

ABSTRACT

MSW STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

There is an unequivocally high incarceration rate amongst socially, economically, and politically vulnerable individuals including racial minorities, impoverished individuals, and the mentally ill (Creswell & Poth, 2017). This has resulted in jails and prisons becoming the leading mental health service provider in the United States. As a result, the incarcerated have required extensive services from social workers and continues to impact the profession. The purpose of this study is to describe MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals because attitudes towards prisoners are a major determinant of a prisoners' success in becoming successfully reintegrated back into society (Park, 2009).

The researcher recruited MSW students from six California State Universities using an online survey to collect students' demographic information, education and experience with prisoners, and their attitudes towards prisoners (ATP). The total sample consisted of $N = 202$ MSW students and based on their responses students' race, religion, location, education and experience with prisoners significantly varied with their attitudes towards prisoners. Education and experience with prisoners was the strongest predictor of favorable attitudes towards prisoners. With this information in mind, the present study declares a need for educating MSW students to work with prisoners to ensure that those who work with this population are fully accepting and advocate for social justice and reintegration.

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MSW STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCARCERATED
INDIVIDUALS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Problem	1
Theoretical Frameworks.....	4
Brief Empirical Literature	6
Methods.....	8
Summary of the Significance of the Study	9
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	10
Introduction	10
Background Information	10
Conceptual Frameworks.....	14
Empirical Literature	19
Public’s Demographic Background and Attitudes towards the Incarcerated	20
Gaps in the Literature.....	44
Summary	46
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	47
Introduction	47
The Purpose of the Study	47
Research Questions	48
Key Terms and Variables.....	49
Research Design.....	49
The Sample Population	50

	Page
The Instruments: Reliability and Validity.....	50
Data Collection and Data Analysis	52
Human Subjects	53
Limitations	54
Summary	55
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS	56
Descriptive Statistics of the Participants' Demographics	56
Graduate Students' Attitudes towards Incarcerated Individuals.....	58
Predictors of Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes Towards Incarcerated Individuals.....	60
Multiple Regression on Predictors	68
Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes and Geographical Location	70
Summary	71
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION	73
Significant Findings	73
Implications for Social Work Practice	78
Limitations	80
Recommendations for Future Research	82
REFERENCES	84
APPENDICES	95
APPENDIX A: EMAIL FLYER.....	96
APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM AND SURVEY	99
APPENDIX C: HUMAN SUBJECTS CERTIFICATE.....	107

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1 <i>Descriptive Demographics of MSW Students</i>	59
Table 2 <i>Descriptive Statistics of Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes Towards Incarcerated Individuals</i>	60
Table 3 <i>Gender Statistics</i>	61
Table 4 <i>Independent Samples t-test</i>	61
Table 5 <i>Descriptive Statistics of ATP Scores for Different Age Groups</i>	62
Table 6 <i>Summary of one-way ANOVA</i>	62
Table 7 <i>Descriptive Statistics of Religion and ATP</i>	65
Table 8 <i>Summary of ANOVA</i>	65
Table 9 <i>Descriptive Statistics of Race and ATP</i>	66
Table 10 <i>Summary of One-Way ANOVA</i>	67
Table 11 <i>Descriptive Statistics of Education, Experience, and Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes towards Prisoners</i>	68
Table 12 <i>Pearson's R Correlations: Education, Experience, and Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes towards Prisoners (N = 202)</i>	68
Table 13 <i>Summary of ANOVA</i>	69
Table 14 <i>Multiple Regression Summary</i>	69
Table 15 <i>Predictors of Attitudes towards Incarcerated Individuals (Multiple Regression)</i>	69
Table 16 <i>Descriptive Statistics of Location and ATP</i>	70
Table 17 <i>Summary of ANOVA</i>	71

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
<i>Figure 1.</i> Distribution of graduate social work students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals.	60
<i>Figure 2.</i> CSU campuses and ATP scores.	71

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to help describe MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. This is important because due to various political and social forces there has been a steady rise in incarceration. The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world and institutionalizes nearly 25% of the entire global prison population (Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013). The problem of mass incarceration affects social workers because incarcerated individuals, the formerly incarcerated, and families of the incarcerated have become frequent clients of the profession and need the services and support from social workers. Consequently, the prisons are now the number 1 provider to those with mental health disorders (Sullivan, 2011). Social workers have become the voices of those who have been silenced and unheard by the confinements of their prison cell walls. As Master of Social Work (MSW) students pursue their advanced degrees, it will be their acquired academic and professional experience that will place them at the forefront of practice of either directly or indirectly working with incarcerated individuals. Despite the increasing prevalence of this population, there is limited contemporary research available about MSW students and their attitudes towards this population. This research addresses the need to study whether the current MSW program curriculum is adequately teaching and preparing MSW students to practice with this population both ethically and sensitively without personal bias.

Problem

In the past 40 years, many draconian laws and policies were enacted which placed an increased reliance on incarceration as a solution to crime despite a sustained trend depicting a decline in the crime rates (Travis, Western, & Redburn,

2014). The adoption of these laws is a testimony to the prevailing attitude of many toward criminal offenders and is characterized by mass incarceration (Mandracchia, Shaw, & Morgan, 2013; Travis et al., 2014). These laws are discriminatory in nature and are not applied equitably amongst members of society. These laws have overtly been applied to impoverished inner-city areas where members belonging to socially, politically, and economically oppressed groups reside (Meiners, 2010). The prison population has become associated with individuals who are undereducated, underemployed, mentally disabled, young, and individuals of a racial minority background (Meiners, 2010).

Within just 50 years, the incarceration rate of prisoners has exponentially increased from 300,000 to 5 million (Alexander, 2010). The land of the free has become a country where it confines, suppresses, and silences its citizens through incarceration. The United States now has the largest incarceration rate in the world which costs taxpayers a staggering \$74 billion annually (Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013; Tonry, 2009). Moreover, many of these individuals are incarcerated for non-violent crimes including drug-related arrests where only 7.4% of all federal prisoners are detained for violent crimes (Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014). The prevalence of incarceration has become so high that there is an estimated 1 in 15 chances of any given citizen becoming incarcerated at some point in their lifetime. Those odds are 7 times greater for racial minorities (Decety, Echols, & Correll, 2010; Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007; Meiners, 2010; Varghese, Hardin, Bauer, & Morgan, 2010; Welch, 2007).

In view of this information, prisoners, former prisoners, and families of prisoners have increasingly become a prevalent and vulnerable client population of social workers regardless of the contextual setting in which the social worker practices. These individuals are surfacing in virtually every realm of social work

practice and it is the community, the prisoner, and their families who are all requiring social work practitioners and future practitioners, specifically, MSW students, to use their advanced education and expertise in providing these individuals with the services needed to successfully reintegrate them back into society. Social workers are expected to address this problem as they do with all other vulnerable populations: to advocate for those who are oppressed, silenced, and disenfranchised by society through empowerment with service delivery. This requires MSW students as future licensed practitioners to be educated and culturally competent with this population so that they understand the unique needs of the incarcerated population and are effective while working with these individuals.

As MSW students and future practitioners, we have an ethical obligation to understand the gravity of this problem that is confining and disenfranchising vulnerable populations at an alarming rate. As future practitioners, MSW students need to recognize the national imperative to promote basic human rights and social justice to all who are socially, economically, and politically oppressed including those who are affected by incarceration. The National Association of Social Workers mandates social workers seek out and pursue change on behalf of those who are unable to advocate for themselves. To do this, social workers must be knowledgeable and possess attitudes that are culturally sensitive towards this group (National Association of Social Workers, n.d.). This constitutes a need to study this topic because of the influence attitudes have on effectively working with clients (Park 2009; Travis, 2005). This study sought to answer three questions. What are graduate social work students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals? What are some predictors of graduate social work students' attitudes

towards incarcerated individuals? Do graduate social work students' attitudes differ by their geographical location?

Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical frameworks of critical theory, critical race theory, and stigma theory are employed to inform the focus of this study on mass incarceration and describing attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. The theoretical assumptions of each theory accentuates the fact that attitudes towards prisoners are rooted in structural inequalities, power differentials, racism, stigma, stereotypes, and the concept of unfamiliarity. Early critical theorists including Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Michel Foucault suggested that at the heart of the American system exists historical, social, political, and economic structural inequalities which are the product of negative attitudes towards those who are marginalized by these prejudicial systems.

Critical race theorists such as Abrams, Moio, and Capers suggested that a prejudicial legal system has been intentionally placed by the privileged class for the purposes of confining, suppressing, and maintaining control over those who are deemed socially undesirable and expendable; particularly, those from vulnerable populations such as the uneducated, impoverished, and people of racial and ethnic minority backgrounds (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Alexander, 2010; Capers, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Consequently, these individuals have emerged as the bulk of the current American prison system. The theorists described a power struggle between the privileged and those belonging to less empowered social groups (Shaikh, 2016). The members of privilege are likely to hold negative attitudes towards vulnerable cultures and perceive them as inferior, subordinate, and deserving of being controlled and confined in prison. As such,

the privilege uses their position of power to their advantage to preserve prejudice and racism by manipulating the US legal system by developing draconian policies directed at vulnerable populations to secure White supremacy and their influential status. These draconian laws are often racially coded and are used for the purposes of legally enslaving people of color and forever casting them to second-class citizenry through felony convictions (Alexander, 2010; Capers, 2014; Meiners, 2010; Shaikh, 2016).

The assumptions of stigma theory will also be used to analyze and describe the study's data. Stigma Theory's (ST) assumptions are based on the premise that people who are classified as different are reduced to a socially undesirable or a tainted status called a stigma (Goffman, 1963). Individuals who are stigmatized are those who are considered to have character deficiencies including the mentally ill, drug addicts, and alcoholics. Scholars contend that these individuals are perceived as repulsive and are avoided and excluded from the rest of society. Likewise, research suggests that these groups of people are affected the most by mass incarceration and make up a significant portion of the prison population (Meiners, 2010). The theory suggests that the reasoning behind carrying out discriminatory actions towards stigmatized individuals such as incarceration is based in the attitudes the public holds towards these people, specifically, they are perceived as abnormal, dangerous, and unable to conform to the conventional rules of society (Goffman, 1963; Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010).

Collectively, CT, CRT, and ST are applied in this study to describe both the individual intrinsic predictors and the macro-level social forces that influence and describe the attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. CT and CRT provide a broad perspective on the current conditions of a discriminatory society, characterized by structural inequalities and racist underpinnings which places

vulnerable populations at-risk of becoming incarcerated which influences the public's attitudes towards those groups. ST is applied to this study because it explains the attitudes towards incarcerated individuals from a shared experience within individuals; it is described as a universal experience based on emotions and psychobiological events that take place unconsciously amongst human beings.

Brief Empirical Literature

The current literature related to attitudes towards incarcerated individuals has been conducted through various methods including qualitative, quantitative, and descriptive methods. The research, for the most part, has primarily focused on professionals and students involved in the criminal justice field, specifically, correctional officers and criminal justice students. The vast amount of the existing literature is generalizable to this area of study but is not entirely explicit to this particular topic. There has been a lot of research involving the attitudes towards incarcerated individuals, attitudes towards sex offenders, and attitudes towards formerly incarcerated individuals; however, fewer studies involving social workers and MSW students has been widely researched in recent years. The existing research suggests that demographic information including race, gender, age, and along with other variables are important predictors of one's attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. For example, Unnever and Cullen's (2009) quantitative research suggested Whites are more inclined to believe that those who are incarcerated are deviant, whereas African Americans view incarcerated individuals in more tolerant terms. Regarding gender, Melvin, Gramling, and Gardner's (1985) quantitative study informed us of the importance of gender and that it has an influence on one's attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. In light of these findings, there has also been research that contradicts those findings. For

example, Mae Boag and Wilson's (2013) qualitative study examined students' attitudes and empathy toward prisoners and found no gender correlation. Age is also a variable that has been widely examined in the context of attitudes towards prisoners with contradictory findings to other related research articles. In Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rustad's (2007) quantitative study that examined the attitudes of prisoners, prison staff, and college students' attitudes towards prisoners the researchers found that age did not have a relationship to their attitudes. However, Chui and Cheng (2015) found age to be a significant predictor in college students' attitudes towards prisoners and that those who were younger were more inclined to judge prisoners as individuals with "bad character."

The empirical research regarding other variables including religion, political affiliation, the media, education, and first-hand contact with prisoners echoes similar inconsistent findings as it relates to impacting individuals' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Collectively, these articles have educated the populous of the importance of demographic variables in considering attitudes towards prisoners, but it also emphasizes the importance that human beings are complex; and as distinct individuals, our attitudes are not easily compartmentalized into single unit demographic variables. Despite the vast knowledge the existing literature has provided on this topic, there are gaps in the literature. There are inconsistent research findings and there is a need for contemporary research that describes MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Moreover, there are few research articles that have examined MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners across several California State Universities. This is particularly important because next to correctional officers, professions including prison social worker, correctional counselors, and

correctional treatment specialists also have extensive exposure and are an integral part of a prisoner's life.

Methods

The proposed study focuses on describing Masters of Social Work (MSW) students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals and is guided by the following questions: What are graduate social work students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals? What are some predictors of graduate social work students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals? Do graduate social work students' attitudes differ by their geographical location?

The study uses a descriptive research design with quantifiable information from a sample consisting of currently enrolled MSW students from six California State Universities (CSU). Participants were recruited using a sample-surveying method. An email written by the researcher (see Appendix A) was sent out to CSU Social Work Departments soliciting their MSW students to fill out an online survey. The online survey consisted of three sections comprised of close-ended questions. The survey collected demographic information, data related to the student's current knowledge and first-hand experience with prisoners, and the student's attitudes towards prisoners (see Appendix B). The study uses frequencies, distributions, and mean scores to describe the data.

The study measures the following major concepts; attitudes, demographic characteristics, education, and first-hand experience. MSW students' attitudes are operationally defined as the thoughts, preconceived ideas, prejudices, stereotypes, and inclinations one has for the purposes of evaluating incarcerated individuals (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007). Demographic characteristics are defined as the race, age, gender, political title, religion, location, and socioeconomic class of the MSW

student. Education is operationally defined as the existing knowledge, training, and information the individual has regarding incarcerated individuals (Cremin, 1974). Lastly, first-hand contact is defined as personal memories, past and present experiences, and associations related to incarcerated individuals (Rogers, 1959).

Summary of the Significance of the Study

In response to the implementation of various draconian laws, there has been a steady rise in incarcerated individuals. As this population continues to grow, the incarcerated, formerly incarcerated, and their families will increasingly become an archetypal client requiring the services of social workers. Considering the impact this population has on the social work profession, there is limited research describing social workers' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. This study emphasizes the importance of research into MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals because it is these students' advanced education and experience that will place them in a position to advocate for these individuals. The following chapter discusses the current research related to MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals, the conceptual models appropriate for guiding this study, and the gap of existing studies related to this area of research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter begins with a brief introduction that provides historical background information related to the early involvement social workers had within the criminal justice system and their influences. This chapter also discusses the various political movements that have influenced the enactment of prejudicial laws and policies responsible for mass incarceration. In respect to rising prevalence of incarcerated clients and the impact this population has on the social work profession, this study measures MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. This chapter discusses the existing research related to MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals, the conceptual models appropriate for guiding and analyzing the study's data and the current gap in empirical literature related to this area of research.

Background Information

Since the inception of the social work profession, social workers have played a pivotal role in the criminal justice system (Wilson, 2010). In fact, social workers are credited with the creation of the first juvenile courts as well as with the development of the concept of probation founded in 1841 by John Augustus (Gumz, 2004). The implementation of these reformatory and rehabilitative based changes to the criminal justice system reflect an empowering-based attitude towards incarcerated individuals by social reformers and social workers. John Augustus, an advocate for probation, believed that prisoners were capable of change and he advocated for probation as a form rehabilitation, which at the time departed from the conventional punitive treatment towards prisoners (Gumz, 2004). He believed that for some individuals, probation was a better alternative to

incarceration and that it provided the tools and resources needed for the individual to become successfully reintegrated back into society as a productive, law-abiding citizen (Gumz, 2004). Following Augustus' early commitment towards advocating for those at-risk of becoming incarcerated, other social workers began to follow suit and became increasingly involved with incarcerated individuals in various criminal justice type settings. By the early 1920s, social workers had expanded their presence in the criminal justice system to reach all realms of the government including city, state, and federal jurisdictions (Wilson, 2010). Social workers were in criminal courts, juvenile justice detention centers, probationary programs, adult jails, and prisons (Gumz, 2004; Wilson, 2010). The social work profession had a commitment to work against the many impairments that incarceration brought to the individual and their families, specifically, the disintegration of the family unit and the risk of recidivism amongst the incarcerated individual (Alexander, 2010).

The presence and influence of the profession of social work in criminal justice was short-lived (Gumz, 2004; Wilson, 2010). Prior to the 1960s, the US had always experienced fluctuations of crime, but it did not result in a criminal justice policy with an increased reliance on incarceration as a solution. (Travis et al., 2014). From the periods covering the early 1960s to the early 1990s, almost every president introduced some form of legislation or political initiative that changed the way we viewed and treated crime and the offenders of crime in the United States. Under President Lyndon B. Johnson, the war on crime provided an increase in funding to police, courts, and prisons; and ultimately an increase in the rate of incarceration (Travis et al., 2014). Following Lyndon B. Johnson's administration, President Richard Nixon enacted the war on drugs in 1971 which increased criminal sanctions against drug dealers and users. This initiative was

dramatically expanded in 1982 by President Ronald Reagan. The new drug laws under President Reagan resulted in an increase in the rate of imprisonment for drug-related crimes. By 1990, Bill Clinton adopted harsher laws in the sentencing of drug offenders and was responsible for even greater increases in the prison population. The public's adoption of draconian laws and policies reflected the emergence of a new attitude toward offenders and prisoners (Mandracchia et al., 2013; Travis et al., 2014). A shift had occurred within the courts, jails, and prisons from a rehabilitative to a punitive approach towards incarcerated individuals (Mandracchia et al., 2013). The consequences of these policies were unprecedented; the United States had entered an era of mass incarceration despite the current decline in crime rates (Jewkes, 2014; Mandracchia et al., 2013; Yousman, 2009).

These policies enacted by elective officials over the past 40 years were discriminatory in nature and were not applied equally across racial, social, and economic lines. The laws indisputably targeted impoverished inner-city areas. Those from socially, politically, and economically oppressed groups were disproportionately arrested and incarcerated in greater numbers compared to those with privilege (Meiners, 2010). Consequently, the prisons had become over-represented with prisoners who were undereducated, underemployed, mentally disabled, young, and of a racial minority identity (Meiners, 2010).

The prison population has now quintupled in the last 50 years (Alexander, 2010). The incarceration rate of prisoners has increased from 300,000 to over 2 million (Alexander, 2010). The war on drugs has been responsible for a 300% incarceration increase for drug-related crimes within the past 20 years (Schmitt, Warner, & Gupta, 2010). As of 2015, 49.5% of federal prisoners were incarcerated for drug offenses; whereas 7.4% were incarcerated for violent crimes (Federal

Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014). Similarly, 46.3% of all state prisoners are incarcerated because of drug-related offenses; the remaining 53.7% of state prisoners are incarcerated for all other miscellaneous crimes including immigration, burglary, larceny, homicide, fraud, and sex crimes (Federal Bureau of Prisons, n.d.). Ironically, in view of this statistical information, “the land of the free” became a country where it confines, suppresses, and silences its citizens through incarceration. The United States now has the largest incarcerated population in the world (Tonry, 2009). The prevalence of incarceration has become so high that if trends continue to rise, citizens have a 1 in 15 chance of becoming incarcerated at some point in their lifetime (Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007; Varghese et al., 2010). These numbers drastically increase for racial minorities. African Americans are 7 times more likely to be incarcerated than Caucasians and it is estimated that 1 in 4 or 28.5% of African Americans will spend some time in jail or prison during their lifetime (Decety et al., 2010; Meiners, 2010; Welch, 2007).

In response to the massive incarceration that has taken place and that continues to occur, this vulnerable population that is over-representative of the mentally ill, racial minorities, and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds continues to grow exponentially and therefore, requires an increase in the number of social workers in criminal justice settings to serve incarcerated individuals. As with other populations, prison social workers are their client’s resource, outlets, and social connection to an otherwise oppressive world, both inside and outside of prison. Prison social workers are the voices on behalf of those who have been silenced and unheard by the confinements of their prison cell walls.

Conceptual Frameworks

The conceptual framework used to guide this study is discussed in this section. The conceptual framework uses theories including critical theory, critical race theory, and stigma theory. Collectively, these theories explain that without some familiarity, attitudes towards incarcerated individuals are based on assumptions and stereotypes deeply embedded in the social, political, and historical systems of the United States.

Critical Theory

Critical theory (CT) was developed by Frankfurt University theoreticians for understanding culture within the broader context of society (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). CT emerged to liberate, confront, and transcend the current social, political, and historical structures that constrain and prevent specific cultures from achieving social mobility (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Shaikh, 2016). The cultural groups that are oppressed by these institutions are those from vulnerable populations including LGBTQ, the poor, uneducated, disabled, and racial minorities. Coincidentally, these cultural identities make up the vast majority of our prison population (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Likewise, CT can be defined as CT a liberating theory directed at critiquing the underlying social assumptions responsible for enslaving them in society (Shaikh, 2016). Early proponents of Critical theory such as Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno critically analyzed the underlying unequivocal circumstances instilled in a society which fostered oppression and sub ordinance amongst its citizens. In their collaborative essay entitled *Dialectic Enlightenment*, the authors critiqued society and the structures within for the purpose of bringing consciousness towards the existing indiscretions with the goal of promoting societal changes that would liberate those affected by socially dominative and oppressive forces (Adorno &

Horkheimer, 1947). Michel Foucault was another critical theory proponent who is known for politicizing many of the existing social problems at the time of his writings since the 1940s. Foucault acknowledged the connection between existing societal problems related to historical cultural factors and power differentials. His research encouraged future critical theorists to examine broader systems including politics and economic forces when promoting the emancipation and liberation of those enslaved by unfavorable social conditions (Foucault, 1982).

The concepts, principles, and hypothesis conveyed by the theorists suggests oppression, discrimination, and confinement are the products of societal attitudes towards these groups. Specifically, there is a power struggle between cultures. This struggle occurs between the privileged and those individuals who belong to a less empowered societal group. These individuals of a less empowered group are often subjected to becoming subordinates and are perceived as deserving of becoming controlled and incarcerated (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). These individuals are perceived as inferior compared to cultural groups who write the laws, police the streets, and determine the length and severity of prison sentences (Meiners, 2010; Shaikh, 2016). The privileged culture manipulates the operations of the criminal justice system to their benefit in order to secure their social-hierarchy over others (Meiners, 2010; Shaikh, 2016). These non-equalitarian power relationships reflects the social assumptions towards vulnerable groups; that is, incarcerated individuals are perceived as different, less than human, and disposable. CT was chosen to guide this study because it provides insight into society's attitudes towards incarcerated individuals and how incarcerated individuals along with other vulnerable cultures experience the world uniquely apart from those who are privileged (Shaikh, 2016). A primary strength of the theory is that it provides a lens that promotes readers to critically analyze the

current social reality and the discriminatory structures that are in place which affect entire populations. With critical analysis, societal assumptions based in a prejudice society are revealed and one might conclude that the criminal justice system's attitudes towards incarcerated individuals are adverse and inconsistent to the principles it embodies itself on including those of liberty, justice, and equality (Shaikh, 2016).

Critical Race Theory

Following the Civil Rights Movement, critical race theory (CRT) emerged as an extension of CT (Abrams & Moio, 2009). The CRT emerged based on the notion that racism is deeply intertwined within the structural establishment of American society (Abrams & Moio, 2009). CRT theorists unequivocally perceive the US legal system as a means for preserving and perpetuating racism through legal means (Capers, 2014). For example, the laws enacted by former presidents including the war on crime and the war on drugs are racially coded to govern and control people of color through sentencing disparities and mass incarceration (Capers, 2014). The laws along with other social institutions are anything but, objective, neutral, and colorblind (Abrams & Moio, 2009). Through these laws the legal system maintains institutional racism and ensures African Americans are caste to second-class citizenry while white supremacy prevails (Alexander, 2010; Meiners, 2010). There are more African Americans incarcerated today than those enslaved prior to the Civil War (Alexander, 2010). Moreover, incarceration further adds to a racial minority's marginalized identity and compounds the degree at which he or she is disempowered and discriminated against. Therefore, one can speculate that attitudes towards incarcerated individuals are affected by the set number of marginalized identities one holds (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Crenshaw,

Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995). For example, CRT theorists suggest that a prisoner has a higher social status than a Black prisoner, and that a Black prisoner has a higher status than a Black mentally disabled prisoner (Abrams & Moio, 2009). This is because the dominant class and the media assign a hierarchical of stereotypes associated with each identity (Abrams & Moio, 2009).

CRT is defined as an interpretive way of examining the presence of race and racism within the dominant culture. The theoretical mode seeks to explain how racial minorities are affected by the dominant culture's perception of race and the way racial minorities resist systemic racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). The theory is rooted in philosophy, law, and sociology. The main proponents associated with CRT both historically and present include writers such as Frederick Douglas, W.E.B Du Bois, Alan Freeman, and Derrick Bell (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

The theory has been applied today to account for the overrepresentation of people of color who are incarcerated, this theoretical framework critically examines the relationship between race and incarceration and the impact cultural attitudes have on people of color when those attitudes associate minorities with incarceration. CRT has many benefits and strengths because it holistically views inequality, oppression, and disenfranchisement at the macro level, specifically, as depicted through the law and the legal system. This oppressive legal system that enslaves racial minorities can also be applied more broadly to other disenfranchised groups of people including those who are of lower social and economic status including incarcerated individuals (Meiners, 2010; Yousman, 2013). A theory that accounts for more individualized differences in one's attitudes is important to incorporate in this study and is discussed below.

Stigma Theory

The third conceptual framework used to guide this study is stigma theory (ST). The emergence of stigma theory came from the earlier works of Emile Durkheim. In the late 1800s, Durkheim became the first to research stigmatization and its social effects on those who deviate from social norms (Durkheim, 1895). Following Durkheim, Ervin Goffman further explored stigmatized individuals, society's perceptions of those who are stigmatized, and the negative consequences of belonging to a stigmatized group (Goffman, 1963). According to Goffman, "a stigma is an attribute that makes a person different from others in a social category, and it reduces the person to a tainted or discounted status" (Goffman, 1963). Goffman classified stigma into three categories; character deficiencies, physical abnormalities, and tribal differences such as race or religion (Goffman, 1963). Then, as of today, those who are presumed to be stigmatized are the mentally and physically disabled, immigrants, drug addicts, alcoholics, prostitutes, and prisoners. ST posits people who have these labels are socially excluded, ostracized, and rejected by others (Goffman, 1963). That is because stigmatized attributes are paradoxical to what is perceived as "normal" and those who are stigmatized are unable to conform to normalized standards of society (Goffman, 1963; Schnittker & John, 2007). The stigmatized are treated less than normal and are even considered repulsive in the eyes of many. Based on this perspective, the perceived attitudes towards stigmatized incarcerated individuals is that they are abnormal, inferior, and dangerous. These distorted assigned characteristics are used to rationalize and justify the discriminatory and oppressive treatment incarcerated individuals receive inside and out of prison (Schnittker & John, 2007). According to this theory, upon first contact incarcerated individuals are automatically stereotyped as felons with a bad moral character who are

untrustworthy and dangerous and so society reduces their opportunities for pursuing a productive life. They are negatively credentialed and labeled as felons and convicts (Rios & Rodriguez, 2012). ST has been applied in contemporary research to explain discriminatory hiring practices against ex-prisoners, regardless of their crimes (Chui & Cheng, 2013; Decker, Spohn, & Hedberg, 2014; Pager & Western, 2009; Varghese et al., 2010). Additionally, it is used in explaining the reasons incarcerated individuals and formerly incarcerated individuals are excluded from social amenities such as voting, education-based grants, public housing, and welfare aid (Alexander, 2010; Meiners, 2010). Unfortunately, negative attitudes rooted in stigmatization perpetuate the fallacy that incarcerated individuals are blemished characters who must be avoided regardless of their overwhelming need for compassion, empathy, and support. ST theory is an important addition to this study because the theoretical paradigm departs from the previously mentioned models. ST explains that attitudes towards incarcerated individuals are a shared experience across cultures, and it is a subjective experience based on emotions and psychobiological events that take place unconsciously (Goffman, 1963; Schnittker & John, 2007). In other words, stigmatization is a universal phenomenon that occurs across cultures and countries. Additionally, research suggests that with familiarity, a process called “normalization,” stigma towards incarcerated individuals can be mitigated (Winnick & Bodkin, 2009).

Empirical Literature

The literature related to the current study is relatively sparse, specifically, as it pertains to the research questions. Moreover, most of the existing research on this topic was conducted 10 years or longer following the published works of

Melvin et al. (1985). For unknown reasons research into the attitudes towards prisoners has come to a stalemate despite the unexplored potential that research has to offer. In response to the limited amount of contemporary research, the current study broadened its literature search to include studies that are similar and based on related concepts. The literature review incorporates studies involving various populations and their attitudes towards incarcerated individuals, attitudes towards sex offenders, and attitudes towards formerly incarcerated individuals. Additionally, broader categories were searched including attitudes towards rehabilitating and punishing incarcerated individuals. This was included in the search and in the empirical literature section because as demonstrated in previous studies, there is a significant relationship between attitudes towards prisoners and the individual's preference in the mode of punishment (Kjelsberg et al., 2007; Mandracchia et al., 2013).

While exploring the recent academic literature, important information emerged relevant to understanding the present study's topic, MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. This information was compiled into themes including demographic background information, the influence of public and media perceptions, and the influence of training, education, and personal association. The information and themes collected from the recent literature are discussed below.

Public's Demographic Background and Attitudes towards the Incarcerated

The literature related to attitudes towards sex offenders, attitudes towards ex-prisoners, attitudes towards mentally ill offenders, attitudes towards stigmatized individuals, and earlier research into attitudes towards prisoners suggests demographic characteristics correlates with attitudes towards prisoners as

well as the criminal justice system (Jones, Ross, Richards, & Murphy, 2009; Mandracchia et al., 2013). The role demographic characteristics have on attitudes towards incarcerated individuals however, are complex, multifaceted, and are interactive with the person's unique life experiences (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Jones et al., 2009). The individualized life experiences of the person including their race, socioeconomic class, gender, age, political affiliation, and along with other characteristics shape their attitudes and in the process limit objectivity and impartiality because these multiple factors make people distinct and carryover in the formation of their attitudes (Jones et al., 2009; Mandracchia et al., 2013). Therefore, the role demographical information has on attitudes towards incarcerated individuals is intricate and not entirely clear cut because people and their attitudes cannot be easily compartmentalized based on simplistic measures of demographic characteristics. Nonetheless, there is an apparent relationship between the two variables and it is an important theme for describing MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals.

Race

Race is defined as a social construct created for the purposes of categorizing people who have similar physical patterns (Clair & Denis, 2015). Scientists have shown that race has no biological basis and is "man-made" still, race structures one's social reality (Clair & Denis, 2015). Race plays a pivotal role in society and in the way in which an individual is treated and ultimately perceives the world. Therefore, it is rational and conceivable to presume race influences attitudes. However, the research into race and attitudes towards incarcerated individuals is limited. There is however, research that explores the relationship

between race and other criminal justice concepts which may shed insight into the undetermined prospect that race has on attitudes towards the incarcerated.

Researchers Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) conducted a multivariate analysis of the public's attitudes towards ex-offenders. In their study the researchers' reported a significant relationship between race and public attitudes towards ex-offenders. The researchers attributed two independent variables responsible for influencing a racial group's attitudes towards ex-prisoners; confidence in the criminal justice system and exposure to criminal justice issues (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010). Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) reported that African Americans had significantly less confidence in the criminal justice system and had softer or more liberal attitudes towards formerly incarcerated individuals compared to Whites (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010). According to the researchers, with the prevalence of certain prejudicial practices in the criminal justice system including the use of excessive police force, racial profiling, selective and discriminatory prosecution, people of color are distrustful and lack confidence in that system (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010). Therefore, African Americans are more likely to identify with incarcerated individuals, view them more favorable, and less culpable for their crimes because of the socially unjust circumstances at play.

Additionally, Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) suggested that because mass-incarceration has become normalized among communities of racial minorities and because of the sheer number of African Americans incarcerated or involved in the criminal justice system they are exposed to criminal justice issues at a greater extent compared to Whites. In the United States, there is 13% of the African American male population in jail or prison (Behan & O'Donnell, 2008). Consequently, African Americans are statistically more likely to be impacted by incarceration by knowing someone who is incarcerated including a friend, relative,

or family member (Decety et al., 2010; Meiners, 2010; Welch, 2007). In the eyes of those African Americans who have normalized criminal justice issues through social familiarity, it is by utter luck that they too are not incarcerated (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Melvin et al., 1985). This normalization process adds to the tolerant attitudes African Americans have towards convicted criminals and their preference for rehabilitative treatment (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; King & Wheelock, 2007).

Similarly, Lerman and Page (2012) found that African Americans and Latino prison staff throughout the country had supportive attitudes towards rehabilitation programs for incarcerated individuals compared to their White counterparts. Lambert, Pasupleti, and Allen (2005) further supported the relationship between race and attitudes towards rehabilitating incarcerated individuals. According to Lambert et al. (2005), racial minority students attending college were more supportive of rehabilitation compared to Whites.

In contrast to racial minorities' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals, Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) reported that Whites have greater confidence in the courts and lesser exposure to criminal justice issues and their attitudes are reflected in a more conservative and tougher approach toward formerly incarcerated individuals. According to the researchers, Whites have faith in the legitimacy of the criminal justice system and believe those who are incarcerated are guilty and deviant (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Unnever & Cullen, 2009). As such, Whites' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals are less tolerant compared to African Americans (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010). Whites' attitudes are reflected in the desire for the denunciation of convicted criminals through harsher and more punitive treatment (Lambert et al., 2005; Unnever & Cullen, 2009). Whites are more inclined to endorse harsher penalties towards incarcerated

individuals including longer sentences and the use of capital punishment (Unnever & Cullen, 2009). Additionally, White college students have unfavorable attitudes towards prisoner services and resources and are more retributively oriented compared to racial minorities (Hensely, Koscheski, & Tewksbury, 2007). Unnever and Cullen (2009) partly ascribed these unfavorable attitudes toward the incarcerated by means of negative stereotypes and unconscious racist underpinnings. It is uncertain whether Whites would continue to have these attitudes towards the incarcerated if, like African Americans, Whites faced similar odds of being incarcerated. Perhaps under this polarized circumstance Whites might identify and empathize with prisoners (Alexander, 2010; Sanchez, 2017; Unnever & Cullen, 2009).

In contrast to these studies' findings, Melvin et al. (1985) measured prisoners, prison staff, and college students' attitudes towards prisoners and found that race was not significantly related to attitudes. Other studies have also found similar results and concluded that race is not a significant predictor in the attitudes towards prisoners or attitudes towards rehabilitating prisoners (Sims, 2003; Tsoudis, 2000) These contradictory findings suggest research into race and attitudes towards prisoners needs further exploration.

Political Title

As mentioned already attitudes are complex and research suggests there are a number of interactive factors involved. Other researchers suggested attitudes towards prisoners are contingent on a system of beliefs and values made up of other related criminal justice concepts (Dhami & Cruise, 2013; Hensely et al., 2007; Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Unnever & Cullen, 2009; Unnever, Cullen, & Fisher, 2007). This is conveyed in the research that found a correlation between an

individual's preference for retribution or rehabilitation and their attitudes towards incarcerated individuals (Kjelsberg et al., 2007). These affixed beliefs and values are described as an individual's political ideology. There are numerous studies that have measured political title and attitudes towards prisoners and it is an important demographic feature in discussing the literature related to MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals.

Unnever and Cullen (2009) explored the role of empathy and individual differences in punitive attitudes towards criminal offenders. The researchers hypothesized that an individual's level of punitive support towards offenders is impacted by political and social forces including personal beliefs about racism, crime, and stereotypes (Unnever & Cullen, 2009). Therefore, Unnever and Cullen (2009) integrated a large set of predictors of attitudes towards crime-related concepts into their experiment in an effort to establish a coherent source of punitive attitudes. The researchers' results supported their hypothesis that the most influential predictors of punitive attitudes towards offenders are 'social beliefs' which are comprised of political beliefs, racial beliefs, and beliefs involving the causality of crime (Unnever & Cullen, 2009).

In an earlier work, Unnever et al. (2007) suggested an individual's views towards crime and their support for certain criminal justice-related policies hinges on their political orientation and the causality of crime. According to the researchers, conservatives are stricter and more punitive towards crime and incarcerated individuals (Dhami & Cruise, 2013; Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Unnever et al., 2007). Unnever et al. (2007) credited individuals who claimed to be a conservative and hold punitive attitudes towards crime and offenders also have political values aligned with a dispositional attribution style that describes the causality of crime. The dispositional attribution style subscribes to the notion

of free will and perceives offenders as autonomous and responsible for their own choices and actions that lead them to prison (King & Maruna, 2009; Unnever & Cullen, 2009; Unnever et al., 2007). The values of dispositional attribution are depicted in conservatives' efforts to incapacitate and prevent the perpetuation of crime through deterrence and punishment (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010).

According to Dhimi and Cruise (2013), one form of deterrence and punishment is by social disenfranchisement. Individuals who engage in crime are socially disenfranchised by a loss of rights and forever becoming stigmatized as a felon.

Dhimi and Cruise (2013), Hirschfield and Piquero (2010), and Unnever et al. (2007) suggested liberals are more tolerant in their attitudes towards crime, incarcerated offenders, and the related social policies. The researchers correlated liberal beliefs to a situational attribution style of crime. The situational attribution style perceives crime as a product of an unequal and prejudicial society.

According to the researchers, those who commit crime are socially, politically, and economically disadvantaged and offenders would not have committed their crimes under different circumstances. Therefore, liberals view offenders more benign and deserving of rehabilitation in the context of an unjust system (Dhimi & Cruise, 2013; Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Unnever et al., 2007).

Similarly, other studies suggest attitudes towards prisoners are deeply embedded in an individual's political orientation related to crime and imprisonment (Dhimi & Cruise, 2013; Lerman & Page, 2012). Specifically, attitudes towards incarcerated individuals are related to views of deterrence, retribution, punishment, social restoration, and rehabilitation. The researchers agreed with similar studies that conservatives favor deterrence and a retributive approach to crime whereas, liberals support rehabilitative approaches (Dhimi & Cruise, 2013; Lerman & Page, 2012).

Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) suggested conservatives have greater social distance between incarcerated individuals and themselves because the incarcerated are perceived as racial minorities with whom they do not relate. These social differences create an inability to empathize with the offender and maintains the conservative's retributive ideal (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Unnever & Cullen, 2009). According to the researchers, political attitudes towards punishment and attitudes toward prisoners are similar, but different and being supportive of retribution doesn't necessarily equate to an unfavorable attitude toward incarcerated individuals (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; King & Maruna, 2009) Lerman and Page (2012) suggested that the political orientation of an individual was just one important consideration amongst broader concepts in describing their attitudes towards incarcerated individuals.

Professional and Institutional Culture

In addition to political title, the literature suggests that an individual's professional culture including the profession's values, principles, norms, and the expected work ethic, influences attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Tewksbury and Mustaine (2008) assessed prison staff from a variety of positions and their perspective towards correctional issues including their attitudes towards incarcerated individuals, rehabilitation, and retribution. The researchers found that attitudes towards these correctional issues varied across correctional-staff members and were influenced by their specific job. In this study, administrators and service providers perceived rehabilitating inmates as the single most important objective in prison compared to correctional officers who viewed retribution and deterrence as the goal of a prison (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2008).

Young, Antonio, and Wingard (2009) measured the attitudes of prison staff toward the treatment of inmates. The researchers found differences in attitudes amongst the prison staff based on their professional role. Treatment staff and clerical prison staff endorsed more positive attitudes towards rehabilitation programs and according to the researchers, were more likely to view inmates with dignity and respect. Whereas correctional officers were more likely to agree with attitudes that indicated incarcerated individuals cannot be respected and that treating prisoners with respect compromises the safety of the prison (Young et al., 2009).

Similar to the other studies, Kjelsberg et al. (2007) explored the attitudes towards incarcerated individuals amongst different professional groups including correctional staff and college students. The researchers found that correctional officers held the most negative attitudes towards prisoners compared to other correctional-staff including teachers and mental-health workers. Also, correctional officers' attitudes towards prisoners were highly correlated with retributive views towards punishment whereas other staff focused on rehabilitation. The researchers also found that college students attitudes towards prisoners varied by major. Compared to history and business management majors, nursing students held the most positive attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Paradoxical to these findings, the researchers suggest that students valued a retributive stance towards punishing prisoners even more so than correctional officers. This conflicts with other studies that propose positive attitudes towards prisoners are correlated with support for rehabilitation (Kjelsberg et al., 2007).

These studies suggest that an individual adopts the professional role of his or her profession. Therefore, it makes sense that across studies correctional officers have the most negative attitudes towards prisoners because their role

within the prison is to supervise and monitor prisoners. Correctional officers are hyper-vigilant to detect any potential threat and all negative aspects that may compromise the safety of the institution. This particular orientation influences the officer's attitude towards those he supervises. Teachers, social workers, and programmers, however, are focused on a prisoner's strengths and resources in an effort to instill hope, educate, and rehabilitate. This role predisposes someone to look for the good in prisoners and therefore may result in more positive attitudes (Kjelsberg et al., 2007). Based on Social Identity Theory, Liebling (2007) claimed that Correctional Officers are the antithesis of prisoners and so correctional officers adopt a collective social identity distinct of the prisoners, an in-group versus out-group or "us versus them" culture (Liebling, 2007; Tajfel & Turner, 2004). This culture is adopted as a means of both protecting the safety of other officers and separating themselves from the prisoners. In doing so, the correctional officers assign negative characteristics to the prisoners and become intolerant and insensitive towards them (Maynard-Moody & Portillo, 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 2004).

In contrast to the studies that found a relationship between professional culture and attitudes towards incarcerated individuals, Murphy and Brown (2000) found no relationship between an individual's attitudes towards prisoners and their occupation. Additionally, Crewe, Liebling, and Hulley (2011) found that although a profession socializes its members into a distinct culture comprised of the profession's history, values, and attitudes; the relationship between the correctional officers' professional culture and their attitudes towards prisoners was not significant. Researchers acknowledge the importance of understanding the culture of the broader institution in its role of defining the professional cultures of those it employs. (Lerman & Page, 2012; Marzano, Ciclitira, & Adler, 2012). The

institution's attitudes towards incarcerated individuals can be interpreted through the presence or absence of the valued need for educational programs, counseling, vocational training, and other resources provided to inmates (Lerman & Page, 2012; Marzano et al., 2012).

Location

Surprisingly, there is a limited number of studies that compare the attitudes towards incarcerated individuals across different locations. However, the existing literature suggests attitudes towards incarcerated individuals are comprised of the unique socio-political context of the region (Barker, 2009; Lerman & Page, 2012). These attitudinal differences can be observed in the variations of the existing policies related to crime, punishment, and prisoners across and within American states. According to Barker (2009), "the United States does not have a uniform nor coherent punishment policy [toward incarcerated individuals] because all criminal justice policy is a subnational responsibility" (p. 4). Therefore, prisoners are treated differently from place to place based on the consensus of attitudes amongst the public. These attitudinal differences explain inconsistencies in the penal regime and why some jurisdictions fall closer to the retribution or rehabilitation side of the pendulum compared to others. Likewise, some locations will impose lengthier sentences than others, prevent early release, and use unique forms of punishment such as humiliating and shaming the prisoner (Barker, 2009).

Barker (2009) compared Washington, California, and New York's sanctions towards incarcerated individuals and found that Washington is characterized as a parsimony state with low imprisonment rates, California is retributive with high incarceration rates, and New York is indifferent with a modest imprisonment rate. Barker (2009) attributed these state variations to two

modes, political structures and a collective agency. Political structures are made up of the unique history, administration, and organizational configurations of the location. Whereas collective agency is comprised of individual citizenry differences within the location. In a similar experiment, Lerman and Page (2012) explored the variations of attitudes towards imprisonment across Minnesota and California prison staff and found that California correctional officers held more punitive attitudes towards prisoners compared to Minnesota. The researchers concluded that these differences are with respect to the unique penal and political environment of each state (Lerman & Page, 2012).

Gender

Gender is an interesting socio-demographic characteristic to considering the past literature related to attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Gender would seem like an important predictor of attitudes towards the incarcerated, but the literature findings are inconsistent and the role gender has towards attitudes towards prisoners remains contentious. In Melvin et al.'s (1985) classical study which measured attitudes towards prisoners amongst various groups including rehabilitative counselors, correctional officers, and students the researchers found no significant variations between gender and attitudes towards prisoners (ATP). In a similarly designed study, Kjelsberg et al. (2007) measured ATP amongst prisoners, correctional staff, and college students. The researchers found a slight gender difference in the college students' ATP scores; men showed a greater negative ATP score than women (men $x=86$ and female $x=93$). However, a year later Kjelsberg and Loos (2008) measured correctional staff and college students' attitudes towards sex offenders (ATS) and found no correlation between gender and ATS. In a qualitative study, Mae Boag and Wilson (2013) examined if

engaging with prisoners changes students' attitudes and empathy towards them. After the students took a tour of a prison and engaged with the prisoners for several hours they were required to write an essay based on their experience. The researchers analyzed the essays for changes in attitudes and empathy at three places of time: before the visit, at the time of the visit, and after the visit. After analyzing the papers, the researchers concluded there were no significant gender differences. In another study that measured ATP amongst religious and non-religious college students, the researchers found no significant relationship between gender and ATP scores (Chui & Cheng, 2015). Lastly, the same researchers found no significant correlation between gender and ATP scores amongst Social Work students in Hong Kong (Chui, Cheng, & Wong, 2013).

Contrary to these studies' findings, Murphy and Brown (2000) explored gender role identity and the sex of the participants and their attitudes towards male and female prisoners. The researchers found no significant sex differences between participants and their ATP but found a relationship between respondent's who identified with a female gender role identity and negative attitudes towards female prisoners. Lambert et al. (2005) explored punishment and rehabilitative ATP amongst social work and non-social work students. The sample was comprised of over 406 students at an American University. The researchers hypothesized that the social work majors would support rehabilitation for prisoners because of the discipline's ethics and core principles towards vulnerable populations. As hypothesized, social work students had attitudes akin to rehabilitating prisoners. The researchers also reported significant gender relationship between those who support rehabilitation compared to those who favor retribution. Specifically, women favored rehabilitation over men. More recent studies have also echoed similar results that women are more supportive of

rehabilitating prisoners than men (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Lerman & Page, 2012; Young et al., 2009). The literature on gender and ATP has produced inconsistent results and extensive research into the area is needed particularly, with MSW students because this population is virtually unexplored as it relates to ATP.

Age

Age is another demographic characteristic that is commonly measured in studies throughout the empirical literature. For the most part, the most current studies show consistent findings that age is related to ATP; however, there is literature that contradicts those findings. Again, further research is needed for scholars to definitively claim a correctional exists between age and ATP especially involving relatively unexplored populations including MSW students.

Kjelsberg et al. (2007) examined the ATP with an attached demographic with a sample of 785 respondents from various groups including prisoners, prison staff, and college students. The ages of each sample group were heterogeneous. The prisoners' ages ranged from 18-72 years, prison staff consisted of ages 20-69 years old, and college students had an age range of 19-52 years. The researchers found that across all groups there was no significant relationship between age and ATP. Similar to these findings, Lambert (2005) researched college students' attitudes towards punishing incarcerated individuals consisting of a sample size of 302 students across two colleges. The researchers found a relationship among various demographic characteristics and attitudes towards punishing prisoners, however, age was one variable that did not correlate with the independent variable.

In opposition to these findings, Church, Baldwin, Brannen, and Clements (2009) investigated BSW and MSW students' ATP and attitudes towards mentally

ill prisoners and found an age relationship between the undergraduates and graduate students. Specifically, MSW students had greater positive-regard for prisoners compared to their BSW student counterparts. Additionally, Chui and Cheng (2015) surveyed a Hong Kong university comprised of college students' and their ATP. The sample consisted of 232 women and 152 men for a total sample size of $N = 384$. The researchers concluded that age was statistically significant among college students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. As age increased, the attitude that prisoners are "bad characters" decreased. There has been an assortment of studies within the literature that have also found similar relationships between age and ATP and as well as with other similar concepts (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Kjelsberg & Loos, 2008; Lerman & Page, 2012; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2008).

Socioeconomic Class

Although not widely researched in the context of students' attitudes towards prisoners the literature that measured other populations suggests that understanding the implications of social and economic class privilege is important in describing MSW students' ATP. Prisoners are usually comprised of the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups and those who are privileged may find it difficult to relate to prisoners which may negatively impact their attitudes towards them (Jones et al., 2009). Those with socioeconomic privilege are more likely to contribute their social and financial success to intrinsic qualities and hold those incarcerated to the same standard. However, the privilege discounts the structural inequalities that maintain stratification within our society. Therefore, those with socioeconomic privilege can develop a narrow and distorted set of beliefs and attitudes towards prisoners (Jones et al., 2009; King & Maruna, 2009).

This is especially true when considering those who are at-risk for incarceration are segmented to distant impoverished neighborhoods and are irrelevant to the privileges' social reality. Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) suggested that those that are socially and economically privileged may develop more favorable views towards ex-offenders if they too were forced to share the same life-experiences and live within the same neighborhoods as those at-risk for becoming incarcerated.

Like all demographic characteristics, socioeconomic class is affixed with intrinsic biases that mold our perceptions and attitudes towards others. Specifically, attitudes are shaped by a person's unique characteristics, experiences, and belief-system and based on one's subjective reality that is then projected onto to others. According to Jones et al. (2009) those who have never been socially, politically, and economically oppressed are sheltered by their middle-class privilege and do not have the means to conceptualize being confined to an environment where breaking the law being arrested, convicted, and imprisoned is a way of surviving in an oppressive world. These socioeconomically elite people will not understand the struggles of the prisoner and consequently will have more negative attitudes towards them. This is supported by King and Maruna (2009), who found that the higher an individual's economic class, the increasingly punitive attitudes one holds towards prisoners. In despite of these findings, Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) found that socioeconomic concepts including "income" did not have a correlation to ATP, but the researchers did find that participants' living in urban areas (presumably of lower socioeconomic class) have a more positive ATP than those living in suburban areas (presumably people of higher socioeconomic class).

Religion

Religion is another demographic characteristic that the literature suggests may influence MSW students' ATP. Park (2009) measured the demographic attributes of students and their ATP and reentry. The researchers found religion to be significantly related to a students' ATP and prisoner reentry scores. Those who identified as being religious had greater attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Similarly, Chui and Cheng (2015) measured the attitudes towards prisoners amongst religious and non-religious college students in Hong Kong. The study consisted of a total of 384 students including 150 Christians, 142 Buddhist, and 92 students who were non-religious. The researchers found that the religious students had greater attitudes towards prisoners compared to the non-religious students. More specifically, Chui and Cheng (2015) reported that Christian and Buddhist students were less inclined to view incarcerated individuals as bad people and were more inclined to show respect and empathy towards them compared to the non-religious students. Interestingly though, the researchers found that students who were "more religious" or had greater spiritual measures correlated with negative ATP. On the contrary, Lambert et al. (2005) surveyed social work and non-social work college students' attitudes towards punishment and rehabilitation of inmates. As originally predicted by the researchers, social work students were more supportive towards rehabilitating incarcerated individuals, but among the independent demographic variables, the researchers found that religion was not significantly related with support for rehabilitation or punishment (Lambert et al., 2005).

The Media, Populous, and Policy

In addition to an individual's demographic characteristics the media, general population, and public policy are important themes or predictors of MSW

students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. The media are known to be an incredibly powerful tool in its ability to disseminate information amongst the public. Yousman (2013) claimed the media provide information about topics and subjects the general public would otherwise have little to no knowledge or experience with such as prisons and prisoners. The public relies on the media as its primary source of information to provide accurate representation and deliver meaning to the subject of incarcerated individuals (Yousman, 2009; Meiners, 2010). However, the mass media are selective in what they broadcast, and they strive to provide the public with tantalizing "stories" for the purpose of ratings rather than dispatching factual news (Yousman, 2009). The media capture the attention of the public by invoking an emotional response through the labels and portrayals depicted of incarcerated individuals as violent, impulsive, psychopathic, young, males, and of minority backgrounds (Yousman, 2009). These portrayals of prisoners are unchallenged in the absence of alternative representations and so the American public frames crime with these terrifying images (Yousman, 2009; Meiners, 2010). According to Walker, Spohn, and DeLone (2015), the public would be more sympathetic towards prisoners if there were no media. This is because there is no real journalism to counteract the media's sensationalistic and exaggerated portrayals of prisoners (Yousman, 2009). Therefore, this distorted perception of incarcerated individuals is universally accepted, and attitudes are forged from the media's stereotypical images of prisoners and their horrific crimes depicted in movies, television shows, and in the news (Unnever & Cullen, 2009).

These emotionally driven images elicit negative attitudes towards prisoners and have real life implications. In fear of their own safety and the well-being of their family members, the general public enacts policies that are oppressive, discriminatory, and excessively punitive towards crime, prisons, and incarcerated

individuals (Unnever & Cullen, 2009). Even though these policies were developed in response to the “crazed” criminal and violent prisoner we all have read, watched, or heard about, 75% of incarcerated individuals in U.S. prisons are in for non-violent offenses, mainly drug-related crimes (Meiners, 2010; Reiman & Leighton, 2015; Unnever & Cullen, 2009). Jewkes (2014) stated that by deconstructing the media’s typified portrayals of criminals, insight is provided into the origins of historical political movements enacted to repress crime including the “War on Drugs” and the “War on Crime.” The consequences that followed these fear-based political movements are reflected in the current landscape of the U.S. Criminal Justice System (Meiners, 2010). More specifically, the media circulate specific stories of minority youth as predatory, hyper-sexualized, criminals and in doing so, the humanistic and individual characteristics of the person are removed and the person becomes compartmentalized into a group that threatens society; correspondingly, the individual becomes an enemy of the public (Meiners, 2010). In response to this, the public accepts racially coded penal policies used to control “the threat” which have become responsible for disproportionately incarcerating racial minorities (Jewkes, 2014). Therefore, the media play a crucial role in manipulating the public’s consciousness and their attitudes towards prisoners which has profound social and political outcomes. Meiners (2010) suggested the media fuel mass incarceration by telling the public who we should perceive as dangerous, who is responsible for crime, and who should be contained.

For those who were once incarcerated, social exclusion continues beyond being imprisoned. This is because the images and fear instilled by the media aren't automatically erased from the public’s memory once the prisoner completes their sentence, but instead, the ex-con is forever stigmatized by the media’s original label of being a violent and an untrustworthy person. Public attitudes towards

former prisoners are observed in the existence of the current felony disenfranchisement laws. These laws convey a message that former prisoners are perceived as unredeemable, devalued, socially discardable, and deserving of permanent social exclusion (Jewkes, 2014; Yousman, 2013). Their felony charge(s) assigns them to second-class citizenry. There are 6.1 million felons in America who in some states, have forever lost their basic rights and privileges (Uggen, Larson, & Shannon, 2016). Some states deny formerly incarcerated individuals the right to vote, the right to carry a firearm, the ability to serve on juries, the ability to receive federal grants for a college education, the ability to receive food stamps, the ability to receive public housing, and they are discriminated against employment (Alexander, 2010; Varghese et al., 2010). Prior to entering prison, these individuals had already belonged to the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups of society and now that they are felons the few legitimate opportunities they once had at becoming self-efficient are taken away from them (Dhami & Cruise, 2013). They are blacklisted, incapacitated, and oppressed to an even greater state of marginalization (Dhami & Cruise, 2013). According to Dhami and Cruise (2013), the type of offense the prisoner committed and the length of sentence has an impact on the public's attitudes towards them regarding disenfranchisement. Dhami and Cruise (2013) found that 61.1% of the public believes that violent criminals should be forever disenfranchised whereas, only 15.63% favored life-long disenfranchisement for Drug-offenders. In most states, however, felony disenfranchisement laws are usually applied equivocally across all crimes. Unfortunately, the felony charge doesn't just marginalize the individual prisoner, but it has long-lasting implications on their families, particularly, their children and the social and economic opportunities that will be afforded to them (Dhami & Cruise, 2013).

Education and First-hand Contact

The literature suggests the media negatively shape the public's attitudes towards incarcerated individuals (Alexander, 2010; Mae Boag & Wilson, 2013; Mandracchia et al., 2013). This is because the media stereotype all prisoners as "evil monsters" and for most, this portrayal is the only bit of information he or she will receive concerning prisoners (Meiners, 2010). According to Mae Boag and Wilson (2013), the public relies on these stereotypes to define and provide meaning to this unfamiliar group. Kleban and Jeglic (2012) suggested attitudes are malleable and change with knowledge. With that said, public ignorance towards prisoners may be challenged with the introduction of new knowledge in the form of education or first-hand experience (Alexander, 2010; Mae Boag & Wilson, 2013; Mandracchia et al., 2013).

Meiners (2010) suggested education or first-hand contact with prisoners provides new insight and replaces previously held images and stereotypes which then can potentially redefine ATP. Consistent with this, Kerce, Magnusson, and Rudolph (1994) suggested that correctional officers are more inclined to have positive attitudes towards prisoners when two variables are present. These variables are training (education) and length of time on the job (contact). The researchers concluded education and experience are significantly related to the positive beliefs, values, and attitudes held towards prisons and inmates. Similarly, Tewksbury and Mustaine (2008) reported that college-educated correctional officers are more supportive of rehabilitating prisoners compared to correctional officers who have less than a college degree who are more supportive of incapacitating and punishing inmates. Unnever et al. (2007) claimed that Americans who have a college education, especially a postgraduate degree, are less supportive of punitive treatment towards incarcerated individuals. In another

study, Young et al. (2009) conducted a pre-test and post-test experiment on prison staff to measure the influence educational training had on their attitudes towards inmates and the treatment of inmates. The experiments found that prison staffs' attitudes towards prisoners had significantly improved following the training. In another pre-test-post-test experiment, Craig (2005) found that after a two-day training the participants were more supportive towards prisoners. Prior to the test more participants had answered the questionnaire with responses "you shouldn't expect a lot from prisoners," "prisoners are constantly attempting to con stuff from people," and "prisoners don't change." Following the test, participants were significantly less apt to answer with those responses and there was even an increase in the number of respondents who answered: "I would live next door to a prisoner."

Earlier studies measuring the influence education and training has on prison staffs' attitudes towards offenders echoes similar results (Hogue, 1993, 1995). Moreover, researchers have found that other populations including college students, probation officers, and even hostel workers show improved attitudes towards offenders following an educational program (Craig, 2005; Wesley, Baldwin, & Brannen, 2009). Education has also been correlated with a reduction of stigma and an increase in positive attitudes towards incarcerated mentally ill offenders as well as sex offenders (Kleban & Jeglic, 2012; Mandracchia et al., 2013; Sadow & Ryder, 2008; Wesley et al., 2009).

Conversely, there has been a number of studies that have reported education has no influence towards attitudes of incarcerated individuals. In a classical study, Jurik (1985) surveyed 179 correctional officers' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals and found education to have no relationship to the participants' attitudes. Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) report that education has no

effect on the participants' held attitudes and stereotypes of offenders. Additionally, Lerman and Page (2012) researched prison staffs' attitudes inside two California and Minnesota prisons and the researchers concluded that staffs' education or experience working inside the institutions did not influence their attitudes towards inmates. Johnson, Hughes, and Ireland (2007) conducted a pre-test-post-test experiment to determine the influence an educational training program may have on attitudes towards incarcerated sex offenders amongst police officers, probation officers, and participants from the general public. The researchers found that the introduction of the educational program had an inverse effect and the participants reported a greater number of negative attitudes towards sex offenders post-test. Lastly, Kjelsberg and Loos (2008) explored the influence of an educational program on correctional staffs' attitudes towards incarcerated sex offenders and the researchers concluded that the educational program did have a brief influence on correctional staffs' attitudes, but the change was short-lived.

In addition to education, first-hand contact and experience with prisoners help to ameliorate prejudices, stereotypes, and unfounded preconceptions amongst ignorant persons (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Meiners, 2010). Hodson (2011) claimed first-hand exposure reduces the anxiety and fear of those we are unfamiliar with and increases connectivity through trust, sympathy, and empathy. This is because the individual is able to identify with and assume the position of the prisoner (Mae Boag & Wilson, 2013; Unnever & Cullen, 2009).

Some researchers have suggested favorable attitudes towards incarcerated individuals evolve from contact (Tonry, 2009). For example, Mae Boag and Wilson (2013) assessed the influence first-hand exposure had on college students' level of empathy and support towards prisoners. The researchers predicted that the college students would be more empathetic and have an increase in supportive

attitudes towards prisoners after experiencing first-hand contact with them. The researchers concluded that all 8 participants had a reduction in ill-informed prejudices and an increase in empathy towards prisoners after spending a total of six hours in jail conversing with them. The researchers proposed that with personal experience inmates are re-humanized and less likely to be socially excluded because experience facilitates empathy and changes negative stereotypes (Mae Boag & Wilson, 2013). Other researchers contend that experience positively shapes attitudes towards prisoners because the public can rely on personal accounts rather than emotionally driven images portrayed by the media (Christ et al., 2010; Meiners, 2010). Malain (2013) has suggested first-hand contact provides an individual with the capacity to understand and shifts the individuals' way of perceiving prisoners from an uneducated attitude to a cognitively informed attitude.

Researchers Dhimi and Cruise (2007) have stated that the public would garnish a more favorable attitude towards prisoners or any other unknown group if they were to live amongst them. According to the authors exposure increases tolerance for prisoners through enriching one's views and provides support for the reason why victims of crime hold more supportive attitudes of prisoners and are no more supportive of punitive measures to crime compared to the general public. In relation to this, Kelly (2014) found that prison staff members who had minimal first-hand contact with prisoners showed significantly more punitive attitudes towards inmates compared to staff who had frequent contact. Similarly, others have found that criminal justice employees had significantly more supportive attitudes towards incarcerated offenders compared to college students (Gakhal & Brown, 2011; Kjelsberg & Loos, 2008; Mandracchia et al., 2013; Melvin et al., 1985). These findings collaborate with other studies findings that those who have

regular exposure to incarcerated individuals are more inclined to hold positive attitudes towards them.

However, other studies have found conflicting results that suggest first-hand contact has no relationship to attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. For example, Kjelsberg et al. (2007) found that despite the day-to-day first-hand contact correctional officers have with prisoners they had a lower ATP score compared to college students who lacked first-hand experience. Similar results were found in Melvin et al. (1985) where college students had more favorable attitudes towards prisoners compared to correctional officers. According to Meiners (2010), these results may be explained by the fact that correctional officers must remain emotionally detached from the clientele they supervise in order to continue their line of work. This is because their job is manifested in trauma and it would be too much for the correctional officer to bear to recognize the prisoner as a “real-life person” who has feelings and a family, and that the prisoner is someone’s spouse, father, and or child.

Gaps in the Literature

The literature discussed in this chapter described the main themes related to the topic of attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Each study presented in this chapter has uniquely contributed to the current understanding of the topic at hand. These preliminary studies have provided insight into the importance of the presence or absence of specific individualized demographic characteristics; as well as education and first-hand contact with prisoners and their propensity to uniquely impact attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Moreover, the studies presented here emphasize the importance and relevance of this topic to both the public and service providers working with the incarcerated, formerly incarcerated, and

families of the incarcerated because of the defining role that attitudes have at rehabilitating and reintegrating prisoners back into society. With that said, these studies need to be recognized for their contributions and advancement into this topic because they have provided knowledge into the core issues associated with attitudes towards incarcerated individuals, accentuated the social importance of the topic, and provided the groundwork for subsequent studies by identifying areas of the research that are ambiguous, inconsistent, and in need of further exploration.

Specifically, as discussed in the empirical literature there are inconsistencies amongst the existing demographic variables that are predictive of attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. There is also an absence of research into notable characteristics that may be predictive of shaping attitudes towards offenders including race, religion, and political affiliation. In addition to this, the pre-existing literature is overly representative of particular sample groups, primarily, those who hail from a criminal justice background. These studies provide a basis for understanding the attitudes towards incarcerated individuals; however, it is not entirely clear if these studies can be applied to other segments of equally important populations. This constituted a need to study the topic from a social work standpoint, specifically, MSW students because it is imperative for prospective social work leaders to be aware of their attitudes towards this population in order to effectively advocate for the needs of prisoners both at the micro and macro levels.

This study focuses on MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. This is because the research related to this sample is relatively non-existent aside from a few studies that had been conducted several years ago and so the results may not be entirely representative of current MSW students in an ever-evolving social and political world. With this said, the research questions of this

study address four areas of interest. One, to update the current literature into the impact demographic characteristics have in shaping attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Two, study all demographic characteristics including those sparsely researched in previous studies such as religion, race, and political affiliation Three, address ambiguous and inconsistent findings from previous studies. Lastly, the current study intends to fill the gap in the literature involving MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals and provide insight into an unknown subject.

Summary

Current trends in the United States regarding mass incarceration can perhaps be understood by the existing attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Researchers discuss important themes in understanding and shaping individual attitudes towards incarcerated persons including their socio-demographic characteristics, education, and history of personal contact with prisoners. The conceptual theories discussed in this chapter are Critical Theory, Critical Race Theory, and Stigma Theory. The theoretical basis for these theories is derived from a social justice and sociological perspective. The Stigma theory subscribes to the idea that unfamiliar groups are ascribed stigmas whereas, Critical Theory and Critical Race theory explain that attitudes towards incarcerated individuals are based in prejudicial values and beliefs ingrained in the American system. This chapter also reviewed the gaps in the existing literature which revealed that the research into the current study is outdated, fails to research certain demographic variables, and is narrowly focused on criminal justice samples. The next chapter describes the methodology used to address these gaps in carrying out the present study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

As mentioned in chapter 2, the United States has entered an era that is characterized by mass incarceration. This is because of the various social and political forces at hand, particularly, the existence of draconian laws catalyzed by prejudicial underpinnings found within the American Criminal Justice System (Mandracchia et al., 2013). The efforts of these laws have been directed at containing members belonging to vulnerable populations and those deemed socially expendable (Shaikh, 2016). These individuals are primarily comprised of racial minorities, the mentally ill, and those from lower social-economic classes (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Consequently, the prison population has increased 5-fold from 300,000 inmates to over 2 million within a 50-year span (Alexander, 2010; Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008). The Social work profession has felt the impact of mass-incarceration as these incarcerated individuals rely on social workers for providing them with the services and tools necessary to become successfully reintegrated back into society. This places social workers in a powerful position considering attitudes towards prisoners is one of the major predictors of whether the prisoner will be successfully reintegrated back into society (Immerwahr & Johnson, 2002; Park, 2009; Travis, 2005). This chapter covers the purpose for this study, research questions, research design, major concepts and variables, the sample, instrumentation, reliability and validity, data collection, human-subjects, data analysis, limitations, and summary.

The Purpose of the Study

The United States has entered an era that is characterized by mass incarceration. This is because of the various social and political forces at hand,

particularly, the existence of draconian laws catalyzed by prejudicial underpinnings found within the American Criminal Justice System (Mandracchia et al., 2013). The purpose of these laws has been to contain members belonging to vulnerable populations and those deemed socially expendable, particularly, members comprised of racial minorities, the mentally ill, and those from lower social-economic classes (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Shaikh, 2016). The goal of this study was to describe MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. The data were analyzed using the theoretical frameworks of critical theory, critical race theory, and stigma theory. These theories promote liberation and social justice against racism, power-differentials, oppression, and structural inequalities. There is a dire need to promote social inclusion and prevent recidivism by ensuring that those who treat the needs of incarcerated individuals are fully accepting and unbiased towards them. The researcher explored this topic using the Attitude Towards Prisoner (ATP) instrument and an additional questionnaire that measured the participants' demographic information, education, and experiences with prisoners.

Research Questions

1. What are graduate social work students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals?
2. What are some predictors of graduate social work students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals?
3. Do graduate social work students' attitudes differ by their geographical location?

Key Terms and Variables

The major concepts found in this study include MSW students' attitudes, demographic characteristics, education, experience, and incarcerated individuals. The dependent variable of this study is MSW students' attitudes and is defined as, the thoughts, preconceived ideas, prejudices, stereotypes, and inclinations one has for the purposes of evaluating incarcerated individuals either favorably or unfavorably (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007). Multiple independent variables are included in the demographic characteristics and it consists of the race, age, gender, political title, religion, location, and socioeconomic class of the MSW student. Education is another independent variable in this study and it is defined as, the existing knowledge, training, and information the individual has regarding incarcerated individuals (Cremin, 1974). The last independent variable is experience. For the purposes of this study, Experience is also commonly referred to as first-hand contact and or exposure to incarcerated individuals. Experience is defined as, all events related to incarcerated individuals that personally affect the individual. This includes the influence of personal memories, past and present experiences, and associations related to incarcerated individuals (Rogers, 1959). The population of the study is incarcerated individuals and it is operationally defined as, those individuals who are currently contained in a jail or prison. Throughout this study incarcerated individuals is commonly interchangeably used with similar terms including prisoners, offenders, and convicts.

Research Design

This study used a descriptive research design and collected quantifiable information from the participants to measure their attitudes towards prisoners. Additional variables of interest included the participants' demographic characteristics and their current education and experience with prisoners. The

information was collected using both an Attitude towards Prisoners (ATP) questionnaire and an attached demographic survey composed of close-ended questions. The information was then statistically assessed for means and frequencies.

The Sample Population

The participants consisted of Master of Social Work (MSW) students enrolled in the California State University (CSU) system. The study surveyed six Universities from the CSU system including Bakersfield, Dominguez Hills, Fresno State, Long Beach, Monterey Bay, and San Bernardino. The researcher acquired participants by requesting that each California State University's Social Work Department forward an email flyer to all their graduate social work students that included a hyperlink to the study's consent form and the questionnaires (see Appendices A and B). All participants in this study were required to be a MSW student who is 18 years or older. The number of those who participated in this study were $N=202$.

The Instruments: Reliability and Validity

The instrument was comprised of an online-survey consisting of three sections. The first section, the demographic portion of the survey was constructed by the researcher and included demographic type survey questions for the purposes of documenting the participant's race, age, gender, political title, religion, location, and socioeconomic class (see Appendix B). The second portion of the survey included six Likert scale evaluative statements and measured the participants' current level of experience and education towards prisoners on a three-point Likert rating scale (see Appendix B). A score of one represented no

prior experience or education with prisoners whereas a score of three represented extensive prior experience and or education with prisoners.

The education and experience Likert scale was an instrument that the researcher created and therefore, the researcher stresses it should not be regarded as reliable nor valid. To measure the validity of the scale a total of four people were asked to fill out the scale, two people who are known to have little to no experience or education with prisoners and another two individuals who are known to have education and experience with prisoners. The Likert-scale demonstrated results that were expected from each of the participants as it relates to their personalized experience and education with prisoners, suggesting there may be some validity to the scale. After a month from the initial test, the same participants were asked again to complete the questionnaire and the results of each of the participant's scores were nearly identical to the first test. This is suggestive of possessing test-retest reliability. However, the techniques used to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire are informal and lack a comprehensive sample. With that said, reservations towards the instrument should be maintained until additional studies can further assess the validity and reliability of the scale.

The third portion of the survey included the Attitudes towards Prisoners (ATP) scale (see Appendix B). The ATP was created by Melvin et al. (1985) and it is a 36-item questionnaire used to measuring diverse samples of participants' attitudes towards prisoners including college students, prisoners, prison staff, and the general public. Since its creation, the ATP has become a standardized tool and it has been used in numerous studies over the years. The ATP instrument is considered to be both reliable with a test-rest reliability of ($r=.082$) and is valid amongst diverse samples (Melvin et al., 1985). The way in which the ATP works is the positive and negative statements on the ATP are scored from a 5-point scale,

with possible responses including “strongly disagree,” “disagree,” “undecided,” “agree,” and “strongly agree.” For the first 19 statements, a score of 1 indicates that the participant strongly disagrees with the statement and a score of 5 suggests he or she strongly agrees with the statement. The remaining 17 items of the questionnaire scoring are reversed and 5 represents strongly disagree while 1 represents strongly agree (Melvin et al., 1985). After the completion of the questionnaire 36 points are subtracted from the sum of the participant’s score. The possible scores range from 0-to-144. The higher the participant scores on the ATP suggests he or she has more favorable attitudes towards prisoners and vice versa. In short, a few examples of the statements found in the ATP include: “Prisoners are different than most people,” “Prisoners never change,” and “It is not wise to trust a prisoner too far” (Melvin et al., 1985).

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The present study used the website Qualtrics.com to create a survey consisting of various questionnaire instruments including demographic questions, attitude towards prisoners (ATP) questions, and several questions that measured the participants’ education and experience with prisoners (see Appendix B). As mentioned, with the permission and aid of each of the five California State University’s Social Work department emails were sent out on behalf of the researcher to elicit MSW students across the State to participate in the three-part survey via Qualtrics.com. Prior to their participation, all participants were sent an email that directed them to a consent form at the start of the survey (see Appendices A and B). All participants’ responses to the questionnaires were entirely anonymous. The demographic, education and experience portions of the surveys were constructed by the researcher. The ATP questionnaire is a

standardized instrument that is made available for free without written permission by Sage Publishing Co. for the use in a Master's Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation.

The survey collected nominal and ordinal quantifiable data using the Qualtrics website. Once these data were collected, it was then exported for analysis into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This study used descriptive data analysis and summarized and described the data in the form of central tendencies, distributions, and frequencies. The central tendency described the average ATP score of all MSW students. The distribution charts described the demographics of the study. Also, this study looked at the mean ATP score of MSW students by location, which provides a unique contribution to the literature. Additionally, the dispersion of ATP scores amongst students is examined and the standard deviation from the mean is analyzed.

Human Subjects

In order to ensure anonymity of the participants, no identifiable information was collected with the exception of their demographic traits including race, gender, age, religiosity, political affiliation, location, and socioeconomic status. The data cannot be traced back to a participant's identity and all participants are completely unidentifiable, even to the researcher. Additionally, the researcher ensured appropriate measures were taken while handling and securing the data. Only the researcher has access to the data where it is securely stored on Qualtrics' website with a unique login username and password. Upon completion of this study all participant data will be erased.

The consent form was emailed and included in the hyperlink to the survey of the study (see Appendix B). The consent form educated and informed all participants of the nature of the study. The consent form also informed the

participants of the possible benefits and implications from the study. Additionally, the consent form informed participants of the possible harm and their legal rights. This included the participant's right to withdraw from the study at any stage. Also, participants were informed that their responses and information would remain anonymous and once the study was completed the data would be destroyed. The form was written as simple as possible so that all individuals with a range of reading skills could understand it and make an informed and voluntary decision whether or not to participate in the study. The bottom of the consent form included the researcher's contact information should the participant have any questions or concerns regarding the study. The researcher was required to complete a web-based training "Protecting Human Research Participants" with the National Institutes of Health before carrying out the study (see Appendix C).

Limitations

There are several known limitations to this study. For one, attitudes are complex and there are many different variables that can influence attitudes. The simplicity of using one measurement and a separate demographic, education, and experience survey cannot accurately capture all the variables that make up a person's attitude towards prisoners. Other studies should adopt a more comprehensive approach by using several measurements with the use of inferential statistics. Additionally, this study uses the broad term "prisoner" in the questionnaire and so the interpretation and imagery of a prisoner may have been unique and varying among participants. For example, one may visualize a prisoner as a child molester while another participant pictures a prisoner as a thief. These dissimilar images of a prisoner may influence the way in which the participants replied to the questionnaire and may have impacted the results of the

study. The researcher also acknowledges that this study is limited in its generalizability towards other populations that are not MSW students.

Summary

This chapter provided information on the methodology of the study. The aim of this study is to describe MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. This is an important issue to study because attitudes have the capacity to influence social work practice with this population, both at the micro and macro levels. This chapter also discussed the study's research questions, research design, variables, sample, instrumentation, data collection process, human subjects, data analysis, and the limitations of this study. The following chapter will discuss the results of the study.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

This chapter discusses the findings of a survey conducted to assess students' attitudes towards prisoners from six CSU MSW programs. The data collected from the MSW students were analyzed with SPSS. The first section of this chapter begins with descriptive statistics, describing the demographic information collected from the participants. The remaining sections of the chapter discusses the data analysis related to the three research questions introduced in chapters 1 and 3; "What are graduate social work students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals?," "What are some predictors of graduate social work students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals?," and "Do graduate social work students' attitudes differ by their geographical location?"

Descriptive Statistics of the Participants' Demographics

A total of 15 CSU MSW programs were contacted to participate in this study based on the similarities between their MSW program and California State University, Fresno's MSW program (the researcher's MSW program). From those 15 schools, six CSU MSW departments agreed to participate; Bakersfield, Dominguez Hills, Long Beach, Fresno State, Monterey Bay, and San Bernardino. Participants were obtained using an online survey which each CSU MSW department emailed to their MSW students on behalf of the researcher. A total of 245 students responded to the survey. There were 43 incomplete surveys that were excluded because these data were missing responses at random. Due to the size of the sample, the researcher determined that deleting these responses would not result in a significant loss of statistical power. This left the final dataset with a remaining sample size of $N = 202$, therefore, with this sample size we can assume

a normal distribution. Based on the distribution of the ATP scores, there is a significant outlier with an average ATP score ($M = 26$). The characteristics of this outlier are Male, Mormon, aged 38-42 years old, Chicano/Hispanic/Latin American, Democrat, middle-class, and located at CSU Fresno. Based on the multiple comparisons conducted on a one-way ANOVA this outlier was included in analyzing all the participants' demographics except religion.

The participants in this study consisted of 87.6% females ($N = 177$) and 11.9% males ($n = 24$). The reported age ranges of the participants were between 18 and 57. A significant portion of the participants 45% ($n = 91$) were between the ages of 23 and 27 and the average age was $M = 25.25$. The ages of the remaining participants are as follows; 3.5% ($n = 7$) were between the ages of 18 and 22, 22.8% ($n = 46$) were between the ages of 28 and 32, 12.9% ($n = 26$) were between the ages of 33 and 37, 6.9% ($n = 14$) were between the ages of 38 and 42, 4.5% ($n = 9$) were between the ages of 43 and 47, 3% ($n = 6$) were between the ages of 48 and 52, 1.5% ($n = 3$) were between the ages of 53 and 57, and no participants reported being 60 years or older. With regards to the participants' race, nearly half identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino American 49.5% ($n = 100$). The second largest racial identity was Caucasian Americans 28.2% ($n = 57$). The racial compositions of the remaining participants were 9.9% ($n = 20$) identified themselves as African American, 6.9% ($n = 14$) identified themselves as Asian American, .5% ($n = 1$) identified themselves as Native American, and 5% ($n = 10$) identified themselves as other.

In addition to gender, age, and race, less commonly explored demographic variables related to this research topic were recorded including the participants' socio-economic status, political affiliation, and their religion. There was a total of 57.9% ($n = 117$) MSW students who reported their socio-economic status as

middle class, 40.6% ($n = 82$) identified with the lower socio-economic class, and 1.5% ($n = 3$) identified as belonging to the upper socioeconomic class. In retrospect, the socioeconomic variable was not clearly defined within the survey, so it is important to acknowledge that there are likely differences in perceptions amongst participants of what constitutes lower, middle, and upper-class status. With regards to political affiliation, 65% ($n = 132$) participants identified themselves as Democratic. The second largest political affiliation was other representing 20.8% ($n = 42$), Independent Party 10.4% ($n = 21$), and 3.5% ($n = 7$) participants identified themselves as Republican. In the order of religions that participants most identified with were Catholic 38.6% ($n = 78$), Christian or Protestant 28.7% ($n = 58$), other 15.3% ($n = 31$), Atheist or Agnostic 11.9% ($n = 24$), Buddhist 3% ($n = 6$), Jewish 1% ($n = 2$), Muslim 1% ($n = 2$), and Mormon .5% ($n = 1$) (see Table 1).

Graduate Students' Attitudes towards Incarcerated Individuals

Descriptive statistics including the mean, range, and standard deviation were used to analyze the research question related to graduate students' attitudes towards prisoners. The dependent variable of this study, attitudes towards prisoners, was defined as the thoughts, preconceived ideas, prejudices, stereotypes, and inclinations one had in evaluating incarcerated individuals either favorably or unfavorably. As mentioned in chapter 3, the ATP questionnaire was used to gather the data related to the students' attitudes towards prisoners. The possible scores of the ATP questionnaire ranged from 26-to-144. An individual who scores a low score represents unfavorable attitudes towards prisoners whereas, higher scores represent favorable attitudes towards prisoners. There were a total of $N = 202$ MSW students who completed the ATP questionnaire. The mean ATP score

Table 1

Descriptive Demographics of MSW Students

Variables	Total N	n	(%)
Gender	N = 202		
Male		24	11.9
Female		177	87.6
Age	N = 202		
18-22		7	3.5
23-27		91	45
28-32		46	22.8
33-37		26	12.9
38-42		14	6.9
43-47		9	4.5
48-52		6	3
53-57		3	1.5
60 +		0	0
Race	N = 202		
Hispanic/Latin American		100	49.5
Caucasian American		57	28.2
African American		20	9.9
Asian American		14	6.9
Native American		1	.5
Other		10	5
Socioeconomic Class	N = 202		
Lower-class		82	40.6
Middle-class		117	57.9
Upper-class		3	1.5
Political Affiliation	N = 202		
Democrat		132	65
Independent		21	10.4
Republican		7	3.5
Other		42	20.8
Religion	N = 202		
Catholic		78	38.6
Christian/ Protestant		58	28.7
Atheist/Agnostic		24	11.9
Buddhist		6	3
Muslim		2	1
Mormon		1	.5
Jewish		2	1
Other		31	15.3

was $M = 105.62$ ($SD = 16.820$). The lowest ATP score from a participant was 26, and the highest score was a maximum 144 (see Table 2). The participant with the 26 ATP score negatively skewed the distribution to the right as illustrated in Figure 1.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes Towards Incarcerated Individuals

Variable	<i>N</i>	Range	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Total Attitudes	202	118	26	144	105.62	16.820

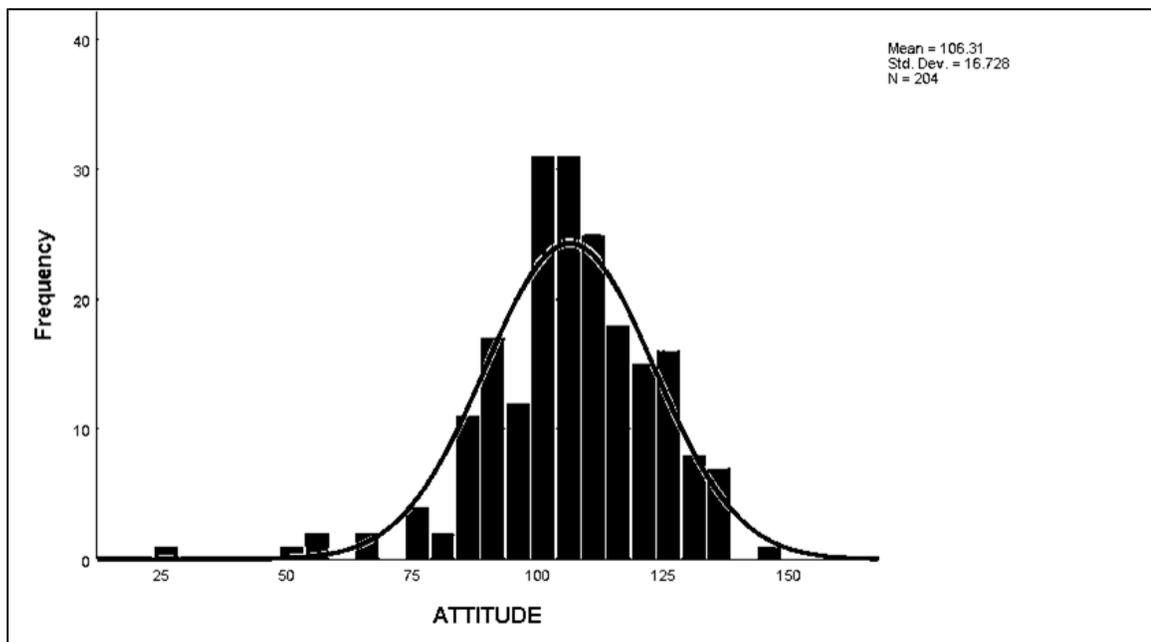


Figure 1. Distribution of graduate social work students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals.

Predictors of Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes Towards Incarcerated Individuals

As a descriptive study, this section describes the results of all the variables that were included in this study. The results are presented for the reader to

determine which variables are predictors of graduate social work student's attitudes towards prisoners. The first section presents the data analysis of those variables determined not to be significant including gender, age, socioeconomic class, religion, and political affiliation. The second section presents the data analysis of those variables that were determined to be significantly correlated with the dependent variable.

Gender

An Independent Samples t-Test was used to compare the mean scores of males and females' attitudes towards prisoners. Attitudes towards prisoners were not significantly different between males ($M=104.00$, $SD=22.746$) and females ($M=105.67$, $SD=15.797$), $t(26.092) = -0.348$, $p > 0.5$ (see Table 3 and Table 4).

Table 3

Gender Statistics

Gender	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Male	104.00	22.746
Female	105.67	15.797

Table 4

Independent Samples t-test

Equal variances not assumed	<i>T</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
	-3.48	26.092	.731

Age

A one-way ANOVA test was used to compare each age bracket's mean score to the dependent variable. The average ATP score for all ages was ($M=105.62$, $SD=16.820$). However, the mean score for each age bracket varied. The lowest score related to attitudes towards incarcerated individuals was $M = 26$

and was reported by a participant who fell between the age range of 38-42. As mentioned earlier, this participant is an outlier compared to the other participants placed in the same age bracket who collectively had an average ATP score ($M = 102.07$, $SD=24.662$). The highest ATP score $M = 144$ came from a participant that fell between the age range of 23-27. This age bracket on average scored ($M = 105.69$, $SD = 16.934$). Overall, those participants ages 43 to 47 scored the lowest ($M = 92.89$, $SD = 17.940$) and interestingly, those ages 48-52 scored the highest ($M = 119.67$, $SD = 10.405$) There was no significant difference among the age groups and ATP $F(7,194) = 1.583$, $p > .05$ (see Table 5 and Table 6).

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of ATP Scores for Different Age Groups

Ages	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum
18-22	7	101.86	14.916	84	124
23-27	91	105.69	16.934	53	144
28-32	46	107.37	14.180	81	138
33-37	26	106.31	15.471	67	135
38-42	14	102.07	24.662	26	130
43-47	9	92.89	17.940	55	120
48-52	6	119.67	10.405	101	129
53-57	3	106.33	17.243	91	125
Total	202	105.62	16.820	26	144

Table 6

Summary of one-way ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3073.091	7	439.013	1.583	.142
Within Groups	53792.315	194	277.280		
Total	56865.406				

Socioeconomic Class

On the survey participants were asked to indicate their socioeconomic class (lower-class, middle-class, or upper-class) to determine whether their socioeconomic class was correlated with their ATP. The average ATP score between the three socioeconomic classes was $M = 105.62$, $SD = 16.820$. Participants who identified with belonging to a lower socioeconomic class ($M = 108.18$, $SD = 16.762$) had more benign attitudes towards prisoners compared to upper-class participants ($M = 94.33$, $SD = 34.064$). However, each class contained outliers. The lower-class ATP scores ranged from 57-to-144, middle-class scores ranged from 26-to-138, and upper-class scores ranged from 55-to-114. There were no statistically significant mean differences between the participants' based on socioeconomic class ($F(2, 199) = 2.116$, $p >.123$).

Political Affiliation

Participants were also asked to specify their political affiliation. The survey listed four possible nominal variables; Democrat, Republican, Independent, and Other. The average ATP score among political groups was $M = 105.62$, $SD = 16.820$. Those who identified as Other ($M = 106.90$, $SD = 14.622$), Democrat ($M = 106.27$, $SD = 17.328$), and Independent ($M = 103.62$, $SD = 14.726$) were more inclined to have supportive attitudes towards prisoners than Republicans ($M = 91.71$, $SD = 21.861$). As depicted in the lack of variability between the mean scores of the political groups and confirmed running a one-way ANOVA test there was no significant difference ($F(3, 198) = 1.866$, $p >.137$).

Religion

The religion portion of the survey contained ten independent nominal variables in which the participants could indicate their religious preference from

including Christian, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Jehovah's Witness, Hindu, Mormon, Atheist/Agnostic, and Other. No participants identified as being Jehovah's Witness or Hindu and so these variables were removed from the data analysis. As discussed in the beginning of the chapter, the participant who identified as Mormon was also excluded in this section. The Mormon was excluded in this section because there was only $n = 1$ participant who identified with this religion and to run a Tukey post hoc test there needs to be a mean score which requires a minimum of two participants. Placing the Mormon participant in the Other group was considered, but because the participant's ATP score was an outlier it would have skewed the group's mean ATP score.

The mean ATP score for the remaining seven religions was $M = 106.61$, $SD = 15.856$. Individual participant's ATP scores related to religion ranged between 53 and 144. Those participants with a 53 and 144 ATP score had identified as Catholic. On average, the religious group with the highest ATP score were from participants who identified with the Other Group $M = 113.77$, $SD = 13.436$. The second highest ATP scores came from participants who identified as Atheists/Agnostic $M = 113.22$, $SD = 13.767$. Whereas, those who identified as Muslim had the lowest ATP scores $M = 96.00$, $SD = 7.071$ (see Table 7). A one-way ANOVA test was used to compare the seven religions' mean ATP scores to each other for significant differences. The one-way ANOVA revealed that there was a statistical difference between religion and ATP ($F(6, 192) = 2.824$, $p < .05$) (see Table 8). A multiple comparisons test determined that Catholic participants ($M = 102.94$, $SD = 16.273$) had significantly lower ATP scores compared to participants who identified as Other ($M = 113.77$, $SD = 13.436$).

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics of Religion and ATP

Religion	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum
Christian	59	105.10	16.293	66	138
Catholic	77	102.94	16.273	53	144
Jewish	2	112.00	2.828	110	114
Muslims	2	96.00	7.071	91	101
Buddhist	6	109.17	12.287	91	128
Atheist/Agnostic	23	113.22	13.767	67	135
Other	30	113.77	13.436	89	138
Total	201	106.61	15.856	53	144

Table 8

Summary of ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4037.249	6	672.875	2.824	.012
Within Groups	45742.178	192	238.241		
Total	49779.427	198			

Race

The survey consisted of 7 categories of race including African American, Asian American, Caucasian American, Chicano/ Hispanic/Latino American, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Other. There were 0 participants who identified as Pacific Islander and 1 participant who identified as being Native American. The Native American was placed into the Other category because the researcher was unable to run a post hoc test on a sample of 1. Overall, the mean score between racial groups was $M = 105.62$ $SD = 16.820$ (see Table 9 for descriptive details). A one-way analysis test determined participants' ATP score was statistically different between racial groups ($F(4, 197) = 3.264, p < .013$) (see Table 10). Based on a Tukey post hoc test, African American ($M = 112.5, SD = 12.215$) and Caucasian American ($M = 108.21, SD = 15.080$) MSW students had significantly more favorable attitudes towards prisoners compared to the students who identified as Other ($M = 92.36, SD = 18.996$). It is unclear as to what race(s) comprised of Other group. The multiple comparisons test revealed there was no significant difference in the scores of the participants who identified with the remaining racial groups.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics of Race and ATP

Race	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum
African American	20	112.50	12.215	87	131
Asian American	14	101.86	12.618	84	131
Caucasian American	57	108.21	15.080	61	138
Chicano, Hispanic, Latino American	100	104.76	18.002	26	144
Other	11	92.36	18.996	53	140
Total	202	105.62	16.820	26	144

Table 10

Summary of One-Way ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3534.433	4	883.608	3.264	.013
Within Groups	53330.973	197	270.716		
Total	56865.406	.201			

Education and Experience

Participants were asked to specify their education and first-hand experience with incarceration and incarcerated individuals to indicate whether education or experience was correlated with their ATP. Both education and experience each consisted of three statements and provided the participants with the possible responses of “no,” “I do not recall,” or “yes.” Correspondingly, the assigned values to the responses were 0, 0, and 1 for “yes.” Therefore, the minimum and maximum combined score for the three experience and education statements ranged between 0 and 3.

With regards to education towards incarcerated individuals and incarceration, participants were asked to respond to the following statements, “I have previously taken courses related to incarcerated individuals/ incarceration,” “My MSW program has educated me about incarceration/incarcerated individuals,” and “I have training related to the topic.” On average participants scored $M = .9059$, $SD = .9442$; in other words, participants responded “yes” to .9059 of the 3 statements. In terms of experience, the three statements consisted of “I work/worked with those who have been incarcerated,” “I have been incarcerated in jail or prison,” “I have friends or family who has been incarcerated in jail or prison.” The participants on average had an experience score of $M =$

1.3069, $SD = .80103$ with incarceration and incarcerated individuals (see Table 11). Based on Pearson's R Correlation, both education ($r = .159, p = .024$) and experience ($r = .285, p < .000$) are significantly correlated with a participant's ATP score (see Table 12). There was also a positive correlation between education and experience in that, as education increases so does experience and vice versa.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics of Education, Experience, and Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes towards Prisoners

Variables	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Education	202	7	439.013	1.583	.142
Experience	202	194	277.280		

Table 12

Pearson's R Correlations: Education, Experience, and Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes towards Prisoners (N = 202)

Variables	Total Attitudes	Education	Experience
Total Attitudes	1	.159*	.285**
Education	.159*	1	.262**
Experience	.285**	.262**	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regression on Predictors

A multiple linear regression was also employed to analyze the individual contributions each of the eight independent variables (gender, race, age, socioeconomic class, religion, political affiliation, education, and experience) had on attitudes towards prisoners. The test was also conducted to evaluate the influences each independent variable had on each other and to specify the residual variability; predictors of attitudes towards prisoners that were not accounted for in

the current study. The multiple regression model was statistically significant ($R^2 = .144$, $F(9,192) = 3.583$, $p < .05$) and suggests that the eight independent variables account for 14% of the variance in MSW students' attitudes towards incarcerated individuals (see Table 13 and Table 14). Additionally, the test indicated that the religion ($\beta = 1.446$, $p < .05$), education ($\beta = 1.310$, $p < .05$), and experience ($\beta = 6.037$, $p < .05$) of the MSW students were statistically related to their attitudes towards prisoners (see Table 15).

Table 13

Summary of ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	80657.305	9	896.145	3.583	.000
Residual	48019.012	192	250.099		
Total	56084.317	201			

Table 14

Multiple Regression Summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
.379	.144	.104	15.815

Table 15

Predictors of Attitudes towards Incarcerated Individuals (Multiple Regression)

Predictors	B	P	95% CI Exp B
Gender	-4.790	.186	-11.903 - 2.324
Age	-1.024	.259	-2.808 - .761
Political Affiliation	-.498	.591	-2.324 - 1.328
CSU	.291	.745	-1.467 - 2.049
Race	.123	.868	-1.336 - 1.582
Religion	1.446	.004*	.459 - 2.432
Socioeconomic Class	3.579	.126	-1.020 - 8.177
Experience	6.037	.000*	2.945 - 9.128
Education	1.310	.037*	-1.210 - 3.830

Graduate Social Work Students' Attitudes and
Geographical Location

There were six California State Universities included in this study that are in different areas of the state. These State Universities included Bakersfield, Dominguez Hills, Long Beach, Fresno State, Monterey Bay, and San Bernardino. Collectively, the MSW students from those participating schools had an average ATP score of $M = 105.62$, $SD = 16.820$. The graduate Social work students from CSU Fresno had the lowest ATP score $M = 99.90$, $SD = 21.627$. This University had a minimum score of 26 and a maximum score of 135. CSU Monterey Bay located 181 miles west of Fresno on average, had the highest ATP score $M = 115.00$, $SD = 13.828$. The participants from this school had a minimum score of 91 and a maximum score of 136 (refer to Table 16 and Figure 2). A Tukey post hoc test was conducted on a one-way ANOVA and determined there was a statistical difference between CSU Fresno and CSU Monterey Bay's MSW students' ATP scores ($F(5, 196) = 2.542$, $p < .05$) (see Table 17). The multiple comparisons test suggested there were no other significant differences between other CSU students' ATP scores.

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics of Location and ATP

California State University	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum
CSU Bakersfield	15	105.00	13.153	75	126
CSU Dominguez Hill	21	110.10	12.601	86	135
CSU Fresno	39	99.90	21.627	26	135
CSU Long Beach	88	106.43	16.323	53	144
CSU Monterey Bay	16	115.00	13.828	81	135
CSU San Bernardino	23	102.04	13.452	26	144
Total	202	105.62	16.820	26	144

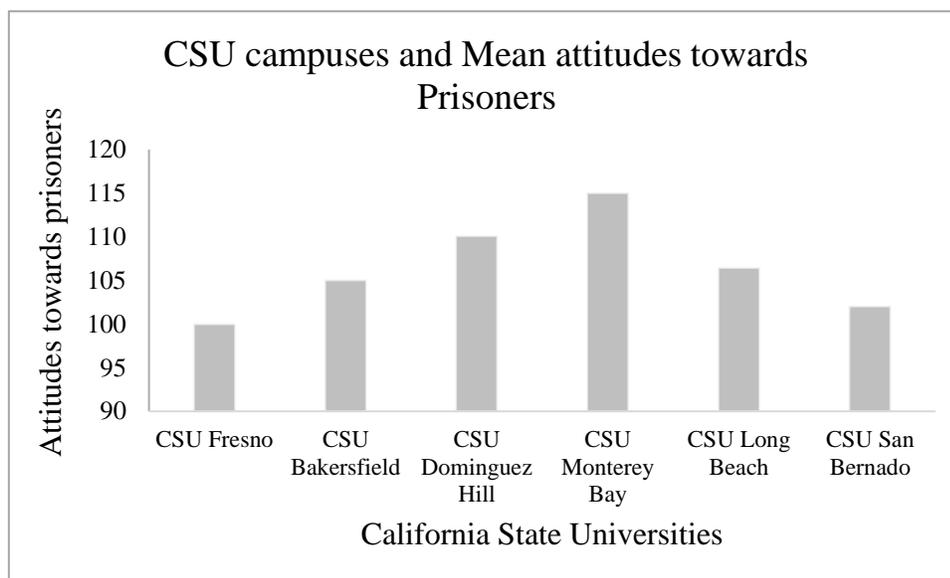


Figure 2. CSU campuses and ATP scores.

Table 17

Summary of ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3463.459	5	692.692	2.542	.030
Within Groups	53401.947	196	272.459		
Total	56865.406	202			

Summary

This chapter presented the quantitative data analysis and results of a survey conducted amongst MSW students from six CSU MSW departments to assess whether their demographic characteristics had a correlation to their attitudes towards prisoners. The sample consisted of $N = 202$, a significant portion of participants in the study identified as being female, ages 23-to-27, Chicano/Hispanic, Catholic, Democrat, and belonging to the middle-class. Additionally, this chapter provided results and insight into the three research

questions: “What are graduate social work students’ attitudes towards incarcerated individuals?” “What are some predictors of graduate social work students’ attitudes towards incarcerated individuals?” and “Do graduate social work students’ attitudes differ by their geographical location?” With regards to these questions, MSW students’ attitudes towards incarcerated individuals were $M = 105.62$. The independent variables that were correlated with the participants’ ATP scores included race, religion, education, and experience. Also, graduate social work students’ attitudes towards prisoners were statistically different based on their geographical location. The next chapter will discuss these research findings as it relates to other research, the implications towards social work, the limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

In response to the rise of incarcerated individuals and their need for social services, this study sought to describe MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners (Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013). This was carried out by surveying MSW students' demographic characteristics including their race, gender, age, religion, political affiliation, location, socioeconomic status, experience, and education with their attitudes towards prisoners. This chapter discusses the significant findings related to the three research questions gleaned from the previous chapter and their implications towards for the social work profession. The study concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the present study and provides recommendations for future research.

Significant Findings

The primary research question of the present study was to determine graduate social work students' attitudes towards prisoners. The current study found that MSW students on average had an ATP score of ($M = 105.62$). This score was higher than previous research that surveyed other types of students' attitudes towards prisoners including nursing students ($M = 96$), history students ($M = 95$), psychology students ($M = 90.5$), business students ($M = 85$), and criminology students ($M = 82.2$). (Kjelsberg et al., 2007; Melvin et al., 1985; Park, 2009). As one would predict, the current study's finding was most comparable to another study that measured MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners ($M = 99.83$) (Wesley et al., 2009). Collectively, these two studies propose MSW students have more favorable attitudes towards prisoners compared to other disciplines. The difference in attitudes may be representative of the values the profession is based on, including a commitment to promoting basic human rights

and advocating for social justice for those who are socially, economically, and politically disenfranchised (National Association of Social Workers, n.d.).

In addition to this finding, the present study contributes to the existing literature by measuring demographic variables that had required additional inquiry, due to either inconsistent findings or the scarcity of recent research involving these predictors in measuring MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners. The current study found race to be a significant predictor in describing MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners. The study found those who identified their race as "other" had significantly unfavorable attitudes towards prisoners compared to the other five races that were surveyed. This finding is inconsistent with the existing research that found race to be insignificant in describing students' attitudes towards prisoners (Melvin et al., 1985; Park, 2009). On the other hand, other research suggests African and Caucasian American attitudes differ towards prisoners and criminal justice issues (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Lambert, 2005; Unnever & Cullen, 2009). However, the present study found African American and Caucasian American MSW students had monotonous unvarying attitudes towards prisoners. This finding is unique because it encompasses other races to have significant attitudinal differences towards prisoners that goes beyond comparing African and Caucasian Americans. Moreover, it adds to the limited literature that measures MSW students' race with their attitudes towards prisoners.

Another significant finding of this study is the correlation between religion and MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners. The present study found MSW students who identified as Muslims to have significantly less favorable attitudes towards prisoners than any other religion. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, religion is a demographic variable that has not been thoroughly

investigated with its relationship to students' attitudes towards prisoners. The researcher found two other studies that measured students' religion to their attitudes towards prisoners. In one study by Park (2009), the researcher measured Christianity, Jewish, Buddhism, Muslims, and "other religions," but the researcher decided to collapse Jewish, Buddhism, and Muslim into a single category of "Other religions" and compared them to Christianity. Park (2009) found "Other religions" had favorable attitudes towards prisoners. Unfortunately, the "Other religions" category encompasses three or more religions and it is uncertain as to which religion has a statistically different perspective towards prisoners. The present study's finding adds a gleam of insight into this obscurity by identifying Muslims as having statistically unfavorable attitudes towards prisoners. The present study found no other correlations between the different religions and their attitudes towards prisoners. This result, however, is inconsistent with Chui and Cheng (2015) who studied the relationship between Buddhist, Christian, and non-religious students' attitudes towards prisoners. These researchers found both Buddhist and Christian religions to have statistically significant ATP scores compared to non-religious students; whereas the present study found no such relationship.

With regards to age, the present study surveyed students who were between the ages of 18 and 57 and found no difference in their attitudes towards prisoners. This finding contradicts a clear majority of the literature which suggests older aged participants including students and the public are more inclined to have favorable attitudes towards prisoners (Chui & Cheng 2015; Church et al., 2009; Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Kjelsberg & Loos, 2008; Lerman & Page, 2012; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2008). However, unlike the present study, most of these studies did not exclusively study MSW students and it is possible the age

differences in the previously mentioned studies may be attributed to a variety of extraneous variables that can be associated with age including experience and education. For instance, Church et al. (2009) found age to be significantly correlated with BSW and MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners and mentally ill prisoners, but the researchers did not control for the differences in education and experience between the two cohorts.

The present study surveyed MSW students' education and experience with prisoners. Measuring experience and education are unfounded and peerless within the current literature pertaining to MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners. Other applicable research has surveyed different types of populations' education and experience with prisoners and their ATP, and have found education and experience to correlate with higher levels of empathy and more favorable attitudes towards prisoners and sex offenders (Craig, 2005; Hogue, 1993; Hogue, 1995; Kleban & Jeglic, 2012; Mandracchia et al., 2013; Wesley et al., 2009) The present study found, like other populations, MSW students' experience and education with prisoners correlates with favorable attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. Interestingly when surveyed, most students reported that their MSW program was not responsible for educating or providing them experience with this population. The implication of this finding suggests the MSW programs in this study are failing to adequately educate and expose their students to prisoners, which this study has illustrated is an important factor in desensitizing stigma and increasing favorable attitudes towards incarcerated individuals. The professional implication of this finding is further discussed in the following section of this chapter.

Another significant finding in this study is that MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners vary by their location. This finding is unique because to the researcher's knowledge there are no other studies that measure MSW students'

attitudes towards prisoners across multiple universities. Therefore, it is the belief that this finding is original and adds an invaluable source of information to the literature. The researcher incorporated the location variable into the present study because other studies have shown a strong correlation between location and other criminal justice-related issues (Barker, 2009). Barker (2009) compared attitudes towards a retributive or rehabilitative penal regime across Washington, California, and New York. The researcher concluded attitudinal preferences for a retributive or rehabilitative penal system differed by state. Additionally, Lerman and Page (2012) examined correctional officers' attitudes towards imprisonment and punishment across the states of Minnesota and California. Lerman and Page (2012) found the location variable is a predictor of the participants' attitudes towards imprisonment and punishment. Similarly, but uniquely this study adds MSW students to the literature that suggests attitudes towards criminal justice-related topics vary by location (Barker, 2009; Lerman & Page, 2012).

Lastly, a multiple regression test was used in to analyze the contributions each independent variable had on the MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners. Interestingly, the test revealed that collectively, the eight independent variables only accounted for 14% of the MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners. In a similar study, Park (2009) measured many of the same demographic variables with students' attitudes towards prisoners. These included their age, gender, race, religion, political affiliation, and personal acquaintance with prisoners. With the use of a multiple regression test, the researcher found a strikingly similar result where only 14.7% of the participants' ATP scores could be explained by the independent variables (Park, 2009). This finding is significant and will later be discussed in the limitations and future recommendations sections of this chapter.

Implications for Social Work Practice

The present study's findings have far-reaching implications for increasing and improving social work services to incarcerated individuals and their families. As mentioned in chapters one and two, the United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world and incarceration continues to be on the rise (Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013). Moreover, those who are being incarcerated are disproportionately made up of racial minorities, impoverished individuals, and the mentally ill (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In fact, 56% of all state inmates have some underlying mental health disorder (Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2006). Consequently, the jails and prisons have become the single highest mental health service provider within the United States (Sullivan, 2011). Prisoners are extensively oppressed and debatably, one of the most vulnerable groups (Epperson, Roberts, Ivanoff, Tripodi, & Gilmer, 2013). These individuals are stigmatized, shunned, and ostracized at every level of society; socially, economically, and politically. Once incarcerated these individuals are distanced and caste to second-class citizenry; yet upon their release, they are expected to find work, provide for their families, access housing, and obey all laws. Studies on ex-prisoners, parolees, and re-entry have indicated that negative attitudes towards ex-prisoners are one of the primary determinants for recidivism (Immerwahr & Johnson, 2002; Park, 2009; Travis, 2005).

This study examined Masters of social work students' attitudes towards prisoners because it is these students who are on the forefront of the profession and will be closely working with these individuals either while they are incarcerated or paroled (Epperson et al., 2013). As a profession, understanding the attitudes MSW students have towards prisoners is necessary for continuing a commitment to advocating for social justice, empowerment, providing quality,

efficient, and unbiased services to marginalized populations. The present study has found education and experience to have the strongest correlation with positive attitudes towards prisoners and implies education and experience are integral in pursuing this professional mission. Educating MSW students towards prisoners is important because as social workers, these individuals will eventually encounter prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their families regardless of their area of work (Epperson et al., 2013; Gumz, 2004). When that time comes, social workers must have the professional insight to sensitively meet the needs of their client. This entails acquiring education into the prison culture, the worth and dignity of the individual, and the environmental predispositions that lead to prison. Just like any other vulnerable population, these individuals rely on social workers and will need social work services to stay out of prison or jail such as therapy, welfare benefits, occupational resources, medical benefits, low-income housing, family reunification, and other social assistance (Phillips & Lindsay, 2011). However, the study's findings imply the current MSW curriculum from the programs surveyed are not adequately teaching and preparing MSW students to practice with this population. In fact, 22% of MSW programs in the United States teach a course related to criminal justice issues and only 5% of MSW programs provide an emphasis in criminal justice (Epperson et al., 2013). Therefore, it can be implied that this population has not been afforded the same attention and obligatory need as other vulnerable populations despite the need for a social work presence in the criminal justice system. The present study calls forth the emergence of influential social work leaders to bridge the disconnection between social work and the criminal justice arena (Epperson et al., 2013, Gumz, 2004;).

In addition to highlighting the need in adjusting MSW curriculum to educate students to work with this population, the present study's findings also

have implications for promoting continuing education (CEUs) and training to provide current social work professionals with education and experience with prisoners. The implications of increasing CEUs and training will ensure that those who are currently treating the needs of incarcerated individuals are fully accepting of them and sustain an advocacy role that pushes for social change, inclusion, and reintegration. Values, beliefs, and empowering based attitudes early social workers and reformers like John Augustus had once exerted onto the criminal justice system and in the process redefined criminal justice policy and practice (Epperson et al., 2013; Gumz, 2004). In addition to bringing professional attention to incarcerated individuals, the present study adds to the lack of research involving graduate social work students and incarcerated individuals. The present study is a cornerstone for future researchers that are interested in promoting social justice and increasing the service of that care social workers provide to incarcerated individuals. More of this information will be explained in the Recommendations section of this chapter.

Limitations

The present study has several limitations that should be acknowledged while interpreting its findings. The study had surveyed six California State University MSW programs that were representative of the researcher's own MSW program, California State University Fresno. This included programs made-up of 60-units with face-to-face instruction, except for CSU Long Beach. While reaching out to MSW programs to survey, the researcher overlooked the fact CSU Long Beach has approximately 50 distance-learning students from Sonoma and Ventura Counties. It is unknown how many of those students received and filled out the survey, but for the most part, the findings are predominately derived from

participants belonging to a 60-unit, California State University campus-based program. With that said, the study's findings are not generalizable to online, hybrid, advanced standing programs, or MSW programs outside the state of California.

In addition to this, there were limitations in the survey. The survey was not designed to be forcibly completed and did not require the participant to answer each question before moving forward in the survey. This resulted in 42 partially completed surveys which were excluded from the study. Additionally, the socioeconomic and prisoner variables were not clearly defined in the survey. The lack of a clearly defined variable allowed for fluctuating frames of reference and inhibited the ability to control for the participant's individual interpretation of the variables' meaning. For example, because socioeconomic class was not defined participants may have had various interpretations of what constitutes lower, middle, and upper socio-economic class. Similarly, ATP scores may have been influenced by the personal imagery and varying representations of a prisoner; whether the participant envisioned a child molester or a thief would have likely resulted in a very different ATP score. Additionally, a low ATP score of 26 was left in the data and could have potentially skewed the findings of several predictors. A one-way test was performed without the outlier and ATP and education was insignificant. Also, for convenience, the ages of participants were recorded into brackets consisting of a range of ages, but this limited the researcher's ability to analyze the individual age differences compared to the participants' ATP scores. Lastly, a multivariate analysis revealed that the study's variables only accounted for 14.4% of the participants' ATP score. Therefore, there are other unknown, unaccounted variables, agents, or interactions at play that the present study had overlooked.

Recommendations for Future Research

With consideration of the limitations mentioned above, this section proposes recommendations to improve and advance related areas of future research. As discussed in the limitations section of this chapter, this study's findings are not generalizable to numerous MSW programs including those that are hybrid, online, and located outside the state of California. Future studies should adopt a comprehensive and diversified approach to study MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners. This would include incorporating hybrid, online, advanced standing programs, and programs located in multiple states of the United States of America since this study has found location to be correlated with ATP. Additionally, future studies should clearly specify the meaning of the independent variables to control for personal interpretations and varying mental representations that may have been present and influenced a participant's response while completing the ATP questionnaire. One possible way to ameliorate ambiguous, obscure, and broad variables including prisoners, is to narrowly define prisoners by the crimes for which they were incarcerated.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, a surprising finding of the present study was that age was insignificant despite the overwhelming research that had found age to correlate with favorable ATP (Chui & Cheng, 2015; Church et al., 2009; Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Kjelsberg & Loos, 2008; Lerman & Page, 2012; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2008). A possible explanation for this contradictory finding may be attributed to the way in which age was surveyed into brackets. Additional research into this topic is needed to determine whether age is a predictor of MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners by analyzing age individually to their participants' ATP scores.

Also mentioned in the previous section, a multivariate analysis revealed that only 14.4% of the independent variables accounted for the MSW students' ATP scores. This suggests over 85% of the students' attitudes towards prisoners are unaccounted for by unknown source(s). This may imply that surveying demographic variables and comparing them to an ATP instrument is an exceedingly simplistic approach to describing MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners. Regardless, the present study has provided a preliminary foundation into describing MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners, but this study has only scratched the surface and requires additional, more sophisticated studies to explore and expand on this new and uncharted area of research. To account for these unknown sources, it is recommended that future researchers incorporate multiple instruments and carry out a mix-methods design to allow for the human element to materialize and transcend the data. This approach will allow future researchers to understand intricate predictors including lived experiences, social circumstances, structures, events, and processes that influence individual assumptions, perceptions, and attitudes towards prisoners that quantitative-based methods are unsuited and limited in their ability to extract from participants (Al-Busaidi, 2008). The study also recommends future research test the effectiveness of different modes of education and experience that was not included in the current study. Future researcher may consider surveying MSW students' undergraduate degrees, the student's experiential learning assignments involving the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated, and student's internships and field placements that may involve working with the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EMAIL FLYER

Dear Masters of Social Work student,

My name is Robert Secula, a graduate social work student at California State University, Fresno. I would like to invite you to participate in a study conducted by myself and Dr. Clarke, who is the principal investigator and supervisor of this study. I am conducting an online-survey of Masters of Social Work (MSW) students' attitudes towards prisoners in order to describe both the attitudes MSW students have towards prisoners and any potential predictors. I am emailing you this invitation to participate in this graduate-level thesis because you are a current MSW student and meet the criteria for participating in this study. The online-survey is comprised of three sections of close-ended questions related to demographic information, education and first-hand experience with prisoners, and attitudes towards prisoners. This study is completely voluntary and there are no adverse impacts for opting not to participate.

If you do decide to participate, the survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and all participant responses are completely anonymous. All participant data will be stored in Qualtrics' database where only the researcher and the principal investigator, Dr. Clarke will have access to the data. All survey data will be deleted upon completion of this study.

The benefits of carrying out this study will help describe the current attitudes MSW students have towards an increasingly prevalent vulnerable population and help identify any biases that may hinder the quality and effectiveness of services provided towards the prison population. Also, your participation will shed insight into whether the California State University MSW curriculum is adequately educating their students about the prison population and if it is preparing their students to work with prisoners and their

families. Additionally, this study has a potential benefit of promoting social justice for prisoners and those at-risk of being incarcerated by identifying the predictors of discriminatory attitudes towards prisoners. With this knowledge, education and other efforts can be made to albeit predictors of negative attitudes towards prisoners.

Individuals who have a personal experience with crime, prison, or prisoners, or any other related issue that may cause them to be vulnerable to experiencing discomfort or distress while filling out the survey are advised to refrain from participating. If you do decide to participate, you are free to withdraw from the survey at any time for any reason.

You can access the survey here.

https://fresnostate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e4IEpyxR0ur5FQh

Upon clicking the hyperlink you will be directed to a consent page prior to beginning the survey. This must be signed before you begin the survey (you do not need to provide your real name).

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me or Dr. Clarke.

Robert Secula (559) 473-6437

robert_secula@mail.fresnostate.edu

Dr. Clarke (559) 278-2985

kclarke@csufresno.edu

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM AND SURVEY

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by Robert Secula, a graduate student at California State University, Fresno, and Dr. Kris Clarke is the principle investigator of this study. Your survey information along with other Masters of Social Work students (MSW) data will be used to describe MSW students' attitudes towards prisoners and describe any possible predictors of those attitudes. Information about this study was sent to you through an email from your University's Social Work Department on behalf of the researcher. You have been chosen as a potential participant because of your current enrollment in your school's MSW program.

This survey is completely voluntary and it is not mandated by your school. If you decide to participate, you will be presented with a three-part survey. The three part-survey will measure your demographic information, current education and first-hand experience with prisoners, and as well as your attitudes towards prisoners. The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete. If you decide to participate in this survey you can withdraw your consent at any given time during the survey without any ramifications. Participating in this study will not affect your standing with your California State University. All information collected in the survey will be anonymous and securely stored on the Qualtrics.com database. Only the researcher and the principal investigator will have access to the data. If you consent by signing this document, this survey data will be exclusively used for the sole purposes of describing the data and completing this thesis study. All data will be deleted after the completion of the study.

The researcher believes this proposed study possesses benefits in aiding social workers who will engage with incarcerated individuals, their families, and the formerly incarcerated. Specifically, it is important for social workers working with these clients to understand their attitudes towards a prevalent population and to be cognizant of any inherent biases so that they can provide ethical, quality and effective services to their clients, while decreasing the likelihood of inflicting unintentional harm. Also this study has the potential to shed insight into whether or not the CSU MSW curriculum is adequately educating their students about the incarcerated population so that they are knowledgeable in multiculturalism towards all with whom they work with including the incarcerated.

The researcher does not anticipate any real risks to the participants engaging in this study. Those who have been previously traumatized by crime, prison, prisoners, offenders, or other related experiences may undergo psychological discomfort as these experiences may resurface while participating in the survey. If the participant begins to feel any degree of distress it is recommended that he or she quit the survey immediately. In the case of severe psychological distress it is recommended you contact your school's health center. The researcher and principal investigator's contact information is also provided below if you have any questions or concerns or are in need of assistance getting in contact with your local California State University health center.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Dr. Kris Clarke.

Robert Secula tel: (559) 473-6437 email: Robert_secula@mail.fresnostate.edu

Dr. Kris Clarke tel: (559) 278-2985 email: kclarke@csufresno.edu

PLEASE MAKE A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. SELECTING THE BOX BELOW INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ THE INFORMTION ABOVE AND HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE.

I HAVE READ AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

Q2.1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

Q2.2. What race do you consider yourself?

African/ Black American	-
Caucasian/ White American	
Chicano/Hispanic/ Latino American	
Asian American	
Native American	
Pacific Islander	
Other	

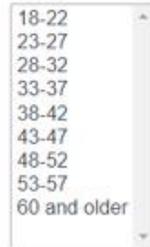
Q2.3. What is your age?

18-22	-
23-27	
28-32	
33-37	
38-42	
43-47	
48-52	
53-57	
60 and older	-

Q2.4. What is your religious preference?

Christian/ Protestant	-
Catholic	
Mormon	
Jewish	
Muslim	
Budhist	
Hindu	
Jehova's Witness	
Atheist/ Agnostic	
Other	-

Q2.3. What is your age?



A dropdown menu with the following options: 18-22, 23-27, 28-32, 33-37, 38-42, 43-47, 48-52, 53-57, and 60 and older.

Q2.4. What is your religious preference?



A dropdown menu with the following options: Christian/ Protestant, Catholic, Mormon, Jewish, Muslim, Budhist, Hindu, Jehova's Witness, Atheist/ Agnostic, and Other.

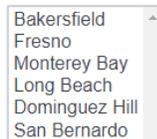
Q2.5. What is your socio-economic class?

- Lower-class
- Middle-class
- Upper-class

Q2.6. What political affiliation do you identify with?

- Republican
- Democrat
- Independent
- Other

Q2.7. What CSU are you currently attending?



A dropdown menu with the following options: Bakersfield, Fresno, Monterey Bay, Long Beach, Dominguez Hill, and San Bernardo.

Q2.6. What political affiliation do you identify with?

- Republican
- Democrat
- Independent
- Other

Q2.7. What CSU are you currently attending?

Bakersfield ^
 Fresno
 Monterey Bay
 Long Beach
 Dominguez Hill
 San Bernardo

Q3.1. What's your personal experience with Incarceration?

	No	I do not recall	Yes
I work/worked with those who have been incarcerated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have been incarcerated in jail or prison	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have friends or family who have been incarcerated in jail or prison	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q3.2. What's your educational level towards incarcerated individuals?

	No	I do not recall	Yes
I have previously taken courses related to incarcerated individuals/ incarceration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My MSW program has educated me about incarceration/ incarcerated individuals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have training related to the topic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4.1. Express your feelings and attitudes about each statement toward prisoners in jails or prisons in the United States.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prisoners are different from most people.	<input type="radio"/>				
Only a few prisoners are really dangerous.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners never change.	<input type="radio"/>				
Most prisoners are victims of circumstance and deserve to be helped.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners have feelings like the rest of us.	<input type="radio"/>				
It is not wise to trust a prisoner too far.	<input type="radio"/>				
I think I would like a lot of prisoners.	<input type="radio"/>				
Bad prison conditions just make a prisoner more bitter.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Give a prisoner an inch and he'll take a mile.	<input type="radio"/>				
Most prisoners are stupid.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners need affection and praise just like anybody else.	<input type="radio"/>				
You should not expect too much from a prisoner.	<input type="radio"/>				
Trying to rehabilitate prisoners is a waste of time and money.	<input type="radio"/>				

You never know when a prisoner is telling the truth.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners are not better or worse than other people.	<input type="radio"/>				
You have to be constantly on your guard with prisoners.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
In general, prisoners think and act alike.	<input type="radio"/>				
If you give a prisoner your respect, he'll give you the same.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners only think about themselves.	<input type="radio"/>				
There are some prisoners I would trust with my life.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners will listen to reason.	<input type="radio"/>				
Most prisoners are too lazy to earn an honest living.	<input type="radio"/>				
I wouldn't mind living next door to an ex-prisoner.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners are just plain mean at heart.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prisoners are always trying to get something out of somebody.	<input type="radio"/>				
The values of most prisoners are about the same as the rest of us.	<input type="radio"/>				

I would never want one of my children dating an ex-prisoner.	<input type="radio"/>				
Most prisoners have the capacity for love.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners are just plain immoral.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners should be under strict, harsh discipline.	<input type="radio"/>				
In general, prisoners are basically bad people.	<input type="radio"/>				
Most prisoners can be rehabilitated.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Some prisoners are pretty nice people.	<input type="radio"/>				
I would like associating with some prisoners.	<input type="radio"/>				
Prisoners only respect brute force.	<input type="radio"/>				
If a person does well in prison, he should be let out on parole.	<input type="radio"/>				

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

APPENDIX C: HUMAN SUBJECTS CERTIFICATE

