnaires were personally delivered to the individual respondents; however, the questionnaires for the Michigan Department of Corrections were given to an official in the Executive Office, who in turn distributed them to the Department Director, the Executive Staff, the Parole Board members, and to only those particular parole and probation officers who work in the Greater Lansing area. For this entire sample, particular care was exercised to insure that the questionnaires were given only to supervisory personnel and those particular individuals engaged in activities relating to released offender employment and rehabilitation. This was done in an effort to insure that the acquired data would be valid, meaningful and suitable for comparison with existing employer attitudes.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter is devoted to a presentation of the data which were compiled from the returned questionnaires and to a detailed analysis, interpretation and evaluation of that data.

As previously stated in Chapter III, 360 questionnaires were distributed; 180 to employers and 180 to criminal justice personnel. A total of 246 (68.3%) usable questionnaires were returned; 121 (67.2%) from employers and 125 (69.4%) from criminal justice personnel. This high return rate from employers was considered to be exceptional, particularly when compared to the studies conducted by Hayner and Rogers, and the states of Minnesota and Louisiana, whose usable return rates were 54 per cent, 25.6 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. The authors attribute this high rate of usable returns primarily to the fact that virtually all of the questionnaires were personally delivered and handed to the respondents. Additionally, the return rate was probably favorably influenced by the fact that the questionnaire was brief,

objective, and accompanied by an addressed, postage-paid return envelope.

Within the criminal justice sample, the police returned 24 of the 30 questionnaires (80%); the courts returned 9 of 20 (45%), corrections returned 20 of 30 (67%), students returned 59 of 80 (74%) and the faculty returned 13 of 20 (65%).

Data Analysis

In order to facilitate the compilation of the raw data, a matrix was utilized to record the 38 responses obtained from each questionnaire. In addition to having spaces provided on the matrix for every possible response, separate spaces were used to record "omits." In a considerable number of instances respondents failed to select a response. The authors attributed these omissions to several factors; oversight, no opinion, reluctance to respond to specific questions for various reasons, such as fear of compromise of anonymity, and invasion of privacy (particularly those questions dealing with company policy and personal data such as age and education).

Numerous respondents chose to add written comments in the margins of the questionnaire. In the majority of cases, the comments were apparently intended to clarify or justify the reason for a specific response. Although those comments did not serve to enhance the value of the responses many of them indicated to the authors that the respondents accorded considerable thought to their responses

rather than mere cursory selection procedures, which in effect added to or to some degree proved the validity of the questionnaire.

A few of the comments were provided to explain that the respondents could not in clear conscience limit themselves to only one response per question. A typical comment of this nature was that "both are of equal importance." Consequently it was decided that multiple responses to a single question could not be ignored, or treated as an "omit," but would have to be recorded. As a result, the number of responses from employers varies from 121 to 188, and from criminal justice personnel, varies from 125 to 148.

The compilation of the data on the matrix also revealed that the criminal justice personnel experienced difficulty with the last three items on the questionnaire which pertained to sex, age and education level. It appeared that the criminal justice personnel, having reached that point in the questionnaire, disregarded the instructions to predict the employers' responses, and responded to those last three items by indicating their own sex, age and education level. Although this might be interpreted as a flaw in the questionnaire design, as well as in the data received, in actuality it is of no consequence. As stated in Chapter III, the purpose of those items was to examine the impact of those three variables, as obtained from only the employer sample, on specific

selected items within the questionnaire. Therefore, for all intents and purposes, the last three items could have been deleted from the criminal justice sample since they serve no useful purpose. Despite the foregoing, these data are included in the analysis of the questions for whatever purpose they might serve the reader who has hereby been cautioned as to their interpretation and value.

Finally, before a presentation and discussion of the data, attention must be given to the analysis technique. In view of the fact that the study was not designed or intended to provide statistically testable inferences, it was decided that the results could be clearly, simply and accurately stated in terms of percentages, subject to the following precaution. The primary intent of the study was to ascertain (in terms of percentages) the attitudes of the employers and compare those attitudes with what the criminal justice personnel thought those attitudes to be. As an ancillary purpose, the criminal justice sample was divided into the five categories discussed previously in an effort to determine if any "communication gaps" existed among the criminal justice sub-systems or ascertain whether, for example, the police had a more accurate knowledge of employer attitudes than the courts. Once the criminal justice sample was divided, and considering the return rates of each sub-system, the population samples become small and potentially misleading. For example, in the courts where only nine questionnaires were returned, one response can equal as much as 11 per cent. This fact

must be given special consideration and viewed as a definite limitation on the value of that particular data; however, the authors do not consider it to be a limitation of the study as a whole since it merely impacts on an ancillary purpose of the study. Despite the fact that the authors could foresee this shortcoming during the initial planning of the study, no reasonable action could be taken to preclude the problem since it would have been necessary to increase the sample sizes to a degree far beyond that for which time and funds were available. Additionally, it would have necessitated the abandonment of the personal delivery technique of questionnaire distribution, which if done, would have reduced the return rate. Finally, there are only 20 faculty members in the School of Criminal Justice and correspondingly limited number of correctional personnel working in the Greater Lansing area; therefore, it must be recognized that even a 100 per cent sample could not have alleviated the problem.

Findings of the Study

In order to present the findings of this study in a logical and meaningful manner, each question will be presented exactly as it appeared in the questionnaire. Following each question the authors discuss and point out the significant findings. In an effort to be as brief as possible, little or no mention is made of minor implications and "nice to know" items since all of the data are

presented in tabular form for the reader's own analysis and evaluation.

1. Crime is a serious problem in America today.
 - a. I strongly agree
 - b. I somewhat agree
 - c. I have no opinion
 - d. I somewhat disagree
 - e. I strongly disagree

This question was intended to serve as an introductory type item which when considered in context with the results of questions two through eight should indicate the degree of employer concern, their opinions, and to some extent their knowledge regarding crime, courts, corrections and released offender employment problems.

The data in Table 1 indicate that 88 per cent of the employers strongly agree that crime is a serious problem in America today. An additional 10 per cent, who represent all of the remaining employers who responded to the question, indicated that they are in general agreement with the statement. The criminal justice sample accurately predicted the employers' responses. These results leave little doubt as to the feelings of the employers. It suggests, particularly considering the fact that employers are generally influential businessmen who are frequently the victims of crime, that employers constitute a group of citizens from whom considerable support and assistance could be derived for worthwhile criminal justice system programs. This would be a logical inference provided that the programs and the methods used to approach employers

TABLE 1.--Attitudes Concerning the Seriousness of Crime in America Today.

Response	Employer Sample	Criminal Justice Sample					All C.J.
		Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	
a	107= 88%	22= 92%	7= 78%	20=100%	50= 85%	10= 77%	109= 87%
b	12= 10%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	9= 15%	3= 23%	13= 10%
c	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%
d	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 11%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 1%
e	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%
Omit	2= 2%	1= 4%	1= 11%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

were proper, and evidence could be offered indicating results of mutual benefit.

2. Which statement best describes your opinion of criminal court sentences?
 - a. Too liberal
 - b. Too harsh
 - c. About right
 - d. I don't know; I haven't made up my mind

Table 2 indicates that most employers (54%) consider criminal court sentences to be too liberal. Although 10 per cent of the employers indicated that the sentences were too harsh, almost all of those 12 respondents added written comments to clarify their responses. For the most part the comments stated that sentences for narcotics violations and other victimless crimes were too harsh. This factor may to some degree account for what the authors consider to be a large number (17%) of "I don't know; I haven't decided" type answers. It is also interesting to note that none of the police or court respondents considered sentences to be too harsh.

3. How much do you know about the purpose and goals of our American prisons?
 - a. I know very little about them
 - b. I am fairly familiar with them
 - c. I am very knowledgeable about them

Table 3 indicates, as was mentioned in Chapter II, that the employers, and probably the general public, know very little about the purpose and goals of correctional programs and judging from the criminal justice prediction, it appears that criminal justice personnel are aware of that fact. The comments received concerning this question

TABLE 2.--Attitudes Toward Criminal Court Sentences.

Response	Criminal Justice Sample					
	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty
a.	66= 54%	20= 84%	4= 45%	11= 55%	36= 60%	8= 62%
b	12= 10%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 5%	4= 6%	2= 15%
c	19= 15%	2= 8%	2= 22%	6= 30%	10= 17%	1= 8%
d	21= 17%	1= 4%	2= 22%	2= 10%	10= 17%	2= 15%
Omit	5= 4%	1= 4%	1= 11%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%
Totals	123=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	60=100%	13=100%
						126=100%

TABLE 3.--Knowledge of the Purpose and Goals of American Prisons.

Response	Employer Sample	Criminal Justice Sample					
		Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	67= 55%	11= 46%	4= 44%	10= 50%	29= 49%	7= 54%	61= 49%
b	47= 39%	11= 46%	4= 44%	5= 25%	19= 32%	4= 31%	43= 34%
c	5= 4%	1= 4%	1= 12%	5= 25%	10= 17%	2= 15%	19= 15%
Omit	2= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	0= 0%	2= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

revealed that response "b" was vague. Respondents experienced difficulty with the meaning of the words "fairly familiar." The authors interpreted these comments to mean that many respondents desired a choice between the degrees of knowledge provided by responses "a" and "b." In other words most people know more than "very little" but less than "fairly familiar." Despite this weakness in the question, there can be little doubt that correctional programs which depend on public support and understanding will have little chance of success unless the public is at least aware of what is being attempted.

4. What do you think the purpose of prisons should be?
 - a. They should punish offenders
 - b. They should rehabilitate offenders
 - c. They should lock up prisoners to protect society until the prisoners have reformed
 - d. I'm not really sure

Table 4 reveals that 67 per cent of the employers think that the purpose of prisons should be to rehabilitate offenders. Only 11 per cent selected punishment as the purpose, only 14 per cent selected protection, and surprisingly only 6 per cent were not really sure as to exactly what the purpose should be. These data contrasted sharply with the predictions of the criminal justice sample as a whole, and particularly with the predictions of the faculty, students and correctional personnel. When viewed as a whole the data indicated that the criminal justice personnel underestimated the employers' attitudes and

TABLE 4.--Attitudes Concerning the Purpose of Prisons.

Response	Criminal Justice Sample					
	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty
a	14= 11%	4= 15%	2= 18%	2= 10%	10= 16%	5= 38%
b	87= 67%	13= 50%	6= 55%	10= 47%	25= 41%	3= 24%
c	18= 14%	7= 27%	3= 27%	9= 43%	24= 40%	5= 38%
d	8= 6%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 3%	0= 0%
Omit	2= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%
Totals	129=100%	26=100%	11=100%	21=100%	61=100%	13=100%
						132=100%

suggests that employers, already having made the directional change in correctional philosophy from punishment and protection to rehabilitation, might very well be amenable to other progressive ideas and programs.

5. How do you feel about prisoner parole programs in general?
 - a. I like them
 - b. I have no opinion
 - c. They are dangerous--a man should serve his full sentence
 - d. More prisoners should be paroled
 - e. Parole is okay if the parolee is properly supervised

Table 5 indicates that 64 per cent of the employers favor parole programs provided that the parolee is properly supervised. Only 2 per cent of the employers felt that parole is dangerous. When responses "a," "d" and "e" are combined, 78 per cent of the employers have favorable attitudes toward parole. This finding substantiates to some degree the authors' findings in Table 4, and suggests that perhaps the "ex-con" stigma is not as formidable a barrier as indicated in Chapter II.

6. What percentage of ex-convicts do you think eventually return to prison?
 - a. Less than 10%
 - b. Between 10% and 40%
 - c. Between 40% and 60%
 - d. Between 60% and 90%
 - e. More than 90%

The purpose of this question was to determine what employers thought the current recidivism rate to be and ultimately to correlate the results of this question with the overall results of the study. As indicated in Table 6,

TABLE 5.--Attitudes Concerning the Parole Program.

Response	Criminal Justice Sample					
	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty
a	7= 5%	1= 4%	2= 22%	2= 10%	3= 5%	0= 0%
b	22= 18%	4= 16%	0= 0%	0= 0%	6= 10%	0= 0%
c	2= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	6= 10%	0= 0%
d	11= 9%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 5%	4= 7%	0= 0%
e	77= 64%	18= 72%	7= 78%	17= 85%	40= 68%	13= 100%
Omit	2= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%
Totals	121=100%	25=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%
						126=100%

TABLE 6.--Knowledge of Recidivism Rates.

		Criminal Justice Sample					
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	2= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 1%
b	37= 31%	5= 21%	4= 44%	1= 5%	5= 8%	2= 15%	17= 14%
c	55= 45%	15= 63%	4= 44%	14= 70%	29= 49%	9= 70%	71= 57%
d	24= 20%	2= 8%	1= 12%	5= 25%	23= 39%	2= 15%	33= 26%
e	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	0= 0%	1= 1%
Omit	3= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	0= 0%	2= 1%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

the responses from both employers and criminal justice personnel resemble the bell-shaped curve. This might be attributed to the nature and structure of the possible responses, in other words if a respondent had no idea as to what the recidivism rate is, a logical response would be "c" between 40 per cent and 60 per cent. Since the inherent validity of this question and response are suspect, the authors are unable to draw any meaningful conclusions or inferences from the raw data received.

7. How difficult do you think it is for an ex-convict from Jackson Prison or the Ingham County Jail to get a job in the Greater Lansing area?
 - a. Extremely difficult
 - b. Fairly difficult
 - c. I have no idea
 - d. Fairly easy
 - e. Very easy

Based on the results portrayed in Table 7, there can be little doubt that everyone believes that it is difficult for a released offender to get a job in the Greater Lansing area. Although these results are neither surprising nor revealing, they should be kept in mind for comparison with the results of other questions and for use when formulating conclusions and recommendations.

8. Do you think ex-convicts really want to go "straight?"
 - a. Most of them
 - b. Some of them
 - c. None of them
 - d. I don't know

Table 8 indicates that almost a third (31%) of the employers think that most released offenders want to go

TABLE 7.--Degree of Difficulty Experienced by Released Offenders Attempting to Acquire Employment.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	42= 35%	6= 25%	4= 44%	2= 10%	13= 22%	6= 43%	31= 25%
b	60= 50%	10= 42%	3= 33%	9= 43%	28= 48%	2= 14%	52= 41%
c	12= 10%	5= 21%	2= 23%	5= 23%	16= 27%	5= 36%	33= 26%
d	3= 2%	2= 8%	0= 0%	3= 14%	2= 3%	1= 7%	8= 6%
e	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%
Omit	4= 3%	1= 4%	0= 0%	2= 10%	0= 0%	0= 0%	3= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	21=100%	59=100%	14=100%	127=100%

TABLE 8.--Attitudes Concerning the Motivation of Offenders upon Release.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	38= 31%	4= 17%	1= 11%	6= 30%	11= 19%	3= 23%	25= 20%
b	71= 59%	17= 71%	8= 89%	13= 65%	41= 69%	9= 69%	88= 70%
c	1= 1%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	0= 0%	1= 1%
d	7= 6%	2= 8%	0= 0%	0= 0%	6= 10%	0= 0%	8= 7%
Omit	4= 3%	1= 4%	0= 0%	1= 5%	0= 0%	1= 8%	3= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

"straight." An additional 59 per cent feel that at least some released offenders want to go straight. This is particularly interesting when compared with the results of question 7. The results of the two questions combined point out the dichotomy that even though most employers think that a large number of released offenders want to go "straight," the same employers, the people who do the hiring, feel that it is difficult for the released offenders to obtain employment.

9. Does your firm have any policy which would prohibit the hiring of ex-convicts?

- a. Yes
- b. I don't know
- c. No

As depicted in Table 9, 72 per cent of the employers stated that their firms have no policy which would prohibit the hiring of released offenders; only 9 per cent stated that such a policy existed and a significant number (14%) stated that they didn't know. These results contrasted sharply with the overall criminal justice predictions and indicate that company policy is not as great an obstacle to offender employment as most criminal justice personnel suspected. It is particularly interesting to note that the predictions made by the courts and corrections respondents closely parallel the employers' responses which indicates that these people have a much better "feel" for the problem than do the police, the students and the faculty.

TABLE 9.--Policies of Firms Regarding the Hiring of Released Offenders.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	11= 9%	12= 50%	2= 22%	3= 15%	24= 41%	2= 16%	43= 34%
b	17= 14%	4= 17%	1= 11%	4= 20%	19= 32%	5= 38%	33= 27%
c	87= 72%	5= 21%	6= 67%	12= 60%	15= 25%	5= 38%	43= 34%
Omit	6= 5%	3= 12%	0= 0%	1= 5%	1= 2%	1= 8%	6= 5%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

10. Does your firm require that employees be licensed? (for example, a barber's license)

- a. Yes
- b. I don't know
- c. No

If yes, do the licensing requirements prohibit hiring ex-convicts?

- a. Yes
- b. I don't know
- c. No

Table 10 reflects that 74 per cent of the firms sampled do not require employees to be licensed. Although 20 per cent of the firms indicated that licenses were required, several respondents in this group added comments that only some of their employees need special licenses. Moreover, when the responses to part two of this question were examined, they reveal that only 5 out of the 121 firms (4%) in the Greater Lansing area have licensing requirements which prohibit hiring released offenders.

11. Do the employees in your firm belong to a labor union which prohibits hiring ex-convicts?

- a. Yes
- b. They belong to a union, but it doesn't prohibit hiring ex-convicts
- c. My employees do not belong to a union

Table 11 clearly indicates that labor unions do not prohibit the hiring of released offenders, in fact the number of firms which require their employees to join a union is not nearly as large as the criminal justice personnel predicted. These results substantiate Lykke's comments, which were discussed in Chapter II, that released

TABLE 10.1.1.--Policies of Firms Regarding Requirements for Special Licenses.

Response	Employer Sample	Criminal Justice Sample					All C.J.
		Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	
a	25= 20%	6= 25%	3= 33%	4= 20%	16= 27%	0= 0%	29= 23%
b	1= 1%	4= 17%	0= 0%	4= 20%	17= 29%	3= 23%	28= 22%
c	92= 74%	10= 41%	6= 67%	7= 35%	21= 36%	7= 54%	51= 41%
Omit	6= 5%	4= 17%	0= 0%	5= 25%	5= 8%	3= 23%	17= 14%
Totals	124=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

TABLE 10.2.--Policies of Firms Regarding Requirements for Special Licenses.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	5= 4%	4= 17%	3= 33%	2= 10%	9= 15%	4= 31%	22= 18%
b	7= 6%	6= 25%	1= 11%	5= 25%	19= 32%	3= 23%	34= 27%
c	23= 19%	1= 4%	3= 33%	6= 30%	10= 17%	1= 8%	21= 17%
Omit	86= 71%	13= 54%	2= 23%	7= 35%	21= 36%	5= 38%	48= 38%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

95

TABLE 11.--Membership in Labor Unions Prohibiting the Hiring of Released Offenders.

		Criminal Justice Sample					
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	0= 0%	2= 8%	0= 0%	0= 0%	9= 15%	0= 0%	11= 9%
b	29= 24%	10= 40%	3= 33%	12= 60%	25= 42%	5= 38%	55= 43%
c	84= 69%	5= 20%	6= 67%	1= 5%	20= 33%	4= 31%	36= 28%
Omit	8= 7%	8= 32%	0= 0%	7= 35%	6= 10%	4= 31%	25= 20%
Totals	121=100%	25=100%	9=100%	20=100%	60=100%	13=100%	127=100%

offenders should view labor unions as allies and should actively seek their assistance not only for finding employment but for training as well.⁷⁵

12. Have you ever hired an ex-convict?

- a. No
- b. No--not that I know of
- c. Yes--and it didn't work out well
- d. Yes--and it worked out satisfactorily

Table 12 indicates that 61 per cent of the employers have never hired a released offender. Only 13 per cent have hired released offenders "and it didn't work out well." A substantial number (22%) have hired offenders and have had good experiences. These results are more favorable than predicted by the criminal justice group. It suggests that perhaps a program could be instituted which would utilize the favorable results of the 22 per cent to influence the 61 per cent who have never hired released offenders.

This particular question was also compared with the results of questions 29 and 30 in an effort to ascertain if any correlations exist which could be attributed to an employer's sex, age and education level. Of the 128 employer responses, 22 responses were from female employers. The authors found that 32 per cent of the females selected response "a," 36 per cent response "b," 14 per cent response "c," and 22 per cent response "d." Considering that the female responses are almost identical to the overall

⁷⁵Lykke, op. cit., pp. 24-33.

TABLE 12.--Number of Employers Who Have Hired Released Offenders.

Criminal Justice Sample						
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty
a	40= 31%	11= 46%	5= 56%	5= 25%	26= 44%	5= 38%
b	39= 30%	7= 29%	4= 44%	5= 25%	24= 41%	5= 38%
c	16= 13%	3= 13%	0= 0%	5= 25%	2= 3%	2= 16%
d	28= 22%	1= 4%	0= 0%	2= 10%	6= 10%	1= 8%
Omit	5= 4%	2= 8%	0= 0%	3= 15%	1= 2%	0= 0%
Totals	128=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%
						125=100%

responses, the authors concluded that the sex of the employers had no bearing on whether the firms had ever previously hired a released offender. For those firms who have hired offenders, their experience, whether satisfactory or unsatisfactory, had no correlation with the sex of the employer.

An analysis of the responses by employers in three age groups, 20-39, 40-59, and 60 or over, revealed that no correlation exists between the age of an employer and whether the firm had ever previously hired a released offender.

The education level of employers was also divided into three groups, employers with a high school education or less, those with a baccalaureate degree or at least some college education, and those employers who hold or are working toward advanced degrees. A comparison of these three variables with the overall responses reveals that no distinct differences exist. In other words, the education level of the employer has no bearing on whether or not the firm had ever hired a released offender.

An analysis of the age and education level of employers, who previously hired released offenders, revealed that these factors have no impact on whether or not the experience was satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

13. Do you know of anyone else who did hire an ex-convict?
 - a. Yes--but I don't know how well it worked
 - b. Yes--and it didn't work out well
 - c. Yes--and it worked out satisfactorily
 - d. No--I don't know of anyone

Table 13 reveals that 54 per cent of the employers do not know of any other employers who have ever hired released offenders. The most significant finding from these data is that 19 per cent, almost one out of every five, of the employers have knowledge of another employer who had hired a released offender and "it worked out satisfactorily." Judging from the criminal justice predictions, which were fairly accurate, these results raise the question, "Why haven't the favorable experiences of those 19 per cent of the employers, been given more publicity?" It stands to reason that businessmen are more apt to believe the experiences of other businessmen than the strong, truthful recommendations of parole officers who are trying to place a released offender.

14. If you were approached by an ex-convict and a person without a criminal record, and both persons were equally qualified, which one would you hire?
 - a. The person without the criminal record
 - b. The ex-convict
 - c. The more impressive of the two

The data depicted in Table 14 are particularly significant. If employers were approached by two individuals, a released offender and a person without a criminal record, and both persons were equally qualified, 64 per cent of the employers would ignore the criminal record and hire the more impressive individual. These results take on even greater significance when the employers' comments are considered. Several employers whose responses to questions 9 and 10 indicated that

TABLE 13.--Knowledge of Other Employers Who Have Hired Released Offenders.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	21= 17%	7= 27%	2= 22%	7= 35%	12= 20%	3= 23%	31= 24%
b	10= 8%	5= 19%	1= 11%	3= 15%	14= 24%	2= 16%	25= 20%
c	23= 19%	3= 12%	1= 11%	5= 25%	9= 15%	3= 23%	21= 16%
d	66= 54%	8= 30%	5= 56%	3= 15%	23= 39%	5= 38%	44= 35%
Omit	3= 2%	3= 12%	0= 0%	2= 10%	1= 2%	0= 0%	6= 5%
Totals	123=100%	26=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	127=100%

TABLE 14.--Impact of Criminal Records on Employer Hiring Practices.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	39= 32%	21= 88%	7= 78%	10= 50%	43= 72%	9= 69%	90= 71%
b	2= 2%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	0= 0%	1= 1%
c	78= 64%	2= 8%	1= 11%	10= 50%	16= 26%	4= 31%	33= 26%
Omit	2= 2%	1= 4%	1= 11%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	60=100%	13=100%	126=100%

company policy and licensing requirements prohibited the hiring of released offenders, commented that even though they personally would hire the more impressive individual they would be forced to select the person without the criminal record. It is also interesting to note that only 2 per cent of the employers would favor the released offender, which indicates that sympathy is not a driving force and therefore should not be relied upon or exploited by offender applicants. Surprisingly, of the 21 female employers who responded to this question, 81 per cent stated that they would hire the more impressive individual. The age and education level of employers were not found to be a significant factor influencing the employers' responses.

The criminal justice predictions are virtually the complete reciprocal of the employers' responses. This certainly suggests that the criminal justice personnel ought to indulge in some introspection. If the rehabilitation programs can produce released offenders who are qualified for employment, apparently the employers will not be influenced by stigma, stereotypes, and criminal records, but will ignore those factors in favor of a qualified applicant.

Despite the findings of this question, the reader should be cautioned of the validity of the results of a hypothetical question of this nature. Regardless of the fact that employers responded to this question in an obviously impartial and objective manner, if these employers

were actually faced with the situation which this hypothetical question poses, they might very well respond in a totally different manner by selecting the man without the criminal record.

15. Has anyone other than an ex-convict ever asked you to hire one?

- a. No--I have never been asked
- b. Yes--a few times
- c. Yes--many times

Table 15 indicates that 79 per cent of the employers have never been approached by anyone other than a released offender himself and asked if they would hire a released offender. Although the responses of the overall criminal justice sample generally paralleled the employer responses, it appears that the correctional personnel have grossly overestimated the number of contacts which they have made in an effort to assist released offenders. The corrections prediction is probably even more inordinate than the table depicts when consideration is given to the likelihood that many friends and relatives of released offenders have attempted to provide assistance by posing this question to employers.

16. If you were considering hiring an ex-convict, what would influence you the most?

- a. His appearance
- b. The type of crime he committed
- c. How many times he was in prison
- d. His attitude
- e. How long he has been out of prison
- f. His qualifications
- g. Other--please specify: _____

TABLE 15.--Employer Experience Concerning Third Party Assistance in Released
Offender Employment.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	95= 79%	16= 67%	9=100%	7= 35%	42= 71%	8= 62%	82= 66%
b	19= 16%	4= 17%	0= 0%	8= 40%	15= 26%	3= 23%	30= 24%
c	3= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	2= 10%	0= 0%	0= 0%	3= 2%
Omit	4= 3%	3= 12%	0= 0%	3= 15%	2= 3%	2= 15%	10= 8%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

This question drew numerous multiple responses which accounts for the fact that 188 employer responses and 148 criminal justice responses were recorded. A total of ten employer comments were received, virtually all of which state that no one single factor was so predominant in their hiring policies that it could clearly be singled out as the most important or most influential. Despite these individual responses, when Table 16 is viewed as a whole it is obvious that the attitude and qualifications of a released offender are his most important attributes. It should also be noted that the type or nature of the crime which the released offender committed was the third most influential factor, and the only other response which received a considerable number of selections.

The employer variables of sex, age and education level did not exert any significant impact on the overall employer responses; however, it was clearly evident that those employers who had a baccalaureate degree or had some amount of college education were the respondents who accounted for the majority of the multiple responses. In other words those employers whose education level is within this category are more apt to hire an employee based on several factors (the whole man concept) than are employers whose education level is in either of the other two categories.

TABLE 16.--Factors Which Influence Employers' Hiring of Released Offenders.

		Criminal Justice Sample					
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	14= 7%	1= 3%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 3%	1= 7%	4= 3%
b	34= 18%	12= 33%	4= 25%	3= 14%	22= 36%	5= 36%	46= 31%
c	11= 6%	4= 11%	2= 13%	1= 5%	4= 7%	2= 14%	13= 9%
d	59= 31%	5= 13%	3= 18%	6= 28%	17= 28%	2= 14%	33= 22%
e	5= 3%	1= 3%	1= 6%	1= 5%	2= 3%	1= 7%	6= 4%
f	52= 28%	9= 25%	4= 25%	9= 43%	12= 20%	3= 22%	37= 25%
g	11= 6%	2= 6%	2= 13%	1= 5%	2= 3%	0= 0%	7= 5%
Omit	2= 1%	2= 6%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 1%
Totals	188=100%	36=100%	16=100%	21=100%	61=100%	14=100%	148=100%

17. Would you hire a qualified ex-convict if no problems existed such as union and licensing prohibitions?
- a. Absolutely not
 - b. I don't know
 - c. Maybe--it would depend on many things such as the crime he committed, the nature of the job available, etc.
 - d. Yes--if I thought he was a good risk, considering the nature of the job I had available, etc.

For all intents and purposes this question is really the central issue in the entire study. Table 17 reflects that more than half (56%) of the employers in the Greater Lansing area would hire a released offender provided that he is qualified for the job and that no union or licensing type problems exist. An additional 30 per cent exhibited some reluctance but still indicate that they might hire a released offender, but their decision would hinge on such factors as the type of crime the offender committed, and the nature of the job available. A total of only 12 per cent of the employers indicate that they either do not know whether they would hire a released offender, or are definitely certain that they would not even consider it. An analysis of the manner in which the female employers responded to this question revealed comparable statistics; 60 per cent indicated "yes" (d), 30 per cent said "maybe" (c), and 10 per cent "didn't know" (b). None of the female employers said "absolutely not." An analysis of the data by age and education level revealed that these variables had no significant impact on the responses.

TABLE 17.--Number of Employers Willing to Hire Released Offenders.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	5= 4%	2= 8%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 2%
b	10= 8%	4= 17%	0= 0%	0= 0%	8= 13%	3= 23%	15= 12%
c	36= 30%	13= 54%	6= 67%	9= 45%	33= 56%	6= 46%	67= 53%
d	68= 56%	4= 17%	3= 33%	10= 50%	18= 31%	4= 31%	39= 31%
Omit	2= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	1= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

It is interesting to note that the overall criminal justice responses predicted almost an exact inverse proportion of responses "c" and "d" which again suggests, particularly in view of the preceding questions, that employers and probably the general public, are much more amenable to progressive correctional programs than criminal justice personnel suspect. The corrections personnel, who should be closer to the problem than the other components of the criminal justice system, made a relatively accurate prediction, although it should be remembered that the population size of 20 is prone to statistical error.

18. Would you be willing to hire an ex-convict on an experimental basis if he was qualified for your job and there were no union or licensing prohibitions?
 - a. Absolutely not
 - b. I might if I could be certain that it would not endanger my business in any way
 - c. I would try it once
 - d. Yes

The results of this question are extremely encouraging. As depicted in Table 18, 45 per cent of the employers are willing to hire a released offender on an experimental basis provided that he is qualified for the job and no union or licensing prohibitions exist. Only 4 per cent of the employers stated "absolutely not." When viewed in total, 96 per cent of the employers responded in the affirmative direction although 49 per cent expressed different degrees of hesitancy or caution.

TABLE 18.--Number of Employers Willing to Hire Released Offenders on an Experimental Basis.

		Criminal Justice Sample					
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	5= 4%	2= 8%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 3%	0= 0%	4= 3%
b	41= 34%	14= 59%	5= 56%	11= 55%	30= 50%	9= 70%	69= 55%
c	18= 15%	1= 4%	3= 33%	0= 0%	9= 15%	2= 15%	15= 12%
d	54= 45%	6= 25%	1= 11%	9= 45%	19= 32%	2= 15%	37= 29%
Omit	3= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 1%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	60=100%	13=100%	126=100%

The sharp contrast between these results and the criminal justice prediction clearly indicates once again that criminal justice personnel underestimate the degree of willingness to help that exists in the Greater Lansing area.

When the impact of the employer variables of sex, age, and education level were examined, it was discovered that those employers in the age group of 40 to 59 were more inclined (45%) to select response "b" than were the other age groups.

19. Assuming that you would hire an ex-convict, please answer the following four questions:

Would you hire an ex-convict who came to your office for an interview without references?

- a. No
- b. Maybe
- c. Yes

Would you hire an ex-convict who came to your office for an interview with good references?

- a. No
- b. Maybe
- c. Yes

Would you hire an ex-convict with good references who was accompanied by his parole officer who highly recommended him?

- a. No
- b. Maybe
- c. Yes

Would you hire an ex-convict who was not present for an interview but was highly recommended by his parole officer?

- a. No
- b. Maybe
- c. Yes

The purpose of this question was to acquire data concerning the manner in which a prospective employer should be approached. Part 1 of Table 19 reflects that a released offender who personally applies for work, but does not have references, has less than a 50-50 chance of being hired. However, if he has good references and personally applies for work, as Part 2 of Table 19 indicates, his chances improve considerably. In this situation 30 per cent of the employers stated "yes" and an additional 64 per cent said "maybe." Only 2 per cent said "no."

At this point the reader should be reminded and cautioned that the basic question posed the hypothetical situation that the employer was willing to hire released offenders. These data merely indicate under which circumstances the released offender has the best chances of being hired.

As portrayed in Part 3 of Table 19, a released offender's chances of being hired improve considerably when he personally applies, has good references, and is accompanied by his parole officer who adds his recommendations. However, as Part 4 of Table 19 indicates, the parole officer's recommendation alone will not normally suffice. The few comments received from employers concerning Part 4 of this question add considerable credence to the authors' conclusion that employers rely heavily upon personal interviews with job applicants.

TABLE 19.1.1.--Impact of Interviews and References on Employer Hiring Practices.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	59= 49%	15= 63%	5= 56%	8= 40%	44= 73%	8= 62%	80= 64%
b	47= 39%	8= 33%	4= 44%	10= 50%	16= 27%	5= 38%	43= 34%
c	11= 9%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 1%
Omit	4= 3%	1= 4%	0= 0%	1= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 1%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	60=100%	13=100%	126=100%

TABLE 19.2.--Impact of Interviews and References on Employer Hiring Practices.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	3= 2%	2= 8%	0= 0%	1= 5%	1= 2%	0= 0%	4= 3%
b	77= 64%	18= 75%	6= 67%	12= 60%	43= 72%	11= 85%	90= 71%
c	36= 30%	3= 13%	3= 33%	6= 30%	16= 26%	2= 15%	30= 24%
Omit	5= 4%	1= 4%	0= 0%	1= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	60=100%	13=100%	126=100%

TABLE 19.3.--Impact of Interviews, References and Parole Officer Recommendations
on Employer Hiring Practices.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	4= 3%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 3%	0= 0%	3= 2%
b	50= 41%	18= 75%	5= 56%	9= 45%	30= 50%	5= 38%	67= 53%
c	60= 50%	4= 17%	4= 44%	10= 50%	28= 47%	8= 62%	54= 43%
Omit	7= 6%	1= 4%	0= 0%	1= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	60=100%	13=100%	126=100%

TABLE 19.4.--Impact of Parole Officer Recommendations on Employer Hiring Practices.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	71= 58%	14= 58%	2= 22%	1= 5%	35= 58%	4= 31%	56= 44%
b	38= 31%	9= 38%	7= 78%	16= 80%	25= 42%	9= 69%	66= 52%
c	8= 7%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 10%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 2%
Omit	5= 4%	1= 4%	0= 0%	1= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 2%
Totals	122=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	60=100%	13=100%	126=100%

Although the criminal justice predictions for the first three parts of this question generally parallel the employer responses, Part 4 clearly indicates, particularly the corrections responses, that criminal justice personnel place too much faith and confidence in the value of parole officer recommendations.

An analysis of the employer variables of sex, age and education level revealed that these factors had no bearing on the overall employer responses.

20. If you had one job opening, which man would you rather hire? (We realize that we are not giving you much of a choice and that your reaction might be "neither"; however, please select one on each line).

Would you hire (circle one):
The murderer or the forger?

Would you hire (circle one):
The forger or the rapist?

Would you hire (circle one):
The rapist or the car thief?

Would you hire (circle one):
The car thief or the embezzler?

This question was designed in an effort to determine the employers' attitudes concerning various types of offenses. The question was constructed in such a manner that employers had to choose in almost each case between a crime of violence and a property type crime which most businessmen would normally find objectionable. Additionally, the offenses presented were those which were at both extremes of the recidivism scale.

As Part 1 of Table 20 depicts almost twice as many employers (56%) selected the forger despite the fact that forgery should be objectionable to businessmen, and despite the fact that forgers have historically had the second highest rate of recidivism of all types of crime, while murderers have one of the lowest recidivism rates.

Part 2 of Table 20 indicates that employers strongly favor the forger over the rapist despite the fact that rapists have an extremely low recidivism rate. An analysis of the female employer responses revealed that 90 per cent of the females prefer the forger to the rapist.

In Part 3 of this question almost six times as many employers preferred the car thief to the rapist, even though car thieves have the highest recidivism rate of all types of crimes. It is also interesting to note that it would be logical to assume that a person who steals a car might very well steal merchandise, products or other articles from his employer's premises. For this question 100 per cent of the female employers favored the car thief to the rapist.

Part 4 of Table 20 indicates that employers almost unanimously prefer the car thief to the embezzler despite the fact that embezzlers have the lowest recidivism rate of all types of crime, and as previously mentioned, car thieves have the highest rate. It appears obvious that businessmen have a tremendous, but unfounded, fear of embezzlers and suggests that perhaps businessmen do not consider auto theft to be too serious a crime.

TABLE 20.1.--Impact of the Type of Crime on Employer Hiring Policies:
Murder vs. Forgery.

Criminal Justice Sample						
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty All C.J.
a	38= 31%	8= 33%	8= 89%	10= 50%	28= 47%	4= 31% 58= 46%
b	67= 56%	14= 59%	1= 11%	9= 45%	29= 49%	8= 62% 61= 49%
Omit	16= 13%	2= 8%	0= 0%	1= 5%	2= 4%	1= 7% 6= 5%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100% 125=100%

TABLE 20.2.--Impact of the Type of Crime on Employer Hiring Policies:
Forgery vs. Rape.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	75= 62%	19= 79%	3= 33%	13= 65%	37= 63%	10= 77%	82= 66%
b	30= 25%	3= 13%	6= 67%	5= 25%	19= 32%	2= 15%	35= 28%
Omit	16= 13%	2= 8%	0= 0%	2= 10%	3= 5%	1= 8%	8= 6%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

TABLE 20.3.---Impact of the Type of Crime on Employer Hiring Policies:
Rape vs. Auto Theft.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	16= 13%	2= 8%	3= 33%	3= 15%	15= 25%	2= 15%	25= 20%
b	89= 74%	20= 84%	6= 67%	15= 75%	41= 70%	10= 77%	92= 74%
Omit	16= 13%	2= 8%	0= 0%	2= 10%	3= 5%	1= 8%	8= 6%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

TABLE 20.4.--Impact of the Type of Crime on Employer Hiring Policies:
Auto Theft vs. Embezzlement.

		Criminal Justice Sample					
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	98= 81%	22= 92%	9=100%	12= 60%	53= 90%	10= 77%	106= 85%
b	6= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%	6= 30%	3= 5%	2= 15%	11= 9%
Omit	17= 14%	2= 8%	0= 0%	2= 10%	3= 5%	1= 8%	8= 6%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

With the exception of the courts in Parts 1 and 2 the criminal justice personnel accurately predicted the employers' responses.

The only significant finding regarding the variables of age and education was that 71 per cent of those employers whose education level exceeds a baccalaureate degree selected the murderer over the forger in Part 1.

21. Which ex-convict would you be more likely to hire?
- a. An ex-convict from Detroit who moved to Lansing in order to get a fresh start
 - b. An ex-convict from Lansing who wants to stay in his own community despite his reputation

The purpose of this question was to determine the attitude of the employers in the Greater Lansing area concerning the age-old question asked by offenders about to be released, "Should I go back to my home town, or should I go somewhere else and try to get a fresh start?"

Based on the employer responses indicated in Table 21, there can be little doubt as to the answer to this question. Released offenders from the Greater Lansing area should return to that area despite their reputation.

22. If you hired an ex-convict some time in the past and had a bad experience with him, would you be willing to hire another ex-convict?
- a. Absolutely not--never again
 - b. I might try it again, but it would have to be a very special individual
 - c. Yes--I would try once more at least

Table 22 indicates that 39 per cent of the employers in the Greater Lansing area would hire another released

TABLE 21.--Employer Attitudes Concerning the Employment of Released Offenders from the Greater Lansing Area Versus Other Communities.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	17= 14%	6= 25%	0= 0%	3= 15%	24= 41%	3= 23%	36= 29%
b	96= 79%	16= 67%	8= 89%	15= 75%	35= 59%	9= 69%	83= 66%
Omit	8= 7%	2= 8%	1= 11%	2= 10%	0= 0%	1= 8%	6= 5%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

TABLE 22.--Impact of Previous Bad Experiences on Employer Willingness to Hire Additional Released Offenders.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	8= 7%	4= 16%	0= 0%	0= 0%	6= 10%	0= 0%	10= 8%
b	62= 51%	16= 67%	9=100%	13= 65%	40= 68%	9= 69%	87= 70%
c	47= 39%	3= 13%	0= 0%	7= 35%	12= 20%	3= 23%	25= 20%
Omit	4= 3%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	1= 8%	3= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

offender despite the fact that they had a previous bad experience. An additional 51 per cent stated that they might try once more, but that it would have to be a very special individual.

These results reflect that even though previous questions revealed that an amenable employer community exists, the employers' tolerance for frustration is far from inexhaustible. This presents a clear challenge to correctional personnel and suggests that well-placed offenders will not frustrate employers, but will serve by example and experience to alleviate the postprison employment problem. On the other hand, poorly placed offenders who do not satisfy employers, will ultimately and quickly destroy the favorable employer attitudes which currently exist.

23. If you hired an ex-convict, how do you suppose your other employees would react?
- a. It wouldn't bother them
 - b. Some of them might quit
 - c. Most of them would quit
 - d. Some of them would protest and threaten to quit

As indicated in Table 23, 53 per cent of the employers feel that their other employees will not be bothered if a released offender was hired. Although this finding is surprising and significant, it is also significant to note that 27 per cent of the employers feel that some of their employees would protest and threaten to quit.

Generally speaking the criminal justice predictions are quite similar to the employers' responses; however,

TABLE 23.--Reactions of Other Employees Toward the Employment of Released Offenders.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	64= 53%	3= 13%	4= 40%	7= 35%	16= 27%	2= 15%	32= 25%
b	14= 12%	2= 8%	0= 0%	3= 15%	8= 13%	3= 23%	16= 13%
c	1= 1%	1= 4%	1= 10%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 2%
d	33= 27%	17= 71%	5= 50%	10= 50%	34= 58%	7= 54%	73= 58%
Omit	9= 7%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	1= 8%	3= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	10=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	126=100%

the predicted "a" and "d" responses are almost the identical reciprocal. This suggests that not only did the criminal justice personnel underestimate the employers' attitudes in previous questions, but in this question they underestimated the favorable attitude of employees as well.

24. Do you think your business would suffer if the public became aware that you had an ex-convict working for you?
- a. Yes
 - b. It might, but I would try it once anyway
 - c. It might--I would be afraid to try it
 - d. I don't know
 - e. No--it wouldn't make any significant difference

Table 24 reveals that 17 per cent of the employers in the Greater Lansing area feel that their business would suffer if the general public became aware that a released offender was in their employ. Twenty-one per cent state that their business might suffer, but that they would hire an offender once, despite this possibility. It is significant that none of the employers who thought that their business might suffer, would be afraid to hire a released offender. Twenty-seven per cent state that if the public were aware it wouldn't make any significant difference, while an additional 34 per cent do not know if it would make any difference.

It is probably safe to assume that the critical factor in this question is the type of business which the employer operates. It probably wouldn't make any significant difference if the employer operated a huge factory or some other type endeavor where employees do not come in close

TABLE 24.--Public Attitude Toward Firms Employing Released Offenders.

Criminal Justice Sample						
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty
a	20= 17%	6= 25%	0= 0%	0= 0%	8= 14%	1= 8%
b	26= 21%	4= 17%	2= 22%	2= 10%	9= 15%	5= 38%
c	0= 0%	1= 4%	2= 22%	1= 5%	8= 14%	1= 8%
d	41= 34%	10= 42%	4= 45%	8= 40%	23= 38%	3= 23%
e	33= 27%	1= 4%	1= 11%	9= 45%	10= 17%	2= 15%
Omit	1= 1%	2= 8%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	1= 8%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%
						125=100%

All C.J.

or frequent contact with the public. However, in most service type industries where this contact is essential, it could have a significant detrimental impact on business.

25. If you discovered that a man working for you was an ex-convict, what would you do?

- a. Fire him
- b. It wouldn't make any difference as long as he had been doing a good job so far
- c. It wouldn't make any difference
- d. It would depend on the crime he had committed.

The purpose of this question was to examine employer attitudes concerning the offender's dilemma regarding disclosure of the criminal record. Upon discovery of a criminal record only 7 per cent of the employers indicate that they would "fire" the released offender. All of these employers added written comments to the questionnaire indicating that the reason for dismissal was that the offender would have falsified his job application. It is significant that 68 per cent of the employers state that discovery wouldn't make any difference as long as the offender's job performance had been satisfactory. An additional 11 per cent state that it wouldn't make any difference, while 12 per cent indicate that their actions would depend on the type of crime which the released offender had previously committed.

Regarding the employer variables of sex, age and education level, it was discovered that female employers are slightly more lenient, in that 76 per cent stated that it wouldn't make any difference as long as the offender's

TABLE 25.--Employer Attitudes and Actions Resulting from Discovery of a Criminal Record.

Criminal Justice Sample						
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty
a	8= 7%	4= 15%	1= 11%	0= 0%	5= 8%	1= 8%
b	82= 68%	11= 42%	3= 33%	13= 65%	33= 56%	9= 69%
c	13= 11%	1= 4%	1= 11%	2= 10%	4= 7%	0= 0%
d	15= 12%	9= 35%	4= 45%	4= 20%	17= 29%	3= 23%
Omit	3= 2%	1= 4%	0= 0%	1= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%
Totals	121=100%	26=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%
						127=100%

All C.J.

job performance had been satisfactory. Age and education level had no significant bearing on the results.

The criminal justice predictions of employer responses were fairly accurate except for response "d" where apparently criminal justice personnel thought the significance of the type of crime committed to be twice as important as the employers indicated.

26. How many people in this city are willing to volunteer some of their free time to citizen groups engaged in assisting ex-convicts to find employment?

- a. None
- b. A few
- c. Quite a few
- d. A large number

The original intent and wording of this question was to determine if the employers themselves would be willing to volunteer some of their free time for programs of this nature. However the authors ultimately decided to phrase the question as it appears above for fear that employers would either omit the question or discard the entire questionnaire. Although the findings depicted in Table 26 indicate that 81 per cent of the employers feel that a few people would volunteer their time, in retrospect the validity of this question is highly suspect. In the opinion of the authors the words "a few," "quite a few" and "a large number" are extremely vague and subject to wide differences of opinion as to the exact meaning or numerical value of these terms. It is significant however, to note that only one employer thought that no one would volunteer

TABLE 26.--Willingness of Citizens to Volunteer Assistance to Released Offenders Seeking Employment.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	1= 1%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	3= 6%	0= 0%	3= 2%
b	99= 81%	20= 83%	8= 89%	17= 85%	50= 85%	12= 92%	107= 86%
c	8= 7%	3= 13%	1= 11%	3= 15%	5= 6%	1= 8%	13= 10%
d	2= 2%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%
Omit	11= 9%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	0= 0%	2= 2%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

their time. Considering that the term "none" is difficult to misinterpret, it can be concluded that 99 per cent of employers feel that some, probably a small number, of the employers would volunteer a portion of their free time to programs designed to assist released offenders acquire employment.

27. What is the biggest single reason why most employers are reluctant to hire ex-convicts?
- a. Physical fear
 - b. Lack of trust
 - c. There is no good reason
 - d. Lack of experience with ex-convicts
 - e. Pure bias
 - f. Bad experiences with other employers
 - g. Personal experience
 - h. Poor public reaction

This question also received numerous multiple responses which resulted in 133 employer selections and 131 criminal justice selections. The respondents' comments indicate that they experienced great difficulty attempting to identify the "biggest single reason." The results depicted in Table 27 clearly reveal that lack of trust is the most significant factor. Lack of experience and pure bias respectively drew 19 per cent and 15 per cent of the employer selections. These results again suggest the influence of the "ex-con" stigma. Even though employers, based on responses to previous questions, do not appear to be personally influenced by stigma, they feel that other employers are influenced significantly.

Although the criminal justice predictions are relatively accurate, the faculty responses reflect an

TABLE 27.--Reasons Why Employers are Reluctant to Hire Released Offenders.

Criminal Justice Sample

Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	5= 4%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	1= 8%	3= 2%
b	67= 50%	15= 55%	5= 56%	9= 45%	29= 46%	4= 31%	62= 47%
c	5= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	0= 0%	1= 1%
d	25= 19%	5= 18%	4= 44%	9= 45%	16= 26%	1= 8%	35= 27%
e	20= 15%	3= 11%	0= 0%	1= 5%	9= 14%	4= 31%	17= 13%
f	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 5%	2= 3%	0= 0%	3= 2%
g	1= 1%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 2%	0= 0%	2= 2%
h	8= 6%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	3= 5%	3= 23%	7= 5%
Omit	2= 1%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 1%
Totals	133=100%	27=100%	9=100%	20=100%	62=100%	13=100%	131=100%

inordinate degree of concern over "poor public reaction."

The employer variables of age and education level exerted no significant influence; however, 10 per cent of the female employers selected "a" physical fear as the predominant reason why some employers are reluctant to hire released offenders.

28. Do you think that your responses on this questionnaire are basically the same as the responses by the other 179 people who completed this questionnaire?

- a. My responses are generally the same
- b. My responses are slightly different
- c. My responses are much different

The purpose of this question was to ascertain how employers thought their responses compared with the responses of the other employers. The authors believe that it is interesting, as Table 28 reflects, that almost half (47%) of the employers felt that their responses were "slightly different." This contrasts sharply with the criminal justice predictions, where 59 per cent of the respondents thought that the employers' responses would be "generally the same."

29. Please provide the following information:

My sex is

- a. Male
- b. Female

My age is

- a. Under 20
- b. 20-29
- c. 30-39
- d. 40-49
- e. 50-59
- f. 60-69
- g. 70 or over

TABLE 28.--Comparison of Individual Employer Responses with Other Employer Responses.

		Criminal Justice Sample					
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	* Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	41= 34%	12= 50%	5= 56%	9= 45%	39= 66%	9= 64%	74= 59%
b	57= 47%	10= 42%	4= 44%	8= 40%	9= 15%	3= 22%	34= 27%
c	11= 9%	1= 4%	0= 0%	2= 10%	7= 12%	2= 14%	12= 9%
Omit	12= 10%	1= 4%	0= 0%	1= 5%	4= 7%	0= 0%	6= 5%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	14=100%	126=100%

This two-part question as well as question 30 was designed to acquire the variable data which were used in the comparative analysis of many of the preceding questions.

Part 1 of Table 29 reveals that 79 per cent of the employers in the Greater Lansing area are males.

Part 2 of Table 29 indicates that approximately half (51%) of the employers are between the ages of 30 and 49. Although this finding is not particularly surprising, when the data are combined differently, it is interesting to note that 48 per cent of the employers are under 40 years of age.

30. What is the extent of your education?

- a. Less than a high school graduate
- b. High school graduate
- c. Some college but less than a bachelor's degree
- d. Bachelor's degree
- e. Currently working toward master's degree
- f. Master's degree
- g. Law degree (LL.B. or J.D.)
- h. Currently working toward doctorate degree
- i. Doctorate

Table 30 depicts the education level of employers in the Greater Lansing area. It reveals that 33 per cent of the employers have some amount of college education less than a baccalaureate degree, or are working toward that degree. An additional 25 per cent have a baccalaureate degree, while 24 per cent have only a high school education.

TABLE 29.1.1.--Sex of Employers.

		Criminal Justice Sample					
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	95= 79%	23= 96%	9=100%	20=100%	53= 90%	13=100%	118= 94%
b	21= 17%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	6= 10%	0= 0%	6= 5%
Omit	5= 4%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 1%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

TABLE 29.2.--Age of Employers.

Criminal Justice Sample							
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	1= 1%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%
b	23= 19%	2= 8%	1= 11%	1= 5%	29= 49%	1= 8%	34= 27%
c	34= 28%	8= 33%	3= 33%	4= 19%	14= 24%	4= 31%	33= 26%
d	28= 23%	8= 33%	3= 33%	7= 33%	11= 19%	5= 38%	34= 27%
e	22= 18%	4= 18%	0= 0%	7= 33%	5= 8%	2= 15%	18= 14%
f	10= 8%	1= 4%	1= 11%	2= 10%	0= 0%	1= 8%	5= 4%
g	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 11%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 1%
Omit	4= 3%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 1%
Totals	122=100%	24=100%	9=100%	21=100%	59=100%	13=100%	126=100%

TABLE 30.--Education Level of Employers.

		Criminal Justice Sample					
Response	Employer Sample	Police	Courts	Corrections	Student	Faculty	All C.J.
a	1= 1%	1= 4%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 1%
b	29= 24%	3= 13%	0= 0%	1= 5%	2= 3%	1= 8%	7= 6%
c	40= 33%	10= 42%	0= 0%	3= 15%	4= 7%	3= 23%	20= 16%
d	30= 25%	6= 25%	0= 0%	5= 25%	6= 10%	0= 0%	17= 13%
e	3= 2%	0= 0%	0= 0%	2= 10%	34= 58%	0= 0%	36= 29%
f	8= 7%	3= 12%	0= 0%	6= 30%	5= 8%	3= 23%	17= 13%
g	1= 1%	0= 0%	9=100%	1= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%	10= 8%
h	1= 1%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%	7= 12%	3= 23%	10= 8%
i	4= 3%	0= 0%	0= 0%	1= 5%	0= 0%	1= 8%	2= 2%
Omit	4= 3%	1= 4%	0= 0%	1= 5%	1= 2%	2= 15%	5= 4%
Totals	121=100%	24=100%	9=100%	20=100%	59=100%	13=100%	125=100%

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The first portion of this chapter is devoted to a brief review of the problem, the purposes of the study, and the research methodology employed by the authors. This is followed by a summary of the significant research findings, together with the authors' conclusions and recommendations. Lastly, the authors concluded with a discussion of the major implications derived from this research project to include an analysis and evaluation of the limitations and overall value of the study.

The Problem

This study was designed and conducted in order to provide a comprehensive and critical examination of the postprison employment problem as it exists presently for male adults in the Greater Lansing, Michigan area. Despite the fact that this problem is clearly visible, easily recognized, and readily comprehended by even a novice sociologist, the fact remains that little if any effort has been directed towards its resolution or alleviation.

The vast majority of teachers, scholars and practitioners within the milieu of the criminal justice system, readily acknowledge the criticality of the problem and admit to the direct relationship which exists between unemployment and recidivism. The authors assert strongly that unemployment may very well be the principal cause of recidivism and that the acquisition of employment is a crucial step toward the successful rehabilitation of each released offender. The authors contend further that correctional awareness, emphasis and dedication alone vis-a-vis the problem of released offender employment will be fruitful only if employers and all citizens realize its impact relative to our unified quest for justice, and join together to work, on a knowledgeable basis, as an integrated team. The necessity for public awareness, knowledge and cooperation in order to effectively deal with the problem is critical to the corrections effort and equally vital to a released offender's basic need to acquire immediate, self-satisfying and gainful employment.

The requirement for viable citizen participation and assistance to cope with the problem has too long been ignored by the corrections sub-system in the Greater Lansing area, and perhaps has valid implications throughout our society as a whole. The authors believe that the existence of a favorable public attitude, coupled with the knowledge by correctional personnel of this fact, will provide a solid foundation for the implementation of

effective rehabilitative programs regarding released offender employment.

Purpose and Methodology

The primary purpose of this study was to identify and examine the attitudes of employers in the Greater Lansing Michigan area vis-a-vis the hiring of adult male released offenders. Additionally, to identify and evaluate what personnel in the criminal justice system in the same geographical area, believed these attitudes to be. Moreover, to determine what specific measures were necessary to favorably change or modify existing employer attitudes in order to coincide with correctional philosophy and rehabilitative programs within the Greater Lansing area.

In addition to the above, seven ancillary purposes, as discussed in Chapter I, were developed in order to enhance the overall value of the study and to provide a degree of insight into peripheral aspects of the problem.

The research reported herein is primarily correlational, or descriptive, and is intentionally focused on the existing relationships among released offenders, employers, and those correctional programs designed to assist released offenders in the acquisition of gainful employment. A descriptive type questionnaire consisting of 30 items was utilized as the basic vehicle for the collection of data. A total of 360 questionnaires, 180 each to employers and criminal justice personnel, were

distributed on a stratified random sample basis within the Greater Lansing area.

The questionnaire was specifically designed to provide data input in three separate and distinct categories: (1) general knowledge and opinions regarding the criminal justice system; (2) existing and past attitudes and policies toward the hiring of released offenders; and (3) personal data to be used as variables for evaluating survey findings. Those randomly selected to complete the questionnaire were requested to render their personal, honest, and biased opinions. All individual respondents to the survey were anonymous in order to insure the reliability and statistical sufficiency of the data received and in order to concentrate on a detailed analysis and evaluation of the major study objectives.

A total of 246 (68.3%) usable questionnaires were returned; 121 (67.2%) from employers and 125 (69.4%) from criminal justice personnel. The authors attribute this high rate of usable returns primarily to the fact that virtually all of the questionnaires were personally delivered and handed to the respondents.

Research Findings

As previously stated, the questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section was designed to acquire data which would provide an indication of the degree of employer concern, their opinions, and to some extent

their knowledge regarding crime, the courts, corrections and released offender employment problems.

The data compiled from the first part of the questionnaires revealed that the vast majority of employers in the Greater Lansing area considered crime in general to be a serious problem in America today, and criminal court sentences to be too liberal. Most employers admitted that they knew very little about the purposes and goals of the American correctional programs; however, they strongly favored the rehabilitation of offenders as the purpose of prisons, rather than punishment or the protection of society. Employers were definitely in favor of parole programs, but only in those cases where parolees are properly supervised. Despite the fact that the employers generally agreed that a considerable percentage of released offenders sincerely want to go "straight," they agreed, almost unanimously, that it is difficult for a released offender to acquire employment in the Greater Lansing area.

For this section of the questionnaire the predictions made by the criminal justice personnel closely paralleled the employer responses with one important exception. Employers are much more in favor of rehabilitation as the primary correctional philosophy than anyone in the criminal justice sample suspected. This fact may very well be one of the most important findings of this study.

The second portion of the questionnaire was designed to elicit the primary data relevant to the problem being studied.

It was found that approximately 75 per cent of the firms had no company policy which prohibited the hiring of released offenders. Moreover, it was found that the number of firms which have licensing requirements or union membership requirements, which would preclude offender employment, are virtually infinitesimal.

These results contrasted sharply with the predictions of the criminal justice personnel and indicate that these so-called barriers to offender employment are nowhere near as formidable as criminal justice personnel commonly believe.

The study revealed that 22 per cent of the employers in the Greater Lansing area had previously hired released offenders and were satisfied with their job performances, while 61 per cent of the employers had never hired an offender. Almost 20 per cent of the employers had knowledge of other employers who hired released offenders and were satisfied with their job performances.

It was discovered that 64 per cent of the employers would ignore a criminal record and hire a released offender provided that he was qualified to do the job. When employers are considering a released offender for employment, it was clearly evident that the offenders attitude and qualifications are the most important factors. The type of crime for which the offender was incarcerated exerted definite influence on the employer, but was not nearly as important as attitude and job qualifications.

More than half the employers in the Greater Lansing area would hire a released offender and an additional 30 per cent, although they expressed some reluctance, might hire an offender depending on many factors such as the nature of the job available and the type of crime the offender committed. Despite these favorable attitudes, 79 per cent of the employers stated that they had never been approached by anyone other than a released offender himself and asked if they would hire a released offender. It was further revealed that almost half of the employers would be willing to hire a released offender on an experimental basis provided that he was qualified for the job.

Regarding the manner in which employers should be approached, it was found that offenders have the best chance of being hired if they apply for the job personally, have good references, and are accompanied by their parole officer who recommends their being hired. In the event that the offender does not apply personally, or does not have good references, his chances of acquiring employment diminish considerably regardless of any type assistance provided by the parole officer.

When employers consider the types of crime committed, they would hire offenders who committed "crimes against property" before those who committed "crimes against persons," despite the consideration that their business might be financially endangered. Although the data did not specifically reveal the extent of employer

knowledge of recidivism rates, it is apparent from the foregoing that employers are uninformed in that regard.

The study revealed that 39 per cent of the employers would hire another released offender despite a previous bad experience, and an additional 51 per cent stated that they might hire another one, but he would have to be a very special individual. Employers also indicated that following incarceration, offenders have the best chance for employment in their home town.

Over half the employers felt that their other employees would not be bothered if a released offender were hired, and a significant number of employers indicated that their business would not suffer if the public became aware that a released offender was in their employ. If employers discovered that a man working for them had a criminal record, 68 per cent stated that it wouldn't make any difference as long as the man's job performance had been satisfactory.

Half of the employers indicated that lack of trust is the biggest single reason why most employers are reluctant to hire released offenders. A much smaller but significant number felt that either pure bias or lack of experience is the reason.

The predictions made by the criminal justice personnel revealed many significant communication gaps. The employer responses indicated that employers are much more impartial and objective in their hiring criteria and much

less influenced by stigma and criminal records, than the criminal justice personnel suspected.

The criminal justice personnel, particularly those working in corrections, have grossly overestimated the number of contacts which have been made in an effort to assist offenders in finding employment, and have placed undue reliance and confidence in the value of parole officer recommendations for the hiring of personnel.

The study revealed that employers are much more amenable to progressive and experimental correctional programs than the criminal justice personnel believed. Regarding the significance of the type of crime an offender committed, the criminal justice group considered it to be twice as important as the employers indicated.

The third section of the questionnaire was designed to acquire personal data in an effort to detect any correlations among the employers' responses to selected questions and their sex, age and education level.

The study revealed that female employers are more objective than male employers concerning hiring criteria and are more apt to ignore criminal records and hire the most impressive job applicants, provided that the applicants have the requisite job qualifications. As was expected, female employers clearly indicated that they would not hire released offenders convicted of sex crimes. In the event that an employer discovered that an employee had a criminal record, female employers were

slightly more lenient than male employers in that 76 per cent of the females stated that it wouldn't make any difference as long as the offender's job performance had been satisfactory. When indicating the predominant reason why some employers are reluctant to hire released offenders, the female employers were slightly more inclined to select "physical fear" as the response.

Regarding the variable of employer education level it was discovered that employers who have a baccalaureate degree or some amount of college education are more apt to hire an employee based upon multiple criteria (the whole man concept), and are more inclined to hire offenders convicted of violent crimes than are the employers with other education levels.

The only significant finding regarding age was that employers in the 40 to 59 age group were more cautious, and inclined to hire released offenders on an experimental basis only with the provision that they could be certain that their business would not be endangered.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In an exploratory study such as this, it is appropriate that the findings be translated with discrete caution into conclusions, and it is appropriate that recommendations be proposed. Recommendations to be effective must be general in nature for at this point the scholar's work is done and the fruits of that labor must be transformed into action. Actions can be accomplished

only within the constraints of the resources available to the implementer. For this reason, this study's recommendations represent mere suggested actions and ideas which the implementer can either discard, modify, or pursue, dependent upon his own attitude and resources.

Conclusion 1. Employment of released offenders is a serious problem which directly effects recidivism and has received little or no formal, organized attention in the Greater Lansing area.

Conclusion 2. If the criminal justice system in the Greater Lansing area can produce a released offender who is qualified to do a job, and a job vacancy exists, the employers are willing to provide employment.

Recommendation 1. Criminal justice personnel, particularly those working in corrections, should determine what skills and qualifications are needed by employers in the Greater Lansing area, and should exert every possible effort to provide the necessary training to offenders during incarceration.

Conclusion 3. Employers in the Greater Lansing area consider the purpose of prisons (and jails) to be rehabilitative and are willing to hire released offenders on an experimental basis.

Recommendation 2. Corrections personnel should identify the specific employers who have exhibited the willingness mentioned above, perhaps with the assistance of selected criminal justice students and faculty members from Michigan State University, in an effort to elicit their assistance not only for the ultimate employment of released offenders, but also for any and all possible assistance which the employers might provide with training programs and the equipment necessary for such training.

Conclusion 4. Unions, licensing requirements, and company policy do not constitute a barrier to offender employment as the criminal justice personnel believed.

Recommendation 3. Labor unions in the Greater Lansing area should be approached in an effort to determine what possible assistance they might render regarding the training and ultimate job placement of offenders.

Conclusion 5. Communications gaps exist among the five sub-sections of the criminal justice system addressed in this study, as well as between the criminal justice system as a whole, and the businessmen in the Greater Lansing area.

Recommendation 4. Criminal justice personnel should exploit every possible means of insuring accurate

communications among themselves in an effort to overcome compartmentalization.

Recommendation 5. Someone, possibly in the executive office of the Michigan Department of Corrections, should assume or be assigned the responsibility of initiating and maintaining close and continual coordination with the businessmen in the Greater Lansing area. This responsibility should include discrete publicity campaigns to make businessmen aware that other employers have hired released offenders, and have had good experiences. These campaigns should utilize existing civic and businessman's groups and organizations to "sell their product."

Conclusion 6. Both released offenders and employers in the Greater Lansing area are relatively uninformed regarding each other.

Recommendation 6. An education program should be instituted for the purpose of informing offenders who are approaching release time of the relative importance which employers place on such things as: (a) attitude, (b) qualifications, (c) type of crime, (d) references, (e) parole officer assistance, (f) personal interview, (g) disclosure of the criminal record, (h) preference for hiring local personnel, and numerous other critical factors which this study revealed.

Recommendation 7. An education program should be instituted perhaps as part of Recommendation 5, for the purpose of informing employers of such factors as recidivism rates, cultural shock, and similar items which should ultimately provide employers with a better understanding of the problem.

Conclusion 7. There is a need for additional research regarding this problem in the Greater Lansing area.

Implications of the Study

As mentioned earlier, the authors acknowledge that the conclusions and generalizations obtained as a result of this study cannot be totally applied beyond the limits of the defined population. Conversely, the implications may exist in varying degrees of applicability, to other similar geographical areas, and perhaps to employers, criminal justice personnel, and citizens throughout our total society.

The authors contend that it is highly probable that the relatively lenient employer attitudes identified by this study are indicative of similar attitudes held in other areas. This assertion is based upon a number of factors. First, the authors are confident that the questionnaire responses truly reflect the honest, biased opinions of employers surveyed. This confidence was manifested by the nature and anonymity of the responses,

the unsolicited written comments, the representativeness of the sample, and the statistical sufficiency of the usable questionnaires analyzed and evaluated. Second, the subject area studied closely parallels many other areas as to diversification of employment opportunities. Third, it is felt that employer values, aspirations, and motivations are relatively predictable and constant, and fluctuate insignificantly from one physical location to another.

The same can be said for the predictions of existing employer attitudes by criminal justice personnel. The results in the Greater Lansing area tend to indicate an underestimation of favorable employer attitudes elsewhere with regard to released offender employment. It is indeed likely that personnel within the criminal justice system, particularly those laboring in corrections, have not only failed to resolve critical communication gaps, but are unaware as to their very existence and important problem-solving ramifications.

Finally, the study results imply that the problems related to released offender employment are not insurmountable, and can be minimized and/or eliminated by a total community effort based upon knowledge, understanding and determination.

Limitations and Value of the Study

The authors recognize that the results obtained and conclusions drawn from this study are limited in

application to the defined population. This includes only an inquiry concerning the employment problems of male adult released offenders within the Greater Lansing, Michigan area. The pragmatic realities of time, money, and resource limitations served to severely limit the specific scope and depth of this study.

Operating within the restrictions imposed above, it was necessary for the writers to by-pass their preferred method of data collection, that of personal interviews, in favor of the questionnaire-type survey technique. In our view, this limitation could have significantly influenced the accuracy of data received, in that the particular individuals desired to be surveyed might not have received or responded to the questionnaire. In order to minimize this limitation, the writers personally delivered the questionnaires to the actual respondents insofar as possible.

Another limitation of this study concerns the utilization of hypothetical questions within the questionnaire. Some of the data we were interested in gathering concerned how employers would behave in the future. As a consequence, it was necessary to ask hypothetical questions which run the risk that many respondents might find it easy to answer a theoretical question in a manner favorable to released offenders; but when actually confronted with the problem, might find it unexpectedly difficult to put their intention into practice.

Yet another limitation of the questionnaire survey method, as opposed to the interview technique, is that it more readily allows the respondent to conceal his actual opinions and attitudes if he so chooses.

The final study limitation of significance is the fact that the research design did not allow for questionnaire responses to be identified by specific employer firm. As mentioned earlier, the anonymity of individual respondents and their firms was intentional in order to insure the return of statistically sufficient and reliable data.

The basic value of the study appears to be substantial. For the first time empirical data is available concerning the postprison employment problem in the Greater Lansing area. The results of the study are usable, timely, and are expressed factually, as opposed to theoretical generalizations. The authors do not pretend to have examined all the aspects of the problem or to have gathered all the answers; however, we are hopeful that the research findings will provide a basis for evaluating existing procedures, programs, and techniques, for additional research in the subject area, and for comparative analysis in other similar areas throughout our total society. This study has highlighted the need for close, continual, coordination and cooperation among employers, criminal justice personnel and citizens in order to successfully resolve the societal problems associated with

released offender employment. The authors visualize a need for a total community participation in order to insure justice and preserve the basic dignity of released offenders. We strongly advocate that end, by that very method.

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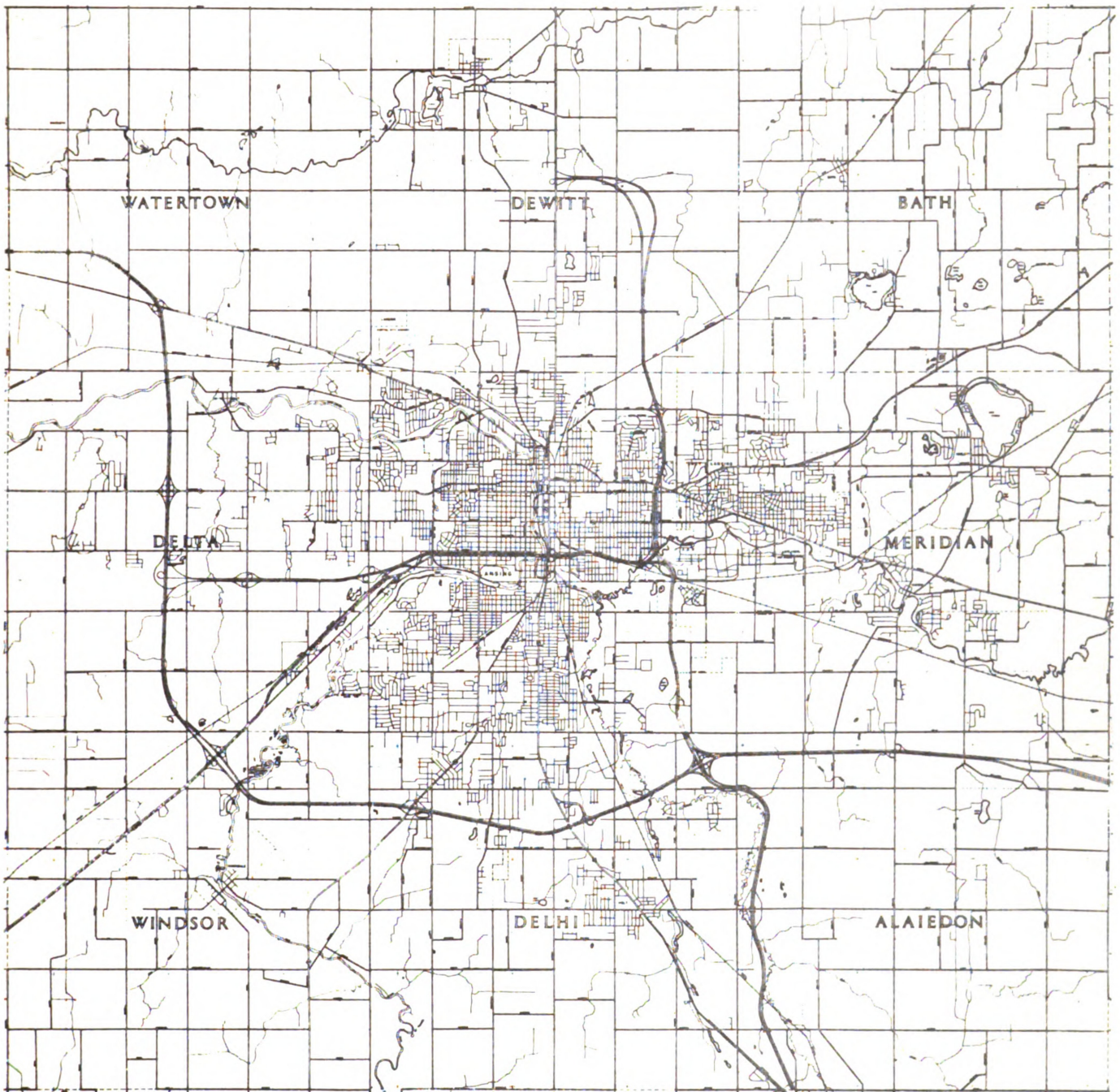
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GREATER LANSING AREA



Greater Lansing Area

As portrayed on the map above, the Greater Lansing area consists of the cities of Lansing and East Lansing, and other municipalities located within the nine townships of Lansing, Watertown, DeWitt, Bath, Delta, Meridian, Windsor, Delhi, and Alaiedon.

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

EMPLOYER SURVEY

For each question, please circle the letter in front of the one answer which best expresses, or is nearest to, your honest opinion.

1. Crime is a serious problem in America today.
 - a. I strongly agree
 - b. I somewhat agree
 - c. I have no opinion
 - d. I somewhat disagree
 - e. I strongly disagree
2. Which statement best describes your opinion of criminal court sentences?
 - a. Too liberal
 - b. Too harsh
 - c. About right
 - d. I don't know; I haven't made up my mind
3. How much do you know about the purpose and goals of our American prisons?
 - a. I know very little about them
 - b. I am fairly familiar with them
 - c. I am very knowledgeable about them
4. What do you think the purpose of prisons should be?
 - a. They should punish offenders
 - b. They should rehabilitate offenders
 - c. They should lock up prisoners to protect society until the prisoners have reformed
 - d. I'm not really sure
5. How do you feel about prisoner parole programs in general?
 - a. I like them
 - b. I have no opinion
 - c. They are dangerous--a man should serve his full sentence
 - d. More prisoners should be paroled
 - e. Parole is okay if the parolee is properly supervised

6. What percentage of ex-convicts do you think eventually return to prison?
 - a. Less than 10%
 - b. Between 10% and 40%
 - c. Between 40% and 60%
 - d. Between 60% and 90%
 - e. More than 90%
7. How difficult do you think it is for an ex-convict from Jackson Prison or the Ingham County Jail to get a job in the Greater Lansing area?
 - a. Extremely difficult
 - b. Fairly difficult
 - c. I have no idea
 - d. Fairly easy
 - e. Very easy
8. Do you think ex-convicts really want to go "straight"?
 - a. Most of them
 - b. Some of them
 - c. None of them
 - d. I don't know
9. Does your firm have any policy which would prohibit the hiring of ex-convicts?
 - a. Yes
 - b. I don't know
 - c. No
10. Does your firm require that employees be licensed? (for example, a barber's license)
 - a. Yes
 - b. I don't know
 - c. No

If yes, do the licensing requirements prohibit hiring ex-convicts?

 - a. Yes
 - b. I don't know
 - c. No
11. Do the employees in your firm belong to a labor union which prohibits hiring ex-convicts?
 - a. Yes
 - b. They belong to a union, but it doesn't prohibit hiring ex-convicts
 - c. My employees do not belong to a union

12. Have you ever hired an ex-convict?
- No
 - No--not that I know of
 - Yes--and it didn't work out well
 - Yes--and it worked out satisfactorily
13. Do you know of anyone else who did hire an ex-convict?
- Yes--but I don't know how well it worked
 - Yes--and it didn't work out well
 - Yes--and it worked out satisfactorily
 - No--I don't know of anyone
14. If you were approached by an ex-convict and a person without a criminal record, and both persons were equally qualified, which one would you hire?
- The person without the criminal record
 - The ex-convict
 - The more impressive of the two
15. Has anyone other than an ex-convict ever asked you to hire one?
- No--I have never been asked
 - Yes--a few times
 - Yes--many times
16. If you were considering hiring an ex-convict, what would influence you the most?
- His appearance
 - The type of crime he committed
 - How many times he was in prison
 - His attitude
 - How long he has been out of prison
 - His qualifications
 - Other--please specify: _____
17. Would you hire a qualified ex-convict if no problems existed such as union and licensing prohibitions?
- Absolutely not
 - I don't know
 - Maybe--it would depend on many things such as the crime he committed, the nature of the job available, etc.
 - Yes--if I thought he was a good risk, considering the nature of the job I had available, etc.

18. Would you be willing to hire an ex-convict on an experimental basis if he was qualified for your job and there were no union or licensing prohibitions?

- a. Absolutely not
- b. I might if I could be certain that it would not endanger my business in any way
- c. I would try it once
- d. Yes

19. Assuming that you would hire an ex-convict, please answer the following four questions:

Would you hire an ex-convict who came to your office for an interview without references?

- a. No
- b. Maybe
- c. Yes

Would you hire an ex-convict who came to your office for an interview with good references?

- a. No
- b. Maybe
- c. Yes

Would you hire an ex-convict with good references who was accompanied by his parole officer who highly recommended him?

- a. No
- b. Maybe
- c. Yes

Would you hire an ex-convict who was not present for an interview but was highly recommended by his parole officer?

- a. No
- b. Maybe
- c. Yes

20. If you had one job opening, which man would you rather hire? (We realize that we are not giving you much of a choice and that your reaction might be "neither"; however, please select one on each line).

Would you hire (circle one): The murderer or the forger?

Would you hire (circle one): The forger or the rapist?

Would you hire (circle one): The rapist or the car thief?

Would you hire (circle one): The car thief or the embezzler?

21. Which ex-convict would you be more likely to hire?
 - a. An ex-convict from Detroit who moved to Lansing in order to get a fresh start
 - b. An ex-convict from Lansing who wants to stay in his own community despite his reputation
22. If you hired an ex-convict some time in the past and had a bad experience with him, would you be willing to hire another ex-convict?
 - a. Absolutely not--never again
 - b. I might try it again, but it would have to be a very special individual
 - c. Yes--I would try once more at least
23. If you hired an ex-convict, how do you suppose your other employees would react?
 - a. It wouldn't bother them
 - b. Some of them might quit
 - c. Most of them would quit
 - d. Some of them would protest and threaten to quit
24. Do you think your business would suffer if the public became aware that you had an ex-convict working for you?
 - a. Yes
 - b. It might, but I would try it once anyway
 - c. It might--I would be afraid to try it
 - d. I don't know
 - e. No--it wouldn't make any significant difference
25. If you discovered that a man working for you was an ex-convict, what would you do?
 - a. Fire him
 - b. It wouldn't make any difference as long as he had been doing a good job so far
 - c. It wouldn't make any difference
 - d. It would depend on the crime he had committed

26. How many people in this city are willing to volunteer some of their free time to citizen groups engaged in assisting ex-convicts to find employment?
- None
 - A few
 - Quite a few
 - A large number
27. What is the biggest single reason why most employers are reluctant to hire ex-convicts?
- Physical fear
 - Lack of trust
 - There is no good reason
 - Lack of experience with ex-convicts
 - Pure bias
 - Bad experiences with other employers
 - Personal experience
 - Poor public reaction
28. Do you think that your responses on this questionnaire are basically the same as the responses by the other 179 people who completed this questionnaire?
- My responses are generally the same
 - My responses are slightly different
 - My responses are much different
29. Please provide the following information:
- | <u>My sex is</u> | <u>My age is</u> |
|------------------|------------------|
| a. Male | a. Under 20 |
| b. Female | b. 20-29 |
| | c. 30-39 |
| | d. 40-49 |
| | e. 50-59 |
| | f. 60-69 |
| | g. 70 or over |
30. What is the extent of your education?
- Less than a high school graduate
 - High school graduate
 - Some college but less than a bachelor's degree
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Currently working toward master's degree
 - Master's degree
 - Law degree (LL.B. or J.D.)
 - Currently working toward doctorate degree
 - Doctorate

Thank you again for your time and effort.

March 27, 1972

Dear Sir:

This questionnaire is being administered to approximately 180 different business firms in the Greater Lansing area. These business firms were selected at random and represent a cross-section of all types of business firms in the community.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to acquire data regarding the attitudes of business firms towards ex-convicts. The data will be used in a master's degree thesis for Michigan State University.

The fact that your particular firm was selected to participate in this study will be known only to the undersigned, will be treated confidentially, and will not be published in any identifiable manner.

Your responses to these questions will be merged with the responses of the 179 other firms to "paint a picture" of prevailing attitudes.

In many of the questions an "ideal" answer is obvious; we ask, however, that you please be completely honest in your answers. If you are like most people and have bias and definite opinions, those are what we want to know. Please express them frankly. Your answers will be completely anonymous. There is no way we can determine who or which firm provided the responses.

When you have completed the questionnaire, we request that you please mail it back to us in the attached postage-paid return envelope.

We sincerely appreciate the time and effort which you have given us.

Thank you,

GORDON N. ZELEZ

VINCENT A. APRUZZESE

March 27, 1972

Dear Sir:

This questionnaire has been distributed to 180 different types of business firms in the Greater Lansing area. The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine employer attitudes toward the hiring of adult male offenders who have been released from prison.

We anticipate that the results of this survey will be enlightening to those of us working within the criminal justice system. Regardless of whether we are enlightened or not, we feel that the results of the survey will be of substantive value relative to the realities involved in postprison employment.

The undersigned are further of the opinion that there is a significant communication gap between employers and those of us who labor within the criminal justice system. In order to test the validity of our opinion, draw meaningful conclusions, and make recommendations for corrective actions, we solicit your assistance. We request that you complete this questionnaire--NOT on the basis of your own personal knowledge or personal opinions--but rather we ask that you PREDICT HOW THE EMPLOYERS WILL RESPOND.

Since the attached questionnaire is directed at employers, we ask that you disregard the instructions preceding question #1 and merely PREDICT employer responses.

Your answers will be completely anonymous. There is no way we can determine who completed the questionnaires, and frankly we have no interest in that matter. Your predictions will be merged with the predictions of other persons working within the CJ system in order to "paint a picture" of predictions relative to employer attitudes.

When you have completed the questionnaire, we request that you please mail it back to us in the attached postage-paid return envelope.

We sincerely appreciate the time and effort which you have given us.

Thank you,

GORDON N. ZELEZ

VINCENT A. APRUZZESE

APPENDIX C

EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES AND LIST OF EMPLOYER
FIRMS SURVEYED BY TYPE OF FIRM

EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES AND LIST OF EMPLOYER
FIRMS SURVEYED BY TYPE OF FIRM

Category I: Industry/Manufacturing

Automotive	Tool and Die
Automotive	Metal
Truck	Clothing
Motor Wheel	Container
Petroleum	Computer
Food Product	Drop Forge
Drop Forge	Sheet Metal

Printing

Category II: Food Service

Restaurant	Wholesale Meats
Restaurant	Wholesale Seafood
Short Order	Beer Distribution
Snack Bar	Ice Cream
Cafeteria	Chain Store
Chain Store	Chain Store
Health Foods	Catering

Soft Drink Distribution

Category III: Retail Sales

Department Store	Furniture Store
Department Store	Shoe Store
Grocery Store	Book Store
Clothing Store	Hardware Store
Jewelry Store	Drug Store
Toy Store	Corner Store
Automotive Store	Five and Ten Store
Appliance Store	

Category IV: Financial

Bank	Savings and Loan
Bank	Savings and Loan
Bank	Savings and Loan
Bank	Credit Union
Loan Agency	Credit Union
Loan Agency	Credit Union
Loan Agency	Loan Agency
Loan Agency	

Category V: Recreation

Golf Course	Ski Club
Bowling Alley	Miniature Golf
Movie Theater	Country Club
Drive-In Movie	Library
Civic Center	YMCA
Museum	Tennis Club
TV Station	Zoo
Billiard Parlor	

Category VI: Clerical

Accounting	Statistical
Publishing	Office Services
Tax Service	File Clerks
Bookkeeping	Insurance
Advertising	Employment Agency
Employment Agency	Temporary Help
Business Consulting	Newspaper
Newspaper	

Category VII: Construction

Building Construction	Plumber
Building Construction	Plumber
Carpenter Shop	Electrical
Roofing and Siding	Electrical
Sheet Metal	Lumber Company
Heating and Air Conditioning	Wallpaper, Paint and Plaster
Brick and Cement	Sand and Gravel
Fencing and Landscaping	

Category VIII: Education

University	Private College
Community College	Private School
Elementary School	Private School
Middle School	Special School
Secondary School	Special School
Correspondence School	Business Trade
Technical School	Business Trade
Industrial School	

Category IX: Government

Federal Agency	County Agency
Federal Agency	City Agency
State Agency	City Agency
State Agency	City Agency
State Agency	City Agency
Township Agency	Township Agency
Township Agency	Township Agency
Township Agency	

Category X: Medicine

Hospital	Medical Clinic
Hospital	Dental Clinic
Hospital	Dental Clinic
Sanitarium	Medical Laboratory
Medical Clinic	Medical Laboratory
Medical Research	Medical Research
Veterinary Clinic	Medical Center
Medical Equipment and Supplies	

Category XI: Public Safety

Fire Protection	Highway Safety
Public Health	Store Security
Public Works	Store Security
Waste Disposal	Civil Defense
Environmental	Public Housing
Animal Control	Property Protection
Detective Agency	Detective Agency
Investigators	

Category XII: Service

Barber Shop	Taxi, Bus
Electrical Repair	Janitorial
Laundry	Repair
Gas Station	Car Wash
Real Estate	Undertaker
Upholstery Repair	Delivery Service
Motel Services	Appliance Repair
Hotel Services	

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