‘Gizza a Job, I Can Do That’: What the Literature Tells Us About How the Inability to Secure Employment Can Lead to Ex-Offenders Starting a Business

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Introduction

Cooney (2014) stressed that despite a substantial body of research undertaken in recent years giving prominence to the additional and distinctive challenges faced by the disadvantaged communities (e.g. female entrepreneurs, ethnic entrepreneurs’ and other minority entrepreneurs), ex-offenders have received relatively little attention and so remain underexplored within entrepreneurship literature. Such ‘silent’ minorities exist in communities which are composed of relatively large numbers in terms of population figures, but require tailored support to overcome distinctive economic, social and personal obstacles. This is particularly true of ex-offenders from such minorities. Given the difficulties encountered in attempting to secure employment through traditional channels, becoming an entrepreneur and launching one’s own small business may be an ex-offender’s only viable career option because they do not require permission to work (Wilson et al. 2000). Indeed, entrepreneurship and small business management training delivered within prisons can provide offenders with a set of core business success skills that will help them to develop a strong business plan, help to increase employment and reduce recidivism (Levenburg and Powers 2009). For ex-offenders,

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the inability to secure employment is one of the major driving forces towards starting their own business (Cooney 2012, 2014).

Historically, unemployment and the inability to secure a meaningful job is a major factor which blights the lives of many disadvantaged people and communities, but in particular ethnic minorities, the working class, and underclasses with limited social capital to trade upon. Unemployment remains a serious problem even in contemporary society. Indeed, many 'job seekers' are either over qualified or under qualified and job shortages can lead to frustration and often a pathway into crime.[1] Ex-offenders face many problems and barriers to securing regular employment, making criminal career pathways for many the only viable option. Indeed, Zakaria et al. (2018) identified two main barriers to recidivism related to supply and demand. The supply side refers to the characteristics, attitudes, skills and experience of the ex-offenders. The demand side concerns employers' attitudes and the economic climate, as well as government policy in supporting the employment of ex-offenders. Other complex and interlinked challenges and barriers facing ex-offenders are housing, homelessness, and alcohol and drug dependency issues (Roman and Travis 2004; Weiman 2007). Many employers persistently refuse to hire ex-offenders, preferring instead employees with no criminal record (Holzer et al. 2002). Furthermore, the majority of job application forms include questions on this topic and employers and their HR departments routinely conduct background checks on prospects to screen out potentially problematic employees. The impact of failing to secure regular employment is a major factor in increased recidivism rates in ex-offenders and can have a detrimental effect on an offender's family and even their wider communities (Holzer et al. 2002). Gill (1997) argued that ex-offenders seeking work can count on very little help from the criminal justice system and that employers and ex-offenders are ignorant about the risks and opportunities. Gill opined that obtaining work for ex-offenders may depend as much on eradicating ignorance among employers as it does on focusing help on ex-offenders.

Collectively these issues can lead to higher rates of recidivism. Cooney (2012) argued that globally prison systems are facing significant challenges from overcrowding and a 'revolving door' routine and that reducing recidivism would help alleviate these problems and assist in breaking the cycle of career criminality. Cooney stressed that recidivism is fuelled by a lack of

[1]The first part of the title is based upon the culturally iconic words of British actor Bernard Hill who played the part of unemployed, fictitious yet iconic 'Yosser Hughes' in the 1982 TV series—'*Boys from the Black Stuff*' written by Alan Bleasdale. The series followed the fortunes of unemployed Liverpudlian tarmacadam layers. Yosser catch phrase '*Gizza a job, I can do that*' became a nationally recognised meme.

employment opportunities for people who have spent time in prison. Cooney highlighted the dearth of entrepreneurship research on ex-prisoners designed to help them via a 'Start Your Own Business' programme delivered inside a prison. Such programmes offer the most realistic opportunity for reducing recidivism. Nevertheless, there are significant obstacles, as well as opportunities, which ex-offenders face when seeking to transition towards becoming a small business owner (Jansyn 1969). Moreover, Vogel (2015) argued that the role of entrepreneurship in society and the economy has drastically changed over the last half century and that it is no longer the case that established companies are the sole drivers of innovation, job creation, economic and societal prosperity. The jobless have a role to play in entrepreneurial reinvigoration.

The literature suggests that there is an established link between entrepreneurial and criminal propensity and in particular between acquisitive crime, drug-dealing and organised crime (Fairlie 2002; Gottschalk 2008). Thus, it could be argued that ex-offenders are potentially greater risk-takers than the general population (as are entrepreneurs) and because of the difficulty in finding employment, many ex-offenders are pushed into starting their own businesses (Reiple and Harper 1993). Ex-offenders and other vulnerable groups such as those Not in Employment Education or Training [NEETS] (Smith and Air 2012) are classified as 'Minority Entrepreneurs' (according to the OECD Reports [2013, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019] on 'Missing Entrepreneurs'). The OECD identified key challenges including: low self-confidence; poor entrepreneurial skillsets; reliance on self-funding; and lack of managerial experience. In addition, they face disadvantage, discrimination, intolerance, social marginalisation and stigma from mainstream society. All of these are exacerbated by a criminal record and prison sentence.

A criminal record, and particularly conviction and imprisonment, can effectively stunt or even cause the termination of an individual's career path. Therefore, an awareness of the power of entrepreneurship and its possibilities can begin to form an attitudinal foundation from which to rebuild a future. Entrepreneurship education is a particularly valuable activity for prisoners because self-employment as an occupational career path can help overcome the well-documented potential for employers' discriminatory attitudes towards ex-prisoners. Such education inspires and develops an entrepreneurial mindset. Although the number of prisoners continues to rise globally, nevertheless, educational efforts to help them return to society as productive members have yielded mixed results (Patzelt et al. 2013), albeit entrepreneurship offers a diversification pathway out of crime (Smith 2009).

Minority communities face additional and distinctive challenges in both seeking employment and starting up a business. They are also statistically more likely to have a criminal record and have served a jail sentence. Both of these factors stigmatise them in the 'eyes' of society and make securing any type of employment problematic. This makes entrepreneurship an ideal employment pathway and accordingly in prisons globally (but particularly in the USA and UK), thus there is an increasing interest in seeking to teach offenders entrepreneurial skills. This is reflected in an expanding academic literature on the topic.

An Overview of the Literature

The literature which has coalesced into 'Prison Entrepreneurship' has a long multidisciplinary history. Indeed, knowledge of it comes from a variety of sources including journal articles, book chapters and theses which span the disciplines of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial learning, social entrepreneurship, criminology, prison studies, practice-based reports and even Probation studies (Reiple and Harper 1993; Johnson 2007). In the Probation Service, there is an increasing awareness that employment does help reduce recidivism for Federal Offenders (Johnson 2007). Indeed, Prison Entrepreneurship is a necessity-based type of entrepreneurship (Downing 2012) and as such is driven by hard push factors as opposed to ideological pull factors. Some of the early examples of the power of entrepreneurship to transform lives come from social entrepreneurship and the writings of American scholars such as Boschee (1995) who provided evidence of how social enterprises such as the Delancey Street Foundation helped reintegrate ex-offenders into society. Indeed, Lahr (2018) talked about piercing the cycle of recidivism via engagement in social entrepreneurship. Mann and Fiedler (2017) argued that social entrepreneurs identify and solve complex social problems, acting as societal change agents by looking for new approaches and advancing sustainable solutions that create social value. They identified that the USA has the highest incarceration rates in the world for women whose re-entry issues differ from those of men. They report on a social enterprise model/programme created to prepare female inmates with entrepreneurial training. This helps the women to attain the necessary life-skills to successfully re-enter and perpetuate a cycle of prosperity in their communities. The study of Patzelt et al. (2013) into a European prison entrepreneurship educational programme found that rather than being an *outcome* of an entrepreneurship education programme, recognising a potential opportunity was a critical *input* to successful completion.

Recognising potential opportunities are important vehicles for transforming prisoners' attitudes towards entrepreneurship and imprisonment (Patzelt et al. 2013). They found that:

> …without a "personal agency mind-set - namely, the set of assumptions, belief systems and self-regulation capabilities through which individuals intentionally exercise influence (i.e. act) as opposed to residing as a discrete entity (i.e. acted upon) - prisoners were unable to make sense of the past or orient themselves toward the future, both of which are necessary to identify and develop opportunities and ultimately to persist with an entrepreneurship educational program.

A tangential aspect of the literature is that of Criminal Entrepreneurship (Gottschalk 2008; Smith 2009, 2013; Smith and McElwee 2014). Within this diverse literature there are identifiable schools of thought deriving from US and UK-based literatures. This is important because they both have different enterprise eco-systems and criminal justice systems, and laws and must be treated differently. The literature and practice of Prison Entrepreneurship evolved from the early literature on social entrepreneurship and attempts to get ex-offenders into employment. The remainder of this review focuses on the US and UK-based literatures, as well as generic religious, faith-based and redemptive literatures in both contexts. Finally, other diverse literatures such as Prison Privatisation, the Crime–Dyslexia–Entrepreneurship' Pathway, the Education Pathway and the Prison Narrative literature will be discussed. These literatures all feed into the Prison Entrepreneurship (PE) literature.

US-Based Literature

In the penal system in the USA, there are an estimated 70 million or more Americans that have some form of criminal record. American federal and state prisons release more than 600,000 such offenders each year. Those with a criminal record find successful re-entry difficult because a record serves as a barrier to public benefits and bars convicts from certain professions (Powell 2017). For Powell, this makes correctional education programmes (designed to help offenders whilst in prison to overcome these barriers) of vital importance. Powell argues that entrepreneurial education programmes are becoming more popular, due to the positive recidivism and post-release employment results they engender.

Prior to the 1990s the direction of the Federal Bureau of Prisons was directed towards Prison Labour Programs (Washburn 1987). The type of

work available to prisoners was limited to sowing mail bags which is a stereotypical (but true) indication of the meaningless nature of such exploitative work activities. The ontological development of the body of knowledge that is PE and the notion of an ex-offender as a business person (Jansyn 1969) and prisoners as entrepreneurs (Goodman 1982) moved from the conceptual and descriptive in the early 1990s to the practical and theoretical in the present day (Sonfield et al. 2001) very much due to the influence of American literature and practice. The literature on PE is in some respects driven by practice such as the Prison Entrepreneurship Program [PEP] (Prison Entrepreneurship Program 2007). This literature was pioneered by scholars such as (Sonfield 1992; Sonfield and Barbato 1994; Sonfield et al. 2001; Sonfield 2008) and Lindahl (2007), plus by newspaper articles on such initiatives (see Butterfield 2004). In 1992, Sonfield proposed that small business and entrepreneurial training programmes for 'soon-to-be-released' inmates and recently released ex-offenders might increase their opportunities for self-employment and their rate of recidivism (Sonfield 1992). This led to the development of so-called 're-entry programs' in the American prison system. Such programmes entailed the provision of instruction, workshops and mentoring to prepare inmates for both employment and self-employment (Sonfield 1992). The reasons behind such initiatives resulted from rising prison populations and high rates of recidivism which were particularly high in disadvantaged ethnic and minority groups. A primary cause of high rates of recidivism is the difficulty former inmates have in obtaining employment (Sonfield 1992) and because without employment, ex-offenders were three-to-five times more likely to commit a crime than are those who gained employment after leaving prison (Jackson 1990, cited in Sonfield 1992). Sonfield (1992) stressed that many programmes specifically targeted women rather than men, even though men constitute about 93% of all prison inmates. Table 1 offers examples of the type of programmes provided to furnish an insight into their scope and nature.

Race is a feature of the US prison system and approximately 41% of the prison population is black and half of all black men that have less than a college education is likely to serve prison time (Pettit and Western 2004). African-American male ex-offenders struggle with a lack of assistance during their transition from incarceration and encounter many barriers when released back into the community and often reoffend within one year (Burt 2018). Burt argues that re-entry programmes enhanced participants' well-being, improved their communication skills and increased their resourcefulness, thereby promoting better re-entry outcomes and safer communities. The aim of such programmes includes the stimulation of life transformation

Table 1 Examples of US PE schemes

Scheme	Narrative description
The Five O'Clock Club	Founded 1978 to provide skills training for employment and self-employment for incarcerated women at a New York City women's correctional facility
Trickle Up	Founded 1979 to provide conditional seed capital and business training for underserved people, including poor and formerly incarcerated people in New York City
Women Entrepreneurs of Baltimore	Founded 1989 to provide business training programmes and a loan fund for low-income and underserved women in Baltimore, MD
New Vision, New Ventures	Founded 1999 to provide micro-entrepreneurial training for economically and socially disadvantaged women in Richmond, VA, many currently in correctional institutions
Men's Employment and Business Ownership Program	Founded 2004 to provide entrepreneurship training for low-income African-American fathers in Chicago, IL, 60% having felony records
Prison Entrepreneurship Program	Founded 2004 to provide business plan and work readiness programmes for incarcerated men in Texas
Rising Tide Capital	Founded 2004. Basic business planning and management training for low-income individuals, primarily women, minorities and formerly incarcerated persons in Jersey City, NJ
Self-Education and Economic Development programme at Clinton NY Correctional Facility	Founded 2005 to provide start-up and general business skill classes for incarcerated men
Central Ohio Regional Ex-Offender and Family Re-entry Program	Founded 2006 to provide micro-enterprise classes for females transitioning from Ohio correctional facilities

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Scheme	Narrative description
Coffee Creek Prison Project	Founded 2006 to provide business planning and related training for women inmates in Portland, Oregon
The Oklahoma City, Training and Supporting Ex-Offenders as Entrepreneurs programme	The program is housed within the education department of the correctional facility in which it operates. Staff of the program were able to facilitate its initiation by marketing their services to correctional administrators as another 'tool for the toolkit' within existing education programmes, and not another entirely new programme
Kansas City Connections to Success, a faith-based re-entry programme	The programme is housed within a municipal jail and provides re-entry services for individuals both within county, state and federal correctional systems and during their transition into the community

Source Adapted from the works of Sonfield (e.g. 1992) and Lindahl (2007)

and the instillation of entrepreneurial passion via education and mentoring. An increasing number of federal and state laws either bar or restrict people with criminal records from holding particular occupations in fields such as finance, insurance, healthcare, childcare, transportation and aviation (Lindahl 2007). Prisoners are often trained in prison employment programmes in industry skills, using machines and technology which are now obsolete, therefore making new approaches necessary.

In the USA, the provision of support for ex-offenders is more formalised than in the UK. For example, many states have their own Prison Entrepreneurship Programs [PEPs], such as the Texas State Entrepreneurship Program (see Sauers 2009; Johnson et al. 2013 for a more in-depth account). There are also formal Federal mechanisms such as the Prisoner Re-entry Institute. Engaging in the PEP develops entrepreneurial skills and creativity which helps incarcerated individuals achieve the ultimate goal of increasing their employability or assisting them in nurturing start-up enterprises (Goodstein 2019). According to Johnson et al. (2013), components of a PEP might include:

- In-prison business plan competition—teaching inmates how to write plans.
- Work readiness programme—providing inmates with work skills.

- Executive mentoring programme—whereby volunteer executives mentor inmates in their choice of business venture.
- Entrepreneurship school [eschool]—where students are taught the practicalities of starting a business in preparation for re-entry.
- Access to financing (PEP Opportunity Fund).

The PEP has been described as a new crime reduction model which facilitates an opportunity for transformation in relation to: (1) character formation; (2) learning a new 'values' base; (3) family reintegration; and (4) concentrating on minimising costs whilst maximising impact. Since its inception in 2004 by Catherine Rhor, PEP has worked with over 1000 inmates, of which 840 have been successfully released into the community on good standing (Rhor 2007). Around 240 inmates have started their own businesses (Johnson et al. 2013) and the initiative and its success stories have been well publicised (Winig 2012; Mangan 2013; see De Jong et al. 2012 for a comprehensive review).

According to Lindahl (2007) individuals re-entering society face myriad challenges, including securing viable employment to match their unique set of experiences, needs and resources. Lindahl called for a collaborative approach to address the challenges facing people re-entering society by developing a spectrum of approaches and solutions. Lindahl collected information, case studies and stories contained with the aim of inspiring professionals across entrepreneurship, workforce development and criminal justice fields to recognise and embrace entrepreneurship and self-employment as appropriate and valuable reintegration tools. Returning inmates are a potentially useful societal resource for community and economic development. Lindahl argued that entrepreneurship represents a path to financial stability and more engaged citizenship, plus defined entrepreneurship as the process of starting a business venture with the aim of becoming self-sufficient and advocated adopting a micro-enterprise development approach. Lindahl profiled a typical micro-enterprise development programme which included the following key elements:

- Training and technical assistance: Including teaching business skills to entrepreneurs with little formal training, limited time to engage in learning and various levels of education. Typical topics include business plan development, integrating technology, bookkeeping, business management and marketing. Training is facilitated via lectures, one-on-one counselling, peer networking and mentoring programmes.

- Credit and credit access: Most programmes either offer credit directly from an in-house loan fund, typically lending from $100 to $35,000 or else partnering with community organisations or institutions to provide access.
- Economic literacy and asset development: Programmes stress the importance of establishing checking and savings accounts, a credit rating and learning about credit rehabilitation. Also, training is provided relating to tax laws, regulatory issues, sound accounting principles and insurance.
- Follow-up services: Services are provided to clients after completing the core training or taking a loan. These help fledgling entrepreneurs successfully negotiate the challenges they face in marketing, increasing sales, quality control, legal issues and business expansion.

What is important about this approach is that it is based upon micro-enterprise development programmes delivered to all under-privileged communities, not just prisoners and ex-offenders.

Garnett (2006) reported on the development of a creative entrepreneurship programme (T.R.U.T.H) for youth, aged 14–24, residents of Camden, one of New Jersey's disinvested neighbourhoods. The programme was designed to cure recidivism amongst youth as part of a three-pronged approach: (1) training and motivation; (2) entrepreneurial opportunity and incentive; and (3) career job placement. The youth went through training on the Genesis Youth Employment Training and Entrepreneurship programme and the ED-Tech Program to gain entrepreneurial skills, business skills and technical knowledge (Garnett 2006). The project helped participants in the implementation of new entrepreneurial ventures, joint ventures, sole proprietorships, marketing, advertisement, sales, operations, strategy and financing via the Camden County Cleaning Service, a for-profit C corporation. The participants worked with community businesses to engage them in all aspects of developing the business—from creating a business plan, incorporation, marketing, purchasing, packaging and distribution. They were taught the basic principles of income generation and the importance of reinvesting monies back into the business and community for sustainability.

Kenna and Simmons (2015) conducted an evaluation of the impact of the Ice House Entrepreneurship Program on the learning experience of participating pre-release inmates at a Mississippi maximum-security prison and their perception of the transfer of skills learned during the programme into securing employment upon re-entry. The programme was a 12-week one facilitated by volunteer university professors to inmates in a pre-release unit of a maximum-security prison. The findings revealed the emergence of eight life-lessons as a promising approach to prison programming for pre-release

inmates. There are three stages of preparation for a mindset change (rethink, reform and re-enter approaches) which help break the traditional cycle of release, reoffend and return.

Unfortunately, there is also a darker side to such enterprise-based programmes in prisons. Indeed, Butcher and LaLonde (2006) emphasised that institutionalisation and engagement with Social Welfare Programs can result in ex-offenders becoming subject to welfare dependency. They found that incarcerated women are amongst the most economically disadvantaged populations in the USA and are often driven towards such dependency. Fairlie (2005) used microdata from the 1979 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to study self-employment and entrepreneurship amongst young adults, including the relationship between criminal activities and self-employment and job-satisfaction amongst the self-employed, and found that although such programmes have positive aspects, there are negative ones too. This creates a vicious self-confirming cycle which perpetuates crime and incarceration. There is therefore a pressing need to design appropriate gender-based programmes to overcome this disadvantage. This is worthy of further research because the positives outweigh the negatives and the disadvantages of such programmes. Another criticism of programmes is that it is counter-productive to teach criminals entrepreneurship. Prison entrepreneurship in the USA follows a very formalised, prescriptive and practical model in which basic enterprise and business skills are taught to inmates to prepare them for either employment or starting their own business, combined with start-up grants. The academic literature was initially descriptive and case based in nature (concentrating on statistics), but it is growing in numbers of studies although lacking in theorisation and theory building.

The UK Literature

Statistics from the UK Prison Reform Trust indicate that 26% of the prison population or 22,683 prisoners, are from a minority ethnic group. The cost of this BAME over-representation is estimated at £234 million per year. The statistics indicate that there was a clear and direct association between ethnic groups and the odds of receiving a custodial sentence. Thus, black people are 53%, Asian 55% and other ethnic groups 81% more likely to be sent to prison for an indictable offence (Prison Trust Website). In the UK, the academic literature on PE has evolved somewhat differently due to the different criminal justice systems. Indeed, a very different model has evolved. Rieple (1998) studied the potential which ex-offenders have for entrepreneurial activity and formulated policy implications for the training

of prisoners and ex-offenders in small business skills. Reiple surveyed small business training and support within prisons and the probation services and conducted a survey of prisoners and probationers to establish their potential for entrepreneurial activity, experience of working in their own businesses and intentions of doing so in the future. She utilised a psychometric test which assessed individuals across five well-established entrepreneurial traits; she also authored case studies of three ex-prisoners intending to start up their own businesses on release. Building on this, Reiple and Harper (1993) examined the potential of ex-offenders running a small business and the provision of small business training in prisons and probation services, arguing that such training in running a small business or self-employment improved their chances of success. In the UK criminal justice system, there is no direct equivalent of the PEP and as a result help and support for ex-offenders has developed on a more ad hoc basis. There is a greater emphasis on helping young ex-offenders through schemes such as The Prince's Trust and a reliance on social enterprise models delivered by NGOs and charities such as APEX (see Greene 2005). Moreover, Smith and Allan (2011) reported on the innovative work of APEX towards encouraging enterprising behaviour in young ex-offenders by using positive role modelling (many of whom were entrepreneurs) to effect change in ex-offenders by encouraging more positive career pathways.

In the UK ethnicity also plays a significant part in the criminal justice system with a greater number of BAME youth becoming criminalised and imprisoned. Pilgrim and Smith (2000) sought to address some of the ethnic considerations, regarding ex-offender's rehabilitation, which are present in social policy. They elaborated on media attention to deviant behaviour amongst ethnic minorities and how crime by black offenders was over-reported compared with levels of similar committed by white offenders. They also highlighted that numbers of Asian offenders were lower than blacks or whites, but was still over-reported. Pilgrim and Smith commended the Apex Community Entrepreneurs Scheme (ACES) project that aims to help ex-offenders to continue their lives as law-abiding members of society by assisting them to find employment. It is therefore apparent that numerous amendments are required to be made to such schemes to assist the rehabilitation of BAME ex-offenders into the mainstream. This links into the early intervention and gang violence and mentoring schemes proliferating in many UK cities to divert at risk youth out of crime and towards employment.

There have been a number of UK government initiatives attempting to address the issue of entrepreneurship for ex-offenders. For example,

in 2005, the UK's National Offender Management Service, in conjunction with the Department of Trade and Industry, issued an advice booklet entitled 'Unlocking Potential: Working for Yourself'. It aimed to inspire prisoners to consider self-employment upon release. The document sought to inspire action by featuring the profiles of, and interviews with, 15 formerly incarcerated entrepreneurs who started a diverse array of businesses throughout the UK, as well as providing the contact information of public and private bodies supporting entrepreneurship and re-entry. Since then, a network of government agencies and community organisations have worked together to promote self-employment as a re-entry strategy through a multi-pronged initiative. There are several components of this initiative including programmes and publications developed:

- Promoted business start-ups in disadvantaged areas and supported existing businesses there to provide better services and become more profitable.
- Set-up pilot projects.
- Established the 'Business in Prison' scheme which assisted incarcerated individuals with reintegration into the labour market and focused on self-employment post-release.
- Initiated an 'In Credit' initiative as a network for women released from prison who demonstrated an interest in starting a business.
- Launched the 'Women into Work' programme which tackled discrimination and inequality experienced by disadvantaged women. A component of the project was the 'Creative Business Pilot', a course which provided a basis for incarcerated women to initiate self-employment upon release, particularly in the creative industries.
- Publication of a report 'Reducing Re-offending: The Enterprise Option', which provided an overview of the relationship between people in the criminal justice system and self-employment, the entrepreneurial aptitude of people with criminal records, existing enterprise support for currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and recommendations for moving forward.
- Publication of a report 'Unlocking Potential' consisting of two booklets. The first detailed various approaches to encouraging currently and formerly incarcerated individuals to explore their potential for self-employment. The second profiled formerly incarcerated business owners.

To embed the initiative, in 2004, multiple government agencies issued a Joint Ministerial Statement announcing the investment of £1.8 million over two

years to support pilot projects. In 2006, further support was made available through the Phoenix Development Fund which was funnelled through the Regional Development Agencies to entrench the Fund's function within local government structures and embedding the knowledge and best practices accumulated through pilot projects in the mainstream provision of business support. The initiative provided a template for encouraging prisoners into self-employment as a positive and practical way of re-entering the labour market (Lindahl 2007). The Fund supported 95 projects between 2001 and 2006, focusing on BAME offenders and refugees (Ramsden 2008). Ramsden (2008) argued that specific or targeted approaches to outreach can succeed in engaging communities who have not previously used business supports available through mainstream agencies. Ramsden highlighted the role of innovation in the success of initiatives targeted at disadvantaged or minority communities in relation to techniques for outreach and engagement, and methods of supporting clients through finance, training and coaching approaches. Ramsden suggested that the programme was less successful in transferring its results to the mainstream agencies because: of the lack of an effective mainstreaming strategy; the target-driven approaches of the larger agencies; ongoing restructuring in agencies; and the break-up of the Government's Small Business Service when its functions were transferred to regional development agencies. The age of austerity post-2008 also had an effect on the financing of such projects.

However, the main lesson learned is that specialist approaches are required to promote enterprise strategies, but they are best implemented by a 'braided' approach linking specialist support to mainstream agencies through referrals, funding and results. There is also a gender element to this in that Rouse and Kitching (2006) argued that working-class participants (particularly women from disadvantaged communities) engaged in a youth enterprise start-up programme in the UK face a discriminatory barrier because of childcare responsibilities. Family-owned firms are an ideal venue for ex-offender re-entry because family firms are run by entrepreneurs who have the power and autonomy to make decisions on hiring ex-offenders (Williams and Ferguson 2011). Indeed, ex-offenders are a potentially valuable resource to family businesses. In addition, many family-owned firms are operated by those of strong religious faith. Despite this, there is considerable resistance by firms to hire ex-offenders because of their stereotypic views regarding ex-offenders (Williams and Ferguson 2011). Williams and Ferguson advised that such firms should look for signals that might highlight the potential that an ex-offender offers as an employee (e.g. their church involvement, their probation requirements, their location and any job training). In the UK prison entrepreneurship

as a practice developed differently and more on an ad hoc basis through working with individual prisoners and small groups. A more formalised approach is developing involving government agencies, but it lags behind the USA. Again, the academic literature has been descriptive and case based, reporting on prison-based initiatives. Attempts have been made to formalise this through the National Offender Management and Phoenix Trust schemes and by setting up supportive mechanisms and processes.

The Influence of Literature on Religion, Faith and Redemption

An important segment of the literature on PE in both the US and UK contexts relates to the sub-literature on the influence of religion, faith-based programmes and redemption on recidivism rates (e.g. Johnson 2014). In the UK this is not such a strong theme in the literature, albeit Bolton and Thompson (2000) narrated the inspirational redemption story of a self-confessed dyslexic thief George Reynolds who like many before him entered into a life of crime in his teenage years. Reynolds did badly at school and become a career criminal. One day when serving a prison sentence, he was berated by a Priest for wasting his obvious organisational talents in crime. On leaving prison Reynolds turned his back on crime and established a business empire. Unleashing a latent entrepreneurial flair, he began with an ice cream van before he became a wealthy tycoon and chairman of a football club. There are other high-profile examples of prolific criminals turned entrepreneurs such as those of Bob Turney (2002) and Mark Johnson (2007), both of whom have authored frank autobiographies and actively work with other ex-offenders to turn their lives around. Both Turney and Johnson described themselves as dyslexic, alcoholic, ex-prisoners and they support the reformed criminal and redemption narrative of how entrepreneurship turned their lives around.

Conversely, Maruna et al. (2006), Hallett and Johnson (2014), Robinson-Edwards and Kewley (2018), Leary (2018) and Atkins et al. (2019) all argued that the growing prominence of faith-based programmes in US correction facilities had a historical context in relation to penal regime change during periods of economic crisis. They acknowledged the emergence of a new American penitentiary movement whose central tenets are faith-based programmes. They emphasised that such programmes have salience for both conservatives and liberals, plus they are popular because they are generally paid for by church congregations and volunteers which saves taxpayers money whilst demonstrating a commitment to having programming in

prisons. Indeed, faith-based programmes involve community building and social capital which it is argued ultimately lowers rates of recidivism (Hallett and Johnson 2014). Much of the current research pertaining to faith-based interventions is limited and the experiences of those who volunteer within prisons in a faith-based capacity is often overlooked (Robinson-Edwards and Kewley 2018). Robinson-Edwards and Kewley (2018) narrated a story of the impact of faith-based interventions through the lens of their respondent, a self-identified practising Christian (Joanna) who for a decade visited several prisons in the UK in a faith-based capacity supporting prisoners, families and prison chaplaincies. Joanna's message to the imprisoned was a positive one, based upon the role of faith and religiosity as influential components in their lives. Faith-based intervention and religiosity within a criminal justice context provide several benefits which impact upon those in prison, their families and people working within a prison environment (Robinson-Edwards and Kewley 2018). Thus ministers, priests, prison visitors, committed Christians and those of other religious persuasions play an important part in lowering recidivism, instilling a sense of purpose channelled into Higher Education and entrepreneurial propensity.

Similarly, Leary (2018) narrated the story of ex-offender's transitioning into, through and out of higher education within the context of the Colson Scholarship program at Wheaton College, Illinois (USA) through support from faith-based mentors. Leary argued that faith-based mentors played an important role in the outcomes of, specifically, faith-worldview development and emotional development. She highlighted a lack of supportive mentors for ex-offender populations in the community, particularly post-release. Such mentors are usually found in faith-based organisations, institutions and houses of worship. Atkins et al. (2019) detailed what religious frameworks and institutions have to contribute to college-in-prison in the context of higher education programmes in American prisons. Religion plays a significant role in motivating prisoners and other people to commit themselves to educating incarcerated people. They stressed that it is a thorny problem and that religious languages (of any persuasion) can be an asset in navigating the practical and pedagogical challenges faced by faith-based mentors. There is an evident religious and faith-based element to PE which have a tone of redemption underpinning them. Although these examples span both the USA and UK, they are more prominent in the USA. These approaches are helpful for those with a strong faith, but may not resonate with a more secular society. The theme of religiosity and faith link strongly with and feed into the prison education and prison narrative literatures discussed below.

Other Diverse Literatures

There are other elements of the literature which impinge upon Prison Entrepreneurship, namely the emerging literature on: the Crime–Dyslexia–Entrepreneurship' Pathway (Kirk and Reid 2001; Logan 2009; Smith 2008); the Education Pathway (see Finch 2000; Rogensues 2006; Leary 2018); the Prison Narrative Literature (Evans and Wallace 2007); and on Prison Privatisation (Morris 2007). Each of these are inextricably linked to the entrepreneurship paradigm.

- The Crime–Dyslexia–Entrepreneurship' Pathway: This is another area of linkage whereby entrepreneurs and criminals (and particularly prisoners) are 4 times more likely to be dyslexic or have other learning difficulties than the average population (Kirk and Reid 2001; Logan 2009; Smith 2008). In their study, Kirk and Reid found that between 25 and 50% of the population of inmates at a Youth Offender Institute in Scotland exhibited signs of dyslexia or other learning difficulties. Although Kirk and Reid did not name these specifically, they included Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Attention Deficit Disorder [ADD] or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder [ADHD] (Smith 2008). Both Logan (2009) and Smith (2008) highlighted the entrepreneurship and dyslexia nexus which predisposes dyslexics towards an entrepreneurial career pathway. This also links into the Education Pathway.
- The Education Pathway: Education programmes produce a more positive impact on recidivism than work programs. This pathway is inextricably linked to the entrepreneurship pathway because gaining an education is central to entrepreneurial success and developing social capital. Indeed, whether it is self-education or formal education, the twin notions of the self-made-person and the self-educated-person are part of entrepreneurial folklore. Without a grounding in education, it is difficult to progress towards an entrepreneurial pathway and indeed the lack of a formal education combined with learning difficulties can lead to many disadvantaged persons being forced into a life of crime to survive. Education, and more importantly improving it, are embedded into the philosophy of the prison system and many inmates take advantage of opportunities to study, upskill and improve their education (Finch 2000). Some even progress towards degree level. Continuing education is also a relevant pathway. Indeed, Lisante and Navon (2000) reported on a progressive school at the Correctional Education Foundation, located on Riker's Island, New York City's corrections complex. This alternative school issues the most

General Educational Development diplomas, with the highest passing rate, of any prison programme. Succeeding on the outside requires preparation, including how to adopt entry-level jobs as 'stepping-stones', as well as preparing to meet or avoid old friends, and identifying positive and negative behaviours. These are taught at release preparation and re-entry classes (Finch 2000).

- Prison Narrative Literature: Of interest here is concept of the construction of offending 'narratives', 'desistence narratives' and 'redemption scripts' because the adoption of desistence narratives and redemption scripts enable an ex-offender to move on with their transformation towards a better life (Maruna 2001; Mdakane 2016). Mdakane (himself an ex-offender) argued that many ex-offenders once released from prison demonstrate positive signs of disengagement from crime and desist from crime which result from engagement in such desistence narratives. The literature on prison narrative and in particular on gender and masculinities (Evans and Wallace 2007) fits into the emerging literature. This topic is of importance because it feeds into critical issues such as self-identity and in particular how this links into accepting and internalising one's position as a prisoner. For male prisoners, it also relates to the phenomenon of hegemonic masculinity and feelings of self-worth. Female prisoners narrate their prison stories differently and concentrate on relationships, not status. However, their stories are complicated by the oppressive patriarchal structures under which most jails operate. This leads to self-destructive behaviours and an internalised pathologising self-discourse that influences their sense of self-worth and thus re-entry into society (Mahoney and Daniel 2006). If one buys into the twin notions of criminality and prison culture, then one is more likely to perpetuate criminal philosophies and behaviours, and less likely to consider notions of betterment and transformation. In prison many offenders experience key life turning points (Evans and Wallace 2007). Adherence to criminal and prison cultures dictates that offenders define themselves through hegemonic masculinity and its associated values, including anti-authoritarianism, the rejection of societal norms, hyper-masculinity and the use extreme violence. If one rejects criminal and prison culture, then one can begin to define themselves outside hegemonic norms and begin the transformation processes of self-education and upskilling, and the development of entrepreneurial propensity. It is of relevance that criminal culture eulogises entrepreneurial propensity and entrepreneurial identity as a form of hegemonic masculinity.

- The Prison Privatisation Pathway: Morris (2007) reported on the trend towards and recent growth of privately operated and privately owned prisons in the USA. This is an example of private enterprise and entrepreneurship in action. Such privatisation of correctional facilities results from a combination of government failures, market failures and political incentives, as well as financial gain to investors. Privatisation can result in changes to established correctional processes and practices. Morris concluded that prison privatisation not only fails to correct certain government or market failures, but also actually creates additional (hybrid) pathologies that combine elements of both government and market failures. The privatisation pathway is also relevant in a UK context with private prisons and prisoner escort services becoming more prevalent in recent years.

In addition, there are studies of Prison Entrepreneurship from other national contexts, including Bolivia and South Africa. Downing (2012) examined prison entrepreneurship and the use of small business enterprises in Bolivia as a rehabilitation strategy. She detailed the mechanisms and structures of the programme which has led to Bolivia having low recidivism rates. Downing argued that the necessity for small enterprise activity in Bolivian prisons had an unintended consequence of providing a successful prisoner rehabilitation mechanism. Vandala (2018) examined the transformative effect of education programmes as perceived by ex-offenders within the South African Department of Correctional Services who utilised the theoretical framework of the Good Lives Model (GLM) of offender rehabilitation. Vandala found that education programmes promote offender transformation, reduce rates of recidivism, improve quality of life, improve literacy levels and that a criminal record is a barrier to ex-offenders' employment in communities. There are a variety of cognate literatures which feed into the overall PE literature and add a deeper level of sociological understanding to the topic which adds considerable value to it and helps one conceptualise and visualise the phenomenon more holistically. The diverse literatures require a deeper level of synthesis to help in higher level theorising and model development.

Conceptualising and Visualising the Phenomenon

The main literature base of PE is grounded upon academic studies of practice in the field and thus upon reports and initiatives, as opposed to being driven purely by theory or ideology. The two main schools of thought profiled are

necessary because of the differing penal systems in the USA and the UK-based schools. Much of the literature is positioned in the academic fields of Criminology and Penal Studies and is published in journals associated with those fields. The works of scholars within the fields of entrepreneurship and business centre around their interest in the phenomenon as a particular application or setting of 'entrepreneurship in disadvantaged communities'. The Prison Narrative Literature, Redemption Literature and the Probation Studies feed into the criminological underpinning, whilst the Generic Entrepreneurship, Social Entrepreneurship and Faith-Based Entrepreneurship literatures add to the Entrepreneurial underpinning. For criminology scholars, entrepreneurship is the vehicle of change or end point, whilst for entrepreneurship scholars, entrepreneurship is the main topic of scholarship. Criminologists do not require to delve too deeply into entrepreneurship theory, whilst entreprenologists feel compelled to arrive at a clearer theoretical understanding of how and why entrepreneurship works differently in this particular setting of disadvantage. From a perusal of the synthesised literature, it is possible to develop a protean conceptual map of the emerging phenomenon as detailed in Fig. 1.

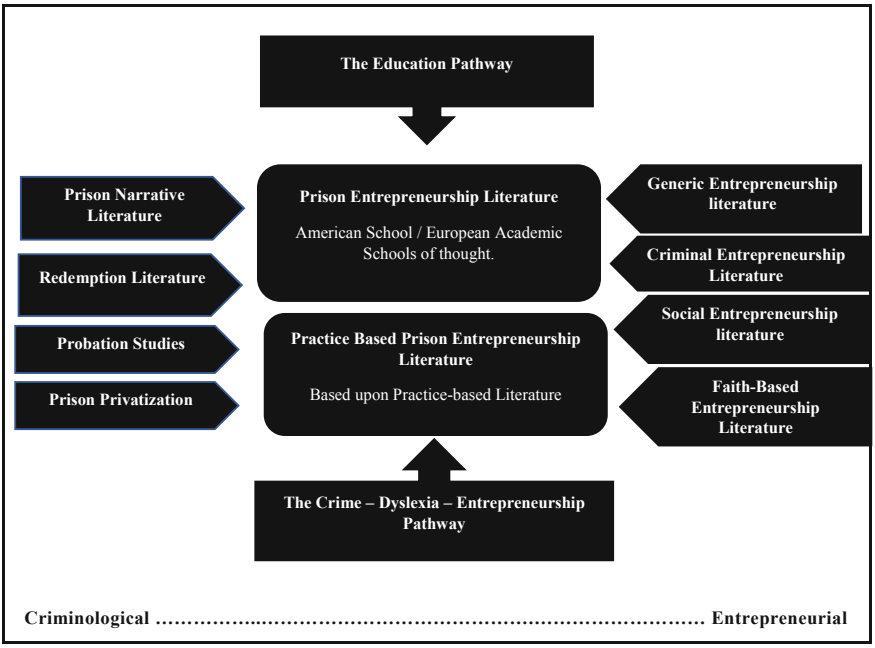

Fig. 1 The diverse components of the prison entrepreneurship literature

There are of course emerging and evolving innovative solutions. For example, Baskaran (2019) argued that the re-entry process for ex-offenders is too locally focused, thanks to a complex web of collateral consequences for themselves and for their often economically distressed communities. For Baskaran, successful re-entry initiatives require strong community and local government investment, dedicated to supporting returning citizens post-release. At present there is a lack of targeted, short-term policy solutions and this causes individuals to become trapped within cycles of poverty and criminalisation in disadvantaged geographic spaces. Economic insecurity is a major obstacle that repeatedly impedes successful re-entry by disenfranchising ex-offenders from viable employment opportunities. Baskaran argued that whilst the existing non-profit model is useful, it is intrinsically flawed as a means of economic enfranchisement because of the failure to adapt to the lack of available jobs within disadvantaged geographic spaces and the larger transition to a knowledge-based economy. Baskaran proposed a novel solution, namely the creation of Economic Justice Incubators (EJIs) via a new municipally led social enterprise strategy to support returning citizen entrepreneurs. This requires municipalities to expand on their current municipal business incubator model, democratising access to these government-sponsored business services and opening local investment possibilities in private enterprise. Another example relates to the study of Zamosteanu and Muranyi (2015) who reported on a Romanian training programme for inmates and staff at a Young Offenders institute to train offenders in employability issues, particularly anger management in the workplace. Day (2015) conducted a study of inmates in an American Penitentiary in Colorado (USA) to gain a greater understanding of the motives, knowledge and skill acquisition of criminal entrepreneurs whilst incarcerated and on release. The offenders in the study sample had been engaged in 'destructive entrepreneurship' (Baumol 1990), but Day argued that many of the offenders' actions outside of prison were highly entrepreneurial, with the creation of ventures that included production, inventory, sales, employees, managers, distribution, security, etc. When incarcerated with 'fellow entrepreneurs', the inmates passed on tricks-of-the-trade, thereby producing even smarter destructive entrepreneurship upon release. Day reported on social implications of this behaviour which provide insights into how society can be better prepared for and redirect such destructive entrepreneurial behaviour and knowledge upon their release by redirecting them towards legitimate entrepreneurial ventures and other positive outcomes and initiating a better reward structure.

Conclusions

It is important to stress that although this chapter has dealt specifically with the topic of PE, plus Ex-Offenders and Entrepreneurship, much of what has been discussed is also germane and relatable to other categories of 'Minority Entrepreneurship' irrespective of issues of gender, ethnicity, religion, sectarianism and sexuality. This is important because men and women engage with entrepreneurship differently and ethnicity and culture play a significant part in this process too. This entails the adoption of a holistic approach to the phenomenon. Prison is also a particular geography of place, albeit the profile and behaviours of ex-offenders will differ from that of other Minority Entrepreneurship communities in terms of their social capital, networks, opportunity structures and eco-systems. The prison communities of the USA and UK differ considerably, but include both male and female prisons where the sexes are exclusively segregated. It would be wrong to treat PE as a distinct literature because the societal problems which lead to crime are present in all the literatures of Minority Entrepreneurship. Although the prison initiatives discussed in this chapter are important in their own right, the causal issues begin well before the minority person becomes a prisoner.

A prison sentence should not be the triggering point for societal engagement in stimulating entrepreneurial potential. This societal engagement must begin at school via the process of Early Intervention (Smith and Frondigoun 2011) and continue after release from prison. Much work has to be done to reduce the level of youth regarded as fitting the NEET category. Developing a standardised 'curriculum' for such engagement would be immensely beneficial so that any stimulation and engagement training delivered to youths and minority students is compatible with each other and builds upon lessons learned. Consideration of an integrated curriculum necessitates consideration of appropriate pedagogical strategies. Indeed, there are many problems and dilemmas in working with and teaching offenders as appreciated by Rogensues who tutors female offenders in an American correctional facility, and these include their limited educational background and having to teach what interests the female inmates (Rogensues 2006). Rogensues argued that from a pedagogical perspective these can limit curriculum development.

Policies to encourage entry by ex-offenders into self-employment are linked to measures to combat high unemployment and social inclusion. This is true in the UK where a plethora of initiatives are embedded to promote enterprise in deprived communities and under-represented groups, including enterprise support for ex-offenders provided by the Small Business Service (Fletcher 2005). Fletcher argued that entrepreneurship is not a panacea and that there

was a danger of perpetuating the myth that ex-offenders are natural risk-takers, whilst overlooking the fact that despite a few high-profile successes that many of the ex-offenders supported were consigned to insecure, low-paid forms of employment (Fletcher et al. 2001; Fletcher 2004). Ultimately, there is a pressing need for the development of a new model of Minority Entrepreneurship spanning the legal, criminal and the social, so that those in danger of engaging in criminal behaviour receive tailored support across their lifespan. This requires such people to be supported by fostering inclusive entrepreneurship policies that is enshrined in legislation. There is also a pressing need for further empirical research into the phenomenon.

Novo-Corti et al. (2017) emphasised that ex-offenders can reinvent themselves through entrepreneurship. This could mitigate against gaps in their CVs, since a period of labour market absence reduces one's chances of getting a job (Ramakers et al. 2012) and this is particularly true of long-term unemployed and ex-offenders. The labour market position of both tends to worsen after their time out of the labour market. However, their results show that ex-prisoners find employment more quickly and more often than unemployed future prisoners which suggests that job assistance and deterrence may have positive effects on the job chances of released prisoners. When referring to ex-offenders, it must be stressed that reintegration can be a complex issue because of the diversity of the prison population, its social make-up and the different crime types of the offenders. For example, it is more difficult to reintegrate sex offenders than burglars or drug dealers (McAlinden 2010). Re-integrating sex offenders is a specialist area of expertise and enterprise routes are not always the appropriate pathway. Gill (1997) argued that ex-offenders seeking work can count on very little help from the criminal justice system and that both employers and ex-offenders are ignorant about the risks and opportunities which exist, and from a perusal of the relevant literature it is apparent some things have changed since then. Whilst the education pathway can and does lead to new career paths and can help to secure employment for ex-offenders, the entrepreneurship pathway can and does provide an opportunity for ex-offenders to circumvent this by starting their own business. This chapter has assembled and begun the synthesis of a wide number of elements of the literature, but stops short of developing a universal model for implementing entrepreneurship in prisons globally. This will be the focus of future studies.

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