

Business Employer's Perspectives on Hiring Former Persons Deprived of Liberty in the City of Angeles, Philippines

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Abstract:- Reintegrating into society with a criminal record is challenging, particularly in securing employment due to stigma and discrimination. In the Philippines, former persons deprived of liberty face a 13.8% unemployment rate—nearly double the national average of 7.1%. This study employs a quantitative Descriptive Correlational Survey design, surveying 150 business employers in Angeles City, Philippines, to examine perceptions of hiring former offenders. The research focuses on employers in SMEs with hiring responsibilities, excluding those without relevant policies or roles. Key factors influencing hiring decisions include offense type, sentence length, personal beliefs, corporate values, and public perception. Experience with hiring ex-offenders, particularly for non-violent offenders or those with shorter sentences, increases openness to inclusive hiring. Financial incentives, support programs, and education help mitigate perceived risks. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the societal benefits of reintegration further encourage second-chance hiring, promoting equity in the labor market. Government incentives and support programs play a critical role in enhancing employability, while inclusive hiring policies and values are essential to reducing stigma and fostering opportunities for former persons deprived of liberty. This study highlights the need for holistic strategies to address employment barriers and promote a fairer labor market.

Keywords:- Business Employers; Former Persons Deprived of Liberty; Risks; Opportunities; Influencing Factors; Angeles City, Philippines.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social environment plays a critical role in shaping the outcomes for ex-offenders, either by intensifying their struggles or by fostering a constructive drive towards overcoming these challenges. Ex-offenders are particularly concerned with addressing issues that directly impact their immediate families, endanger their well-being, and increase the likelihood of recidivism, which often necessitates their engagement in conventional activities and distancing from former associates (Palgan & Apolinario, 2022). Reintegration into society is a significant goal for Persons Deprived of Liberty, who are individuals serving sentences for crimes within correctional institutions. Former persons deprived of liberty often struggle with finding employment, making a living, and dealing with feelings of alienation from family

and negative treatment from others. Despite these challenges, they strive to start over, maintain a positive attitude, and reconcile with their families, facing hardships that test their patience and perspective on life (Vivares and Cuevas, 2023).

More than 10,000 individuals are released from state and federal prisons each week in the United States based on the United States Department of Justice. Annually, this figure exceeds 650,000. Research indicates that nearly two-thirds of these individuals will be rearrested within three years. This high rate of recidivism correlates with the substantial growth in the U.S. prison population over the past three decades. The reintegration of ex-offenders presents significant challenges for the communities they return to, which are often economically disadvantaged, socially marginalized, and characterized by persistently high crime rates and limited access to social support services. According to Couloute & Kopf (2018), among the 5 million former persons deprived of liberty in the U.S., the unemployment rate exceeds 27%—higher than any historical U.S. rate, even during the Great Depression. These individuals are eager to work but face significant barriers, especially right after release. Among Black or Hispanic individuals, particularly women, the "former persons deprived of liberty" label further reduces their employment prospects.

In the Philippines, former persons deprived of liberty deal with significant barriers to reintegration, including public stigma, limited employment possibilities, insufficient support, and discriminatory conduct, all of which prevent a seamless transition back to society (Bidola et al., 2024). According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the January 2021 survey revealed that the unemployment rate for individuals with criminal convictions was 13.8%, which is nearly twice the national average of 7.1%. In 2023, the House of Representatives introduced a bill that would permit individuals convicted of certain crimes to have their criminal records expunged from government records. House Bill 7938, the proposed Clean Slate Act, seeks to mitigate stigma and discrimination faced by individuals who have completed their sentences for non-serious offenses. Also, the House Bill 1681 proposes the establishment of an employment program for former prisoners, providing paid work as part of their reintegration process. This bill, currently under review by the House Committee on Labor and Employment, also aims to offer incentives to private employers who hire ex-offenders, supporting their transition to productive, crime-free lives.

The unemployment of former persons deprived of liberty is a controversial issue. A significant barrier to their employment is public perception and the level of support from their families (Obatusin & Ritter-Williams, 2019). Collaborations between companies and correctional agencies to create programs that provide work opportunities for inmates while they are still in prison can help them acquire the skills needed for securing jobs after release and decrease the chances of reoffending (Bryant, 2018). By employing a quantitative approach, this study aims to determine the perception of business employers on hiring former persons deprived of liberty and its three major areas: the risks involved with hiring former persons deprived of liberty, the opportunities that may result from hiring them, and other factors that impact the choice to hire former persons deprived of liberty. By analyzing existing literature and placing the research problem within context, this study seeks to enhance understanding of the risks, opportunities, and factors affecting the employment of former persons deprived of liberty. It aims to provide valuable insights to individuals, local communities, and policymakers on how to support long-term rehabilitation, boost community engagement, promote successful reintegration, and decrease recidivism rates.

➤ *Problem Statement*

The Philippine government, through the Department of Justice's Parole and Probation Administration (DOJ-PPA), is actively working to enhance the employability of former offenders and mitigate the stigma associated with reintegration into society. Recidivism is influenced by various factors, including limited access to job opportunities, substance abuse issues, inadequate education and skills, and a lack of sufficient social support. The government's initiatives aim to address these challenges and support the successful rehabilitation of ex-detainees. The need for more comprehensive rehabilitation and reintegration programs that address these underlying characteristics in order to reduce the likelihood of repeat offenses and promote effective reentry into society (Onsat and Breva, 2023). According to (Pino et al., 2021; Agtong et al., 2023), former persons deprived of liberty in the Philippines face the primary issue of finding work. Individuals who are released from incarceration frequently lack access to basic necessities, making it difficult for them to restart their lives and find better jobs.

Former persons deprived of liberty often face challenges in securing employment due to their criminal records, leading to prolonged periods of unemployment. This study examines the perceptions of business employers in Angeles City, Philippines, towards hiring former persons deprived of liberty, focusing on perceived risks, opportunities, and influencing factors. Utilizing a quantitative approach, the research investigates several key relationships concerning business owners' recruitment decisions regarding former persons deprived of liberty. It examines whether there is a significant relationship between the perceived risk of hiring previous criminal offenders and the recruitment decisions made by business owners. Additionally, it explores how the type of offense committed and the type of sentence served influence these decisions. The study also assesses the impact of perceived opportunities, government incentives,

and support programs on recruitment choices. Furthermore, it evaluates how corporate culture and values, public perception, and the personal beliefs of employers affect their willingness to hire former persons deprived of liberty.

➤ *Purpose/Objectives:*

• *General Objective*

To investigate the relationship between the perceptions of risks, perceptions of opportunities, and influencing factors on the hiring decisions of business employers.

• *Specific Objectives*

- ✓ How may the respondents describe the factors influencing recruitment decisions of business owners as to: perceived risk of hiring previous criminal offenders, type of offense committed, perceived opportunities, type of sentence, government incentives, support programs, corporate culture and values, public perception, and personal beliefs of employers?
- ✓ Is there a significant relationship between perceived risk of hiring previous criminal offenders, type of offense committed, perceived opportunities, type of sentence, government incentives, and recruitment decisions of business owners?
- ✓ Is there a significant relationship to support programs, corporate culture and values, public perception, personal beliefs of employers, and recruitment decisions of business owners?

➤ *Scope of the Study*

This study examines the perceptions of business employers in Angeles City, Philippines, regarding the hiring of former persons deprived of liberty, focusing on risks, opportunities, and influencing factors. It investigates how factors such as perceived risk, type of offense, perceived opportunities, type of sentence, government incentives, support programs, corporate culture, public perception, and personal beliefs affect recruitment decisions. The research is geographically limited to Angeles City and uses a descriptive correlational approach with quantitative surveys.

However, the study has limitations, including its regional focus, reliance on self-reported data, and the exclusion of broader stakeholder perspectives. It also does not address economic factors or legal restrictions affecting hiring decisions, which may impact the generalizability and comprehensiveness of the findings.

➤ *Significance or Importance*

For Business Employers, this study can help them understand the advantages and risks of hiring former persons deprived of liberty. It may also give crucial information to help them make hiring decisions.

For former persons deprived of liberty, the results of the study could help them explore job prospects and overcome existing misconceptions, easing their reintegration into society after serving their sentence.

For Policymakers, the study may provide vital information as they develop legislative frameworks to facilitate the employment of former persons deprived of liberty. Such regulations may encourage firms to recruit former persons deprived of liberty, facilitating their reintegration into society, increasing community participation, and lowering recidivism.

For Human Resource Professionals, the study's findings can help departments create more inclusive employment policies, particularly for people with criminal backgrounds. It may also assist to develop standards that allow qualified people with criminal records to apply for jobs.

For Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the study could be helpful in support for formerly incarcerated people with their rehabilitation and reintegration. The results might be utilized to support job possibilities, which would aid in the reintegration of former prisoners into society and provide them a second opportunity at life.

For Local Community, the results of the study could be helpful giving a better understanding of the difficulties ex-offenders encounter when they reintegrate into society. With this understanding, recidivism can be decreased and effective reintegration can be encouraged.

➤ *Theoretical Framework*

- *Labeling Theory*

Labeling theory suggests that being labeled as deviant or criminal can lead to negative consequences, such as prejudice and stigma, which can increase the likelihood of continued deviant behavior (Bernburg, 2019). This theory suggests that how business employers perceive former persons deprived of liberty can impact their likelihood of reoffending or successfully reintegrating into society. The stigma associated with being labeled a criminal may make former persons deprived of liberty seem less appealing to potential employers. However, some business employers may view hiring former persons deprived of liberty as a way to contribute to their rehabilitation and benefit from their diverse experiences. Societal attitudes and supportive programs can impact these perceptions, demonstrating the role of labeling in shaping employment opportunities for former persons deprived of liberty.

Labeling Theory suggests that being labeled as a criminal can lead to social stigma and prejudice, which may hinder former persons deprived of liberty' reintegration and affect how business employers perceive their employability. Employers may view former persons deprived of liberty as risky hires due to their criminal history, but some may see hiring them as an opportunity to support rehabilitation and benefit from their diverse experiences. Our study examines how these labeling processes shape both the risks and opportunities in hiring former persons deprived of liberty, highlighting the role of societal attitudes and support systems in influencing employers' decisions.

- *Social Control Theory*

Social control theory suggests that individuals' connections to relationships, commitments, values, norms, and beliefs play a significant role in preventing criminal behavior. By fostering adherence to shared values and norms, these relationships help individuals resist deviant impulses and maintain lawful behavior. While people may have the potential to engage in crime, the societal consequences often serve as a deterrent. Hirschi's social control hypothesis argues that strong social ties to family, religion, and community organizations reduce the likelihood of criminal activity by fostering adherence to shared values and norms (Nickerson, 2024). A robust family support system can aid ex-offenders in their reintegration process by providing a sense of social control, thus reducing the risk of recidivism and promoting a greater appreciation for life.

The theory highlights how strong social ties, commitments, and adherence to societal norms can play a significant role in preventing recidivism among former persons deprived of liberty. Business employers may view these social connections as factors that reduce the risk of reoffending, making former persons deprived of liberty more appealing hires. Conversely, a lack of such support systems could increase employers' perceived risks of hiring them. By understanding the influence of social control, our study can explore how factors like family support or community ties impact employers' perceptions of the risks and opportunities involved in hiring former persons deprived of liberty. This aligns with the broader goal of your research to identify the key factors shaping hiring decisions in this context.

➤ *Conceptual Framework*

- **H1: Perceived Risk of Hiring Previous Criminal Offenders and Recruitment Decisions** examines whether business owners' perception of risk associated with hiring individuals with criminal records influences their recruitment choices. Business owners may perceive hiring previous offenders as risky due to concerns about reliability, safety, or reputational damage. This perception of risk can impact their decision-making process, potentially making them less likely to hire individuals with criminal records.
- **H2: Type of Offense Committed and Recruitment Decisions** evaluates how the nature of the offense (e.g., violent crime, theft, fraud) affects business owners' recruitment decisions. Different types of offenses might be viewed differently by employers. For instance, a violent crime might be perceived as more problematic than a non-violent crime, influencing the likelihood of hiring a candidate based on their offense history.
- **H3: Perceived Opportunities for Hiring Previous Criminal Offenders and Recruitment Decisions** investigates how the perceived availability of opportunities or incentives for hiring previous offenders influences business owners' recruitment decisions. If business owners believe there are significant opportunities or incentives for hiring ex-offenders (such as tax breaks or subsidies), they might be more inclined to

hire them. Conversely, a lack of perceived opportunities could reduce their willingness to hire.

- **H4: Type of Sentence and Recruitment Decisions** explores whether the nature of the sentence (e.g., prison term, probation, community service) impacts recruitment decisions. Business owners might consider the severity of the sentence as a proxy for the seriousness of the offense or the likelihood of recidivism. A longer prison term might be perceived as more indicative of a higher risk compared to a shorter or non-custodial sentence.
- **H5: Government Incentives and Recruitment Decisions** examines how government-provided incentives (e.g., tax credits, funding) influence hiring decisions. Government incentives can mitigate perceived risks or financial burdens associated with hiring previous offenders. Positive incentives might encourage business owners to consider ex-offenders more favorably in their recruitment decisions.
- **H6: Support Programs and Recruitment Decisions** assesses the impact of support programs (e.g., job training, counseling) on recruitment decisions. Support programs designed to help previous offenders reintegrate into the workforce can affect employers' perceptions of these candidates' readiness and reliability, potentially making them more likely to hire them.

- **H7: Corporate Culture and Values and Recruitment Decisions** considers how the corporate culture and values of a business influence its decision to hire individuals with criminal records. Businesses with a culture that values second chances or social responsibility might be more inclined to hire previous offenders. In contrast, companies with a more conservative or risk-averse culture might be less willing to do so.
- **H8: Public Perception and Recruitment Decisions.** This evaluates how public opinion or societal attitudes toward hiring previous offenders affect recruitment decisions. Business owners may be influenced by public perception, as hiring practices can impact the company's public image. Concerns about negative public reaction might affect their willingness to hire ex-offenders.
- **H9: Personal Beliefs of Employers and Recruitment Decisions.** This variable explores how individual employers' personal beliefs or values regarding criminal records and rehabilitation affect their hiring decisions. Employers' personal beliefs about rehabilitation and second chances can strongly influence their recruitment choices. Those who believe in rehabilitation may be more open to hiring previous offenders.

➤ *Paradigm of the Study*

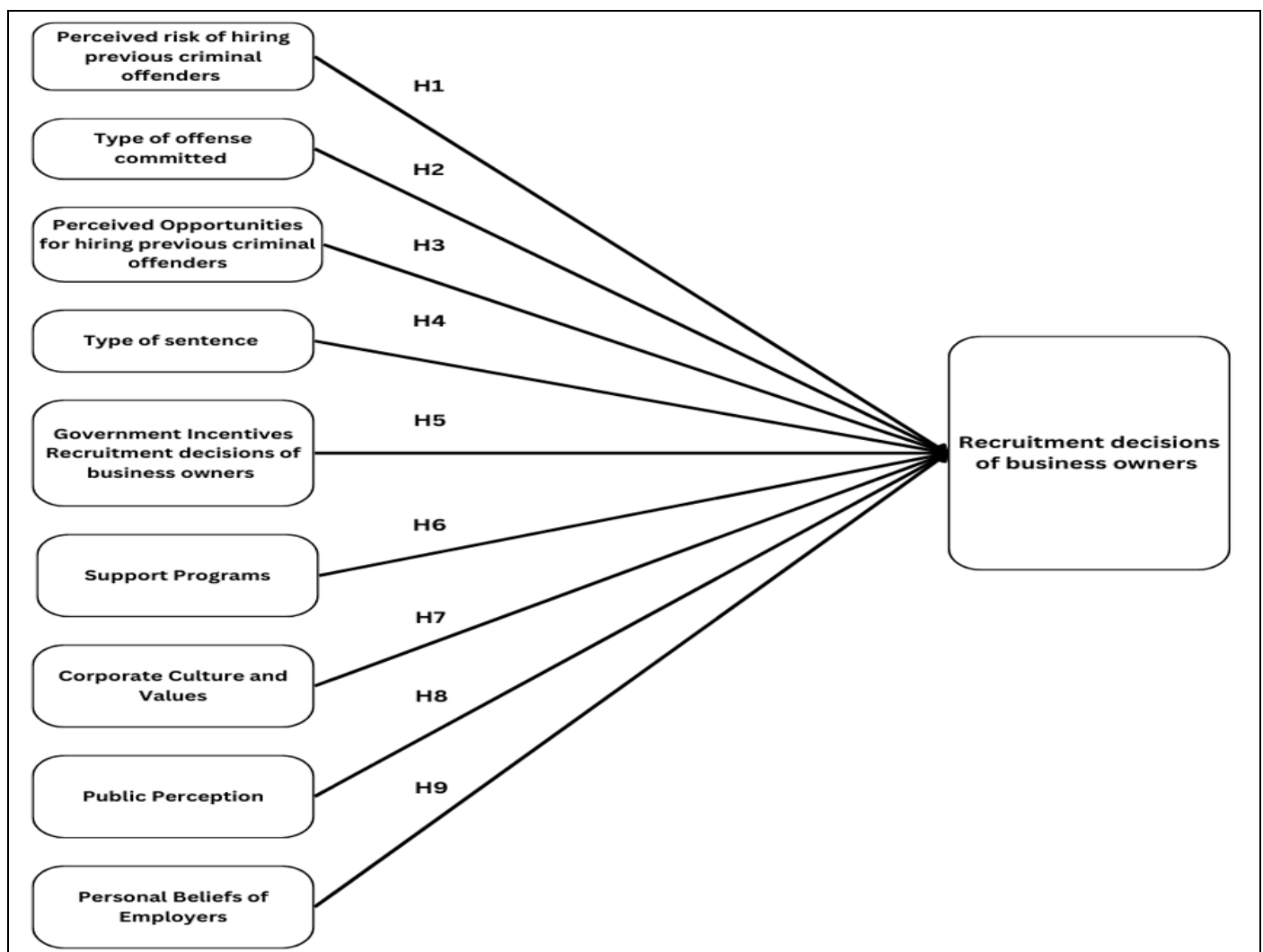


Fig 1 Paradigm of the Study

II. METHODS

➤ Study Design

This study employed a quantitative approach utilizing a Descriptive Correlational Survey design to provide a comprehensive snapshot of how current business employers in Angeles City perceive the hiring of former persons deprived of liberty. This survey captures data at a single point in time, focusing on understanding the immediate attitudes and perceptions of employers regarding the potential risks and benefits of employing individuals with a criminal record. It explores various influencing factors that shape these perceptions, such as perceived risks of recidivism, legal considerations, and potential opportunities for inclusion and rehabilitation. By analyzing these perspectives, the survey seeks to identify key patterns and trends that can inform policies and practices related to the employment of former persons deprived of liberty, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and supportive business environment.

➤ Study Participants

The study involved 150 business employers in Angeles City, Philippines, to analyze how their perceptions of risk, opportunities, and other factors influence their decisions to hire former persons deprived of liberty. It explored concerns about recidivism, potential benefits, and the overall attitudes of employers, aiming to provide insights into the trends and challenges in hiring former persons deprived of liberty within the local business community.

➤ Sample Size

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), there are 6,087 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Central Luzon. The researchers employed the G*Power statistical software, ensuring the study achieves sufficient statistical power to produce reliable and valid results. By incorporating the parameters of G*Power, a total sample size of 122 respondents from SMEs in Angeles City is determined. With these parameters—an effect size of 0.30, alpha of 0.05, and power of 0.95—G*Power calculates that a sample size of 122 is necessary. The researchers decided to increase the sample size to 150. A sample of 150 is large enough to avoid Type II errors (false negatives), ensuring the study can detect a moderate effect if it exists, and small enough to avoid unnecessary over-sampling that would be cost-inefficient.

A sample of 150 respondents from SMEs in Angeles City should be representative of the broader SME population in Central Luzon. If the sample is selected randomly or through a purposive sampling method (where different types of SMEs—based on size, industry, or other relevant factors—are represented proportionally), the findings should be generalizable to the region's broader SME population. The calculated sample size also takes into account practical constraints, such as time, budget, and access to respondents. Given the resources available, 150 respondents offer a good balance between statistical rigor and feasibility.

The researchers utilized the purposive sampling technique to gather data on business employers' perceptions of hiring former persons deprived of liberty in Angeles City, Philippines. This method involves selecting participants who are readily accessible and willing to participate, thereby streamlining the data collection process. While this approach offers practical advantages and efficiency, it is important to acknowledge that it may introduce some biases, as the sample may not fully represent the broader population of employers. Nonetheless, purposive sampling enabled us to quickly and effectively gather insights into the current attitudes and influencing factors relevant to our study, providing valuable preliminary data for further research.

➤ Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

• Inclusion

To ensure a homogenous participant pool, this research limited participation in our quantitative phase to business employers from Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs). To select participants for the study, the researchers collaborated with the Pampanga Chamber of Commerce, the largest and most prominent organization representing SMEs in the province. This chamber is accredited by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and plays a pivotal role in the development and training of SMEs in Pampanga. The researchers reached out to the Chamber to request permission to distribute questionnaires to its members that are relevant to the objectives of the study.

It is important to note that the focus of this study is not on companies that have an established track record of hiring employees. Instead, the research aims to explore the potential of business owners and employers in the region to expand their workforce. The study examined the factors that may influence their decisions to hire, with an emphasis on understanding the factors that shape their hiring intentions, rather than their hiring practices to date.

Regarding the age bracket of the respondents, the study targets individuals between the ages of 25 and 60 years. The positions of the respondents vary but included Human Resource personnel, business owners, and, in the case of smaller enterprises, managers or the most senior personnel within the company. This selection of respondents ensures a comprehensive understanding of the decision-making process from multiple perspectives within the organizational hierarchy, especially in small and medium-sized businesses where roles may overlap. The researchers wrote a letter to the Pampanga Chamber of Commerce that provided a list of the SMEs. Based on the list, the researchers select 150 respondents from the list.

• Exclusion

Our research excludes business employers who are not directly involved in the hiring process or do not have decision-making power regarding employee recruitment as well as employers who do not have any relevant policies or practices regarding the hiring of individuals with criminal records.

➤ *Research Instruments*

Our research instrument is designed to assess the perceptions, attitudes, and decision-making processes of business employers regarding the hiring of individuals with criminal records.

It is organized into nine sections, each aligned with the study's specific objectives, such as perceived risks, the nature of the offense, perceived opportunities, government incentives, support programs, corporate culture, public perception, and personal beliefs of employers. The questions are designed using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree) to capture respondents' levels of agreement on various factors influencing their recruitment decisions.

This structured approach allows for the collection of quantitative data, making it possible to identify significant relationships between the perceptions of business owners and their actual hiring decisions regarding former persons deprived of liberty. By exploring diverse factors, the questionnaire offers comprehensive insights into how risks, opportunities, and external influences like government incentives and public perception shape recruitment choices, providing valuable data to address the study's objectives.

➤ *Validity and Reliability*

• *Validity*

The study sought input from a panel of three experts: a corrections officer, a psychologist, and a professor of corrections. The corrections officer brings practical insights on the rehabilitation and reintegration of former persons deprived of liberty, while the psychologist offers expertise in understanding behavioral factors and attitudes that may influence employers' perceptions. The professor of corrections provides an academic perspective on the broader theories and practices related to criminal justice and employment. Together, their combined expertise ensures that the survey accurately reflects relevant aspects of hiring former persons deprived of liberty and captures key factors affecting employers' perceptions.

The study involved three key experts: a corrections officer, psychologists, and a professor of corrections. The corrections officer provided practical insights into the rehabilitation and reintegration of former persons deprived of liberty, contributing a real-world perspective on how ex-offenders are perceived in employment settings. Psychologists offered expertise on the cognitive and behavioral aspects of stigma, risk perception, and decision-making, helping to align the study's measures with psychological theories. Meanwhile, the professor of corrections contributed academic rigor, ensuring the study's constructs were accurately defined in relation to corrections theory and practice. These experts validated the research instruments, ensuring they effectively measure the intended perceptions and attitudes toward hiring former persons deprived of liberty.

• *Reliability*

To assess the reliability of the tool, a pilot test was conducted with a representative sample of 150 participants from the target population. The tool was administered under controlled conditions to ensure consistency and accuracy in the data to be collected. Following the administration, responses were gathered and analyzed using statistical software to compute Cronbach's alpha, a measure of internal consistency. The resulting Cronbach's alpha was 0.92, which indicates a high level of reliability.

An alpha value of 0.92 suggests that the items within the tool exhibit a very strong internal consistency, meaning that they are highly correlated and consistently measure the same underlying construct. This high alpha value reflects that the tool's items work well together to assess the intended construct, providing confidence in the tool's ability to produce stable and reliable results.

The pilot testing results demonstrate that the tool has excellent reliability, with the high Cronbach's alpha confirming that it is a dependable measure of the construct it is designed to evaluate. This ensures that the tool's items are well-aligned and consistently reflect the concept being measured, validating its use for further application and research.

➤ *Specific Procedures Based on Study Objectives*

The data collection process employed in this study adheres to a systematic approach aimed at ensuring the accurate acquisition of information from participants. Researchers had provided printed copies of the survey questionnaires that were distributed to the respondents to gather data on various demographic variables such as age, gender, and position on the business, alongside participant's perceptions on hiring former persons deprived of liberty, their perceptions of risk and opportunity, and the influencing factors of hiring former persons deprived of liberty.

To select business employers for the study, the researchers employed the purposive sampling technique. This method was chosen to streamline the data collection process by selecting participants who are readily accessible and willing to participate. Purposive sampling allows researchers to gather data quickly and efficiently from a group of employers who are easily reachable, rather than employing more complex sampling methods that might require more time and resources.

Data gathering is then followed by statistical analysis. Participants were provided with informed consent forms detailing the study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits before participation. To encourage participation the researchers offered a simple token of appreciation for their participation. Participants who withdrew before the survey was finished are not considered in the data analysis.

To safeguard data integrity, survey questionnaires were stored in a secure location, and recorded interview sessions were kept confidential. Prior to analysis, a thorough verification process was conducted to ensure the accuracy

and reliability of the collected data. A comprehensive report detailing the data collection procedures is e provided, enhancing transparency and serving as a valuable resource for future research endeavors.

➤ *Ethical Considerations*

- **Informed Consent.** Participants' rights are safeguarded through an informed consent process that includes providing clear and comprehensive information, obtaining documented consent, and ensuring the option to withdraw at any time. Participation is entirely voluntary, and choosing to withdraw carries no obligations or repercussions.
- **Risk and Inconvenience.** The study presents no significant risks at its outset. Confidentiality is assured, and participants have the option to withdraw if they feel uncomfortable. The questionnaire took approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. All data collected were used exclusively for research purposes.
- **Benefits and Community Impact.** The study provided valuable insights into employers' views on hiring former persons deprived of liberty, aiding policy development and improving business practices. It supports reduced recidivism and local economic growth, fosters social integration and awareness, and strengthens community support networks.
- **Privacy and Confidentiality.** Data collection complies with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, guaranteeing secure storage and restricted access to data. Confidentiality is strictly upheld, with personal identifiers kept private. All data from survey questionnaires were kept upon completion of the study.
- **Conflict of Interests.** The researchers declare no conflicts of interest in the study.
- **Justice and Fairness.** Researchers choose participants impartially, ensuring inclusivity and avoiding discrimination. Accessibility accommodations are provided for everyone, and the benefits of the research are equitably distributed. Cultural sensitivity and awareness of power imbalances are emphasized to ensure respect and empowerment for all participants.

➤ *Data Statistical Analysis Plan*

In our study, we utilized Descriptive statistics that helped the researchers summarize the main features of the survey data. By calculating the mean, median, and mode for responses to Likert scale questions, the researchers provided a snapshot of how business employers perceive the risks and opportunities associated with hiring former persons deprived of liberty. These descriptive statistics helped the researchers summarize key aspects such as perceived risks, opportunities, and influencing factors related to hiring former persons deprived of liberty.

Frequency analysis provided additional insights by showing how likely different responses occur. Frequency tables are created to list the number of respondents who

chose each option on the Likert scale. Analyzing these frequencies spotted patterns, highlight areas of agreement or disagreement, and present the data in a way that's easy to interpret.

In the study of the relationships between various factors and the recruitment decisions of business owners, researchers typically employ logistic regression when the dependent variable is binary. This method is particularly suitable for determining the influence of independent variables such as perceived risk, type of offense, perceived opportunities, sentence types, government incentives, support programs, corporate culture and values, public perception, and personal beliefs of employers on the likelihood of hiring previous criminal offenders.

➤ *Data Collection and Preparation*

The researchers began by collecting data from business owners on key variables, including perceived risks and opportunities in hiring former offenders, offense types, sentences served, and the availability of government incentives. They also measure factors like corporate culture, public perception, and employers' personal beliefs, often using Likert scales for perceptual data and categorical labels for offenses and sentences. The data is then prepared for analysis by encoding categorical variables, normalizing ranges, and addressing missing values.

➤ *Model Building and Evaluation*

The recruitment decision, represented as a binary variable (0 = did not hire, 1 = hired), serves as the dependent variable. Researchers split the dataset into training and testing subsets and use logistic regression to model the training data. Key outputs, such as p-values, R-squared, and fit indices, evaluate model performance. Variables with p-values below 0.05 are deemed statistically significant, indicating a meaningful influence on hiring decisions.

➤ *Validation and Reporting*

The model's predictive accuracy is validated using the testing set, employing metrics like accuracy, confusion matrices, ROC curves, and AUC scores. Results are discussed in detail, emphasizing significant relationships. For example, a significant negative coefficient for perceived risk indicates that higher perceived risks reduce the likelihood of hiring. Practical implications of these findings are explored to inform hiring practices.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

➤ *Age of the Respondents*

The table illustrates the age distribution of a sample of 150 individuals. The largest group is aged 25-30 years, comprising 47.3% of the sample, while the 50-60 years group is the smallest, with just 0.7%. The sample is predominantly younger, with nearly 80% of participants under 40 years old, and a significant underrepresentation of older age groups.

Table 1 Age of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
25-30 y/o	71	47.3
31-40 y/o	46	30.7
40-50 y/o	32	21.3
50-60 y/o	1	.7
TOTAL	150	100.0

Table 1. This age distribution suggests that the sample is heavily weighted towards younger individuals, which may reflect certain biases, such as greater availability or willingness to participate among younger employers. Additionally, the low representation of individuals aged 50-60 may limit insights into issues like later-life employment.

➤ *Position of the Respondents*

The table presents the role distribution among 150 individuals. Managers form the largest group, with 58

participants (38.7%), highlighting a substantial managerial presence. Owners, the second-largest group, include 37 individuals (24.7%), indicating significant representation. Human resource professionals account for only 9 participants (6.0%), reflecting minimal representation, while the remaining 46 participants (30.7%) are categorized as senior staff.

Table 2 Position of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Manager	58	38.7
Owner	37	24.7
Human Resource	9	6.0
Senior Staff	46	30.7
TOTAL	150	100.0

Table 2. The sample is primarily composed of managers and owners, with fewer human resources professionals and a notable number of senior staff. This emphasis on leadership roles suggests the findings may largely reflect decision-making perspectives, potentially limiting insights into employee relations or broader organizational operations. The limited representation of HR professionals may restrict understanding of HR-specific issues, such as recruitment, retention, and workplace culture, as they provide unique insights into organizational dynamics. This distribution underscores the importance of more balanced sampling in future studies to capture diverse perspectives across organizational roles.

➤ *Perceived Risk of Hiring Former Persons Deprived of Liberty*

The table presents responses to statements about hiring former persons deprived of liberty, including means, verbal interpretations, standard deviations, and variances. The highest mean (3.04) corresponds to the statement, "The potential legal liabilities associated with hiring former offenders are a major concern," indicating strong agreement. The lowest mean (2.84) relates to, "Former persons deprived of liberty are more likely to re-offend if hired," reflecting agreement but with less intensity. Respondents express stronger concerns about legal liabilities and business risks, while worries about re-offending are less pronounced, indicating varying levels of concern across different aspects.

Table 3 Perceived Risk of Hiring Former Persons Deprived of Liberty

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
1. I believe hiring former persons deprived of liberty increases Risks for my business.	3.01	Strongly Agree	.916	.839
2. Hiring a former offender may negatively affect the reputation of my business.	3.02	Strongly Agree	.993	.986
3. Former persons deprived of liberty are more likely to re-offend if hired.	2.84	Agree	.984	.968
4. The potential legal liabilities associated with hiring former offenders are a major concern.	3.04	Strongly Agree	.955	.911
AVERAGE	2.98	Agree	0.96	0.93

Table 3. The data shows that while employers acknowledge the legal and reputational risks of hiring former persons deprived of liberty, concerns about re-offending are relatively less pronounced. This suggests that employers prioritize financial and legal implications, such as lawsuits and brand damage, over the likelihood of recidivism. These findings underscore the need for support and resources for employers, such as legal protections and reintegration programs, to mitigate these risks. Addressing these concerns could reduce barriers to hiring former persons deprived of liberty, making them more viable candidates in the workforce. Public awareness and education campaigns could also help change perceptions of recidivism. Many policies, like Ban the Box and fair chance laws, lack clear guidelines for assessing applicants with criminal records, allowing employers to reject them once their history is revealed (Mikkelsen, 2019). For these reforms to be more effective,

they should be expanded across both public and private sectors with clearer instructions on how criminal history should influence hiring decisions.

➤ *Type of Offense Committed*

The table presents data on attitudes toward hiring individuals with criminal backgrounds, specifically regarding the type of crime committed. The statement with the highest mean (3.45), "The nature of the crime committed affects my decision to hire a former offender," indicates strong agreement, highlighting the significance of the crime type in hiring decisions. The lowest mean (2.87), "I am more likely to hire individuals who committed financial or white-collar crimes than violent crimes," shows general agreement but with less intensity, suggesting a preference for financial crimes over violent offenses, though the distinction is not overwhelming.

Table 4 Type of Offense Committed

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
5. I am more hesitant to hire individuals convicted of violent crimes.	3.29	Strongly Agree	.854	.729
6. I am open to hiring individuals convicted of non-violent crimes.	3.09	Strongly Agree	.904	.818
7. The nature of the crime committed affects my decision to hire a former offender.	3.45	Strongly Agree	.764	.584
8. I am more likely to hire individuals who committed financial or white-collar crimes than violent crimes.	2.87	Agree	1.021	1.043
AVERAGE	3.17	Strongly Agree	.886	.794

Table 4. These findings suggest that employers may be more inclined to hire former offenders with non-violent or financial crimes, as these are perceived as less risky than violent offenses. This bias could limit opportunities for individuals with violent criminal backgrounds, despite their potential for rehabilitation. To address this, organizations could adopt fair chance hiring policies that prioritize an individual's rehabilitation and qualifications over the nature of their past offenses. Educational programs could also help reduce the stigma associated with violent criminal histories, fostering a more inclusive hiring approach. Ultimately, employers could benefit from evaluating candidates holistically, considering their current skills, rehabilitation efforts, and potential contributions rather than focusing solely on their past crimes. Dar (2018) explored that skills such as problem-solving and work experience enhanced the employability of ex-offenders with non-violent offenses.

However, for those with violent offenses, higher skill levels did not significantly improve their employability.

➤ *Perceived Opportunities for Hiring Former Persons Deprived of Liberty*

The table below presents data on attitudes towards hiring former persons deprived of liberty, focusing on the potential benefits of such hiring decisions. The highest mean (3.28) is for the statement "Employing former offenders can positively impact the company's corporate social responsibility," indicating strong agreement among respondents. This suggests that the positive impact on corporate social responsibility is seen as a significant benefit. The lowest mean (2.97) is for "I believe that hiring former offenders can improve employee diversity in my business," which corresponds to "Agree." While respondents generally agree with this statement, it is the least strongly endorsed compared to the others.

Table 5 Perceived Opportunities for Hiring Former Persons Deprived of Liberty

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
9. Hiring former persons deprived of liberty can provide valuable opportunities for community reintegration.	3.22	Strongly Agree	.713	.508
10. Employing former offenders can positively impact the company's corporate social responsibility.	3.28	Strongly Agree	.778	.606
11. Former persons deprived of liberty can bring unique perspectives and skills to the workplace.	3.15	Strongly Agree	.809	.654
12. I believe that hiring former offenders can improve employee diversity in my business.	2.97	Agree	.893	.798
AVERAGE	3.16	Strongly Agree	.798	.641

Table 5. The findings from Couloute & Kopf (2018) and Smith (2021) suggest that while employers may acknowledge the corporate and community benefits of hiring former persons deprived of liberty, they might not view this decision as a significant driver of workplace diversity. Businesses are increasingly recognizing the value of such hires in terms of enhancing corporate social responsibility (CSR), but they are less convinced about the direct impact on diversity, often prioritizing other factors like skills or risk management. This indicates an opportunity for companies to better leverage the social and community benefits of hiring former offenders to strengthen their CSR efforts. Additionally, emphasizing the unique perspectives and skills that former persons deprived of liberty bring to the workplace could help demonstrate the value they add beyond simply increasing diversity. To further highlight how hiring former

offenders contributes to a more diverse workforce, businesses may benefit from additional education on how such hiring decisions can foster diversity in experience, background, and resilience, making it an even more compelling aspect of their broader recruitment strategy.

➤ *Type of Sentence*

The highest mean (3.33) corresponds to the statement "I am more likely to hire individuals who served probation or community service rather than imprisonment," indicating a preference for hiring individuals with probation or community service backgrounds over those who have been incarcerated. The lowest mean (3.12) is for "I am willing to hire individuals who have completed shorter sentences," still showing strong agreement but with less emphasis compared to other statements.

Table 6 Type of Sentence

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
13. I am more likely to hire individuals who served probation or community service rather than imprisonment.	3.33	Strongly Agree	.798	.638
14. Individuals who have served long sentences are more challenging to integrate into the workplace.	3.31	Strongly Agree	.723	.523
15. I am willing to hire individuals who have completed shorter sentences.	3.12	Strongly Agree	.794	.630
AVERAGE	3.25	Strongly Agree	.772	.597

Table 6. The data suggests that employers may be more inclined to hire individuals with less severe criminal backgrounds, especially those who have completed probation or community service. The study found that neither the length of an applicant's prison sentence nor the time since their release significantly affected hiring decisions. Long periods of incarceration often lead to gaps in work experience and a decline in job skills. Additionally, individuals with criminal records frequently have lower educational attainment and face transportation challenges, which further complicates their ability to secure stable employment post-release (Mikkelsen and Schweitzer, 2019). Employers may perceive these individuals as posing fewer risks for workforce reintegration. The slightly lower willingness to hire those with longer prison sentences suggests concerns about integration, recidivism, or past behavior. To address these issues, employers could implement rehabilitation-focused hiring policies, offer support for reintegration, and provide educational or training initiatives to ease the

transition for individuals with longer criminal histories, creating a more inclusive hiring environment. The findings also highlight the need for clear policies and support structures to better integrate individuals from diverse criminal justice backgrounds, ensuring a fairer hiring approach.

➤ *Government Incentives*

The highest mean (3.41) is for the statement "Government programs that support the hiring of former offenders positively influence my decision-making," indicating that respondents view government programs as the most influential factor in their hiring decisions. The lowest mean (3.20) is for "Tax breaks or government subsidies would make hiring former offenders more appealing," suggesting that while respondents agree with this statement, they see financial incentives as less impactful compared to other forms of government support.

Table 7 Government Incentives

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
16. I would be more inclined to hire former persons deprived of liberty if the government provides financial incentives.	3.25	Strongly Agree	.753	.566
17. Tax breaks or government subsidies would make hiring former offenders more appealing.	3.20	Strongly Agree	.714	.510
18. Government programs that support the hiring of former offenders positively influence my decision-making.	3.41	Strongly Agree	.743	.552
AVERAGE	3.29	Strongly Agree	.736	.543

Table 7. The findings suggest that employers find government support programs, such as job training, mentorship, or reintegration services, more effective than financial incentives like tax breaks or subsidies in

encouraging the hiring of former persons deprived of liberty. Employers seem to value tangible support that aids in the integration of former offenders and reduces perceived risks. The study indicates that financial incentives may not be as

influential in shaping hiring decisions (Martin et al., 2020). Policymakers and organizations could benefit from expanding and enhancing support programs, such as training, job placement, and mentorship. While financial incentives are important, combining them with comprehensive support services may prove more effective. Furthermore, increasing awareness and ensuring accessibility of these programs could help employers hire former persons deprived of liberty, facilitating their successful reintegration into society and the workforce.

➤ Support Programs for Former Persons Deprived of Liberty

The highest mean score (3.29) is for the statement, "Continuous support programs for formerly incarcerated employees can minimize risks in the workplace," indicating that respondents view ongoing support as particularly effective in reducing workplace risks. The lowest mean score (3.23) is for the statement, "I am more likely to hire former persons deprived of liberty if they have undergone job training programs." While still strongly endorsed, it reflects a slightly lower emphasis on job training compared to continuous support programs.

Table 8 Support Programs for Former Persons Deprived of Liberty

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
19. I am more likely to hire former persons deprived of liberty if they have undergone job training programs.	3.23	Strongly Agree	.878	.771
20. I would prefer hiring former offenders who are part of a support or rehabilitation program.	3.27	Strongly Agree	.825	.680
21. Continuous support programs for formerly incarcerated employees can minimize risks in the workplace.	3.29	Strongly Agree	.816	.665
AVERAGE	3.26	Strongly Agree	.839	.705

Table 8. These findings indicate that employers are more inclined to hire former persons deprived of liberty when structured, ongoing workplace support systems are available. Cortina (2024) emphasizes the importance of reentry programs that integrate vocational training, soft skills development, and sustained support, such as mentorship and employee assistance. Continuous support is perceived as the most effective approach for minimizing risks, as it facilitates smoother workplace integration over time. While job training is valued, it is seen as less critical than long-term support and rehabilitation. These insights highlight the need for employers and policymakers to prioritize holistic, sustained support strategies for former persons deprived of liberty. Businesses can benefit from investing in mentorship, employee assistance, and onboarding programs designed for long-term success, improving retention rates and easing transitions. Additionally, increasing employer awareness of

diverse support options could build confidence in hiring individuals with criminal records, thereby enhancing reintegration opportunities.

➤ Corporate Culture and Values

The highest mean (3.00) is for the statement "My company's values align with giving second chances to former persons deprived of liberty," suggests that, on average, respondents feel their company's values support giving second chances to those with criminal records. The lowest mean (2.81) is for the statement "Hiring former persons deprived of liberty is consistent with our company's social responsibility goals," suggesting that while hiring former offenders aligns with some corporate goals, it may not be seen as strongly tied to social responsibility by all respondents.

Table 9 Corporate Culture and Values

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
22. My company's values align with giving second chances to former persons deprived of liberty.	3.00	Strongly Agree	.927	.859
23. Our corporate culture supports the Reintegration of individuals with a criminal record.	2.91	Agree	.944	.891
24. Hiring former persons deprived of liberty is consistent with our company's social responsibility goals.	2.81	Agree	.878	.770
AVERAGE	2.91	Agree	.916	.840

Table 9. These findings suggest that while companies generally support giving second chances, they may not fully associate hiring former persons deprived of liberty with their social responsibility goals. Burns et al. (2023) emphasize the pivotal role of HR professionals in reshaping public and employer attitudes toward hiring individuals with criminal records. HR can address this gap by adopting fair-chance hiring practices, such as delaying background checks and prioritizing skills and qualifications. Educating stakeholders on the benefits—such as increased loyalty, diversity, and

alignment with CSR—can help integrate second-chance hiring into CSR strategies. This approach demonstrates equity and social justice, while enhancing reputation and community ties.

Organizations have an opportunity to strengthen their commitment by explicitly linking second-chance hiring to CSR initiatives. Making these practices a focal point of CSR strategies can enhance a company's impact on social change and its ethical goals. Additionally, emphasizing the societal

benefits of hiring former offenders can foster a more cohesive and impactful corporate responsibility approach.

➤ Public Perception

The highest mean (3.19) is for the statement *"I am concerned about the public's reaction to my business if I hire former persons deprived of liberty,"* which suggests that

respondents are most concerned about the public's reaction when hiring former offenders. The lowest mean (3.02) is for the statement *"The public perception of former offenders does not influence my decision to hire them,"* suggesting that public perception does have some influence, but it may not be as significant as other concerns.

Table 10 Public Perception

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
25. I am concerned about the public's reaction to my business if I hire former persons deprived of liberty.	3.19	Strongly Agree	.872	.761
26. I believe hiring former offenders could attract negative attention to my business.	3.12	Strongly Agree	.882	.777
27. The public perception of former offenders does not influence my decision to hire them.	3.02	Strongly Agree	.863	.745
AVERAGE	3.11	Strongly Agree	.872	.761

Table 10. These findings indicate that while public perception is a key concern for employers, it does not necessarily deter them from hiring former persons deprived of liberty. Participants expressed worries about customers feeling unsafe or uncomfortable, which could impact business (Obatusin & Williams, 2019). Such concerns may arise from perceived reputational risks or customer backlash, suggesting hesitation without clear strategies to manage public relations.

To address this, companies can emphasize their commitment to social responsibility and second chances by highlighting the rehabilitative value of hiring former offenders. Public relations campaigns, social media outreach, and partnerships with community organizations could shift the narrative, showcasing the societal benefits and workforce value of second-chance hiring.

Additionally, internal policies and training programs that underline the business case for diversity and inclusion, including hiring individuals with criminal records, can help counter negative perceptions. This approach demonstrates the company's ethical commitment to equal opportunity while mitigating public concerns.

➤ Personal Beliefs of Employers

The highest mean (3.25) is for the statement *"My personal beliefs about criminal justice influence my decision to hire former offenders,"* which suggests that respondents feel their personal views on criminal justice play a significant role in their hiring decisions. The lowest mean (2.94) is for the statement *"I feel comfortable hiring someone with a criminal record if they have demonstrated rehabilitation,"* suggesting some hesitancy or lower comfort level with hiring individuals with criminal records, even if they have shown signs of rehabilitation.

Table 11 Personal Beliefs of Employers

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
28. I personally believe in giving second chances to former persons deprived of liberty.	3.22	Strongly Agree	.802	.643
29. I feel comfortable hiring someone with a criminal record if they have demonstrated rehabilitation.	2.94	Agree	.936	.876
30. My personal beliefs about criminal justice influence my decision to hire former offenders.	3.25	Strongly Agree	.707	.499
AVERAGE	3.14	Strongly Agree	.815	.672

Table 11. The findings indicate that employers are generally open to hiring former persons deprived of liberty, especially when their personal beliefs align with rehabilitation and second chances. Dorr (2021) highlights that employers who value these principles are more likely to offer opportunities, recognizing the resilience and work ethic of justice-involved individuals. However, some hesitation persists, even for rehabilitated individuals, underscoring the need for greater awareness about the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs in workforce integration.

Training programs and workshops showcasing positive outcomes of hiring rehabilitated individuals, along with success stories, can help address employer concerns.

Highlighting the skills and contributions of formerly incarcerated employees can increase comfort and confidence in hiring decisions. Businesses could also refine their hiring policies to clearly address the role of criminal records and rehabilitation, fostering inclusivity and supporting informed decision-making.

• Recruitment Decisions

The highest mean (2.90) is for the statement *"The recruitment process should include special consideration for candidates with a criminal history,"* suggests that respondents generally believe that candidates with criminal histories should receive special consideration during recruitment. The lowest mean (2.41) is for the statement *"I*

have previously hired former persons deprived of liberty," suggests that while some respondents have hired former

persons deprived of liberty, it is not a common practice among them.

Table 12 Recruitment Decisions

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Std. Dev.	Var.
31. I have previously hired Former persons deprived of liberty.	2.41	Agree	1.011	1.023
32. I am open to considering applications from former offenders in the future.	2.85	Agree	.961	.923
33. The recruitment process should include special consideration for candidates with a criminal history.	2.90	Agree	.939	.883
AVERAGE	2.72	Agree	0.970	0.943

Table 12. The findings reveal a disconnect between employers' openness to hiring former persons deprived of liberty and their actual practices. While many believe in giving special consideration to these candidates, concerns about risks and integration challenges hinder their hiring (Morzenti et al., 2021). Skill development, on-the-job training, and transparent disclosure can help improve employment opportunities. The relatively low rate of hiring former offenders highlights the need for actionable frameworks to align attitudes with practices.

To address this, companies could establish targeted recruitment policies, such as job training, mentorship, or partnerships with rehabilitation programs. Educating HR teams on the benefits and practical strategies for hiring former persons deprived of liberty can ensure openness translates into action.

Diversity and inclusion initiatives that prioritize candidates with criminal records could further support this effort, reinforcing the company's commitment to second chances and social responsibility while increasing workforce representation.

- *Relationship between Perceived Risk of Hiring Previous Criminal Offenders and The Recruitment Decision of Business Owners*

The correlation matrix reveals key insights into business owners' perceptions of hiring former persons deprived of liberty and its impact on recruitment decisions. Owners with prior experience hiring former offenders are more likely to consider them in the future (0.605, $p < 0.01$) and support policies for criminal history considerations in recruitment (0.552, $p < 0.01$). These experiences appear to reduce concerns about re-offending (-0.210, $p < 0.05$) and legal risks (-0.163, $p < 0.05$). However, past hiring experience does not significantly alter perceptions of risk or reputational damage. There is a strong correlation (0.756, $p < 0.01$) between openness to hiring former offenders and supporting special recruitment policies, reflecting a more inclusive approach. Conversely, openness to hiring is weakly associated with concerns about risks, reputation, or legal liabilities.

Concerns about risks, such as re-offending and legal liabilities, are strongly correlated with fears of reputational damage (0.767, $p < 0.01$) and legal risks (0.783, $p < 0.01$). Business owners who view hiring former offenders as risky are also more likely to worry about these factors. Prior hiring experience reduces perceived risks and fosters inclusivity, while concerns about re-offending and legal liabilities reinforce hesitance among other business owners.

Table 13 Relationship between Perceived Risk of Hiring Previous Criminal Offenders and the Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

		Previously hired	Open to applications	Special considerations in recruitment process	Belief that hiring increases risks	Negatively affect reputation of business	More likely to re-offend	Concern on potential legal liabilities
	Pearson Correlation	1	.605**	.552**	-.010	-.149	-.210*	-.163*
Previously hired	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.901	.069	.010	.046
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Open to applications	Pearson Correlation	.605**	1	.756**	-.121	-.102	-.175*	-.081
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.141	.213	.032	.324
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Special considerations in recruitment process	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.756**	1	-.077	-.012	-.141	-.085
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.348	.882	.085	.299
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Belief that hiring increases risks	Pearson Correlation	-.010	-.121	-.077	1	.767**	.679**	.783**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.901	.141	.348		.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Negatively affect reputation of business	Pearson Correlation	-.149	-.102	-.012	.767**	1	.704**	.743**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.069	.213	.882	.000		.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
More likely to re-offend	Pearson Correlation	-.210*	-.175*	-.141	.679**	.704**	1	.772**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.032	.085	.000	.000		.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Concern on potential legal liabilities	Pearson Correlation	-.163*	-.081	-.085	.783**	.743**	.772**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.046	.324	.299	.000	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150

Table 13. Business owners with prior experience hiring former persons deprived of liberty are more likely to continue doing so, indicating that positive past experiences reduce perceived risks. O'Connor et al. (2023) notes that managers' previous experiences and belief in redemption significantly influence future hiring decisions, with past experiences reducing the need for belief in redeemability. To encourage hiring, pilot programs or internships offering firsthand experience could help alleviate concerns about hiring ex-offenders. Furthermore, the correlation between openness to hiring and support for inclusive recruitment practices underscores the importance of developing policies that accommodate candidates with criminal backgrounds. These policies could create more opportunities for former offenders.

Despite positive correlations, concerns about reputational damage, legal liabilities, and re-offending remain significant barriers. Targeted education, risk management strategies, and resources to address these fears could help businesses integrate former offenders into their workforce. Programs focused on skill development, mentoring, and transparent disclosure of criminal history can also mitigate these concerns.

Given the minimal correlation between previous hiring experiences and concerns about risks, further research is needed to understand business owners' hesitancy. Public policies, such as tax credits or legal protections, could reduce risks and incentivize businesses to hire former offenders, aiding their reintegration into the workforce.

• *Relationship between Type of Offense Committed and the Recruitment Decision of Business Owners*

The correlation matrix reveals how business owners' perceptions of offenses by former offenders impact hiring

choices. The data shows significant differences in how violent, non-violent, and white-collar crimes are viewed, influencing openness to hiring individuals with criminal backgrounds.

Business owners who favor special consideration for those with criminal records are more likely to hire non-violent offenders (0.437, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that those supporting inclusive hiring are more inclined to hire individuals with non-violent pasts. A weak negative correlation (-0.134 , $p = 0.103$) between special consideration and the belief that the crime's nature should influence hiring indicates that such business owners may not prioritize crime type in decisions. Furthermore, while there is no significant correlation (0.112 , $p = 0.173$) between special consideration and preference for white-collar over violent offenders, it still suggests that crime type may not heavily affect hiring for those advocating special consideration.

Regarding violent crimes, business owners hesitant to hire violent offenders are more likely to consider hiring non-violent offenders (0.176, $p = 0.031$), indicating a link between reluctance toward violent offenses and openness to non-violent ones. A positive correlation (0.265 , $p < 0.01$) exists between hesitancy toward violent offenders and the belief that crime type should influence hiring, suggesting that reluctance to hire violent offenders is associated with prioritizing crime nature in hiring. Additionally, a weak positive correlation (0.152 , $p = 0.064$) exists between hesitancy toward violent offenders and preference for white-collar over violent offenders, implying a perception of white-collar offenders as less risky.

Business owners open to hiring non-violent offenders are more likely to see crime type as an important hiring

consideration (0.147, $p = 0.072$), though not statistically significant. A strong positive correlation (0.405, $p < 0.01$) exists between willingness to hire non-violent offenders and preference for white-collar offenders over violent offenders, suggesting a view of white-collar crimes as lower risk.

No significant correlation (0.034, $p = 0.681$) exists between believing crime type should affect hiring and preference for white-collar over violent offenders, indicating that while crime type is considered, it does not significantly affect the preference for one type of offender.

Overall, business owners' perceptions of crime type play a crucial role in hiring decisions. Those with experience hiring former offenders, particularly non-violent ones, are more likely to continue doing so. There is a notable preference for white-collar offenders over violent ones, especially among those open to hiring former offenders. Business owners supporting special consideration are more inclined to hire non-violent offenders and may prioritize inclusion over crime type. However, concerns about violent crimes remain a significant barrier.

Table 14 Relationship Between Type of Offense Committed and the Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

		Previously hired	Open to applications	Special considerations in recruitment process	Hesitant to hire those with violent crime convictions	Open to hiring those with non-violent crime convictions	Nature of crime affects decision to hire	Hire more those with white-collar crimes
	Pearson Correlation	1	.605**	.552**	-0.154	.283**	-0.145	.184*
Previously hired	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0.06	0	0.077	0.024
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
	Pearson Correlation	.605**	1	.756**	-0.028	.379**	-0.089	.184*
Open to applications	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0.735	0	0.279	0.024
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Special considerations in recruitment process	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.756**	1	0.036	.437**	-0.134	0.112
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0.662	0	0.103	0.173
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Hesitant to hire those with violent crime convictions	Pearson Correlation	-0.154	-0.028	0.036	1	.176*	.265**	0.152
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.06	0.735	0.662		0.031	0.001	0.064
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Open to hiring those with non-violent crime convictions	Pearson Correlation	.283**	.379**	.437**	.176*	1	0.147	.405**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0.031		0.072	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Nature of crime affects decision to hire	Pearson Correlation	-0.145	-0.089	-0.134	.265**	0.147	1	0.034
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.077	0.279	0.103	0.001	0.072		0.681
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Hire more those with white-collar crimes	Pearson Correlation	.184*	.184*	0.112	0.152	.405**	0.034	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.024	0.024	0.173	0.064	0	0.681	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150

Table 14. Business owners are more likely to hire non-violent offenders, as shown by the positive correlation (0.283, $p < 0.01$) between prior hiring experience and willingness to hire non-violent offenders. In contrast, the correlation with hesitancy toward hiring violent offenders is weak (-0.154, $p = 0.060$), and the correlation between openness to hiring former offenders and concerns about violent crimes is negligible (-0.028, $p = 0.735$), indicating that violent crime concerns don't significantly affect openness to hiring former offenders.

Business owners who support special consideration for former offenders are more inclined to hire non-violent offenders (0.437, $p < 0.01$), reflecting a broader trend of inclusive hiring aligning with a preference for non-violent criminal backgrounds. However, there is little evidence linking special consideration with a preference for white-collar over violent offenders (0.112, $p = 0.173$), suggesting crime type isn't a major factor for those supporting inclusive hiring.

Nonviolent ex-offenders are often viewed as reliable, with stronger work ethics and higher job satisfaction, making them desirable candidates for long-term employment (Nickerson, 2019). Employers who recognize these qualities are more inclined to hire them. Smith (2021) supports this, noting that employers favor nonviolent offenders when

offering special consideration, with fewer concerns about criminal history. Starks (2018) observes that while employers remain hesitant about hiring individuals with violent convictions, they are more willing to consider those with minor offenses, highlighting the potential positive impact of special consideration.

Despite these trends, violent crimes remain a significant barrier for many employers. Those hesitant to hire violent offenders are more likely to hire non-violent offenders (0.176, $p = 0.031$), indicating a distinction in how violent and non-violent offenses are viewed. There is also a preference for white-collar offenders over violent ones (0.152, $p = 0.064$), suggesting that non-violent crimes, especially white-collar crimes, are considered less risky for business operations.

Business owners' attitudes toward hiring former offenders are influenced by the nature of the offense. Previous experience with hiring former offenders reduces concerns, particularly for non-violent offenders, and there is a preference for individuals with white-collar convictions. However, violent offenses remain a significant barrier. Addressing concerns about violent crimes through support programs or education may help promote more inclusive hiring practices.

• *Relationship between Perceived Opportunities for Hiring Former persons deprived of liberty and the Recruitment Decision of Business Owners*

The statement "I have previously hired former persons deprived of liberty" shows a moderate positive correlation with "Hiring former persons deprived of liberty provides community reintegration opportunities" ($r = 0.264, p < 0.01$) and "Employing former offenders enhances corporate social responsibility (CSR)" ($r = 0.278, p < 0.01$). This suggests that business owners who have hired former persons deprived of liberty are more likely to acknowledge the broader community and CSR benefits of such hires. O'Connor et al. (2023) emphasize that positive prior experiences and belief in redemption increase the likelihood of hiring former offenders, as these employers recognize the social value and benefits to their company's image.

The correlation between "I am open to considering applications from former offenders in the future" and "Hiring former persons deprived of liberty provides community reintegration opportunities" ($r = 0.451, p < 0.01$) shows that openness to future applicants is strongly linked to the belief in the value of reintegration. Additionally, the positive correlation with CSR ($r = 0.372, p < 0.01$) supports the idea that employers view hiring former offenders as a means to fulfill their company's social responsibilities.

The statement "The recruitment process should include special consideration for candidates with a criminal history" strongly correlates with "Hiring former persons deprived of liberty provides community reintegration opportunities" ($r = 0.394, p < 0.01$) and "Former offenders can bring unique perspectives and skills to the workplace" ($r = 0.400, p < 0.01$), suggesting that those who support special

consideration for criminal history in recruitment view these hires as offering both social and workplace benefits, such as diverse perspectives.

The correlation between "Former offenders bring unique perspectives and skills" and "Hiring former offenders improves workplace diversity" ($r = 0.667, p < 0.01$) shows that employers who value the skills and perspectives of former offenders also believe these hires enhance workplace diversity, contributing to a more inclusive environment.

Strong correlations between "Hiring former offenders provides community reintegration opportunities" ($r = 0.541, p < 0.01$), "Employing former offenders positively impacts CSR" ($r = 0.464, p < 0.01$), and "Former offenders bring unique workplace skills" ($r = 0.465, p < 0.01$) suggest that employers who view hiring former offenders as a reintegration and CSR opportunity also recognize their value in terms of skills and perspectives.

The results show that business owners who are open to hiring former offenders perceive multiple benefits, such as community reintegration and enhanced CSR. Nickerson (2019) highlights that nonviolent ex-offenders tend to show a stronger work ethic and greater job satisfaction, which business owners may view as opportunities for long-term stability. Furthermore, those with positive prior hiring experiences with criminal records are more likely to appreciate these broader benefits. The data indicates that employers who value these opportunities are more inclined to hire individuals with criminal histories, linking positive perceptions of opportunity with recruitment decisions.

Table 15 Relationship Between Perceived Opportunities for Hiring Former Persons Deprived of Liberty and the Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

Previously hired			Open to applications	Special considerations in recruitment process	Opportunity to them	Positive impact to company's CSR	Bring uniqueness to workplace	Improve employee diversity
Previously hired	Pearson Correlation	1	.605**	.552**	.264**	.278**	.250**	.350**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0.001	0.001	0.002	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Open to applications	Pearson Correlation	.605**	1	.756**	.451**	.372**	.324**	.495**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0	0	0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Special considerations in recruitment process	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.756**	1	.394**	.305**	.400**	.516**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0	0	0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Opportunity to them	Pearson Correlation	.264**	.451**	.394**	1	.541**	.465**	.359**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0	0		0	0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Positive impact to company's CSR	Pearson Correlation	.278**	.372**	.305**	.541**	1	.464**	.448**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0	0	0		0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Bring uniqueness to workplace	Pearson Correlation	.250**	.324**	.400**	.465**	.464**	1	.667**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0	0	0	0		0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Improve employee diversity	Pearson Correlation	.350**	.495**	.516**	.359**	.448**	.667**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150	150

Table 15. Employers who value hiring former offenders for community reintegration and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are more likely to hire individuals with criminal backgrounds. Emphasizing the social benefits of

such hires, like supporting reintegration and enhancing CSR, could encourage more businesses to adopt inclusive hiring practices.

Support for special consideration in recruitment reflects broader acceptance of inclusive hiring. Employers who value the skills and perspectives of former offenders are more likely to offer them opportunities. Formalizing and promoting such practices can improve hiring outcomes and enhance a company's reputation as socially responsible.

The strong link between hiring former offenders and enhancing workplace diversity suggests businesses recognize the value of diverse backgrounds. Including individuals with criminal histories can support diversity and inclusion goals. Companies may want to highlight the diversity benefits of such hires to align with their commitment to inclusive workplaces.

For employers hesitant to hire former offenders, showcasing the benefits—such as community reintegration, CSR, and diversity—could reduce perceived risks and encourage more hires. Targeted support programs and public incentives emphasizing these benefits could further promote second-chance hiring.

Business owners who view hiring former offenders as beneficial for community reintegration and CSR are also more likely to value their workplace skills and diverse perspectives. This positive view fosters inclusive recruitment practices and underscores the social and organizational benefits of hiring individuals with criminal histories.

• Relationship Between Type of Sentence and the Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

The survey results show how business owners' views on sentences—probation, community service, and imprisonment—impact their decisions to hire former persons deprived of liberty. Employers are more likely to hire individuals with probation or community service sentences than those with lengthy prison terms.

A positive correlation exists between hiring experience and the preference for individuals with alternative sentences ($r = 0.364$, $p < 0.01$). Business owners who have hired former offenders are also more open to considering those who have served shorter sentences ($r = 0.440$, $p < 0.01$), viewing them as easier to reintegrate.

Those open to future hires tend to prefer candidates with shorter sentences, as seen in the correlations with hiring preference for probation or community service sentences ($r = 0.372$, $p < 0.01$) and shorter sentences ($r = 0.579$, $p < 0.01$).

Support for special consideration in recruitment also correlates with a preference for candidates with shorter sentences ($r = 0.411$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.511$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that employers who advocate for inclusive hiring practices favor those with less severe criminal histories due to easier reintegration.

The correlation between long sentences and reintegration challenges is weaker, with $r = 0.239$ ($p < 0.01$) for previous hiring experience. While long sentences pose reintegration challenges, they don't fully deter hiring. This is reflected in the correlations with openness to future hires ($r = 0.300$, $p < 0.01$) and support for special consideration ($r = 0.332$, $p < 0.01$).

Employers are more likely to hire those with shorter sentences, as they are perceived as easier to reintegrate. Felony convictions, particularly those with long sentences, are viewed more negatively, but individuals with shorter sentences or probation/community service are seen as more capable of reintegration. O'Connor et al. (2023) note that employers' past positive experiences with former offenders, especially those with shorter sentences, influence future hiring decisions. These findings highlight the importance of special consideration for candidates with criminal histories, as employers favor those with less severe sentences.

Table 16 Relationship Between Type of Sentence and the Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

		Previously hired	Open to applications	Special considerations in recruitment process	Served probation/ community service	Served long sentences reentry challenges	Short sentence hires
	Pearson Correlation	1	.605**	.552**	.364**	.239**	.440**
Previously hired	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0	0.003	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Open to applications	Pearson Correlation	.605**	1	.756**	.372**	.300**	.579**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0	0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Special considerations in recruitment process	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.756**	1	.411**	.332**	.511**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0	0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Served probation/ community service	Pearson Correlation	.364**	.372**	.411**	1	.372**	.594**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0		0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Served long sentences reentry challenges	Pearson Correlation	.239**	.300**	.332**	.372**	1	.438**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003	0	0	0		0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
	Pearson Correlation	.440**	.579**	.511**	.594**	.438**	1
Short sentence hires	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0	0	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150

Table 16. Employers who prefer hiring individuals with shorter sentences, such as probation or community service, could benefit from outreach and support programs that address reintegration challenges. Mentorship or rehabilitation programs could help reintegrate those with longer sentences, reducing perceived employment risks.

The positive correlation between openness to hiring former offenders and support for special consideration suggests that businesses supportive of second-chance hiring may adopt policies specifically accommodating individuals with criminal backgrounds. Formalizing and promoting such policies as part of corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts could improve public image and attract diverse talent.

While long prison sentences may be seen as a barrier, many employers remain open to hiring such individuals if provided appropriate support. Francis (2018) notes that employers are more willing to hire ex-offenders when supported by reentry advocates who push for automatic record expungement and foster partnerships. Offering incentives like tax breaks or public recognition for businesses hiring individuals with longer sentences could reduce hesitancy and encourage more inclusive hiring practices. By recognizing the diverse experiences of former persons deprived of liberty and emphasizing the broader social and organizational benefits, such as workforce diversity and CSR contributions, businesses can enhance their hiring practices.

• *Relationship between the Government Incentives and the Recruitment Decision of Business Owners*

The data highlights key factors influencing business owners' decisions to hire former persons deprived of liberty, with government incentives and support programs playing a significant role.

While financial incentives, such as tax breaks or subsidies, show a weaker correlation with past hiring behavior ($r = 0.144$), they strongly influence future hiring decisions ($r = 0.692$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that such incentives can be a powerful motivator for hiring former offenders.

Government programs, including tax breaks and other support initiatives ($r = 0.692$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.529$, $p < 0.01$), significantly enhance the attractiveness of hiring former offenders, indicating that financial incentives are crucial for encouraging businesses that might otherwise be hesitant.

While past hiring experience strongly impacts future decisions, government incentives, particularly tax breaks and subsidies, are vital for businesses that have not previously hired former offenders. O'Connor et al. (2023) found that employers with prior experience hiring ex-offenders are more likely to support inclusive policies. Similarly, Dar (2018) highlighted that employers with positive attitudes toward hiring ex-offenders are more supportive of policy changes that encourage their inclusion. Targeted government interventions could therefore help expand employment opportunities for former persons deprived of liberty.

Table 17 Relationship Between the Government Incentives and the Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

		Previously hired	Open to applications	Special considerations in recruitment process	Incentivized hiring preference	Incentives boost hiring	Government programs influence hiring
	Pearson Correlation	1	.605**	.552**	0.144	0.071	.177*
Previously hired	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0.079	0.39	0.03
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
	Pearson Correlation	.605**	1	.756**	0.147	.162*	.248**
Open to applications	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0.073	0.047	0.002
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Special considerations in recruitment process	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.756**	1	0.159	0.16	0.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0.051	0.05	0.551
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Incentivized hiring preference	Pearson Correlation	0.144	0.147	0.159	1	.692**	.451**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.079	0.073	0.051		0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
	Pearson Correlation	0.071	.162*	0.16	.692**	1	.529**
Incentives boost hiring	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.39	0.047	0.05	0		0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Government programs influence hiring	Pearson Correlation	.177*	.248**	0.049	.451**	.529**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.03	0.002	0.551	0	0	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150

Table 17. Past hiring experiences are key to encouraging future hiring decisions. O'Connor et al. (2023) found that positive experiences with ex-offenders lead employers to continue hiring from this group, reducing the reliance on external incentives. Programs should leverage these experiences by providing businesses with opportunities to engage with former persons deprived of liberty, shifting perceptions and fostering greater openness to hiring without

external incentives. Additionally, financial incentives play a critical role in influencing hiring decisions. For businesses not yet considering this group, targeted incentives, such as tax breaks or subsidies, can increase their willingness to hire former offenders. Government intervention through such programs can effectively encourage second-chance hiring.

The data also highlights the importance of government support programs in shaping employer decisions. Policymakers should focus on expanding financial relief programs, as they make hiring former offenders more appealing to a wider range of businesses. By combining financial incentives with support for inclusive recruitment practices, targeted policies can increase employment opportunities for former persons deprived of liberty, promoting a more inclusive labor market.

• *Relationship between Support Programs for Former persons deprived of liberty and Recruitment Decision of Business Owners*

The results show that support programs, such as job training and rehabilitation, strongly influence business owners' hiring decisions regarding former persons deprived of liberty. Employers are more likely to consider or hire applicants who have participated in these programs, as indicated by significant correlations.

The strongest correlations are between hiring former offenders and their completion of job training ($r = .720$, $p < .01$) or rehabilitation programs ($r = .721$, $p < .01$), suggesting these programs are seen as vital in reducing workplace risks and improving employability. Ongoing support programs

also correlate with reduced workplace risks ($r = .701$, $p < .01$), indicating that business owners feel more confident hiring individuals who have received such support. Additionally, there is a strong correlation between openness to hiring former offenders and the belief that recruitment processes should accommodate candidates with criminal histories ($r = .756$, $p < .01$), highlighting the importance of inclusive hiring practices.

Business owners with prior experience in hiring former offenders tend to prefer candidates with job training or support programs ($r = .462$, $p < .01$ and $r = .381$, $p < .01$, respectively), recognizing the value these programs bring. Such support enhances employability and reduces perceived workplace risks, making employers more comfortable with hiring individuals with criminal backgrounds.

The data indicates that business owners are more likely to hire former persons deprived of liberty who have participated in job training and rehabilitation programs. These programs are crucial in reducing perceived risks, improving employability, and facilitating successful workforce integration.

Table 18 Relationship Between Support Programs for Former Persons Deprived of Liberty and Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

		Employed former inmates	Open to hiring ex-offenders	Special consideration for criminal history	Prefer trained ex-offenders	Prefer hiring rehabilitated offenders	Ongoing support reduces risks
	Pearson Correlation	1	.605**	.552**	.359**	.462**	.381**
Employed former inmates	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0	0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Open to hiring ex-offenders	Pearson Correlation	.605**	1	.756**	.465**	.493**	.443**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0	0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Special consideration for criminal history	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.756**	1	.338**	.355**	.450**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0	0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Prefer trained ex-offenders	Pearson Correlation	.359**	.465**	.338**	1	.720**	.701**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0		0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Prefer hiring rehabilitated offenders	Pearson Correlation	.462**	.493**	.355**	.720**	1	.721**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0		0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Ongoing support reduces risks	Pearson Correlation	.381**	.443**	.450**	.701**	.721**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0	0	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150

Table 18. The findings highlight the critical role of job training and rehabilitation programs in influencing business owners' willingness to hire former persons deprived of liberty. Businesses and policymakers should focus on expanding these programs to enhance employability and reduce perceived risks. Employers are more likely to hire candidates who have participated in structured training and rehabilitation, as these programs aid workplace integration.

The strong support for specialized recruitment processes for individuals with criminal histories underscores the importance of inclusive hiring policies. Employers who favor

such processes are more likely to hire former offenders, particularly those who have undergone training and rehabilitation. Therefore, organizations should formalize these inclusive practices and integrate them into broader diversity and inclusion efforts to promote second-chance hiring.

Additionally, the perception that continuous support programs reduce workplace risks emphasizes the need for ongoing support systems. Employers value both initial job training and continuous skill reinforcement, making it essential for policymakers and community organizations to

create long-term support systems for former offenders to help them succeed in the workforce.

The data suggests that job training, rehabilitation, and ongoing support programs significantly influence employers' openness to hiring former persons deprived of liberty. Studies by Morzenti et al. (2021), Crawford (2023), and O'Connor et al. (2023) show that these programs reduce perceived risks, increase employers' comfort with hiring, and improve reintegration outcomes. By prioritizing these support systems, businesses can foster more inclusive hiring practices and create a supportive environment for second-chance hiring.

• *Relationship Between Corporate and Culture Values and Recruitment Decision of Business Owners*

Corporate culture and values play a pivotal role in recruitment decisions involving former persons deprived of liberty. Companies aligned with principles of second chances and reintegration are more likely to hire candidates with criminal histories.

The findings indicate a positive correlation between hiring former offenders and values of second chances ($r = .473, p < .01$) and reintegration ($r = .519, p < .01$). Employers with prior experience hiring these individuals tend to

embrace these values, fostering inclusivity and redemption-focused cultures. Businesses open to considering applicants with criminal histories also strongly associate their values with second chances ($r = .580, p < .01$) and reintegration ($r = .613, p < .01$), reinforcing the importance of these principles in shaping future hiring practices.

Corporate values strongly influence both general willingness to hire and specific recruitment actions. Employers who view their company as supporting second chances ($r = .829, p < .01$) and reintegration ($r = .741, p < .01$) are more likely to implement policies tailored for candidates with criminal records.

Hiring former persons deprived of liberty also aligns closely with corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals ($r = .549, p < .01$). Many business owners see these practices as a way to demonstrate commitment to social issues and community support. The connection between CSR objectives and reintegration-focused values ($r = .741, p < .01$) highlights their impact on recruitment decisions.

Companies with strong cultures of second chances and social responsibility integrate these values into recruitment, demonstrating a commitment to reintegration and social impact that aligns with their broader goals.

Table 19 Relationship Between Corporate and Culture Values and Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

		Previously hired	Open to applications	Special considerations in recruitment process	Fair Employment	Reintegration Support	Social Responsibility
Previously hired	Pearson Correlation	1	.605**	.552**	.473**	.519**	.549**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Open to applications	Pearson Correlation	.605**	1	.756**	.580**	.613**	.515**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Special considerations in recruitment process criminal history	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.756**	1	.432**	.550**	.457**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Fair Employment	Pearson Correlation	.473**	.580**	.432**	1	.829**	.792**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Reintegration Support	Pearson Correlation	.519**	.613**	.550**	.829**	1	.741**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Social Responsibility	Pearson Correlation	.549**	.515**	.457**	.792**	.741**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150

Table 19. The findings highlight the crucial role of corporate culture and values in shaping business owners' decisions to hire former persons deprived of liberty. Companies that emphasize second chances and reintegration are more likely to hire people with criminal backgrounds. Business leaders should align their corporate culture with values of redemption and inclusivity to create a supportive environment for these individuals and leverage their contributions in the workplace.

The strong correlation between corporate values and recruitment practices suggests that companies with these

values are more likely to implement inclusive hiring practices, such as offering special consideration to applicants with criminal histories. HR departments can use this insight to develop recruitment strategies that ensure fair treatment and support for these candidates.

Additionally, the data shows a clear link between hiring former offenders and a company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals. Businesses that include second-chance hiring in their CSR strategies improve their reputation by demonstrating a commitment to social good and community reintegration. This suggests that companies can

enhance their public image and employee morale by framing these hiring practices as part of their CSR efforts.

The findings further support that corporate values around second chances and reintegration significantly influence long-term hiring decisions. Wiafe (2021) found that companies with these values are more likely to make sustainable hiring decisions, benefiting ex-offenders. Crawford (2023) highlighted that companies prioritizing social responsibility play a key role in the reentry process. Policymakers and corporate leaders should integrate these values into their mission and culture to promote a more inclusive workforce. Training programs focused on diversity and inclusion, particularly for individuals with criminal backgrounds, can help shift perceptions and encourage second-chance hiring.

Corporate values related to second chances and reintegration are essential for driving inclusive hiring practices. By aligning these values with broader CSR initiatives, companies can support the reintegration of former persons deprived of liberty while strengthening their organizational culture and reputation.

• *Relationship between Public Perception and Recruitment Decision of Business Owners*

The results highlight the complex relationship between public perception and business owners' hiring decisions for former persons deprived of liberty. While public opinion does influence some aspects of hiring, it is not the primary factor, with company values and support programs playing a more significant role. Couloute and Kopf (2018) suggest that concerns about public perception may discourage inclusive hiring policies for ex-offenders. Similarly, Jones (2019) found that negative public reactions in stigmatized environments can deter businesses from hiring individuals with criminal records. However, these concerns are often outweighed by the company's values and the potential benefits of second-chance hiring.

The findings show weak negative correlations between public concerns and the willingness to hire former persons deprived of liberty. Specifically, concerns about public reactions ($r = -0.046$, $p = 0.580$) and potential negative attention ($r = -0.079$, $p = 0.339$) do not strongly influence past hiring decisions. This suggests that for most business owners, public perception is not a major barrier to hiring former offenders.

However, public perception does influence certain recruitment practices. A correlation between concerns about negative public reactions and the belief in special consideration for candidates with criminal histories ($r = -0.228$, $p = 0.005$) indicates that business owners wary of public opinion are less likely to support policies prioritizing former offenders. Additionally, a moderate negative correlation ($r = 0.781$, $p < 0.01$) links concerns about public reaction to fears of negative publicity, suggesting that business owners see the risk of bad publicity as a factor in their decisions.

Conversely, a positive correlation between public perception and willingness to hire ($r = 0.283$, $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.376$, $p < 0.01$) indicates that business owners who are less influenced by public opinion are more likely to consider hiring former offenders. This reflects a group focused on corporate values or employee potential, rather than societal attitudes.

A correlation between the belief that hiring former offenders aligns with social responsibility goals ($r = 0.549$, $p < 0.01$) and the view that public perception does not affect hiring decisions ($r = 0.376$, $p < 0.01$) suggests that companies with strong CSR objectives are less swayed by public concerns. These business owners prioritize their company's mission and values, seeing the hiring of former persons deprived of liberty as part of their social responsibility goals.

Table 20 Relationship Between Public Perception and Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

		Previously hired	Open to applications	Special considerations in recruitment process	Public Perception	Social Criticism	Unbiased Hiring
Previously hired	Pearson Correlation	1	.605**	.552**	-0.046	-0.079	.283**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0.58	0.339	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Open to applications	Pearson Correlation	.605**	1	.756**	-0.069	-0.073	.376**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0.405	0.373	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Special considerations in recruitment process	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.756**	1	-.181*	-.228**	.383**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0.027	0.005	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Public Perception	Pearson Correlation	-0.046	-0.069	-.181*	1	.781**	.227**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.58	0.405	0.027		0	0.005
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Social Criticism	Pearson Correlation	-0.079	-0.073	-.228**	.781**	1	.191*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.339	0.373	0.005	0		0.019
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Unbiased Hiring	Pearson Correlation	.283**	.376**	.383**	.227**	.191*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0.005	0.019	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150

Table 20. The findings suggest that while public perception affects business owners' decisions to hire former persons deprived of liberty, it is not the primary factor. O'Connor et al. (2023) found that employers who value second chances and redemption are less influenced by public opinion, focusing instead on an individual's potential and workplace value. Crawford (2023) similarly noted that employers prioritizing social responsibility and fairness are more likely to overlook public perceptions in favor of supporting reintegration. Bowles and Guerra (2022) also emphasized that business leaders with a focus on social responsibility approach hiring with an emphasis on rehabilitation, rather than concerns about negative reactions. Public opinion becomes more of a barrier for risk-averse employers or those less committed to inclusive practices. Policymakers and advocacy groups can help shift public attitudes by highlighting the social and economic benefits of second-chance hiring.

For businesses already committed to inclusive hiring or with strong CSR goals, public opinion plays a lesser role. This suggests that corporate culture and values are crucial in overcoming external pressure. Companies with a strong internal commitment to social good are more likely to focus on the long-term benefits of hiring former persons deprived of liberty, such as improved workplace diversity and meeting CSR objectives. These businesses are less deterred by negative perceptions and more likely to implement special recruitment policies for candidates with criminal histories.

For companies more concerned with public reactions, the findings suggest that support programs, such as job training and rehabilitation, could alleviate concerns. These programs reduce perceived risks and may make employers more confident in hiring former persons deprived of liberty. Additionally, highlighting the positive contributions of successfully reintegrated employees can help reshape public perceptions.

While public perception influences hiring decisions, corporate values, social responsibility, and support programs are more significant factors for businesses willing to hire

former persons deprived of liberty. Promoting shifts in public attitudes and strengthening support systems can reduce the impact of negative perceptions and encourage more businesses to engage in second-chance hiring.

• *Relationship Between Employers' Personal Beliefs and Recruitment Decisions for Former Persons Deprived of Liberty*

The results demonstrate that business owners' personal beliefs, particularly about second chances, rehabilitation, and criminal justice, significantly impact their decisions to hire former persons deprived of liberty. Employers with progressive views on criminal justice are more likely to consider applicants with criminal backgrounds.

A positive correlation ($r = .400, p < .01$) between hiring former persons deprived of liberty and believing in second chances suggests that business owners who are open to such hires strongly support the idea of second chances, influencing their willingness to offer opportunities to those with criminal records. Furthermore, a strong correlation ($r = .671, p < .01$) between supporting second chances and valuing rehabilitation highlights its importance in hiring decisions. Business owners who prioritize second chances place significant weight on applicants' rehabilitation efforts.

The correlation between comfort with hiring individuals with criminal records and openness to future hires ($r = .639, p < .01$) indicates that employers who are comfortable with these hires are more likely to continue doing so. This shows that comfort and belief in rehabilitation encourage ongoing inclusive hiring practices.

While personal beliefs about criminal justice have a weaker correlation ($r = .219, p = 0.007$) with hiring decisions than beliefs in second chances and rehabilitation, they still play a role, particularly for those who view criminal justice reform as important. Business owners who advocate for special consideration of candidates with criminal histories ($r = .395, p < .01$) are often guided by broader principles of justice and equity in their recruitment practices.

Table 21 Relationship Between Personal Beliefs of Employers and Recruitment Decision of Business Owners

		Previously hired	Open to applications	Special considerations in recruitment process	Belief in Redemption	Rehabilitated Applicants	Advocacy for Criminal Justice Reform
Previously hired	Pearson Correlation	1	.605**	.552**	.400**	.466**	.219**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0	0	0.007
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Open to applications	Pearson Correlation	.605**	1	.756**	.524**	.639**	.384**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0	0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Special considerations in recruitment process	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.756**	1	.395**	.589**	0.15
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0	0	0.068
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Belief in Redemption	Pearson Correlation	.400**	.524**	.395**	1	.671**	.541**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0		0	0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Rehabilitated Applicants	Pearson Correlation	.466**	.639**	.589**	.671**	1	.378**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0		0
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Advocacy for Criminal Justice Reform	Pearson Correlation	.219**	.384**	0.15	.541**	.378**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.007	0	0.068	0	0	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150

Table 21. The findings underscore how personal beliefs—particularly around second chances, rehabilitation, and criminal justice reform—affect business owners' hiring decisions, especially for former persons deprived of liberty. Riley (2022) highlighted that employers who believe in redemption prioritize applicants' skills over public judgment, suggesting public perception is secondary in hiring decisions. Martin et al. (2020) also noted that while some businesses consider public opinion, those offering second chances are motivated by social responsibility and ethics. Van den Berg et al. (2020) further emphasized that employers focus on skills, not public perceptions, when hiring individuals with criminal records. Business owners with progressive views on criminal justice are more inclined to hire former offenders, particularly those who have shown rehabilitation, valuing their potential for reintegration.

Belief in second chances is crucial in promoting inclusive recruitment. Employers supporting second chances are not only more likely to hire ex-offenders but also provide long-term employment. O'Connor et al. (2023) found that these employers foster stable, lasting employment relationships, while Wiafe (2021) highlighted their efforts to reduce stigma and support reintegration. For policymakers and advocates, emphasizing the moral and ethical benefits of second-chance hiring and showcasing rehabilitation success stories can engage more employers. Business owners confident in rehabilitation are more likely to continue hiring former offenders, with job training and mental health services helping reduce workplace risks and enhancing the reintegration process.

The connection between personal beliefs and support for special consideration in recruitment suggests that employers who value equity are more likely to adopt policies favoring applicants with criminal histories. This reflects a broader commitment to fairness and societal reintegration, suggesting that recruitment should include systematic support for integrating former persons deprived of liberty into the workforce.

While personal beliefs about criminal justice may not be the primary driver of hiring decisions, they are essential in shaping employers' attitudes toward second-chance hiring.

Mikkelsen and Schweitzer (2019) found that beliefs about justice and redemption strongly influence employers' willingness to hire former persons deprived of liberty. O'Connor et al. (2023) and Crawford (2023) emphasized that employers who believe in rehabilitation are more likely to offer opportunities to those with criminal records. Targeted programs focusing on second chances, rehabilitation, and justice can encourage more employers to consider applicants with criminal backgrounds, fostering inclusive employment practices aligned with corporate culture and societal values.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

➤ Conclusion

The findings suggest that while business owners recognize certain risks associated with hiring former

offenders, those with prior experience in this area are more likely to continue inclusive hiring practices. Previous hiring experience, the type of offense committed, and the length of the sentence all influence decisions, with non-violent offenders and those with shorter sentences being more likely to be hired. Additionally, employers who view hiring ex-offenders as an opportunity for community reintegration and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are more open to considering them for employment.

Support programs, including job training and rehabilitation, are crucial in alleviating concerns about reintegration and workplace risks, significantly enhancing the employability of former offenders. Government incentives and policies that offer financial relief further encourage businesses to engage in second-chance hiring by reducing perceived risks. Moreover, companies with strong corporate values centered around second chances and social responsibility are more inclined to hire former offenders, aligning their recruitment practices with their organizational ethos.

Ultimately, fostering inclusive hiring practices requires a combination of personal beliefs, targeted support programs, and policies that mitigate risks. Business owners who believe in second chances, supported by the right education and incentives, are more likely to integrate former persons deprived of liberty into the workforce, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable labor market.

➤ Recommendations

- *Education and Awareness Campaigns*

Targeted education programs should be implemented to highlight the benefits of hiring former offenders and address perceived risks. Workshops on risk management, rehabilitation success, and legal considerations can help alleviate concerns about re-offending and legal issues.

- *Promotion of Support Programs*

Expanding job training, mentorship, and rehabilitation programs is essential. These initiatives enhance employability and reduce workplace risks. Employers who have successfully hired former offenders should share their experiences to build confidence among hesitant businesses.

- *Government Incentives*

Policies offering financial incentives, such as tax breaks, subsidies, and liability protections, should be expanded. These incentives help mitigate perceived risks, particularly for businesses new to second-chance hiring. Governments should also encourage inclusive hiring practices to support the reintegration of former persons deprived of liberty.

- *Develop Tailored Recruitment Strategies*

Businesses should develop recruitment strategies tailored to the type of offense, with an emphasis on non-violent offenders and those with shorter sentences. Support programs can be designed to address concerns about violent

offenders or those with longer sentences, enhancing employer confidence.

- *Corporate Culture and Values Integration*

Companies should align recruitment practices with their values, especially those focused on social responsibility and second chances. This alignment will foster inclusive hiring within the corporate culture. Companies that prioritize values like reintegration and rehabilitation should communicate them publicly to boost both their image and internal morale.

- *Public Perception Management*

For businesses concerned about public perception, resources should be provided to manage potential backlash. This includes public relations support, media coverage of second-chance hiring successes, and showcasing the benefits of a diverse workforce.

- *Ongoing Research and Data Collection*

Ongoing research into the impact of hiring former persons deprived of liberty should be encouraged. Longitudinal studies can provide data to support second-chance hiring and inform the development of more effective policies and programs.

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