Resettlement of Elderly Male Ex-Prisoners in Hong Kong: Their Basic Needs and Mental Health Issues

香港年長男性釋囚更生康復研究報告

Prepared by

Professor Wing Hong Chui

Dr Yujing Fun

Mr Joseph Yap

June 2015

A Report Submitted to the Society for Community Organization

報告提交香港社區組織協會省覽

Acknowledgements

This study was funded by the Social Welfare Development Fund from the Social Welfare Department of the HKSAR Government. The authors would also like to thank the Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers, Operation Dawn, and Hong Kong Christian Kun Sun Association for their help in providing resources and interview data. The authors are grateful to the Correctional Services Department for providing data to help in this project.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary (in English and Chinese) 1
Background of the Study 5
- Study Scope 7
- Methodology 7
- Sampling Method 8
- Limitations 10

Qualitative Findings: A System of Needs 11
- Physiological Needs 13
- Security and Safety Needs 15
- Love and Belonging Needs 18
- Self-Esteem Needs 22
- Self-Actualization 24
- Other Factors 25
- Summary of Qualitative Data 31

Quantitative Findings: Statistical Data Results 34
- Demographic Information 34
- Personal Experience and Institutional Life 39
- Employment Status 43
- Substance Abuse Scale 47
- General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) 48
- Perceived Devaluation/Discrimination Scale (PDDS) 53
- CRIME-PICS II 58
- Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) 61
- Subjective Well-Being Scale (SWBS) 65
- Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) 70
- Summary of Quantitative Data 74

Conclusion 78
- Accommodation 79
- Employment 80
- Family Relationships 82
- Drugs 84
- Christianity 86
- System Disintegration and Reintegration 88

Recommendations 92
References 97

List of Tables and Figures	Page
Figure 1. Rate of Imprisoned Elderly Male Prisoners from 2000 to 2013	6
Figure 2. Rate of Discharged Elderly Male Prisoners from 2000 to 2013	6
Table 1. Summary of Qualitative Data Findings by Needs Category and Other Factors	33
Table 2.1. Age Category for Elderly Ex-prisoners	34
Table 2.2. Sociodemographic of Elderly Ex-prisoners	37-38
Table 2.3. Recoded Sociodemographic of Elderly Ex-prisoners	38
Table 3.1. Contacts with the Justice System	39
Table 3.2. Recoded Criminal Careers	40
Table 3.3. Types of Offending for Last Conviction	40
Table 3.4. Factors for Last Conviction	41
Table 3.5. Possibilities for Reoffending	41
Table 3.6. Mean and Variance for Confidence in Stopping Offending Immediately	42
Table 3.7. Means and Variances for Experiences with CSD	42
Table 4.1. Employment before Conviction	43
Table 4.2. Recoded Employment before Conviction	44
Table 4.3. Barriers to Securing Job at Present	45
Table 4.4. Income Sources	45
Table 4.5. Workshop Participation in Correctional Institutions	46
Table 5. Means and Variances for Drug Use in Past 6 Months	47

List of Tables and Figures	Page
Table 6.1. Visits to Doctors in Past 6 Months	48
Table 6.2. Means and Variances for GHQ Scores	49
Table 6.3. Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Drug History	49
Table 6.4. Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Current Employment Status	50
Table 6.5. Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Family Relationship	50
Table 6.6. Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Accommodation Type	51
Table 6.7. Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Age Category	51
Table 6.8. Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Religion	51
Table 6.9. Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Number of Prison Experiences	52
Table 6.10. Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Category of Profession	52
Table 7.1. Means and Variances for PDDS Scores	53
Table 7.2. Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Current Employment Status	54
Table 7.3. Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Family Relationship	54
Table 7.4. Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Religion	55
Table 7.5. Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Drug History	55
Table 7.6. Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Accommodation Type	56
Table 7.7. Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Age Category	56
Table 7.8. Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Number of Prison Experiences	57
Table 7.9. Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Category of Profession	57
Table 8.1. Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score	58

List of Tables and Figures	Page
Table 8.2. Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score by Drug History	58
Table 8.3. Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score by Current Employment Status	59
Table 8.4. Means and Variances for CRIME-PICS II Score by Family Relationship	59
Table 8.5. Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score by Accommodation Type	59
Table 8.6. Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score by Religion	60
Table 8.7. Means and Variances for CRIME-PICS II Score by Age Category	60
Table 8.8. Means and Variances for CRIME-PICS II Score by Number of Prison Experiences	60
Table 8.9. Means and Variances for CRIME-PICS II Score by Category of Profession	61
Table 9.1. Means and Variances for PANAS Scores	61
Table 9.2. Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Drug History	62
Table 9.3. Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Current Employment Status	62
Table 9.4. Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Family Relationship	63
Table 9.5. Means and Variances for PANAS Scores Total by Accommodation Type	63
Table 9.6. Means and Variances for PANAS Scores Total by Religion	63
Table 9.7. Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Number of Prison Experiences	64
Table 9.8. Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Category of Profession	64
Table 9.9. Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Age Category	65
Table 10.1. Means and Variances for SWBS Scores	65

List of Tables and Figures	Page
Table 10.2. Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Drug History	66
Table 10.3. Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Current Employment Status	66
Table 10.4. Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Family Relationship	67
Table 10.5. Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Accommodation Type	67
Table 10.6. Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Religion	68
Table 10.7. Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Number of Prison Experiences	68
Table 10.8. Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Age Category	69
Table 10.9. Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Category of Profession	69
Table 11.1. Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores	70
Table 11.2. Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Drug History	70
Table 11.3. Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Current Employment Status	71
Table 11.4. Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Family Relationship	71
Table 11.5. Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Religion	72
Table 11.6. Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Number of Prison Experiences	72
Table 11.7. Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Accommodation Type	73
Table 11.8. Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Age Category	73
Table 11.9. Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Category of Profession	74
Table 12.1. Means and Variances for Other Items by Family Relationship	74

List of Tables and Figures	Page
Table 12.2. Means and Variances for Other Items by Accommodation Type	75
Table 13.1. Summary of Quantitative Findings by Tests Administered	76
Table 13.2. Summary of Significant Differences in Quantitative Findings by Demographics and Tests	77
Table 14. Association between Accommodation Type and Current Employment	79
Table 15. Association between Family Relationship and Imprisonment Times	83
Table 16.1. Association between Drug History and Family Relationship	84
Table 16.2. Association between Drug History and Accommodation Type	84
Table 16.3. Association between Drug History and Current Employment	85
Table 16.4. Association between Drug History and Imprisonment Times	85
Figure 3. Reintegration and Disintegration Process from Offending	90
Figure 4. Special Hostel Intervention Towards Reintegration	94

Executive Summary

Data from various government and non-government sources have shown that the number of elderly ex-prisoners is on the rise. The Correctional Services Department's (CSD) numbers show that in 2000, elderly offenders aged 50 or above who were discharged from prison constituted 8.68% of the male prison population but in 2013, that rate had become 21.20. These data are obtained through the formal correspondence between CSD and the Society of Community Organization (SoCO) in December 2014. If the numbers maintain their trajectory, the percentage of elderly ex-prisoners in Care and Support Networking Team (CASNET) of the SoCO will likely continue to increase in future. It is therefore imperative to enhance service provision to this sub-group and coordinate efforts towards better reintegrating them. Also, according to the latest Director of Audit's Report (2015) which is published in April, while research has been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of various rehabilitative programmes for young prisoners and drug inmates, there are very few analyses of the impact of these programmes for adult prisoners, not to mention the elderly prisoners or ex-prisoners (p. 22 of the *Report No. 64*).

This study adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches to meet its objectives of better understanding the needs of a total of 50 elderly male ex-prisoners aged from 50 or above to better facilitate their reintegration into society (see Demographic Information, pp. 34–38 of this report). In its qualitative findings, the study found that the needs of elderly ex-prisoners were better understood by grouping them into a system of needs based on the work of Abraham Maslow (1954) or the so-called hierarchy of needs. The study found that the major conditions that push ex-prisoners back towards re-offending are the lack of adequate shelter (see Physiological Needs, pp. 13-15); unemployment and a focus on the stigma of crime (see Security and Safety Needs, pp. 15-17); lack of family support and a community of deviant peers (see Love and Belonging Needs, pp. 18-22); perceived discrimination and discrimination by the general public and employers (see Self-Esteem Needs, pp. 22-24); a pessimistic worldview, the allure of drugs, sense of desperation, and an evasion of responsibility (see Attitudinal Factors, pp. 26-29); and, problems with money and poor adaptation (see Circumstantial Factors, pp. 29-31).

The quantitative findings in this study verified the qualitative findings. The quantitative data strengthened the association between drugs, repeated imprisonment, and the deterioration of law-abiding livelihoods. In the survey, 40 of 50 participants (80%) had a history of drugs (see Substance Abuse Scale, p. 47). Other tests found that participants showed slight general distress, social dysfunction, and anxiety and depression (see General Health Questionnaire (GHQ), pp. 48-52); slight perceptions of devaluation, rejection experiences, and above normal use of secrecy as a means of coping (see Perceived Devaluation/Discrimination Scale (PDDS), pp. 53-58); high tendency to self-report more serious current life problems that they encountered (see CRIME-PICS II, pp. 58-61); lower

than normal positive moods and higher than normal negative moods (see Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), pp. 61-65); lower than normal subjective, spiritual, and existential well-beings (see Subjective Well-Being Scale (SWBS), pp. 65-69; and, poor family, friend, and significant other supports (see Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), pp. 70-74). The quantitative findings also showed that the Christian faith significantly contributed to helping individuals reintegrate into society (see Christianity, pp. 86-88).

This study finds that the plight of elderly ex-prisoners is worse because the emphasis on young offenders has drawn attention and resources away from helping them reintegrate, which may explain the upward trend in elderly arrest and imprisonment. Elderly ex-prisoners face unique challenges to their rehabilitation as they suffer from near complete isolation due to the collapse of their support networks as they continually get into trouble with the law. Elderly ex-prisoners are caught in a disintegrating system brought about mainly by an addiction to drugs but which then persists because of the lack of social support, employment opportunities, and adequate accommodation (see System Disintegration and Reintegration, pp. 88-91).

In order to deal with the accommodation or housing needs, we ultimately recommend that temporary and therapeutic residential treatment programmes such as hostels should be made available to those elderly ex-prisoners who have little contact with their family members or lack social support, and have history of drug abuse. According to their needs, this residential programme ideally will allow them to stay for a longer period, say 3 years in order to allow them to adjust to the society after imprisonment and to continue to deal with their addiction problems with the assistance of social workers. These hostels can work both long-term and short-term because it can be flexible enough in the long-term to continue serving special populations for reintegration while also immediately meet the housing or accommodation concerns especially for those elderly ex-prisoners who do not have strong support networks and needs more time to deal with the transition between imprisonment and their return to the community.

To address to the needs of the male elderly ex-prisoner, we propose three recommendations:

- **Accommodation:** The physiological provision of shelter is an important part of the reintegration process. A special hostel is primarily a place of accommodation and should be more focused on addressing the psychological needs of ex-prisoners.
- **Drug rehabilitation:** The shelter can also alleviate any longings they have for their deviant peers and keep them away from such influences. Faith-based counselling or volunteer opportunities should be made available to ex-prisoners.
- **Community:** Concerted efforts by the Government and other stakeholders to reduce the stigma and discrimination against elderly ex-prisoners should be made. A more targeting policy should be devised to provide help to those elderly ex-prisoners who repeatedly re-offend and is sentenced to short prison sentences.

摘要

官方與非官方數據都顯示年長男性釋囚的數目日趨上升。根據香港懲教署（CSD）所提供的數字顯示，較年長（50 歲或以上）的犯事者在 2000 年佔香港男性監獄人口的 8.68%，但到了 2013 年，此比例已經達到 21.20%。這些數據是從 2014 年 12 月懲教署與香港社區組織協會的正式通信中取出。若數據維持現有升勢，社區組織協會的曙光行動邊緣社群支援計劃中的年長釋囚的人數會持續上升。因此，強化服務與支持他們的更生康復路程是當務之急。再者，根據在本年度四月份發佈的審計署署長報告書，大量的研究報告都專注於青少年人和戒毒人士的更生計劃是否有效，比較少會聚焦在成年釋囚上，而對老年釋囚的研究更是寥寥無幾（第六十四號報告書第 22 頁）。

為求達到更好理解 50 歲以上較年長釋囚的需求，並且協助他們重新融入社會（關於人口統計，請參閱 34-38 頁的《人口統計信息問卷調查結果》），是次研究採用了定性和定量的分析方法，訪問了 50 位受訪者。關於定性分析，年長釋囚的各種需求最好以亞伯拉罕·馬斯洛 (1954) 提出的理論分類。是次調查結果顯示，推動釋囚重新犯罪的主要條件是居住地方不足（關於生理上的需要，請參閱 13-15 頁）；失業與犯罪帶來的自卑感（關於心靈與安全感上的需要，請閱 15-17 頁）；缺乏家庭支持和與犯罪朋輩生活（關於親情與歸屬感上的需要，請參閱 18-22 頁）；面對大眾和僱主的歧視（關於自尊上的需要，請參閱 22-24 頁）；悲觀的世界觀、毒品的誘惑、絕望感、逃避責任（關於態度上的因素，請參閱 26-29 頁）；經濟問題與較差的適應性（關於環境上的因素，請參閱 29-31 頁）。

是次研究的定量結果與定性的結果相約。定量分析的結果支持對吸食毒品、返回罪行、減低守法誘因因素之間關聯性質的論點。調查發現，80%的受訪者擁有濫用藥物的經歷 （關於應用藥物濫用指標的結果，請參閱 47 頁）。其他測試的結果既顯示，一般受訪者表現輕微的綜和性窘迫感、社會功能障礙、憂慮感與抑鬱感（關於綜合性健康問卷（GHQ）的結果，請參閱 48-52 頁）；有輕微的自我貶值、被排斥的經驗、並用比常人更注重私隱、更保密的方法作為應對日常生活的手段（關於應用自我貶值/被受歧視指標的結果，請參閱 53-58 頁）；察覺自我現在面對較多嚴重的生活上的問題（關於應用 CRIME-PICS II 指標的結果，請參閱 58-61 頁）；較平常人情緒負面（關於應用積極與消極情感指標（PANAS）的結果，請參閱 61-65 頁）；精神的滿足與自我良好的感覺較平常人差（關於主觀幸福感指標（SWBS）的結果，請參閱 65-69 頁）；較平常人缺乏家庭、朋友、或其他支持（關於應用多層面的社交支持指標（MSPSS）的結果，請參閱 70-74 頁）。最後，定量分析表明，基督教信仰顯著有助釋囚重新融入社會（關於基督教信仰，請閱 86-88 頁）。

是次研究顯示，由於青少年罪犯較被重視，並且得到較多的資源幫助他們在更生康復的時候重新融入社會，不過卻忽視了年長釋囚，並沒有幫助他們走出困境，成為老年人士被捕和被判監禁上升趨勢的一大因素。在更生康復路程上，年長釋囚更會面對一些特有的問題。由於不斷陷入法律糾紛，他們的社交網絡基本上已經瓦解，心靈上處於與社會完全隔離的狀態。吸毒成癮是阻止年長釋囚重新融入社會的主要原因，而社會支持、就業機會、基本住宿的缺乏使他們捲入一個吸毒、犯罪、判監的長期惡性循環（關於系統循環與重返社會，請閱 88-91 頁）。

爲了解決住宿的需要，我們最後會建議設立一種暫時性以及協助更生的特殊宿舍，讓一些沒有家庭支援或者曾有毒癮的年長釋囚解決生活上最大的難題。根據他們的需要，這一個住宿計劃理想地能讓他們住上一段較長的時間（例如 3 年），從而讓他們能夠重新適應釋放後的社會，並且在社工的協助下繼續解決毒癮問題及其他問題。這些宿舍既是一個解決長期問題而同時針對短期情況的方案，因爲這些宿舍能夠有彈性地針對這些年長釋囚的長期更生、重新融入社會的問題，亦可以同時解決一些年長釋囚對於住宿需要的燃眉之急，這對一些缺乏家庭支持、需要更多時間適應和重新融入釋放後社會的釋囚十分重要。

針對年長釋囚的需要，我們主要有以下三項建議：

住宿：擁有一個容身之處對於更生融入的過程相當重要。一個中轉宿舍能夠首要提供住宿需要，並且能夠更加集中針對釋囚的心理需要。

戒毒：這宿舍不僅僅是提供住宿地方和基本需要，並且減少受不良分子的影響。而在宿舍中亦會提供帶有信仰色彩的輔導或者進行義務工作的機會。

社區：政府和其他持分者需要通力合作去減少對於年長釋囚的歧視。並且應為年長、多次犯案、及短刑期人士制定康復政策及提供有關服務。

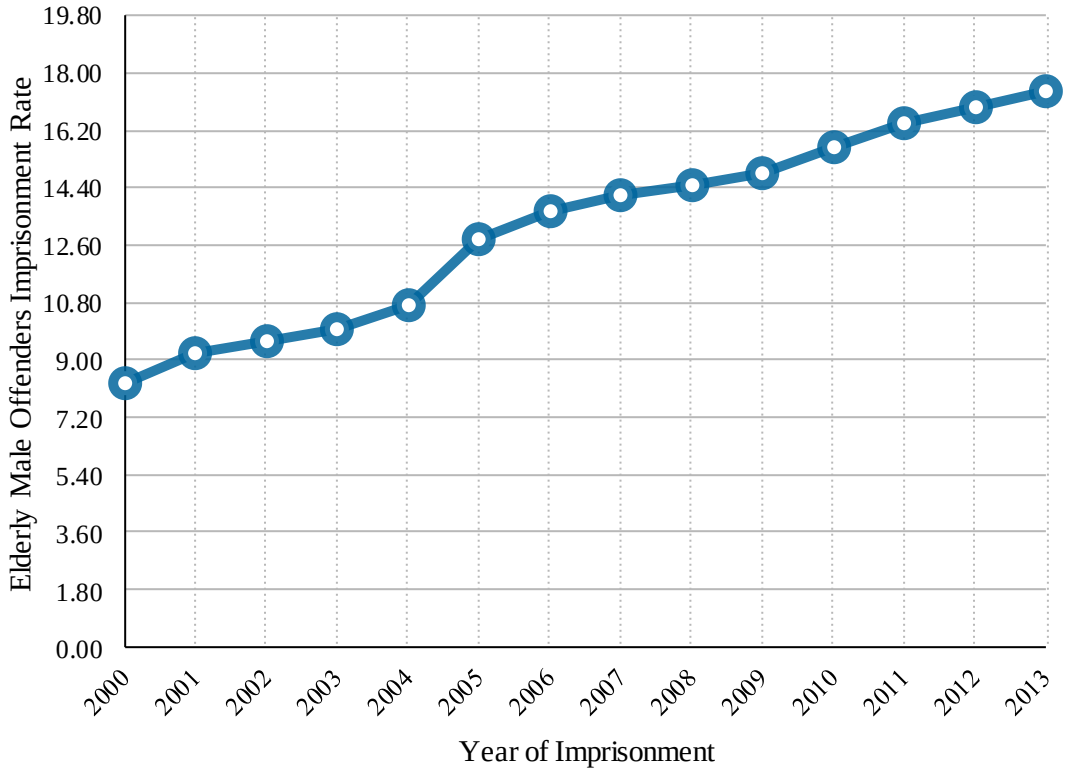
Background of the Study

Elderly ex-prisoners currently make up 4% of the services for ex-offenders within the Society for Community Organization's (SoCO) Care and Support Networking Team (CASNET) project. CASNET was launched in April 1, 2003 to provide social services for street-sleepers, ex-offenders, people with mental illness, and other underprivileged people residing in old urban areas within West Kowloon. The objectives of CASNET are to identify the vulnerable groups through outreach operations; match the needs of these groups with appropriate social and welfare services for integration into mainstream services through a case management strategy; and, enhance the ability of these groups to self-help as well as provide mutual help and promote a sense of belonging for further integration into their communities. For more information on CASNET, see SoCO (2013).

Although elderly ex-prisoners taking up 4% of the ex-offender bracket may appear proportionally small, the number of elderly ex-prisoners approaching NGOs for help and statistics from the Hong Kong Police Force show an increase in their numbers. The police note that arrests of elderly individuals aged 60 and above have increased from 1,100 in 2001 to 3,100 in 2011; and from working with these individuals, it was noted that elderly ex-prisoners face more barriers to rehabilitation than other ex-offender groups. Data that were obtained through the formal correspondence between SoCO and the Correctional Services Department (CSD) in December 2014 also show that the number of offenders becoming elderly is growing. In 2000, the number of males in prison who were elderly was 8.28% whereas in 2013, that rate was 17.43; in the same way, the number of inmates discharged by the CSD who were elderly males was 8.68% in 2000, which grew to 21.20% in 2013. Figures 1 and 2 show the rate of increase according to CSD data. If the numbers maintain their trajectory, then the percentage of elderly ex-offenders in CASNET will likely continue to increase in future. It is therefore important to enhance service provision to this sub-group and coordinate efforts towards reintegrating these individuals.

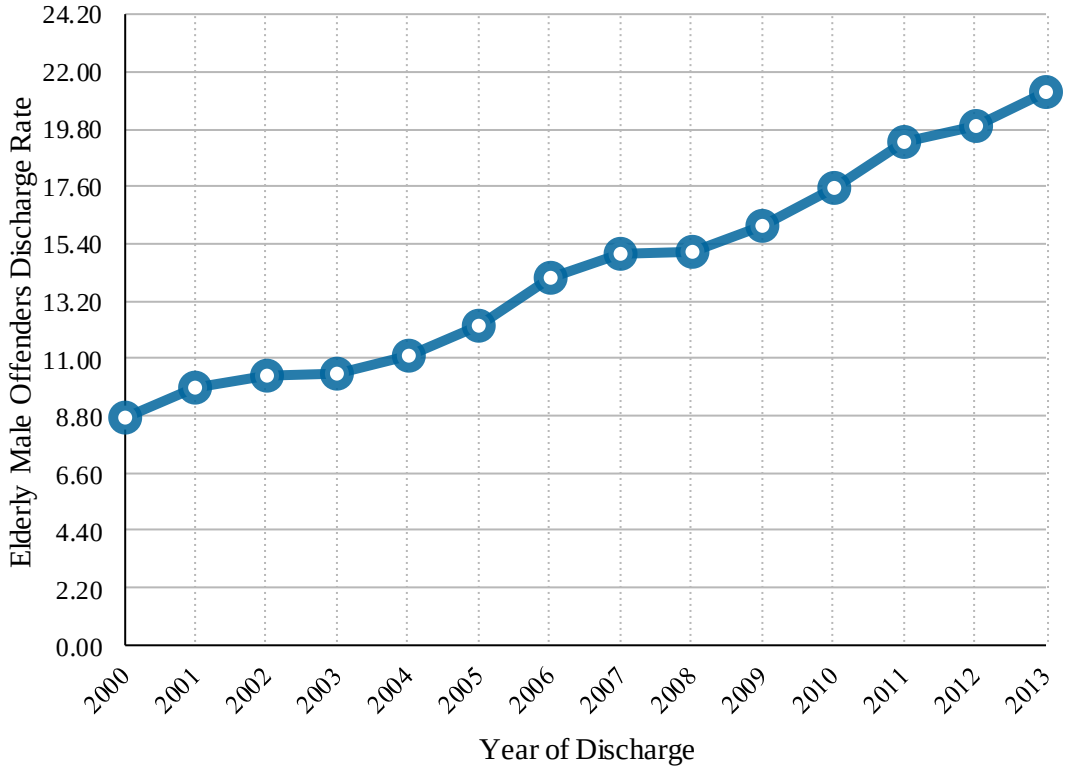
A 2002 study by the SoCO noted that ex-offenders in general were greatly disadvantaged in terms of their finances, employment, and accommodation. The study found that 87.3% of ex-offenders lived in inadequate housing, which encompasses those who live in tiny bed-space compartments [or subdivided flats] and the homeless, and that proportion increased to 94.9% in 2009 (SoCO, 2009). The 2009 study also found that ex-offenders take a large hit to their income after imprisonment with respondents having a median income of $10,000 before conviction and decreasing to a median of $5,000 after. With ex-offenders in general facing so many obstacles, the current study works to understand how much more difficult the situation may be for ex-prisoners who are elderly.

Figure 1. ***Rate of Imprisoned Elderly Male Prisoners from 2000 to 2013***



Source: Formal correspondence between SoCO and CSD in December 2014

Figure 2. ***Rate of Discharged Elderly Male Prisoners from 2000 to 2013***



Source: Formal correspondence between SoCO and CSD in December 2014

The aim of this research was therefore to generate more knowledge on the lived experiences of elderly ex-prisoners discharged from the prison. More specifically, this study investigated the needs of elderly ex-prisoners, including conditions pertaining to their accommodation, employment, relationships with family and peers, and self-esteem, and the difficulties and obstacles they encountered after discharge. The study worked towards understanding the necessary measures required to enhance the social rehabilitation project for elderly ex-prisoners—a population that remained unconsidered by the criminal justice system in general.

Study Scope

Purpose of Study

1. To determine the needs of elderly ex-prisoners to healthily reintegrate into society;
2. To explore the interaction of needs and their effects on the livelihood and well-being implications on elderly ex-prisoners; and,
3. To suggest areas that require attention or improvements to facilitate elderly ex-prisoner reintegration.

Elderly Ex-prisoners

In this study, the term "elderly ex-prisoner" shall be used to refer to individuals who have been previously convicted of a crime, were sent to a correctional institution, and were released back into society when over the age of 50.

Methodology

This study adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches to meet its objectives. The qualitative in-depth, semi-structured interviews located elderly ex-prisoners by enlisting the help of several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and sought criminal background information, previous correctional institution experiences, difficulties encountered after release, alleviating factors that helped reintegration, and views of how society and system could improve. Quantitative surveys were conducted with the same interviewees in a separate session, which meant that interviewees were seen at least twice to complete their data for the study. In total, 50 male participants were sampled with a mean age of 59.7 (SD = 6.17; for detailed demographic information pertaining to the sample, please refer to subsection "Demographic Information" in "Quantitative Findings: Statistical Data Results" of this report).

Sampling Method

Qualitative Data Collection

One-on-one, face-to-face interviews were conducted with purposively selected clients of different NGOs serving elderly ex-prisoners to understand their challenges and needs as well as identify conditions that facilitated reintegration. A total of 50 individuals who were identified by various social service providers as appropriate for the scope of this study were then approached. All research participants consented to be interviewed for this study after initial contact through face-to-face meetings or via the telephone if they had one.

Interviewees were met either in the offices of the aforementioned organizations or at locations where they could feel at ease, which included their place of abode, a cafe, and a public park. Most interviews were completed in single 1.5 hour sittings although there were 5 incidences where the interviewee had conflicting commitments and interviews had to be completed over 2 sessions. As an exploratory study, this qualitative segment was the primary means to gather data as it allowed for deeper exploration of interviewee backgrounds, more detailed accounts of experiences, and clarification of views. Such firsthand information helps in determining the scope and benchmark for further studies and immediate policy considerations.

The semi-structured, in-depth interviews followed an overall structure of asking for participants' information, including,

- History with correctional services (experiences with institutions and its programmes and facilities, how they entered the system, overall positive and negative impressions of the system, and so on);
- Recollection of services received from the government, NGOs, and other sources in the period immediately following release;
- Experiences of impact of those services in relation to their ability to reintegrate;
- Most effective items that helped them maintain the path to reintegration;
- Most challenging items that continually attract them back towards a life of crime; and,
- Recommendations on improvements to services that would better facilitate reintegration.

Permission was obtained to record all interviews with a digital voice recorder before the beginning of the session. The audio was later transcribed from Cantonese into English for data analysis. Where locally specific terms were used by interviewees, transcribers would translate the text but supplement that segment with the original Chinese text as well as a brief translator's note to aid analysis and maintain interpretive integrity.

Quantitative Data Collection

In this study, the qualitative data are the focus because they provide us with the insights to improve services for elderly ex-prisoners; however, the study was supplemented with a quantitative survey as a means to enhance the validity and reliability of the data. Due to the special circumstances of some interviewees without an abode, some of these surveys were conducted in cafeterias where they were able to have a meal while working through the questions. Nonetheless, all interviewees were given a space and necessary time to complete the questionnaire in comfort.

The survey instrument took about at least an hour to complete in a single sitting and all interviewees completed this section in one session. The survey itself was composed of 10 parts,

1. General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg et al., 1997; Li et al., 2009), a 12-item scale that measured the general health condition of the interviewee.
2. Perceived Devaluation/Discrimination Scale (Link et al., 1997), an 8-item scale that measured the interviewee's perceived stigma.
3. CRIME-PICS II (Frude, Honess, & Maguire, 1994), a 15-item inventory that measured the interviewee's perception of the seriousness of the current life problems.
4. Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988; Yik, 2007), a 20-item scale that measured positive and negative emotions affecting the interviewee.
5. Personal Experience and Institutional Life Questionnaire, a 32-item scale that was specifically developed for this study to obtain factual information of the interviewee's past experiences in the system and to confirm interview recollections.
6. Substance Abuse Scale (Shek, 2005), a 9-item scale that measured the interviewee's substance abuse patterns.
7. Employment Status Questionnaire, a 9-item scale that was designed for this study to obtain factual information of the interviewee's past and current employment experiences and to confirm interview responses.
8. Subjective Well-Being Scale (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982; Tang, 2008), a 20-item scale that measured the interviewee's subjective well-being.
9. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Cheng & Chan, 2004), a 12-item scale that measured the interviewee's perceived social support with family, friends, and significant others.
10. Demographic Information Questionnaire, an 8-item questionnaire obtaining factual demographic information about the interviewee such as age, marital status, accommodation type, and so on.

The quantitative data should not be treated as generalizable due to the purposive sample collected; however, it should be recognized as supplementary information to strengthen the qualitative data collected. It is also data about this specific sample, who speaks in their qualitative segment about the experiences of the larger group, and therefore its confirmation of the qualitative portion is generalizable.

Limitations

The study is an exploratory study and because of this there is little precedent to work with. The issue of elderly ex-prisoners has become prominent as social workers from various NGOs began to note how this specific population appeared to face more trouble than other clients. In this way, the area is relatively new in Hong Kong and there is no specific study or data regarding this population, leading to the use of purposive sampling methods.

The use of purposive sampling therefore requires qualitative data to improve reliability and validity rather than quantitative data. For this reason, time and resources were important considerations in the design of this study and reaching out to other organizations to help locate this population was vital to obtaining enough interviewees to provide a comprehensive first look at the issue. Nonetheless, a purposive sample could be criticized for bias and while the study has worked to eliminate any bias, by the nature of the sample itself, some bias should be expected. One such bias that should be taken note of is that interviewees were recruited by and from NGOs, which is why their views of the NGOs—though not always—were generally quite positive. At this time, it is not possible to locate other elderly ex-prisoners as there are no known networks to recruit from.

In this way, all interviewees were also in touch with NGOs in some capacity and those who may be completely without help and without means were not a part of this study. Interviewees were also difficult to locate for interviews as they each faced unique personal challenges that either made them unable to keep track of time or difficult to reach during certain periods. Persistence was required therefore to locate, and then interview and survey some of these individuals to meet the 100% response rate for the 50 interviewees. The sample is therefore made up of individuals with an immediate and current link with a participating NGO.

Qualitative Findings: A System of Needs

The hierarchy of needs was comprehensively presented by Abraham Maslow in his 1954, *Motivation and Personality*, and is now a classic means of understanding the important elements that make for a wholesome individual life. According to this theory, every human being must fulfill certain needs before being able to fully explore and fill other needs at higher, more abstract levels. The most fundamental of these needs were what Maslow called "deficiency needs," which contain physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging, and esteem as categories. These needs were called "deficiency needs" because Maslow theorized that the lack of these items motivated people to act so that they would obtain or achieve them. The hierarchy of needs provides a helpful model for understanding where elderly ex-prisoners require the most support and, through the work already done, provide meaningful social strategies to approach these areas. Before this could be applied to our study, it would be helpful to define concepts and discuss caveats to the use of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

First, while Maslow proposed that the needs were sequential—starting with basic physiological needs and moving up, this study does not see this sequence as an adequate reflection of our population. The report sees the model as a system of interconnected factors rather than a hierarchy because the categories are not assumed to follow the same order as portrayed in Maslow's theory although we agree that physiological aspects are the most primary need. The hierarchy concept assumes an individualistic society in its ordering and has been considered ethnocentric (Hofstede, 1984; Rajasakran, Sinnappan, & Raja, 2014; Wei et al., 2014). Further, following the hierarchy strictly has neither been validated by research nor contributed significantly to a discussion on needs (Nankervis et al., 2013; Wahba & Bridwell, 1976). To this end, it would be more helpful to use Maslow and his theory as a framework for identifying deficiencies in elderly ex-prisoner needs rather than an applied model for explaining the inability of elderly ex-prisoners to rise to self-actualization.

Second, a brief discussion of each need used to categorize and understand the data is in order. Following Maslow's traditional format, the study begins with physiological needs. This need category is considered the most basic as it refers to physical survival requirements and consists of items such as air, water, food, shelter, and clothing. The lack of any element is a severe disadvantage to a person's livelihood and social survivability. For these reasons, this study contends that it is the only category that requires immediate attention where there is a lack. The lack of physiological needs provides motivation to obtain better living conditions through biological compulsions such as hunger, sleepiness, or pain.

The next need category in Maslow's model is security and safety needs. Security and safety needs refer to the requirement for stability and relative peace of mind in an individual's life. This category includes the needs of health and well-being, stable employment, property ownership, family safety net, and relative stability. The lack of these needs means that an individual finds life to be uncertain and therefore makes it difficult for them to plan ahead and build up their self-confidence. This could therefore make a person unreliable because nothing is stable enough to invest time and energy into. The lack of security and safety needs motivates individuals for better conditions through the promise of a future and foreseeable stability.

Love and belonging needs refer to a person's interpersonal needs and the desire to belong. Fulfilling this need requires wholesome friendships, close family support, intimacy with other people, and accepting communities. An individual who lacks in any of these needs experiences loneliness, anxiety, and depression, which leads to demotivation and withdrawal from normal activities. This could make a person unable to work or otherwise contribute to society. A lack of love and belonging motivates individuals to better their conditions by compelling them to engage with other people and to participate in the making of society.

The penultimate of Maslow's categories—self-esteem needs—speaks to the desire for people to be respected and recognized. This need speaks to a person's self-value and is best understood by the elements of self-confidence, personal achievements, possessing the respect of others, meaningful connections, and a sense of individuality. Someone who is lacking in this category of needs will likely develop an inferiority or superiority complex. This was manifested in the study by persons who primarily placed blame for their condition on other people. A lack of self-esteem motivates people by pushing them to seek their place in the world and make a difference in society.

The final need that Maslow discussed was self-actualization. This is a category that is rarely reached and should therefore be understood specifically in the context of elderly ex-prisoners in this study. Normally, self-actualization refers to an individual who feels fulfilled and is achieving everything they are capable of; however, in this study, self-actualization refers to an elderly ex-prisoner who feels fulfilled and is achieving everything they are able to given their past experiences and present circumstances. Unlike the previous need categories, self-actualization does not motivate individuals from its lack but, rather, from its being. That is, the motivation for self-actualization is to continue self-actualizing because this is the peak of an individual's life and it is where they have found their life purpose. Because of this, self-actualized individuals are motivated simply by the fact that they have self-actualized.

Self-actualization is composed of elements such as strong morality, high creativity, life purpose, finding meaning, and reaching inner potential. Maslow used self-actualization to describe the elite 1% of human beings, therefore not very many people are expected to reach it. In Maslow's formulation, because it was a hierarchy, a person must have fulfilled

every other need before they would be able to reach this stage. However, because this study only uses Maslow as a framework to identify needs, we have included it in our analysis and reworked it to better suit the sample and population in question. While most of the research participants appeared to have some inclination towards self-actualization, only one of them (Case 12) had managed to achieve it by this study's definition above. It is important to point out that this study used purposive sampling to recruit participants; thus, the occurrence of this case is no indication of the probability of success for elderly ex-prisoners as a population.

This describes the hierarchy of needs that will be presented in the following section. Each need is presented twice: first, when some of its elements are lacking and second, when its elements are fulfilled. This is done to better understand the effect that fulfilling this need would have on the elderly ex-prisoner and how this contributes to decreasing or increasing the risk of recidivism. Further to the section on needs, the study also compiled a list of other alleviating and aggravating criminal risk factors that did not appear to fit in any of the needs noted.

Physiological Needs

Results show that the most pressing physiological concern for elderly ex-prisoners is shelter. Those with this need unmet and those with it met both point to similar benefits from having accommodation. Because this is the one topic or subject that occurs in every interview, we find this to be the central and most pressing concern that needs to be addressed going forward.

Unmet Needs

When asked about physiological needs that elderly ex-prisoners immediately need, several difficulties were brought to light by many of the interviewees. Case 10 summarizes some of the key concerns when he responds to inquiries on challenges after being released when he says,

> There were a myriad of difficulties: money, accommodation, and food. I slept under the bridge and got together with some old druggy friends. I was tempted to use drugs again. Every time I do, I end up breaking the law and going back to jail. I was desperate for some money for heroin. Jobless and homeless, I had no money for lunch even.

The physiological challenges facing elderly ex-prisoners are many but the overwhelming majority of interviewees—about 90%—highlighted that finding shelter was the most pressing concern. Case 9 echoes the sentiment of other interviewees when he responds to the importance of shelter from his experience, saying,

> Regardless of clothing and food, it is most important to go through the application for public rental housing as quick as possible. I was turned down several times in prison

> before I knew my imprisonment term and the procedure delayed all the way. If the application were approved earlier, I would have gotten a unit right after discharge but I was left helpless and faced a whole year of waiting. Having no place to live can't possibly be called rehabilitation, can it?

These two cases point out two major consequences of being unable to provide decent shelter for ex-prisoners. First, the lack of decent shelter may push them back to their old haunts where they may get involved with bad company again. This will put them highly at risk of falling back into a life of crime, if not a life of drugs (Broome et al., 1997). Second, this situation places them in desperate circumstances and removes a stable platform from which they could rebuild their lives again. Case 7 points out this situation well throughout his interview, arguing,

> In my opinion, there is no hope without a place to live. It's no wonder so many people become drug addicts. [Social worker X] once said to me that it was pointless to grant drug addicts a unit to help them beat drugs. I told him he had no clue about homelessness. If I have to move around with a backpack every day, what more do I have to expect from life?

Case 7 also mentions that,

> There is no hope when you wander the streets. You can't give an address for job interviews. Forget the criminal record, no one will hire you if you don't even have an address. Who will be responsible if something happens at the company? You can't be released on bail if you can't provide an address. You need an address, even if it's only a cubicle apartment. Otherwise, the authorities won't be able to hold you accountable.

Case 7 relates homelessness to hopelessness because both welfare organizations and employers have reasons for not providing accommodation. For welfare organizations, this is tied to the presentability of the homeless person. If they are afflicted with specific problems, such as drug addiction, then those organizations may be less willing to provide aid in view of their own overstretched resources. For employers, there is considerable risk in hiring an employee that has no fixed address and is essentially untraceable. Being homeless has severe knock-on effects on the ability to obtain other needs, and as Case 19 shows, it also affects other physiological needs when he says,

> Accommodation is the most important thing. If you don't have decent place to stay, you get worn down quickly. How could you fall asleep if your sleeping area is full of lice?

From the interviews, it was clear that accommodation and shelter is by far the most urgent need—physiological or otherwise—facing elderly ex-prisoners. Unfortunately, despite this pressing situation, many interviewee experiences reverberate with that of Case 21's, as he shares,

> What worries me most is my accommodation. The limited help of the [government organization X] can't keep up with my rent. Without a down payment or paying rent in advance, I am unable to afford accommodation and have to sleep on the street.

Met Needs

While many interviewees pointed out accommodation as an issue that requires to be immediately addressed, not all of them lack shelter. Those who have shelter share their good fortune in a way that confirms the difficulties above. A stark example of this could be found in Case 2's job hunt as he recounts that,

> I went for an interview after I saw that advertisement. Funnily, the employer recognized me from a newspaper report over my removal as a homeless person but then I told him that I have moved into a public housing flat now. He hired me immediately and I have working under him since that morning!

This has had positive knock-on effects for Case 2 as he continues to point out,

> Now I have a flat, a job and someone who cares for me! What more do I want? When I was homeless, no one cared about me. Now I have a flat. I have friends.

While not everyone that has found accommodation has had such a turnaround in their lives, having it places them at a larger advantage of placing their lives in order and obtaining the stability to properly reintegrate into society. Conversely, accommodation helps to turn people away from crime by rational choice: what they stand to lose is far greater than what they can gain from going back to their old ways. This is best illustrated by Case 15, when he says,

> I am old and afraid of returning to prison again. I would lose everything if I served time in prison. All of my personal belongings would be confiscated if I were arrested. Moreover, I am getting ready for public housing and I wouldn't risk stealing and going to jail. The application for public housing would be called off if I went to jail. The authority would consider the application invalid.

The hope for accommodation and holding on to it is an important consideration for many elderly ex-prisoners. Because of that, being able to obtain accommodation marks a turning point in their lives. It this turning point especially that has the potential to keep them on the path away from crime and drugs.

Security and Safety Needs

For security and safety needs, the most important area to tackle is employment. There are several reasons why elderly ex-prisoners are unable to obtain jobs after their return to society but one large influence is the shame that is associated with the stigma of a criminal record. The aspect of employment also occurs in every interview and is an area that is very important alongside accommodation. As was noted above, however, accommodation has a higher priority because it is usually a crucial component in securing employment.

Unmet Needs

Pertaining to safety and security needs, two major factors place interviewees at a disadvantage. The first and more dire need in this category is the difficulty in securing

employment. As Case 7 had previously shared, homelessness hurts opportunities to secure employment because the lack of a permanent address implies a lack of accountability to potential employers. Hong Kong society's general mistrust of strangers then adds to an employer's rationale not to risk hiring such a person. As Case 10 shares,

> People inevitably look down on discharged inmates. My family is slightly unpleasant to me, but family is family. I don't have a wife, otherwise I imagine we would have been divorced. This also unquestionably affects my employment. Due to my criminal record, I was rejected for the position of a security guard that I previously applied for. I can only do cleaning work at present. I would never dream of working for the government. Background checks are necessary even to clean at the government's offices. Emigration is also not an option since I have a criminal record.

The stigma of a criminal record goes a long way as Case 10 states. Applying for jobs brings shame as records of past crimes are uncovered and held against prospective employment. To make matters worse, elderly ex-prisoners have their age as an additional barrier to employment as well as Case 21 points out, "I had a difficult time after discharge. I can hardly find a job because I am old." Despite the stigma of their criminal history and old age, elderly ex-prisoners are generally willing to work and many of their sentiments are reflected in Case 5's experience when he notes,

> I go to libraries every day to read the newspapers and look for work to do. Come to the tunnel and take a look at the newspapers and job advertisements I have piled up. I am really looking for a job. I don't care about the salary. I just want a job to kill time. It's good if I could stay healthy and stable of course [...] I am very bored.

Another challenge in employment for elderly ex-prisoners is the fact that they tend to be the most dispensable of employees. Because of the stigma of crime, they tend to obtain low-level jobs that are the first to be terminated in the event that an employer needs to cut cost. This was the experience of Case 8 when he shared,

> I was fired when the statutory minimum wage came into force, when the hourly wage was raised to $28 per hour. I earned $6,800 per month previously but after the rate was increased to $28 per hour, my monthly salary would be increased to over $10,000 since I worked for about 11 hours a day. No one would hire an odd-job worker for more than $10,000, so the company sacked me on the pretext of my poor behaviour.

In Case 8's account, the possibility exists that his employers used his criminal background against him as a reason for termination after the introduction of statutory minimum wage. Such a situation again demonstrates the difficulty of not only finding a job but also holding on to it for this population of elderly ex-prisoners.

Another difficulty that is common in the security and safety category is poor health. This is generally also tied to employment as Cases 4 and 19 express in saying, "I don't have much strength. Since I am sick and old, no one is willing to hire me," and "Because of my poor health, I am always frustrated since I can't find work. I have failed to fulfill any of my aspirations in a long run."

The accounts above show that poor health contributes to the inability to find work, which places more pressure on needs for safety and security. Without this, as Case 19 explains, individuals become frustrated in their day-to-day lives as they are unable to achieve stability in their livelihoods. This is a large psychological burden that makes their situation increasingly more difficult. Case 6 presents another instance where poor health, in his case disability, impacts his physiological need of shelter as he is unable to reach his own home, pointing out, "This place does me no good at all. I am homeless now because I cannot get my wheelchair up the hill to where I live in Pak Tin Estate. The whole thing is just a terrible mismatch."

Cases such as 6 are less common though they nonetheless highlight one possible debilitating outcome of poor health while also demonstrating the interconnectedness of the needs in the system. Moreover, the impact of poor health is likely to lead to further deterioration of health. Case 19 expresses this best with his point that, "I ruptured my joint then my entire leg became infected by bacteria and it's becoming numb. It's feels like I'm about to get a stroke now as well. I cannot walk properly and it's frustrating." This case of a seemingly worsening situation highlights the reality of many other cases: that each challenge is taken day-by-day and every next day may be worse than the one before for those who have not.

Met Needs

When the need of employment is met, elderly ex-prisoners are more able to settle down and accept their circumstances. Their age is a key reason to consider a different pace in life than the one they may have previously led. A job with a steady income is a good reason for individuals not to re-enter a life of crime as Case 2 explains,

> Since I started working, I never thought of re-offending. I am very happily earning about HK$11,000 a month and I have savings after my expenses! I am content, so why should I re-offend? I am also too old to re-offend!

Case 22 also highlights this link between reducing criminality and holding a job when he says, "I have a normal job. I deliver soft drinks. I have been behaving myself for nearly a decade now." Another explanation for the crime-alleviating influence of a job could be self-fulfillment. Having been in prison for a good part of their lives, holding down a job helps elderly ex-prisoners return to some sense of normalcy and participation in society. As Case 12, an author, notes,

> As I started my writing, more and more people read it. I sold a number each time and earned my living. Now, I wished I could write more. There is so much hope.

A job provides individuals with a sense of hope and participation, which is why it is another important area that requires addressing in the current system. If jobs are provided to ex-prisoners, it will make returning to crime far less attractive.

Love and Belonging Needs

People must belong: if not with good company then it will be with bad company, and this is a large problem for elderly ex-prisoners. Although this category is not the most important in terms of needs, it is one that is closest to the hearts of interviewees as they speak more at length about their families and relationships than any other topic. In a collectivist society like Hong Kong, the fulfillment of this need is indeed important because without a group to belong to, individuals are left to fend for themselves and are cut off from many social resources such as contacts or even a home to go back to. The family is an important part of caring for this need, so it would be important to work on healing family relationships in this regard.

Unmet Needs

While the lack of family support is a major vulnerability, it is deviant peers that lead people back to a life of crime. Usually, the effect that deviant peers have are not immediately obvious and it is better to stay away from them outright. Case 3 points this out by noting that,

> My friends don't help except in luring me back into drugs. They will encourage me to lend them money. I tell them that I have money because I quit heroin but that money is for my wife, not for their drugs. I have to save money for myself.

Case 3 points out that deviant peers do not directly bring people back into crime but there is a possibility of bringing them back by gradually involving them in degrees and then getting them entangled in criminal situations. In the point of Case 3, he draws the line for his spouse but many elderly ex-prisoners we interviewed did not have this reason to desist or deny their associates. Indeed, Case 14 was more actively brought back into possible deviance when he shares, "It's not that simple. You're lured back into old habits. The triad group needed me badly since there was no new blood."

Other times, deviant peers are said to be difficult to resist, to a point where it could change the course of a person's rehabilitation. Case 25 speaks of how his friends brought him back to a life he thought he left behind,

> I swear the influence of friends is immense. I was filled with hope in prison after meeting with [NGO X]. I was away from drugs, meeting with the association regularly, looking for a job, and waiting for training after being discharged. Nonetheless, after a month or two, I just knew that everything was in vain.

One of the largest influences of deviant friends is simply that they feed individuals with a different mindset, one that is pro-offending and anti-social. As individuals associate more with one group than the other, different mindsets take precedence in the individual's mind and when an individual has too many deviant friends, it is normal for the deviant mindset to take hold (Sutherland, 1947). As with above, Case 15 shows how rehabilitation can be reversed by reintegrating back into more deviant behaviours through bad influence when he says,

> I left the church and got back with my old friends again. After leaving church, I continued smoking and drinking like before. I didn't care about finding a job and eventually got into drugs again.

Later in the interview, Case 15 admits that,

> I don't know how to take control of my time and my life. I don't know how to get new friends that are proper. I ended up sticking with my old friends. I don't go to places like church since I don't want them to make me a fanatic. I refuse to go to church and kept things to myself. I have too much time to spend now, so I resort to heroin, since it makes time go much faster.

The way we see the world is important to the opportunities we recognize for rehabilitating. Case 15 did not feel like he belonged with a "proper" group of people and ended up returning to where he was most comfortable before. The rehabilitation work previously done to put him in a place where he may be able to reintegrate was undone when he made that decision to return. For individuals like this, the most common condition is for them to have bad friends but the lack of familial support to help them turn away from their previous lives is also a factor. Case 23 points this out well when he says,

> I have tried drug rehabilitation many times, 13 or 14 times perhaps. I am confident I can quit using drug; I just need a little help. It's easy to quit but difficult to maintain because I don't have a warm and supportive family. As a single man, the only people I hang out with are my bad friends.

Without a family to help or even just take up his time, Case 23 finds it easier to associate with his deviant peers. Family, however, is one of the biggest things that elderly ex-prisoners lose when they are released. Culturally, because of the shame imprisonment entails, families are not always ready to welcome them back. This, however denies them of certain affective protections and leaves them vulnerable to turn back to crime again. As Case 21 points out, family is perhaps one of the most devastating things lost for elderly ex-prisoners:

> I lost a lot of things spending so much time in prison. I lost my family and their trust. There is no more mutual trust and they don't believe I change anymore. Committing crimes over and over again, I have turned my own family against me.

This rejection from their family as well as the guilt and shame they have to bear makes it exceedingly hard for elderly ex-prisoners rehabilitate. There is also a sense that they are constantly being looked down upon, which provides constant demotivation for them to return to satisfactory livelihoods once more. Case 12 provides a brief description of the situation they constantly face, saying,

> My family looks down on me. Inmates are disconnected from society. I once asked where I should sit in a gathering with them, and my sons yelled at me saying that I should just sit where there was a seat.

Thus far, the consequences outlined occur on the emotional level and point at sources for demotivation. This is not the only consequence of strained family relationships

however and Case 19 exemplifies a harsher consequence where the attitude of family members actually has an effect on the physiological needs of the elderly ex-prisoner. In this case, his estranged wife's attitude makes it difficult for him to obtain affordable accommodation as he shares,

> We didn't get a divorce. We were estranged and I haven't been able to find her. I tried to look for her for a divorce, but now I don't know what to do. She is dragging my feet since I cannot apply for public housing right now without a divorce. I am just desperate to leave the current cubicle apartment and get public housing. There is even no room for me to dry out my clothes right now.

As can be seen the lack of fulfillment in love and belonging needs leads to a worsened state of rehabilitation and, with the wrong friends, it could bring a person almost immediately back to a life of crime and render society's rehabilitation efforts pointless.

Met Needs

When family support is present, it tends to have a very positive effect on elderly ex-prisoners. Converse to the effects of its lack, family support helps to motivate elderly ex-prisoners to desist from further criminality and keep them on the path of rehabilitation. Case 11, for examples, says,

> I am given a chance at rehabilitation, so I will behave well. My family has been supportive for so long. I would never commit wrongdoing again. I still know ways to break the law but I am not doing it anymore.

Case 15 backs this statement up by noting that,

> Family is another reason for desisting. It puts pressure on me and makes me realize that I will really lose everything and wait to die if I commit a crime again.

Beyond general family support, being in a family also helps by imbuing a sense of responsibility through the roles they take up in the family. Case 9, for example, decided to turn his life around because he needed to take responsibility as a father:

> I was not in myself and that made my daughters sad. After coming to [Hostel X], I thought it over and I decided that I wanted to be a better father. I did not want to embarrass them, so I made the decision to stay on after treatment.

Case 9 committed himself to cleaning up and becoming a father that was worthy of his daughters. This decision made him commit to the path of drug rehabilitation. Case 20 also illustrates the case of a son wanting to take responsibility and make up for his past mistakes to his parents after release, saying,

> I meet up with my parents from time to time so I can take care of them and go out to dim sum with them. I want to compensate for my wrongdoings. I couldn't take good care of myself yet but I want to meet my obligation to them as a son and give them some warmth while they are still alive.

Here, we see that one of the major ways in which having a family helps is by providing individuals with roles that they can fit into and regain a sense of normal life. Another way

that family support helps in the reintegration of individuals is more practical as Case 9 shares,

> My family guided me around the city after I was discharge so that I could get used to society again. They gave me clothes and shoes and things I needed to help me on my way.

Families provide practical and material support to help elderly ex-prisoners get back into the rhythm of social life and towards attaining some sense of normalcy. This is also a very big component of reintegrating these individuals back into society. Another means of reintegration comes in the form of a new community. Whereas deviant peers get ex-prisoners into trouble, a new community would be able to set them towards law-abidance. Case 19 was aware of this as he shares of his initiatives to turn things around while still in prison, "In order to prepare me to get new normal friends and stay away from my old friends, I attended seminars in prison by [NGO X] and so on."

It appears that efforts by Christian organizations are helpful in providing elderly ex-prisoners with finding a new community. All mention of finding new communities to be in come from interviewees that had encountered Christian organizations during their time in prison or while they were being rehabilitated from drugs. Certainly, the ideas of the Christian religion were also largely acknowledged by interviewees as making them turn away from a life of crime through changing the way they see the world. Case 7, for example, points out that,

> I quit drugs in 2008, and when I say quit, I mean quit. I went for gospel rehabilitation and realized that life was unfair. I was not a fair person in the past either. I don't understand why I wanted to be treated fairly when I was not fair to others myself. I befriend you but reject him, where is the fairness in that? I was naïve and blamed society for all the unfairness. I am not an educated person, but after knowing God, I have more understanding of the world. I have been working hard and studying a lot.

By accepting that nothing is fair in this world, it appears that Case 7 has accepted his place in this world and come to see that crime is not the solution to the unfair state of things. Instead of addressing unfairness by himself being unfair, he turned to working harder and studying more to try to be fairer. Another point that the Christian religion brings is a high standard for behaviour. Case 10 points this out when he says, "I may yet fulfill the standards of Christian behaviour but I am not going to rob, steal, or abuse drugs again." Carrying on from his point above, Case 7 demonstrates the change in his behaviour, saying,

> God's grace can never be neglected in making me who I am today. I would be ungrateful without God's grace. I did not care if I hurt someone else before but I am more considerate now. Wrongdoings were not a concern for me before I knew God. Money mattered most to me. I was not a vicious person but I still would not care much about anything before. Today, I helped an old woman take her groceries. I would never have done that in the past since there was no benefit to me.

Case 7 links the way his perspectives on life have changed to his behaviour because of his belief in the Christian God. According to Case 7, he is able to obtain a sense of love from understanding the Christian God and this motivates him to rethink his actions. Further, the standards of good behaviour are high in the Christian religion, which appears to sensitize individuals who have encountered the Christian message to their own behaviour. Yet another way that the Christian worldview aids in rehabilitation is through providing care to elderly ex-prisoners. Case 18 shares,

> I can't tell what is going to happen in the future and I may seek help from church in the future, but right now I would love to help church instead. I shouldn't say this since they don't feel like I do, but I owe the church a lot. It has been supportive and encouraging to me especially when I was unemployed—not to mention they eventually got me a job. I can't tell you how grateful I am. We respect one another.

Christian organizations appear to provide aid for those who are able to reach them and some interviewees feel that this need could be met by churches. Indeed, churches do seem to be a meaningful way of entering a new community and in this way, it is possible that Christianity provides the most straightforward route to new communities aside from familial support.

Self-Esteem Needs

For Maslow, self-esteem was the highest of the basic needs. It speaks to the need of requiring to be respected as an individual and to be treated with some degree of dignity. In this category, discrimination was the only thing that elderly ex-prisoners spoke of. Interviewees did not spend much time lingering on this topic as they seemed resigned to accept this as a consequence of their past actions. Nonetheless, the danger from not having this need met at this time appears minimal in contrast to previously mentioned needs. The data here will prove more valuable as the other needs are addressed in the future.

Unmet Needs

Discrimination presents itself as the largest problem to the self-esteem of elderly ex-prisoners. Interviewees note how people around them change their behaviour, which leaves interviewees more cynical and encourages them to adopt a more negative view of life and society. It could be argued that such discrimination could lead to what Edwin Lemert (1967) calls "secondary deviance," where an individual makes their deviant identity the essence of who they are and thus embarks on a criminal career; however, arguing this would be to misunderstand the population since elderly ex-prisoners already see themselves as past criminals. They are now either repentant or acceptant of it, and the aim of this study is to understand how to make them susceptible to repentance such that they may be rehabilitated into Hong Kong society.

To this end, it is important to understand how discrimination influences elderly ex-prisoners. Case 10 provides a glimpse into this condition when he shares that, "People in general inevitably look down on discharged inmates. My family is slightly unpleasant with me, but family is family. I don't have a wife, or we would get divorced." Discrimination adds to the burden of reconciliation with family members as people prefer not to be associated with ex-prisoners. Public reactions also discourage elderly ex-prisoners from trying to reintegrate and contributing back to society as their shame and guilt may be accentuated by such encounters. Case 12 shares of this dilemma when he recounts that,

> I could seek help in the daytime when I get lost but at night, I become lost with what to do. I can find my way home during the day somehow but I can't do it at night. The first job I had after being released was in Shau Kei Wan. I had to get to North Point from Wah Fu by tram and I didn't know how. I asked for help from a housewife who was surprised at my ignorance at first and then she taught me to take tram. She then asked if I came from mainland, and I explained that I just got out of jail. She immediately asked me to leave her alone after that. This was just one of the encounters I had of running into a wall daily.

This example showcases the interplay between elderly ex-prisoners and the public. Elderly ex-prisoners need help to reintegrate but public reactions as well as their own sense of shame drives them away from looking for public support. This could only push elderly ex-prisoners further away from society unless they have their own support networks. Furthermore, discrimination is not only a matter of respect, a good number of elderly ex-prisoners point out that it severely hampers their chances of securing a job. On this front, the tension between ex-offenders and non-offenders has two main effects: first, employers discriminate against hiring them after a criminal background check as Case 4 shares,

> What I remember most was the moment I was released and could not find any jobs with my criminal record. I was being discriminated against. The employers would find out of my criminal history once they checked my background.

Implied in Case 4 is the second effect of this tension, and this is that elderly ex-prisoners held preconceived notions of discrimination, which leads to them not applying for jobs because they are already certain that no one would want them on account of their histories. This loop of negative thoughts and public reinforcement for those negative thoughts plays a large role in their demotivation and hampers their rehabilitative efforts.

Met Needs

In the interviews, there is also not so much in this need category pertaining to needs met. Two concepts that did occur were hope and respect. Hope is placed in this category because it appeared to be giving individuals a sense of dignity through keeping them thinking of better possible futures. Case 1 puts this position best when he says,

> It really depends on whether you have given up in life or not. If your heart is dead, you would simply accept this vicious cycle of re-offending and drug-taking.

The motivation for change comes from the hope that their condition is not a pronouncement for the rest of their lives. If they have not given up—that is, if they had hope for their future—then they would continue to work towards better livelihoods. One place where hope in life could be found for elderly ex-prisoners is in psychological counselling coupled with religion as Case 13 shares,

> The Bible, in my perspective, is advanced psychology. I was obsessed with drugs because I didn't know how to get rid of it. Like people venting their frustrations after work, I used drugs to drown my sorrows. The centre here applies biblical principles and psychology and guides you to get rid of the obsession through other means such as talking to others and reading. Drug addiction is, after all, psychological problem. It is significant to stay optimistic and positive.

Psychological counselling is important to provide individuals with mental strategies to address their addiction and, in this particular case, when it is placed alongside Christian teachings, could facilitate rehabilitation by instilling an "optimistic and positive" attitude and providing hope for the future. Finally, this sense of esteem could also be achieved simply by the ex-prisoner being released back into a supportive family. This respect from family members encourages good behaviour and makes people consider their second chance at life seriously as Case 9 shares,

> I have been given a chance to rehabilitate, so I will behave well. My family has been supportive of me for ages. I will never commit wrongdoing again. I know ways to break the law still but I am not doing it anymore.

Self-Actualization

Self-actualization is the final need that Maslow discussed. This category is to be understood only in the context of elderly ex-prisoners in this study. We refer to the case of self-actualization here as an elderly ex-prisoner who feels fulfilled and is achieving everything they are able to in light of their past experiences and present circumstances. While most interviewees have some inclination towards self-actualization, only one interviewee (Case 12) could be said to achieve it. This section is not a depiction of his care, however, but is only used to show inclinations towards it by other interviewees. While Maslow's hierarchy requires that individuals fulfill previous needs before being able to reach this stage, this study demonstrates that there are other means to achieve similar psychological conditions in elderly ex-prisoners.

Because self-actualization is not so much a need as it is a condition, it is not something that can be "unmet" per se. This is therefore only a collection of possible pathways to self-actualization as expressed in our interviews. At the centre of feeling self-actualized is having a sense of purpose, which turns elderly ex-prisoners further away from returning

to crime and sets their efforts on contributing back to society. Case 9 puts well the importance of having a vision when he notes,

> Everyone has a goal after being discharged. Family support is of crucial importance here. The church cannot help much but what matters most is self-motivation. I have seen many discharged inmates, who just end up borrowing money from friends and having no work, which leads them back to a degenerate and empty life.

Having a purpose does not need to be something grand or lofty. As Case 9 above mentioned, family support is important and it is indeed the family that not only motivates individuals to live purposefully but also provides them responsibility by giving them a role within the family. As Case 14 shows, his purpose in life comes from his acknowledgement of his role as a father, saying,

> My daughter is my power source. She will eventually find out my bad behaviour if I keep abusing drugs. It would be shameful to everyone if I were to be introduced to her boyfriend, wouldn't it?

Of course, for those without families, purpose can also come from other places. One common place found in this study was religion. Purpose is attached to beliefs in some religions such as Christianity as Case 18 demonstrates in his declaration that,

> My one goal in life is to serve God. I am taking classes in church now to prepare me for preaching. I hope I can contribute back. As a teacher for a long time before, I love to teach others what I have learnt in my life.

Finally, having a social cause to fight for appears to a purpose that helps individuals achieve self-actualization as well. Case 1 found a cause to champion and this encouraged him to work hard and give back in the social sphere. He reported, "I feel that I have done something in life and become the first person in Hong Kong to fight for the rights of the [Population X]." While the causes may be related to potentially volatile topics; the point remains that this gave purpose to Case 1's life and led him to achieve more in post-release life.

To that end, self-actualization is not reserved only for individuals who have met all of the previous basic needs but can be obtained in some respect through connecting individual lives to a larger purpose, be that purpose a family, a religion, or a social movement. Being a part of something larger tends to motivate people into actions and lives that contribute back to society.

Other Factors

Beyond the hierarchy of needs, there were also some notable factors that were discussed by elderly ex-prisoners that could help in either alleviating and worsening their risk of re-offending. These possibilities can be categorized as attitudinal factors and circumstantial factors, where attitudinal factors involve the psychological disposition of an elderly ex-

prisoner and circumstantial factors refer to the external environment that affects them in some way.

Attitudinal Factors

A number of attitudinal factors afflict elderly ex-prisoners and draw them back to considerations of deviant and criminal behaviour. In elderly ex-prisoners, pessimism is the most expressed attitudinal negativity. This pessimism puts these ex-prisoners at risk because it leans them towards indifference and makes them see things through a lens of gloom. They are noticeably less appreciative of those who provide them aid and far more ready to express resorting to criminality if situation dictates. As an attitude, pessimism needs to be better understood and addressed as it is possible that this life outlook developed either before or during imprisonment. It is clear, however, that changing this attitude while elderly ex-prisoners are still in custody holds great promise of having a dramatic impact on decreasing the risk of recidivism. Let us now turn to an analysis of attitudinal risk factors before looking at the alleviating factors.

Attitudinal Risk Factors

The clearest attitude that elderly ex-prisoners possess is that of pessimism. This attitude is characterized by defeatism. It increases the risk of recidivism because it pushes individuals to a point of hopeless frustration that could make crime an attractive way out. Case 19 is an example of this mindset:

> It's destiny. I will be under arrest even if I behave well. I mean it. It's like I am destined to go to jail. I can never get rid of crime even if I don't break the law.

Regardless, this attitude ultimately leaves many elderly ex-prisoners idle and not doing anything to reintegrate into society as Case 21 shows,

> Things don't change. To me, it makes no difference whether to live in the world or just die. I live with no meaning and no purpose. I just mess around with no ambition.

Beyond pessimism, the second most noted risk factor is the appeal of drugs. This is perhaps more dangerous than pessimism if only because it is directly related to criminality since many elderly ex-offenders entered jail because of their drug habits and got into petty criminality to fund their behaviour. Case 10 points out the challenge facing those who try to end their addiction,

> I was obsessed with drugs since I was young but there were no other alternative paths, so I decided to make a change. In fact, many of us want to correct ourselves but we end up failing. Drugs are so addictive that we can never really let go of it.

Of course, there is also the direct link between drugs and crime as Case 15 highlights,

> What I earn by selling illegal cigarettes, I spend on heroin. If I had the money, I would spend it on heroin and alcohol as I wouldn't leave any money earned this way. People who commit crimes usually have an addiction problem.

In some ways, getting involved in addictive behaviour again is a symptom of being idle. There is a desire by some inmates to go back to a life of crime just to regain some thrill in their lives. Case 21 expresses this well in saying that,

> Life is boring. It's getting more and more boring compared to my previous energetic life. Unlike the time I was young, I am now getting old and subdued, so there will only be a small chance that I turn to crime again. Old age has changed my way of thinking and I am now less ruthless.

Further implied in that statement is the point that, if he could commit crime again, he might have. If it were not for his age, Case 21 would be doing those things that put him in jail in the first place. Boredom is therefore another attitude that requires addressing in elderly ex-prisoners.

Another common mental state that is observed in many elderly ex-prisoners is desperation. While a sense of desperation is subjective, it is a feeling that keeps individuals on edge and makes them reactive and susceptible to deviance. Case 16 provides a good example of someone with this mentality when he responds,

> I am forced to commit a crime, am I not? No one wants to commit a crime if they have a choice. It's nature, like animals hunting and scrambling for food when they don't have enough to eat. It's the same for human beings when you look for advantages from other people. We become criminals when life is unstable. I have tried by taking out a loan but it won't last forever and not even my friends are willing to look after me.

Another common attitude that increases the risk of recidivism is the evasion of responsibility. Here, elderly ex-prisoners place the blame of their criminality on others. When inmates do this, the most common example they provide is of their parents spoiling them as Case 19 demonstrates,

> The problem is that my family indulged my every whim. All of my elder brothers did not smoke or drink. I am the only bad kid. They spoiled me too much. They did not beat me or teach me properly because my parents were uneducated. They failed to teach us to study hard. They were conservative and I didn't listen to their advice.

Sometimes the blame is a lot more abstract as Case 22 argues that the crime itself is merely something that happens regardless of circumstance, saying, "Situations don't matter in committing crime. For instance, shoplifting is not done for money. I asked a lot of people about this. It just happens." This points out precisely the difficulty in addressing participants who can be characterized with evasion of responsibility, they simply see that things "just happen" and it is not their fault if they get caught up.

Related to evasion of responsibility, is a sense of pride that places some elderly ex-prisoners at the top of their world. Case 16 makes this clear when he says, "I don't want to lose my dignity. I'd rather commit a crime than suffer this sad situation. You can now understand why there are so many criminals." This sense of pride tends to make them balance committing a crime against losing what is perceived as a basic right for them.

Claims to power are interesting because it is difficult to know if the interviewee is speaking the truth or whether they are exaggerating or merely fantasizing. Nonetheless, a concern lies in regards to the fact that this attitude predisposes them to react in the event their honor is threatened. This attitude makes the interviewee difficult to approach for further intervention. While some interviewees hinted at this, Case 4 does well to exemplify it when he recounts,

> I have seen through the vanity of life and the world. As I have mentioned, don't jot down those notes on my background because I have triad backgrounds. I have subordinates. You asked my nickname before, and to tell you the truth, I have one. I just don't bother telling you these things. It's all political. Especially about my past in the army, I am a party member. It can protect me. A son of my uncle's is the deputy mayor of [Province X]. I have my men there who are politicians. Two of my uncles are powerful politicians; one of them is close to the son of [Communist Leader X].

While these are some of the more notable forms of attitudinal risks identified in this study, it is important to recall that these individuals are already advanced in age and likely pose less threat by that fact alone. Still, the attitudes listed here should be kept in mind when developing programmes to address the elderly ex-prisoner.

Alleviating Attitudinal Factors

The interviews identified three attitudinal occurrences that alleviate the risk of recidivism. They are a 1) general disinterest in crime, 2) growth in maturity, and 3) wake-up calls from witnessing events unfold through their lives. The general disinterest in crime has been reported by Case 6 as simply a loss of stimulation ("I was not interested in drugs anymore. It was just not as stimulating.") or by Case 24 as a logical conclusion as the best course of action ("When I quit drugs, I don't need to break the law. Also, I would need more money that now if I still used drugs."). These were expressions that, for one reason or another, drugs—and crime in general—had lost their appeal since returning to society.

The reasons for losing interest may be varied but some, like Case 12, explains that it can come through maturity from introspection and reflection of the circumstances, as he shares,

> I have learnt much throughout my 24 years. I have come to understand a lot. I am a grown-up and know how to think before acting. I can tell the difference between right and wrong now. This is something I failed to see when I was young and ruthless. We grow up and get more experience with time. Facing the prison walls, I was able to go through some introspection. I learnt to be prudent. Besides that, I have also seen a lot of human nature after I was released. People I used to care for discriminated against me and kicked me out of their company. I told myself I had to stand up and be faithful to God. I encouraged myself to cut expenses and find more jobs to get on with life.

Indeed, Case 1 shares a similar tale of coming to understand the world by seeing more of it and thinking through it to reach a state where there is no need for all the things he

once sought as evidenced when he responded to a question about what helped him to turn away from crime:

> First, I became more mature and I felt sorry for the offenses I committed. Second, money was no longer my goal in life. Earning money in itself is meaningless. Li Ka-Shing has great fortune but he is a frugal person living like the normal people. Third, I came across a jeweler when I did voluntary work in an elderly home. He had a lot of money but none of his children cared for him. His children lived in Canada, Italy, and Australia. His story reminded me of the importance of family. After being discharged for 4 years, I got married almost 3 years ago. I cherish my family.

Leaving the life of crime behind and losing interest in it could come from reflecting on one's circumstances and actions. Letting go of the goals that attracted these individuals to crime is another large part of losing interest in criminality. These are more gentle methods of awakening. Case 16, on the other hand, looked around him and got a wake-up call on the harmful effects a life of crime could lead to. He points out that,

> I know drugs very well. There are just too many bad examples that indicate how terrible drugs are. I chose to quit. Drugs were having too many harmful effects on the next generation. I have no children, but I have seen so many cases of broken families because of drug abuse throughout the years. Frankly, I am afraid of drugs and I really can't help those who can't see how scary they are.

Wake-up calls could come from many different sources, such as friends dying and other such events, but they are rude awakenings that make people quickly disinterested in crime. Regardless of whether it is a wake-up call or a gentle reflection to maturity, the effect of becoming disinterested in crime is a positive step towards alleviating the risk of recidivism. The task ahead will thus be to find effective methods to help individuals lose interest while they are still within the system.

Circumstantial Factors

Circumstantial factors facing elderly ex-offenders are not as numerous as attitudinal factors. In relation to their circumstances apart from the ones already mentioned in the system of needs, money problems and poor adaptation are the most common issues for elderly ex-offenders who have spent a lot of time in correctional institutions. Of the two circumstances, problems with money are more likely to bring them towards recidivism while problems of adaptation work to make reintegration frustrating.

Circumstantial Risk Factors

Money is the larger of the two problems elderly ex-prisoners face because it is an issue that puts them immediately at risk of returning to crime with the promises of "making it" easily. As Case 23 argues,

> Everyone loves money. Those people that tell you they don't are just lying. It's up to me and my abilities to make it. There's no use being jealous of the rich.

Money was one of the major reasons many elderly ex-prisoners got into a life of crime, thus the feeling that they still lack money is troubling, especially if they are still in touch with their past contacts. Nonetheless, many elderly ex-prisoners are working to make a change in their lives and the lack of money is a real problem hindering their transition. Case 15, when asked about what his biggest concern is at the moment, replies,

> My finances. I don't have enough money to spend. If I am given housing, I think I don't have enough money for any furniture. I will get the flat first and think about the bed or stuff later. The social workers will probably give me a hand in this.

Case 15 is resolute in making a change though not all our interviewees were so determined. Case 19 admits that, "When I am short of money or when I start taking heroin again, I will consider breaking the law again and may end up in jail again." While money is a necessary part of surviving in Hong Kong, it may benefit elderly ex-prisoners to go through basic finance management and adjusting their expectations according to their income as a basic means of addressing this problem.

A second circumstantial issue works to hinder reintegration and could be best described as poor adaptation. Case 12 illustrates a general case of how poor adaptation works for elderly ex-prisoners when he recounts,

> I couldn't distinguish the coins. I put them all in the tram. Since I just got released, I was scared that I would make a mistake again, and end up back in jail. I did not dare to go to the supermarket because I feared that I would be arrested for messing up at the entrances and exits. There was a lot to worry about when I first came out.

This height of paranoia was not commonly observed but, to some degree, adaptation was a difficult process for many interviewees. This could manifest in other important areas of life as well however, such as at the workplace, where poor adaptation would pose a serious disadvantage to elderly ex-prisoners. Case 18 points out that,

> I have a lot of challenges at work as the job nature is totally different from what I used to do. My current job concerns business and personnel matters that are much more complicated. Everything has to be computerized now, and while I had an assistant and an IT expert in the past, I don't have that anymore. Before, all I had to do was write things down but I have to do it myself now. Teaching in the field for years, I was well aware of the sequence, and schedule of my work before but today, there's so much going on.

Because adaptation can have a severe impact on the reintegration of elderly ex-prisoners, it would be helpful to develop reintegration programmes for individuals who have been held in correctional institutions for more than a certain period of time. Indeed, it would be important for correctional institutions to bring ex-prisoners up-to-date with the times so that they are able to return to life as quickly as possible and return to contributing their abilities to society.

Alleviating Circumstantial Factors

The single most important alleviating circumstantial factor for elderly ex-prisoners is the support of NGOs. Throughout all the interviews, the work of NGOs in keeping them off the path of crime has been was frequently acknowledged although, of course, their appreciation depended on their overall life attitudes as previously demonstrated. Still, when asked about factors that helped in their journey to stay away from crime, every interviewee gave credit to the work of NGOs in some way. Case 1 typifies the general message of how to aid the rehabilitation of elderly ex-prisoners when he states,

> If you really want inmates to change, then you should allocate social workers to each of them and let them to live in the context of a caring community. I know a lot of repeat ex-offenders. They went to church and their lives changed dramatically for the better.

Case 9 also contrasts government support with NGOs by noting that,

> The government should be ashamed when it sees what is happening to discharged inmates. I received support from the church. What is the Correctional Services Department doing for us? Nothing except requiring that I report to them 3 times a day. It's hard to support that kind of action.

The statement is not completely fair since government agencies have already fulfilled their mandates in getting these individuals so far, but the sentiment remains that elderly ex-prisoners still feel that more could be done by the government to help. Indeed, it may be helpful for the government to consider larger aid for NGOs as many of them are also stretching to make ends meet.

Summary of Qualitative Data

This report has thus far argued that understanding the needs of elderly ex-prisoners was easier by reworking Maslow's work into a system of needs (see Table 1). This means that this study sees the needs as interconnected to one another and prioritizes the fact that there is a link between the needs rather than identifying an order by which the needs develop. This helps to better identify those needs that should be immediately met to provide elderly ex-prisoners with the best opportunity to rehabilitate and return to normal society.

Following Maslow's hierarchy, the study evaluated the needs of physiology, security and safety, love and belonging, self-esteem, and the final need of self-actualization. Beyond that, the study noted other factors that could either aggravate or alleviate the risk of recidivism in these elderly ex-prisoners. These factors were divided into attitudinal and circumstantial categories to help better understand the context.

Looking at both the effects of needs unmet and met, we found several key areas that require urgent attention to better help elderly ex-prisoners. The most pressing of these needs is accommodation. This is a need that exists on the physiological level and its lack has a long-term impact on the psychological as well as physical well-being of an elderly

ex-prisoner as well as denies them opportunities—such as acquiring employment—that would have helped in their rehabilitation. This lack predisposes them towards recidivism and significantly worsens the outlook on their own conditions.

The second most pressing concern is finding a job. This need arises from the need for safety and security. Having a job gives elderly ex-prisoners something to do and occupy their time with. Their reformed lives are less demanding, so a stable job helps them achieve a sense of responsibility and make them more capable of achieving normalcy alongside life satisfaction. Conversely, a lack of employment puts too much time in their hands, makes them worry about where their next meal will come from, and brings them psychological uncertainty, which culminates in less resistance to deviant behaviour.

Love and belonging needs are also important in Chinese societies because of their collectivist cultural orientation. One of the major areas of lack for elderly ex-prisoners is family support. Having lived a life of crime or been sent to prison for a notable crime has a tendency to turn family members away, and this could be devastating for elderly ex-prisoners because they lose a vital means of social and material support. This need is therefore a rather important one to fulfill and it is important to consider a means of resolving family tensions for elderly ex-prisoners to aid them in reintegration.

With regards to self-esteem, the largest problem facing elderly ex-prisoners is discrimination of their ex-inmate status. This discrimination could come from the individual's inner circle, such as family, and go as broad as the public. There are two components of discrimination, namely the public's actions towards ex-inmates when they discover that they were previously criminals and also the elderly ex-prisoner's expectation of discrimination. In some way, because elderly ex-prisoners anticipate discrimination, they sometimes take actions that may not help their situation, such as not looking for jobs that require a background check. Finally, Maslow's last level—self-actualization—was not very meaningful in terms of its lack but it is clear that elderly ex-prisoners have found alternative pathways to reach it.

Last, pertaining to other factors, the study found that the attitude that was most prevalent in the sampled elderly ex-prisoners was pessimism. The attitude of pessimism breeds a sense in elderly ex-prisoners that society owes them something and, in that manner, predisposes them to crime again. Psychological counselling to specifically address this may help. Another investigated factor is circumstantial variables and it is noted that the largest circumstantial factors that hinder rehabilitation and increase risk of recidivism are financial problems and poor adaptation to society. Some training in managing resources and adjusting expectations of society today could thus help in these areas.

Category	Risk-Aggravating Conditions	Risk-Alleviating Conditions
Physiological needs	1. Lack of adequate shelter	1. Possession of adequate shelter
Security and safety needs	1. Unemployment 2. Focus on stigma of crime	1. Employment
Love and belonging needs	1. Lack of family support 2. Deviant peers	1. Presence of family support 2. Having a firm positive social role 3. Having a non-deviant community 4. Christian community involvement
Self-esteem needs	1. Discrimination by general public 2. Discrimination by employers 3. Perceived discrimination	1. Psychological counselling 2. Sense of hope for future 3. Optimistic and positive attitudes
Self-actualization	N/A	1. Sense of purpose in life 2. Maintaining religious beliefs 3. Having a cause to fight for
Attitudinal risk factors	1. Pessimism and defeatism 2. Allure of drug use 3. Sense of desperation 4. Evasion of responsibility	1. Disinterest in crime 2. Growth in personal maturity 3. Wake-up calls by observation
Circumstantial risk factors	1. Problems with money 2. Poor adaptation	1. NGO care and support

Table 1. ***Summary of Qualitative Findings by Needs Category and Other Factors***

Quantitative Findings: Statistical Data Results

It is important to emphasise again that the main source of data in this exploratory study is the qualitative interview sessions as it is there where researchers are able to obtain rich and nuanced data of elderly ex-prisoners experiences. In this way, the interviews set the basis to understand the general conditions affecting elderly ex-prisoners and encourage further investigation.

Because of the purposive sampling method, the quantitative segment should also not be treated as a tool for generalizing the findings to the elderly ex-prisoner population in itself, but as a tool for triangulation and validation of qualitative interviews. The statistical data should only be taken to refer to this specific population while their qualitative responses make up the generalizable experiences of this population. This tool and the findings herein therefore only bolster those assertions and tease out other data points that are noticeable but not obviously mentioned during the qualitative interview sessions.

Where possible, the study compared the means of scores between several conditions to investigate their effect. These conditions were identified in the qualitative segment as history of drugs use, current employment, type of accommodation, family relationship, and religious background. We also looked at age, number of prison experiences, and type of previous employment to see if they had any bearing on the scales. The following few subsections describe the demographics, criminal justice experience history, employment characteristics, and substance abuse traits of the sample.

Demographic Information

Demographic data were collected via an 8-item questionnaire. This instrument captured information pertaining to age, marital status, parent's marital status, relationship with family, people currently staying with, type of accommodation living in, religion, and highest educational attainment. The 50 male elderly ex-prisoners interviewed had an age range between 50 and 79, with a mean age of 59.72 (*SD* = 6.17). Table 2.1 shows that the sample was grouped into three age categories for use in analysis.

	N = 50	%
50 to 55	11	22
56 to 59	20	40
60 or above	19	38

Table 2.1. ***Age Category for Elderly Ex-prisoners***

Table 2.2 displays the demographic information. The respondents' marital status was quite evenly distributed with 28% reporting they were single, 34% married, 26% divorced, and 10% other. Notably, the lowest category for respondent's marital status was "Cohabitation," which reflects that much of their marital status is based on past relationships rather than current pursuits. Cohabitation requires that people without legal or social commitments stay together in a relationship and therefore requires active engagement to maintain its stability, especially after incarceration. It is therefore a useful indicator of individual capacities to maintain current committed relationships.

The "Other" category encompassed complicated relationships such as situations where a respondent's wife has been unreachable, or they are no longer in touch, yet neither have filed for divorce. While the law still considers them married, they do not consider themselves married, hence the complicated status of their relationship. On the other hand, some in the "Married" category also insist they are married despite their wives having been seeking divorce with them not consenting to it. In this way, it is important to understand that although the response options were meant to collect factual information pertaining to respondents' marital status, they were filled in more as a reflection of their perceptions of their own status due to the complicated nature of their relationships.

The marital status of respondents' parents create quite a stark contrast to their own. Most of their parents were reported to be married (72%) and the second largest category was cohabitation (18%). Only one respondent reported their parent as single and another as divorced (2% each). Three interviewees (6%) reported their parental marital status as other, with the explanation being that either both or one of their parents have passed away. The results of parental marital status bolsters the point that both married and cohabiting couples need to maintain some level of commitment at present in order to stay within these statuses. Regarding the state of family relationships, the largest proportion of respondents saw themselves as having very poor relationships with their families (38%). This is followed by those who reported good family relationships at 24%, very good relationships 18%, fair relationships 12%, and poor relationships 8%.

In relation to sharing accommodation with others, the study found that most interviewees stayed alone in their various abodes. Thirty-nine respondents (78%) reported living with no one. Of the remaining 11 respondents, 54.5% lived with their spouses. The percentage discrepancy between their married status (34%) and those living with their spouses (12% when considering the complete sample) is noteworthy as it hints at the state of marriage in the sample. One respondent (9.1%) reported living with children, another with siblings (9.1%), and one more with their parents (9.1%). Three respondents (27.3%) reported sharing accommodation, by which they meant living in halfway houses with other persons in similar situations. In all, it should be noted that most elderly ex-prisoners in this study considered themselves as living alone.

For types of accommodation, the majority of respondents were homeless (36%) followed by those living in hostels or halfway houses (28%) then public housing (24%), and bed-space compartments (10%). One respondent (2%) was living with friends or relatives while another filled in "Other," although in the explanation he filled in the name of a halfway house—his data was therefore recoded under hostels or halfway houses. While the largest categorical portion was homeless, it should be noted that the majority of respondents had some form of shelter.

In relation to religion, respondents were generally either Christians (52%) or had no religion (44%) with only 2 persons (4%) reporting to be Buddhists. Those reporting to be Buddhists referred to the Taoist mix that is common in Hong Kong as they pray and worship the Goddess of Mercy and other traditional deities. Those who considered themselves without religion also reported participating in these traditional rituals, exploring different religions, or being atheists. The large percentage of Christians can be attributed to Christian organizations doing a lot of outreach work in correctional institutions and also other post-release care programmes they have, including running halfway houses and hostels. Moreover, because respondents were reached based on their contact with NGOs and a few of those NGOs that provided interviewees were primarily Christian in background, the large percentage of Christians in this survey should be understood in context.

Finally, most of the interviewees (74%) reported primary school as their highest educational attainment. Moving up the educational attainment scale yielded smaller numbers. Only 8 persons (16%) made it to junior high school, 2 (4%) to senior high school, and 1 (2%) to Form 6 and 7, which are pre-college years. Two persons (4%) received tertiary education, which reflected the interview data as there were two individuals with professional occupations among the respondents.

The data as is would not have allowed for reliable statistical tests to be done on the different items, therefore the items intended for further analyses were recoded. Pertaining to state of family relationships, the responses of very good, good, and fair were grouped into the category of "Decent" while poor and very poor were placed under "Poor." Accommodation types were also divided between "Homeless" and "Sheltered," where the first category was kept as it was while the latter category was defined as being able to sleep in an enclosed space that is unexposed to the elements. Finally, because there were only two reported Buddhists and their responses on their religion were similar to those who reported no religion, we recoded their answers into the no religion category. The extent of the recoding on this data could be seen in Table 2.3.

	N = 50	%
Marital Status		
Single	14	28
Married	17	34
Cohabitation	1	2
Divorced	13	26
Other	5	10
Parental Marital Status		
Single	1	2
Married	36	72
Cohabitation	9	18
Divorced	1	2
Other	3	6
State of Family Relationships		
Very good	9	18
Good	12	24
Fair	6	12
Poor	4	8
Very poor	19	38
Sharing Accommodation with[a]		
No one	39	78
Spouse	6	54.5
Children	1	9.1
Siblings	1	9.1
Parents	1	9.1
Extended family	0	0.0
Helper	0	0.0
Other	3	27.3
Accommodation Living in		
Bed-space compartment	5	10
Hostel/Halfway house	14	28
Homeless	18	36
Living with friend/relative	1	2
Public housing	12	24

Religion		
Christian	26	52
Buddhist	2	4
None	22	44
Highest Educational Attainment		
Primary School	37	74
Junior High (Form 1–3)	8	16
Senior High (Form 4–5)	2	4
Form 6–7	1	2
Tertiary Education	2	4

Table 2.2. ***Sociodemographics of Elderly Ex-prisoners***

	N = 50	%
State of Family Relationships		
Decent	27	54
Poor	23	46
Accommodation Living in		
Homeless	18	36
Sheltered	32	64
Religion		
Christian	26	52
None	24	48

Table 2.3. ***Recoded Sociodemographic of Elderly Ex-prisoners***

Personal Experience and Institutional Life

Personal Experience and Institutional Life Questionnaire was developed for this study to obtain factual information about interviewee past experiences in the justice system and to verify their interview recollections. To this end, most of the data here is simply descriptive and does not entail much analysis. Table 3.1 presents locations where interviewees from this study mainly experienced the Hong Kong justice system. The numbers are not mutually exclusive as one interviewee may visit several institutions. All the interviewees experienced imprisonment and a majority of them were sent to drug addiction treatment centers (60%). Fines and suspended sentences made up the two larger parts of justice system experiences by interviewees (44% and 40% respectively).

	N = 50	%
Police Superintendent Discretionary	4	8
Binding Over Orders	13	26
Fines	22	44
Suspended Sentences	20	40
Probation Order	15	30
Probation Home/Reformatory Schools	4	8
Community Services Order	0	0
Detention Centre	6	12
Rehabilitation Centre	1	2
Training Centre	12	24
Drug Addiction Treatment Centre	30	60
Imprisonment	50	100

Table 3.1. ***Contacts with the Justice System***

From the above, we extracted the imprisonment data to create a category for criminal careers. We divided the number of prison experiences to 1, 2 to 5, 6 to 10, and over 11 because criminologically, one time in imprisonment is usually enough to deter most people from a lifetime of criminality while the other categories illustrate the severity of career criminals. Of all the respondents who reported experiencing imprisonment, 13 (27.7%) had experienced it only once. Those with 2 to 5 times of imprisonment were considered petty repeat offenders (29.8%), 6 to 10 times career offenders (29.8%), and 11 and above serious career offenders (19.1%). Their data is presented in Table 3.2.

Number of Prison Experiences	*N* = 50	%
1	13	27.7
2 to 5	14	29.8
6 to 10	14	29.8
11 and above	9	19.1

Table 3.2. ***Recoded Criminal Careers***

Table 3.3 features the most reported types of crimes interviewees were last convicted of. The largest proportion of interviewees got in trouble with the law over drug offenses with drug possession and trafficking combining to make up 34%. The most common crime after that was the selling of pirated or pornographic discs at 20%. These crimes are triad-related as the products involved imply large-scale operations. Theft was most frequent type of personal crime at 12%.

	N = 50	%
Assault	4	8
Burglary	2	4
Drug possession	9	18
Drug trafficking	8	16
Firearm possession	1	2
Murder	1	2
Rape	1	2
Robbery	2	4
Selling pirated discs	10	20
Sexual assault	2	4
Shoplifting	3	6
Smuggling	1	2
Theft	6	12

Table 3.3. ***Types of Offending for Last Conviction***

Table 3.4 shows the frequencies of reported factors that led to the last conviction. It is notable that drug addiction was found to be a major factor to previous convictions (50%) alongside financial problems (44%). The two are naturally interrelated because interviewees noted that financial problems arose from drug addiction. In the "Others" category, five interviewees indicated intoxication as a factor to their previous conviction,

which is also tied to the problem of drugs. In that same category, the one monetary dispute and three selling of pirated discs also suggest that money was a major issue leading to their last conviction. In essence, drug and money problems appear to be the primary reason why interviewees were previously convicted.

	N = 50	%
Peer influence	13	26
Financial problems	22	44
Temptation	14	28
Drug addiction	25	50
Other[a]	11	22

Table 3.4. *Factors for Last Conviction*[a] Other reasons include fighting (2), monetary disputes (1), intoxication (5), and selling pirated discs (3).

Table 3.5 shows that most of the interviewees were confident they would not be reoffending as only 8 people believed they would reoffend given the right circumstances. Furthermore, all of the 8 believed that if they were to return to crime, it would be because of peer influence. Seven of the interviewees also believed that financial problems would be a major reason for their return to a life of crime. Interestingly, perhaps because a large proportion of them had beaten their drug addiction, only 1 respondent from the 8 attributed the possibility to drugs. This is interesting since many of the interviewees' previous convictions were due to drugs.

	N = 50	%
General possibility	*8*	*16*
Peer influence	8	100
Financial problems	7	87.5
Temptation	1	12.5
Drug addiction	1	12.5
Other	0	0

Table 3.5. *Possibilities for Reoffending*

Table 3.6 shows how confident interviewees are in their confidence to stop all offending behaviour immediately. A mean of 1.64 means that they are quite confident in putting an end to their offending when required.

	M	*SD*
Confidence in stopping offending	1.64	.78

Table 3.6. ***Mean and Variance for Confidence in Stopping Offending Immediately***

Table 3.7 presents the mean of reported in-prison experiences with the Correctional Services Department (CSD). A score higher than 3 means that the interviewees thought the Department did well in these areas. With that in mind, it appears that the three areas that the Department should pay attention to are that of encouraging inmates (2.84), providing clear information about actions they should take (2.50), and helping inmates make realistic plans for their future (2.02).

Experience	*M*	*SD*
Positive relationships	3.36	1.29
Treated with respect	3.54	1.09
Shown care	3.36	1.12
Firm structure and guidelines	3.46	1.01
Develop self-discipline	3.68	.77
Shoulder responsibilities	3.74	.83
Learn from mistakes	3.66	1.02
Praised for success	2.84	1.24
Learned empathy	3.46	.99
Lessened impulsivity	3.56	.97
Received clear information on actions	2.40	1.43
Make realistic plans for future	2.02	1.36

Table 3.7. ***Means and Variances for Experiences with CSD***

Overall, the aforementioned data shows that drugs and monetary problems are the main reasons for interviewee convictions; however, peer influence is a large concern for those who believe they may fall into reoffending again. In general, the interviewees were positive about the work of the CSD. The only areas where they felt the Department could have done better are those that are generally future-oriented. Interviewees felt that the Department could better encourage inmates, provide clear information about the actions they should take to address issues they have, and help inmates make realistic plans for the future.

Employment Status

The Employment Status Questionnaire was designed to obtain information regarding interviewees' past and current employment experiences and verify their qualitative recollections. The questionnaire begins with a survey of their employment status before they were convicted. A large majority of interviewees (74%) were employed in various professions before their conviction. It could also be noted that a large proportion of the working interviewees were employed in low-level jobs.

For purposes of analysis, we regrouped these professions into the conventional categories of professionals (i.e. decorator, pastor, politician, prison guard, and teacher), skilled labourers (i.e. craftsman, mechanic, and painter), semi-skilled labourers (i.e. bartender, cook, driver, delivery man, and painter), unskilled labourers (i.e. cleaner, hawker, labourer, salesman, and waiter), and the unemployed. In this, only 5 respondents were professionals before conviction with the proportionally largest employed group being unskilled labourers at 26%. Table 4.2 presents the distribution of the different groups.

	N = 50	%
Bartender	2	4
Cleaner	6	12
Cook	4	8
Craftsman	6	12
Decorator	1	2
Delivery man	2	4
Driver	3	6
Hawker	2	4
Labourer	1	2
Mechanic	1	2
Merchant	1	2
Painter	2	4
Pastor	1	2
Politician	1	2
Prison guard	1	2
Salesman	1	2
Teacher	1	2
Waiter	1	2
Unemployed	13	26

Table 4.1. ***Employment before Conviction***

	N = 50	%
Professional	5	10
Skilled Labourer	10	20
Semi-Skilled Labourer	7	14
Unskilled Labourer	13	26
Unemployed	15	30

Table 4.2. ***Recoded Employment before Conviction***

The questionnaire then moved to ask about the current employment status of interviewees. Here, only 10 persons (20%) were found to be presently employed. These reported jobs were artist (1 person), craftsman (2 people), shop assistant (2 people), delivery men (3 people), and social activist (2 people). For the unemployed majority of the sample, it may be deduced that the lack of jobs is tied to a lack of trying as only 7 respondents (14%) reported that they are actively looking for employment. The average length of their search thus far has been 3.83 months (*SD* = 2.93, Min. = 1 month, Max. = 8 months). Nonetheless, as the interviews have shown, there are many barriers for elderly ex-prisoners to even start looking for employment. This includes the fact that they are unable to professionally prepare résumés using a computer, hold perceptions that employers will either use their age or criminal record against them, and do not recognize the information society that has developed while they were in prison. These barriers create an immediate sense of hopelessness in relation to employment prospects.

For those who obtained employment, it is also clear that the journey was neither straightforward nor easy. The average length of time it took to secure a job was 7.87 months (*SD* = 9.85, Min. = 1 month, Max. = 30 months), which suggests the wide range of job seeking experiences even among those who managed to secure employment. Pertaining to the income of interviewees, considering the sample itself, the average monthly income was HK$5,541.16 (*SD* = HK$11,352.16, Min. = HK$0, Max. = HK$80,000). The very large income of one of the interviewees comes from the fact that he is somewhat of a celebrity, so removing this outlying datapoint would better help to understand what most of the interviewees experience. Upon removing the outlier, the data shows that the average income for remaining interviewees was HK$4,021.59 (*SD* = HK$3,700.891, Min. = HK$0, Max = HK$16,000), reflecting a more recognizable situation.

Table 4.3 presents the major barriers to finding a job at present. A large proportion of interviewees without jobs believe that their poor education is a large contributor (50%) followed by the fact that they have a criminal record (45%). The lack of vocational qualifications (30%) and low self-esteem (27.5%) were also major factors contributing to their lack of employment.

	N = 40	%
Low level of education	20	50
Criminal record	18	45
Lack of vocational qualification	12	30
Low self-esteem	11	27.5
Lack of relevant skills	9	22.5
Lack of money for interview	4	10
Other[a]	9	22.5

Table 4.3. ***Barriers to Securing Job at Present*** **[a] Other reasons include not seeking job (2), disability (2), lack of address (3), and age (2).**

Table 4.4 lists out the major income sources for the sample. While 8 participants listed their pay as a major income source (2 individuals reportedly work voluntarily), most of the sample (33 persons) were recipients of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) from the government. 5 persons listed other sources of income and included NGO fund support, disability benefits, and government pension in their details.

Table 4.5 presents the workshops that interviewees participated in during their time in correctional institutions. A fair proportion of them were involved in garment making (48%) followed by envelope making (28%) and laundry services (26%). Details of their experiences can be found in the overleaf.

	N = 50	%
Wage/Salary	8	16
Personal savings	1	2
Monetary gifts from friends/family	1	2
Comprehensive Social Security Assistance	33	66
Money borrowed from friends/family/others	1	2
Other[a]	5	10

Table 4.4. ***Income Sources*** **[a] Other reasons include NGO fund support (3), disability benefits (1), and government pension (1).**

	N = 50	%
Carpentry	11	22
Book binding	6	12
Envelope making	14	28
Fiberglass products	1	2
Garment making	24	48
Knitting	5	10
Laundry services	13	26
Leather products	3	6
Metalwork	9	18
Printing	2	4
Precast concrete products	7	14
Sign making	2	4
Simple manual work	6	12
Other[a]	11	22

Table 4.5. ***Workshop Participation in Correctional Institutions***[a] **Other reasons include cleaning (7) and kitchen (4).**

A majority of interviewees did not participate in academic courses or vocational training offered. From the interviews, a lack of time spent in correctional institutions was the main reason for this situation since the CSD rightfully did not approve any such education for inmates who stayed for too short a period for it to have a meaningful effect. It should be noted that interviewees were appreciative of the efforts that went into making this possible and it was mainly logistical challenges that brought about the lack of numbers on this front as many of our interviewees went to jail for drug offenses and did not serve long single sentences.

Employment contributes to the overall well-being of interviewees, however there are many barriers—psychological and social—that make them hesitant to seek employment. The fact that many were employed before conviction and then return to society unable to work is a sad state of affairs, especially since many of them are desperately seeking work. It is important to develop a comprehensive strategy to help elderly ex-prisoners secure employment more readily—even if it is low income—to help them along the path to reintegration.

Substance Abuse Scale

The Substance Abuse Scale (Shek, 2005) measured the substance abuse patterns of interviewees. It begins with a question about whether they have any history in taking drugs, to which 40 respondents (80%) answered in the affirmative. The scale then enquired about the age interviewees first took drugs. The result was a mean age of 22.8 (*SD* = 7.45, Min. = 13, Max. = 40).

As shown in Table 5, the scale moves on to ask participants about their drug abuse patterns in the last 6 months. The average response from interviewees was that those who had continued to use drugs sometimes consumed alcohol (1.86) and slightly more frequently heroin (2.20). Smoking was a frequent occurrence as per the standards of the scale at 5.56 and also quite prevalent among those who have reported abusing drugs in the sample. The use of psychoactive amphetamines such as ecstasy (.52) and ICE (.31) was also noted although rarer.

The scale finally noted that 32 of the 40 individuals who used drugs received treatment while they were in custody while 23 of 40 reported receiving treatment post-release. It would be important to increase the post-release treatment programmes however as the interviews revealed that individuals have a premature sense of victory over drug abuse in prison because the environment is tightly controlled. Once released, the challenge of resisting drug use is refreshed. It would thus be important to work on addressing the problem of drugs in society. In the end, drug abuse among interviewees seems to be restricted mainly to smoking although the presence of harder drugs such as heroin and various amphetamines are also areas of concern, especially pertaining to the former.

Experience	*M*	*SD*
Alcohol	1.86	2.50
Smoking	5.56	1.35
Ketamine	0	0
Cannabis	0	0
Cough mixture	0	0
Sniffing organic solvents	0	0
Pills	.52	1.63
ICE	.31	1.23
Heroin	2.20	2.40

Table 5. ***Means and Variances for Drug Use in Past 6 Months***

General Health Questionnaire (GHQ)

The General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg et al., 1997; Li et al., 2009) is used to obtain a measure of the general health of respondents. Its main components were the distress, and mental and physical health of respondents. It contains a basic question about doctor visits in the last 6 months. Although the mean number of visits in the past 6 months was 4.66, this should not be treated as reliable because one case visited the doctor 20 times and another noted 120 visits. Those cases had major illnesses that required an operation and involved prolonged stays in healthcare institutions. Thus, the median of 1.5 is a more reliable indicator of health in this case with most cases (40%) reporting no visits to the doctor and most other cases falling within a realistic number of visits of 1 to 4 in the last 6 months (see Table 6.1).

Visits	*N* = 50	%
0	20	40
1	5	10
2	7	14
3	7	14
4	5	10
6	1	2
7	1	2
10	2	4
20	1	2
120	1	2

Table 6.1. ***Visits to Doctors in Past 6 Months***

Table 6.2 points out the emotional distress experienced by individuals. Here, a higher score indicates more distress with a healthy level being an average score of 1.5. It is clear that our sample of elderly ex-prisoners was generally more distressed (M = 2.14, α = .93) than healthy in their emotional health. This means that they are likely to experience negative thoughts, inability to stay focused, experience constant worry and strain, and are more susceptible to psychological ailments. Our sample was also more in a state of social dysfunction (M = 2.18, α = .79) than they were healthy, indicating that they are less able to be decisive about things, confront their own problems, enjoy normal activities, and feel happy in general. By the average score for the anxiety/depression subscale, it is also clear that the respondents are experiencing some depression and anxiety (M = 2.00, α = .90). This condition has consequences both in the present and their future outlook because it means they presently feel unhappy and consider themselves worthless, and are also continuing to lose confidence while seeing themselves as incapable of overcoming future difficulties. These conditions are indicative of mental strain as they cast the present in a negative light while also placing no hope in the future.

The standard deviations for the three scores are .60 for general distress, .48 for social dysfunction, and .87 for depression/anxiety. This means that the scores for most of the respondents fall mostly within the range described with some slightly better and others slightly worse. The general profile of the sample should therefore be understood as slightly distressed, socially dysfunctional, and depressed and anxious.

	M	*SD*
General distress	2.14	.60
Social dysfunction	2.18	.48
Anxiety/Depression	2.00	.87

Table 6.2. ***Means and Variances for GHQ Scores***

Looking into drug history and how it relates to the emotional health of interviewees in Table 6.3, we find that a history in drugs actually contributes to poorer states of general distress, social dysfunction, and anxiety or depression. Interviewees with a history of drug abuse reported significantly more distress (2.26 over 1.62, $p < .01$), social dysfunction (2.26 over 1.89, $p < .05$), and anxiety/depression (2.19 over 1.19, $p < .01$) than their counterparts without such a history. This would suggest that addressing the problem of drugs is critical to improving the emotional health of elderly ex-prisoners to give them a better chance at rehabilitation.

	Have History (*N* = 40)		No History (*N* = 10)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
General distress	2.26*	.58	1.62	.39
Social dysfunction	2.26*	.47	1.89	.40
Anxiety/Depression	2.19*	.84	1.19	.35

Table 6.3. ***Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Drug History**** **General distress ($p < .01$); social dysfunction ($p < .05$); anxiety/depression ($p < .01$).**

While drug abuse refers more to participant troubles in the past, another major factor in bringing about distress was the lack of current employment as can be seen in Table 6.4. Interviewees without employment at the time of the survey showed significantly higher distress (2.25 over 1.67, $p < .01$), social dysfunction (2.26 over 1.85, $p < .05$), and anxiety/depression (2.15 over 1.38, $p < .01$) than those with jobs. This validates the claim that a job is important for elderly ex-prisoners despite their ages, and would again put them on a better track to reintegration.

	Employed (N = 10)		Unemployed (N = 40)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
General distress	1.67	.41	2.25*	.85
Social dysfunction	1.85	.36	2.26*	.59
Anxiety/Depression	1.38	.59	2.15*	.86

Table 6.4. ***Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Current Employment Status**** **General distress ($p < .01$); social dysfunction ($p < .05$); anxiety/depression ($p < .01$).**

General distress, social dysfunction, and anxiety/depression were also tied to the elderly ex-prisoners family relationships (see Table 6.5). Those in the decent relationships category saw less distress (1.92 compared to 2.39, $p < .01$), social dysfunction (2.04 to 2.35, $p < .05$), and anxiety/depression (1.69 compared to 2.36, $p < .01$) than those in the poor family relationships category.

	Decent (N = 27)		Poor (N = 23)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
General distress	1.92	.59	2.39*	.50
Social dysfunction	2.04	.47	2.35*	.44
Anxiety/Depression	1.69	.81	2.36*	.78

Table 6.5. ***Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Family Relationship**** **General distress ($p < .01$); social dysfunction ($p < .05$); anxiety/depression ($p < .01$).**

Moving on to accommodation in Table 6.6, it is noted that the homeless suffer from more general distress, social dysfunction, and anxiety/depression although only distress and anxiety are significant ($p < .05$ and $p < .01$ respectively). The homeless had means of 2.41 for general distress, 2.33 for social dysfunction, and 2.46 for anxiety/depression while the sheltered scored 1.97 for distress, 2.08 for dysfunction, and 1.73 for anxiety/depression. Indeed, this makes sense as those who are homeless and elderly are more exposed to the elements and do not have much privacy and opportunities, which would lead to more distress and anxiety or depression in their lives.

	Homeless (*N* = 18)		Sheltered (*N* = 32)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
General distress	2.41*	.51	1.97	.60
Social dysfunction	2.33	.40	2.08	.51
Anxiety/Depression	2.46*	.77	1.73	.81

Table 6.6. ***Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Accommodation Type**** **General distress ($p < .05$); anxiety/depression ($p < .01$).**

Our analyses showed that age, religion, number of prison experiences, and whether elderly ex-prisoners were professionals before conviction did not bear any significant differences in their scores for distress, dysfunction, and depression. Age does not appear to differentiate the group much as Table 6.7 shows.

	50 to 55 (*N* = 11)		56 to 60 (*N* = 20)		60 and above (*N* = 19)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
General distress	2.18	.50	2.14	.71	2.11	.54
Social dysfunction	2.18	.30	2.21	.62	2.14	.42
Anxiety/Depression	1.98	.84	2.05	.91	1.95	.86

Table 6.7. ***Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Age Category***

Religion also appeared to have an effect, as those reporting no religion had higher scores in all categories, however the difference was not enough to register significance (see Table 6.8).

	No Religion (*N* = 24)		Christian (*N* = 26)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
General distress	2.24	.60	2.04	.59
Social dysfunction	2.25	.44	2.12	.52
Anxiety/Depression	2.14	.91	1.87	.80

Table 6.8. ***Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Religion***

A pattern could be observed in prison experiences where those who were only imprisoned once and those who had gone to prison over 10 times had lower scores that those who were between those two extremes. Having lower scores at both extremes may indicate that both groups have come to terms with themselves either as individuals who made a mistake or as individuals who cannot escape a life of crime perhaps, thereby bringing their sense of distress, dysfunction, and depression down (see Table 6.9). Findings, as previously noted, were not significantly different.

	1 time (N = 13)		2 to 5 times (N = 14)		6 to 10 times (N = 14)		11 or more (N = 9)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
General distress	1.89	.63	2.30	.59	2.36	.67	1.94	.35
Social dysfunction	1.96	.59	2.27	.40	2.38	.55	2.08	.22
Anxiety/Depression	1.73	.81	2.25	.92	2.21	.92	1.72	.70

Table 6.9. ***Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Number of Prison Experiences***

Table 6.10 depicts the findings of the GHQ according to their previous categories of profession. It could be noted that distress, dysfunction, and depression scores generally deteriorate as their work becomes less skilled. This may indicate how their life courses have a large impact on their present emotions. Those with lower skilled jobs have lesser opportunities to start again and could perhaps feel that they have squandered opportunities. The findings were not significant nonetheless.

	Professional (N = 5)		Skilled Labour (N = 7)		Semi-Skilled (N = 10)		Unskilled (N = 15)		Unemployed (N = 13)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
General distress	1.63	.47	1.98	.75	2.28	.66	2.23	.57	2.19	.48
Social dysfunction	1.85	.49	2.11	.67	2.28	.40	2.23	.49	2.21	.43
Anxiety/Depression	1.25	.43	1.75	.91	2.23	.98	2.13	.90	2.08	.71

Table 6.10. ***Means and Variances for GHQ Scores by Category of Profession***

The sample's general distress, social dysfunction, and anxiety/depression is slightly unhealthy overall. Major contributors to this state of mind may be an interviewee's use of drugs in the past, lack of employment, poor relationship with their families, and being homeless. Conversely, having employment, good relationship with families, and decent living quarters appeared to help push them back towards a healthier state of mind.

Perceived Devaluation/Discrimination Scale (PDDS)

The Perceived Devaluation/Discrimination Scale (Link et al., 1997) measured the perceived stigma felt by the sample. The instrument measured how interviewees perceived discrimination, their experiences of rejection, and how they tended to cope with their perceptions of stigma. This scale is to be read in two parts, the first part comprising perceived stigma, where a lower score means a higher perception of devaluation, and the second part encompasses rejection experiences, coping by secrecy, and coping by withdrawal, where a higher score means more experiences or behaviour in these categories. For perceived stigma, a score of about 2 and above is healthy while for rejection experiences, coping by secrecy, and coping by withdrawal, a score of about .40 or below is healthy. That the sample's average for perceived devaluation was 1.38 (α = .78) and their rejection experiences, coping by secrecy, and coping by withdrawal were .55, .59, and .43 respectively; showed that the sample felt slightly discriminated and had more than normal rejection experiences and coping by secrecy. However, the interviewees did seem to exhibit healthy patterns of coping by withdrawal. Table 7.1 shows the overall scores with standard deviations.

	M	*SD*
Perceived devaluation	1.38	.49
Rejection experiences	.55	.31
Coping by secrecy	.59	.36
Coping by withdrawal	.43	.25

Table 7.1. ***Means and Variances for PDDS Scores***

Employment makes a difference in perceived discrimination and devaluation, although the effect is not as expected. In Table 7.2, it can be noted that those employed significantly perceive more discrimination (1.01 over 1.47, $p < .01$) than those without work. This is despite the fact that rejection experiences and coping behaviours are similar for the interviewees. This result could be made sense of by noting that employed individuals are placed together with other people to compete in the same workplace, thus it possible that they therefore perceive more discrimination based on the politics of the workplace instead.

	Employed (N = 10)		Unemployed (N = 40)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Perceived devaluation	1.01*	.65	1.47	.41
Rejection experiences	.60	.21	.53	.33
Coping by secrecy	.58	.33	.59	.37
Coping by withdrawal	.45	.23	.42	.25

Table 7.2. ***Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Current Employment Status* p* < .01.**

Table 7.3 also shows that family relationships did have some bearing on interviewee coping strategies. Expectedly, those with poor family relationships had significantly higher perceptions of rejection experiences (.67 over .44, $p < .01$) and unexpectedly, individuals who reported decent family relationships also experience a higher score for coping by withdrawal (.49, $p < .05$). This actually makes sense once thought through since it would be those who have a good enough relationship with their family to then have enough contact to have to use withdrawal as a means of coping.

Perceived devaluation also appeared to be tied to religion with Christians reporting more feelings of discrimination (1.24) than those without religion (1.53). It is not possible to determine whether this sense of discrimination comes from the religious beliefs themselves or if they arise from the activities around practicing the religion. If the explanation for the family relationship data is accepted, then it is possible that the Christian interviewees feel a stronger sense of discrimination due to their participation with Christian communities. It is, of course, possible that the discrimination could be the result of their religious beliefs although this reasoning is not supported by the qualitative interviews.

	Decent (N = 27)		Poor (N = 23)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Perceived devaluation	1.40	.49	1.34	.50
Rejection experiences	.44	.31	.67*	.25
Coping by secrecy	.56	.38	.63	.35
Coping by withdrawal	.49*	.24	.35	.24

Table 7.3. ***Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Family Relationship**** **Rejection experiences (*p* < .01); coping by withdrawal (*p* < .05).**

	No Religion (N = 24)		Christian (N = 26)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Perceived devaluation	1.53	.48	1.24*	.47
Rejection experiences	.46	.32	.62	.28
Coping by secrecy	.57	.42	.61	.31
Coping by withdrawal	.42	.25	.43	.25

Table 7.4. ***Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Religion* p < .05.***

The remaining conditions examined—drug history, type of accommodation, age category, prison experiences, and category of profession—do not bring about any statistical differences for perceived devaluation, rejection experiences, and coping strategies. Some patterns could be observed despite this lack of statistical significance however. Pertaining to drug history, Table 7.5 shows that those without such a history actually perceive more discrimination than those with one. From the interviews, a possible explanation may be that past drug users generally accepted the stigma brought about by their behaviour, which could then result in a reduced sensitivity to discrimination.

	Have History (N = 40)		No History (N = 10)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Perceived devaluation	1.45	.46	1.05	.54
Rejection experiences	.55	.32	.53	.26
Coping by secrecy	.60	.35	.61	.42
Coping by withdrawal	.41	.26	.50	.18

Table 7.5. ***Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Drug History***

Table 7.6 shows that type of accommodation also did not significantly influence perceived devaluation, rejection experiences, and coping strategies. Interviewees in shelter scored lower in perceived discrimination (1.33) although the other items were fairly equally matched. The concept of devaluation is interesting because it entails a sense of being valued less than what one believes their own value to be; so, in this sense, it is possible that those who are homelessness could already have a poor self-image and therefore have less of a sense of devaluation than those who have shelter and a higher sense of value. This difference is not significantly different however.

	Homeless (N = 18)		Sheltered (N = 32)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Perceived devaluation	1.43	.42	1.33	.54
Rejection experiences	.57	.31	.55	.30
Coping by secrecy	.56	.38	.60	.36
Coping by withdrawal	.40	.27	.45	.24

Table 7.6. ***Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Accommodation Type***

In Table 7.7, it could also be noted that devaluation increases with age. This could be due to life opportunities or an overall sense of rejection and isolation brought about by decreased mobility and increased health problems from age. Again, this is only an observable pattern—no significant relationship was found in the data here.

	50 to 55 (N = 11)		56 to 60 (N = 20)		60 and above (N = 19)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Perceived devaluation	1.43	.56	1.39	.53	1.33	.43
Rejection experiences	.59	.30	.46	.35	.61	.25
Coping by secrecy	.52	.34	.54	.35	.68	.39
Coping by withdrawal	.43	.23	.39	.28	.46	.24

Table 7.7. ***Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Age Category***

Table 7.8 also shows that more imprisonment actually decreases a sense of devaluation. This may be because those who only committed one crime and went to prison for it were so ashamed by that experience that they desisted from it since, while those who had gone to prison more times began to develop a criminal identity that adjusted their self-image. It is interesting to note also that those with 11 or more prison experiences also reported less rejection experiences (.39). The results, which were not significant are presented in Table 7.8.

	1 time (*N* = 13)		2 to 5 times (*N* = 14)		6 to 10 times (*N* = 14)		11 or more (*N* = 9)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Perceived devaluation	1.26	.58	1.35	.51	1.30	.67	1.52	.47
Rejection experiences	.58	.25	.58	.31	.60	.55	.39	.31
Coping by secrecy	.54	.37	.58	.40	.67	.30	.58	.41
Coping by withdrawal	.51	.21	.50	.25	.33	.26	.36	.25

Table 7.8. ***Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Number of Prison Experiences***

Finally, Table 7.9 depicts the same scores by profession. It is interesting to note that here, skilled labourers perceived the least devaluation (1.67) followed by the unemployed (1.46). For skilled labour, it is possible that their skills are simply abilities they possess and their vocations do not define who they are; therefore, their joblessness is not as tied to their devaluation as professionals, who define themselves by their careers. The unemployed, on the other hand, follow the possible explanation of a poor self-image that raises the threshold for what they would consider devaluation.

	Professional (*N* = 5)		Skilled Labour (*N* = 7)		Semi-Skilled (*N* = 10)		Unskilled (*N* = 15)		Unemployed (*N* = 13)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Perceived devaluation	1.29	.30	1.67	.51	1.31	.51	1.23	.49	1.46	.52
Rejection experiences	.50	.31	.57	.28	.50	.33	.68	.24	.42	.34
Coping by secrecy	.35	.38	.64	.32	.48	.34	.75	.30	.56	.42
Coping by withdrawal	.55	.11	.43	.24	.50	.24	.41	.24	.35	.30

Table 7.9. ***Means and Variances for PDDS Scores by Category of Profession***

The sample's perceived devaluation was slightly worse and their rejection experiences and coping strategies were a little higher than normal. Major contributors to increased perceptions of discrimination were a respondent's having employment and being Christian. Having a decent family relationship contributed to more coping by withdrawal while having a poor family relationship was tied to more rejection experiences. Discrimination needs to be further looked into because it appears that community and positive social experiences, such as obtaining public housing, serve to increase its perception. Perceived discrimination appears to be tied to feelings of worthlessness and

elderly ex-offender interaction with society post-release, but more research is necessary to obtain a more accurate perspective of this phenomenon.

CRIME-PICS II

The CRIME-PICS II (Frude, Honess, & Maguire, 1994) measured interviewee self-perception of the seriousness of the current life problems that they encountered. The instrument assessed how much of a problem respondents had with traits that have been associated with increasing risks of offending. The instrument asked about the struggles they had with money, relationships, family, prospects of employment, needing extra excitement in life, boredom, lack of confidence, worries, and so on. The scale produced a single average score. Lower scores are to be read as respondents experiencing more serious life problems; therefore, a mean score of 3 and above is desirable in relation to decreased risk of offending. The sample's average score was actually found to be encouraging in this regard at 2.98 (α = .85), which means that there is good reason to trust respondent assessments that they would not be returning to a life of crime (see Table 8.1).

	M	*SD*
Seriousness of current life problems	2.98	.65

Table 8.1. ***Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score***

Table 8.2 shows that drug history does place interviewees in a position where offending is statistically more likely (2.83 over 3.61, $p < .01$). This is not surprising since many interviewees reported that drug usage and the community that accompanies it actually places them at higher risk of experiencing more serious life problems, thereby increasing the risk of re-offending. In this way, the problem of drugs makes criminal behaviour more likely because it makes other aspects of life more problematic than without it. That said, an average score of 2.83 still implies interviewees are likely not going to return to a life of crime.

	Have History (*N* = 40)		No History (*N* = 10)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Seriousness of current life problems	2.8	.60	3.61	.47

Table 8.2. ***Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score by Drug History* p* < .01.**

Like drugs, employment also makes a difference in participants' perception of the seriousness of their current life problem. Table 8.3 demonstrates that those without employment report more serious problems they face (2.84 over 3.57, p = .001). Contrary to the effects of drugs, employment tends to alleviate problems perceived in different aspects of life and could therefore help to significantly reduce stressors that may lead to re-offending.

	Employed		Unemployed	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Seriousness of current life problems	3.57	.53	2.84*	.60

Table 8.3. ***Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score by Current Employment Status* p < .001.***

With regards to family relationships, Table 8.4 shows that individuals with poor family relationships also report more serious life problems they face. Those with decent relationships reported scores above the desirable range. Looking at the family as a resource for aid and security, it is possible to understand this result simply as those with positive familial relationships have more solutions to life problems while those without can only look to themselves and their opportunities for relief. Those with poor relationships therefore see each issue as a larger problem because there are less alternative solutions.

	Decent		Poor	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Seriousness of current life problems	3.28	.67	2.63*	.41

Table 8.4. ***Means and Variances for CRIME-PICS II Score by Family Relationship* p < .001.***

Type of accommodation also made a difference to the self-perception of the seriousness of life problems for the sample. In Table 8.5, the homeless had significantly more serious probkems (2.67 compared to 3.16, p = .01) while those with shelter had a score above the desirable range. Being homeless, in this way, therefore makes reintegration more difficult and places recidivism more as a tempting proposition therefore as Table 8.5 depicts.

	Homeless		Sheltered	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Seriousness of current life problems	2.67*	.58	3.16	.63

Table 8.5. ***Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score by Accommodation Type* p = .01.***

Religion makes a difference as well since those who professed to be Christians reported a score within the desired range (3.20) and those without religion fell below it to a significant level (2.72, $p < .01$). This supports the points made about how Christianity deters individuals from future offending in the qualitative interviews.

	No Religion		Christian	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Seriousness of current life problems	2.72*	.59	3.20	.62

Table 8.6. ***Mean and Variance for CRIME-PICS II Score by Religion* p < .01.***

All other categories tested, age, prison experience, and profession, did not appear to yield significant differences in their perception in the seriousness of life problems they faced. Table 8.7 presents that finding on age and while there is no significant difference, it should be noted that their self-perception of the seriousness of life problems decrease with increasing age.

	50 to 55		56 to 60		60 and above	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Seriousness of current life problems	2.	.60	3	.61	3.09	.68

Table 8.7. ***Means and Variances for CRIME-PICS II Score by Age Category***

Table 8.8 compares participants' perception against the number of times they had been to prison. The pattern here is much like that observed in the GHQ regarding their distress, dysfunction, and depression, where those who had gone to prison once and those that had gone to prison over 10 times report experiencing less serious life problems.

	1 time		2 to 5 times		6 to 10 times		11 or more	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Seriousness of current life problems	3.23	.78	2.75	.65	2.8	.65	3.10	.53

Table 8.8. ***Means and Variances for CRIME-PICS II Score by Number of Prison Experiences***

Finally, while there were also no statistical differences, pertaining to occupation before conviction, it appears that those who were professionals before were the least likely to report serious life problems they faced and that likelihood decreases with the decrease in skill required for their jobs. Professionals, skilled labourers, and the unemployed all noted mean scores within the ideal range of 3.65, 3.25, and 3.03 respectively as Table 8.9 shows.

	Professional		Skilled		Semi-Skilled		Unskilled		Unemployed	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Seriousness of current life problems	3.65	.49	3.15	.93	2.71	.53	2.82	.65	3.03	.44

Table 8.9. ***Means and Variances for CRIME-PICS II Score by Category of Profession***

The sample's perception of the seriousness of the life problems was close to the desirable range of 3. Major attributes that appeared to be linked to the tendency to report more serious life problems were having a history with drugs, being unemployed, having poor family relationships, being homeless, and having no religious beliefs. These perceptions could therefore be improved by addressing problems relating to their past with drugs, obtaining employment, bettering family relationships, and providing decent living quarters.

Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)

The Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988; Yik, 2007) measured the positive and negative emotions held by the respondent over the past 3 months from the time of the survey being taken. It has two scores and both work opposite to one another. The positive affect score asks for moods such as interest, inspiration, and enthusiasm while the negative affect score requests moods such as distress, guilt, and hostility. The responses are then summed up to one large score. A higher affect score on either dimension means either more positive or negative moods over the past 3 months. From Yik (2007), a positive affect score of 35 with a standard deviation of 6.4 as well as a negative affect score of 18.1 with a standard deviation of 5.9 should be considered normal. As Table 9.1 shows, the sample's average positive affect score was lower than normal at 27.0 (SD = 9.15, α = .89) while their average negative affect score was higher than normal at 20.3 (SD = 9.29, α = .91). This means that the respondents were both less positive and more negative than the normal population.

	M	*SD*
Positive affect	27.0	9.15
Negative affect	20.3	9.29

Table 9.1. ***Means and Variances for PANAS Scores***

Having a drug history makes a large difference to the affect scores as Table 9.2 depicts. Those with a drug history are both significantly less positive (25.2 over 34.6, $p < .05$) and more negative (22.0 over 13.6, $p < .05$) than those without this history. This meant that those without a drug history were very much like the normal population in terms of their positive affect and better with their negative affect score. Interviewees with a history of drug use appear to be much less positive and a lot more negative in their recent months. It does appear that using drugs in the past has effects that carried over into the present.

	Have History		No History	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Positive affect	25.2*	8.70	34.6	7.35
Negative affect	22.0*	9.40	13.6	4.80

Table 9.2. ***Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Drug History* p < .05.***

Employment also makes a significant difference in participants' positive and negative affections. Table 9.3 shows that those who had no employment were both less positive (25.1 over 34.8, $p < .01$) and more negative (21.8 over 14.3, $p < .05$) than those with jobs. Employment could provide them with some normalcy and therefore increase their positivity while decreasing their negativity.

	Employed		Unemployed	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Positive affect	34.8	7.55	25.1*	8.53
Negative affect	14.3	5.95	21.8*	9.42

Table 9.3. ***Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Current Employment Status**** **Positive affect ($p < .01$); negative affect ($p < .05$).**

Pertaining to family relationships, Table 9.4 shows only that statistical significance could be registered on the dimension of positive affect. The least positive were individuals who had poor family relationships (23.0, $p = .01$). Those with decent family relationships were more positive with a score of 30.5. This indicates that family relationship has a large role to play in the positive outlook of the sample.

	Decent		Poor	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Positive affect	30.5	9.69	23.0*	6.57
Negative affect	18.0	8.77	23.0	9.34

Table 9.4. ***Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Family Relationship* p < .01.***

Type of accommodation played a significant role in differentiating positive and negative affect as Table 9.5 depicts. The homeless were less positive (22.8) and more negative (24.7) when compared to the 29.5 ($p < .05$) positive affect and the 17.8 negative affect scores of those who had shelter. This means that interviewees who were homeless were also afflicted with more negative emotions and experienced less positive emotions, putting them in a worse state of mind than those who had a place to shelter.

	Homeless		Sheltered	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Positive affect	22.8*	7.95	29.5	9.16
Negative affect	24.7*	10.6	17.8	7.71

Table 9.5. ***Means and Variances for PANAS Scores Total by Accommodation Type* p < .05.***

Table 9.6 also shows that religion played a role in the positive affect score as those who reported having no religion held a lower positive affect of 24.0 while Christians had a higher positive score at 29.6 ($p < .05$). In terms of negative affect score, Christians also reported a lower negative affect score of 18.8 as those with no religion reported a mean of 22.0. These results were supported by the interview data, especially when they discussed the Christian religion providing them with a sense of hope.

	No Religion		Christian	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Positive affect	24.0*	8.51	29.6	9.04
Negative affect	22.0	10.6	18.8	7.86

Table 9.6. ***Means and Variances for PANAS Scores Total by Religion* p < .05.***

The number of prison experiences also seemed to differentiate positive affects as those who went to prison once had the highest positive affect score (32.8) while those who were sent to prison 6 to 10 times had the lowest at 22.9 ($p < .05$). In general, the data showed that repeat offenders had a lower positive affect score when compared to those who only were incarcerated once. This result makes sense because the more one gets sent to prison, the more confidence one loses in his own ability to support his family and live up to social expectations (see Table 9.7).

	1 time		2 to 5 times		6 to 10 times		11 or more	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Positive affect	32.8	9.15	26.0	6.80	22.9*	7.11	26.9	10.3
Negative affect	18.3	6.80	21.0	10.5	21.5	9.54	18.6	10.6

Table 9.7. ***Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Number of Prison Experiences* p* = .05.**

Table 9.8 shows that one's profession before conviction also makes a difference in positive affect as professionals had a high score of 36.4 while unskilled labourers scored the lowest here at 24.4 ($p < .05$). A pattern could be noted where those in skilled professions also had a high positive affect score. This again shows that those who were in skilled employment are more able to have a more positive outlook as they reintegrate into society. This may be because they have more opportunities to work or have more practiced work habits that help them cope better with their situation.

	Professional		Skilled Labour		Semi-Skilled		Unskilled		Unemployed	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Positive affect	36.4	7.23	32.4	11.1	25.1	6.82	24.4*	7.55	25.1	9.58
Negative affect	14.6	5.90	20.9	10.1	21.0	9.89	21.5	10.3	20.2	8.84

Table 9.8. ***Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Category of Profession* p* = .05.**

Pertaining to age, this was the only factor that did not see any significant difference pertaining to positive and negative affect scores. The pattern that does emerge is that those who are younger within the sample (aged 50 to 55) tended to have the worst affect states with a low positive affect score of 23.9 and a high negative affect score of 22.4. Going past 56, it appears that the elderly become more positive and less negative in the sample. The results are not significant but it is nonetheless an interesting pattern to note that those still in their early 50s could be under more severe stress than those who are older (see Table 9.9).

	50 to 55		56 to 60		60 and above	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Positive affect	23.9	8.12	28.2	9.86	27.7	8.99
Negative affect	22.4	8.02	21.1	10.7	18.3	8.38

Table 9.9. ***Means and Variances for PANAS Scores by Age Category***

The sample's positive affect scores are lower than normal and their negative affect scores higher than normal, which means they are generally not as positive and more negative than the average person. Major reasons tied to poorer negative affects were being a previous drug user, being unemployed, and being homeless. On the other hand, increasing positive affect appears to be tied to a history without drugs, having employment, being in a decent family relationship, having some form of shelter, affiliation with the Christian faith, going to prison only once, and being a professional or skilled labourer previously.

Subjective Well-Being Scale (SWBS)

The Subjective Well-Being Scale (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982; Tang, 2008), measured an interviewee's spiritual well-being. It has one general score and two sub-scale scores, the first being the general subjective well-being score and the sub-scales being spiritual well-being and existential well-being. Subjective well-being is defined as a sense of confidence that allows individuals to be motivated to act and seize opportunities to grow in society. The sub-scales of spiritual well-being and existential well-being deal with a general sense of self and security that enables individuals to make a difference in their lives. In this scale, the lower the score, the higher that sense of well-being, thus a score of 2.5 and below is desirable. On average, the sample has a less than ideal sense of subjective well-being, spiritual well-being, and existential well-being with scores of 3.28 (α = .97), 3.23 (α = .95), and 3.33 (α = .93) respectively. Table 10.1 furnishes the details.

	M	*SD*
Subjective well-being	3.28	1.46
Spiritual well-being	3.23	1.58
Existential well-being	3.33	1.42

Table 10.1. ***Means and Variances for SWBS Scores***

Table 10.2 depicts how having a drug history leads to significance differences in interviewees' subjective well-being. Those with past drug use have less subjective well-being (3.50 over 2.50), spiritual well-being (3.39 over 2.67), and significantly less existential well-being (3.61 over 2.33, $p < .05$). Those without a history in drugs had a good subjective well-being, which could demonstrate the destructive mindset connected with drug use.

	Have History		No History	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Subjective well-being	3.50	1.40	2.50	1.52
Spiritual well-being	3.39	1.51	2.67	1.85
Existential well-being	3.61*	1.35	2.33	1.21

Table 10.2. ***Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Drug History* p < .05.***

Employment makes a big difference in relation to the concepts measured in this scale as Table 10.3 shows. Having employment placed interviewees well in the ideal range of subjective well-being (1.90 over 3.62, $p < .001$), spiritual well-being (1.92 over 3.55, $p < .01$), and existential well-being (1.88 over 3.69, $p < .001$) whereas those without employment had poor well-being. It is not completely clear from the data whether employment elicits a sense of well-being or that individuals' sense of well-being made them continue to seek employment in the first place; however, it is clear that the two conditions are connected.

	Employed		Unemployed	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Subjective well-being	1.90	1.12	3.62*	1.34
Spiritual well-being	1.92	1.40	3.55*	1.46
Existential well-being	1.88	.93	3.69*	1.28

Table 10.3. ***Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Current Employment Status**** **Spiritual well-being ($p < .001$); religious well-being ($p < .01$); existential well-being ($p < .001$).**

Family relationships also have a bearing on an individual's sense of existential well-being. Table 10.4 shows that those in poor family relationships reported a significantly poorer existential well-being score of 3.84 ($p < .05$) while those with decent family relationships had a score of 2.90. It is also noteworthy that while there is no statistical significance, the subjective well-being scores of those with poor family relationships were worse (3.63) than those with decent family relationships (2.98). Because subjective, spiritual, and existential well-being is connected to loneliness and other factors that place

individuals at risk of depression, the quality of family relationships would likely have some effect on it.

	Decent		Poor	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Subjective well-being	2.98	1.53	3.63	1.34
Spiritual well-being	3.06	1.61	3.42	1.56
Existential well-being	2.90	1.49	3.84*	1.16

Table 10.4. ***Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Family Relationship* p < .05.***

Table 10.5 shows that the type of accommodation played a significant role in an overall sense of well-being. Those who lived in sheltered locations reported subjective well-being (2.90), spiritual well-being (2.87), and existential well-being scores (2.93) that were better than those who were homeless. The homeless actually scored very poorly with subjective well-being at 4.00 ($p < .01$), spiritual well-being at 3.92 ($p < .05$), and existential well-being at 4.09 ($p < .01$). Being homeless undoubtedly takes a toll on an interviewee's subjective well-being and this difference is immediately observable in Table 10.5.

	Homeless		Sheltered	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Subjective well-being	4.00*	1.17	2.90	1.48
Spiritual well-being	3.92*	1.26	2.87	1.64
Existential well-being	4.09*	1.12	2.93	1.42

Table 10.5. ***Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Accommodation Type**** **Spiritual well-being ($p = .01$); religious well-being ($p < .05$); existential well-being ($p < .01$).**

Pertaining to subjective well-being, religion has always been a large contributor to this aspect. Table 10.6 shows that those who reported having no religion scored the poorest for subjective well-being (4.48, $p < .001$), spiritual well-being (4.55, $p < .001$), and existential well-being (4.42, $p < .001$). Christian interviewees scored well in all categories with subjective well-being at 2.25, spiritual well-being at 2.10, and existential well-being at 2.40. For religion, a belief in Christianity helps an individual's subjective well-being dramatically.

	No Religion (N = 24)		Christian (N = 26)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Subjective well-being	4.48*	1.08	2.25	.83
Spiritual well-being	4.55*	1.22	2.10	.77
Existential well-being	4.42*	1.02	2.40	.98

Table 10.6. ***Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Religion*** ***** $p < .001$.

Table 10.7 finds that those who had been to prison over 10 times fared the poorest in relation to all areas of well-being while those who only went to prison once had the most desirable scores. Those who had been to prison only once scored 2.00 for subjective well-being, 1.99 for spiritual well-being, and 2.01 for existential well-being whereas those with over 10 returns to prison scored 4.13 for subjective well-being, 4.17 for spiritual well-being, and 4.08 for existential well-being. This finding makes sense since those who have gone to prison so many times appear unable to keep themselves away from lives of crime. This condition could be brought about and be caused by a sense of poor well-being, which is reflected in the pessimism noted in the qualitative data of those ex-prisoners that have returned to jail many times over.

	1 time (N = 13)		2 to 5 times (N = 14)		6 to 10 times (N = 14)		11 or more (N = 9)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Subjective well-being	2.00	.81	3.95	1.38	3.25	.80	4.13*	1.89
Spiritual well-being	1.99	.76	3.95	1.68	3.04	.98	4.17*	2.01
Existential well-being	2.01	.92	3.94	1.16	3.46	.75	4.08*	1.78

Table 10.7. ***Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Number of Prison Experiences*** *** Spiritual well-being ($p = .001$); religious well-being ($p < .01$); existential well-being ($p < .001$).**

The categories of age and previous profession did not show any significant results. Despite that, in terms of age, it is noteworthy that, as one gets older, one also achieves a better sense of well-being. This makes sense as those who are older may have already settled for a routine they are familiar with and are more able to accept their circumstances whereas those who are still in their early 50s still have to think about their future and may be anxious over their future prospects (see Table 10.8).

	50 to 55 (*N* = 11)		56 to 60 (*N* = 20)		60 and above (*N* = 19)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Subjective well-being	3.66	1.46	3.20	1.49	3.14	1.48
Spiritual well-being	3.60	1.62	3.18	1.65	3.07	1.54
Existential well-being	3.73	1.34	3.23	1.41	3.21	1.50

Table 10.8. ***Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Age Category***

With the professions in Table 10.9, it is noted again that professionals and higher skilled workers are better off in terms of their subjective well-being. It is interesting to note here that, although not significant, skilled labourers actually have the most desirable scores for well-being. This may be because skilled labourers do not have as much of a reputation to lose as professionals, who, by virtue of a criminal conviction, may lose their entire careers and sense of personhood.

	Professional (*N* = 5)		Skilled Labour (*N* = 7)		Semi-Skilled (*N* = 10)		Unskilled (*N* = 15)		Unemployed (*N* = 13)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Subjective well-being	3.06	1.83	2.41	1.51	3.48	1.36	3.28	1.47	3.68	1.39
Spiritual well-being	3.34	2.27	2.26	1.26	3.46	1.53	3.21	1.51	3.55	1.60
Existential well-being	2.78	1.41	2.56	1.81	3.50	1.22	3.35	1.47	3.81	1.23

Table 10.9. ***Means and Variances for SWBS Scores by Category of Profession***

The sample's subjective well-being, spiritual well-being, and existential well-being were poorer than the ideal. Major areas that were tied to decreased subjective well-being were being unemployed, being homeless, having no religious beliefs, and having repeated prison experiences. Decreased spiritual well-being was tied to no employment, no accommodation, no religion, and multiple prison experiences. Finally, lessened existential well-being was associated with having a drug history, being without a job, having poor family relationships, being homeless, having no religious affiliation, and having multiple prison experiences. From these, it could be inferred that finding employment, having sheltered accommodation, and finding faith helps individual subjective well-being and motivates them to make a difference in their lives.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Cheng & Chan, 2004) measured an interviewee's perceived social support from family, friends, and significant others. It has three scores in these categories and the higher score represents higher social support from the tested groups. A score of 5 is considered good support from the social group in question. As Table 11.1 shows, the sample's average social support is rather poor with family support having an average of 3.65 (α = .98), friend support 3.60 (α = .96), and significant other support at 3.97 (α = .98). This means that respondents generally did not feel that their social groups fully supported them.

	M	*SD*
Family support	3.65	2.51
Friend support	3.60	2.33
Significant other support	3.97	2.49

Table 11.1. ***Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores***

Testing the difference between those who have a history with drugs against those who do not in relation to social support in Table 11.2, it is clear that drug users have less social support than those who have never used drugs. Those who have had a history with drugs reported far less family support (3.11 over 5.75, $p < .01$), friend support (3.05 over 5.81, $p < .01$) and significant other support (3.51 over 5.67, $p < .05$). This could imply that those with drug problems in the past are more discriminated against by those who know them as some interviewees have suggested. Drugs, in this way, could bring about a separate stigma that deepens discrimination apart from mere criminality.

	Have History (N = 40)		No History (N = 10)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Family support	3.11*	2.36	5.75	2.05
Friend support	3.05*	2.19	5.81	1.57
Significant other support	3.51*	2.35	5.67	2.40

Table 11.2. ***Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Drug History**** **Family support ($p < .01$); friend support ($p < .01$); significant other support ($p < .05$).**

Table 11.3 shows that employment is also important in encouraging social support. The unemployed reported significantly lower scores in social support than those who have employment. For the unemployed, family support was 3.39 compared to 4.70 for the

employed, friend support was 3.18 compared to 5.28 ($p < .01$), and significant other support was 3.61 compared to 5.40 ($p < .05$). The point on family support is interesting because although employment helps, it does not help to a point where the family is providing strong support unlike the other categories. This may be due to the collectivist mindset, where a criminal does not only bring shame to himself but also to the entire family, which then works to distance the family from the individual. Nonetheless, having employment is tied to increased social support overall; supporting the argument that being employed does help others see elderly ex-prisoners as more normal and thereby supporting their reintegration.

	Employed (N = 10)		Unemployed (N = 40)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Family support	4.70	2.71	3.39	2.43
Friend support	5.28	1.94	3.18*	2.25
Significant other support	5.40	2.41	3.61*	2.40

Table 11.3. ***Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Current Employment Status** Friend support ($p < .01$); significant other support ($p < .05$).**

Table 11.4 looks at family relationship quality and social support. The results are as expected as those reporting poor family relationships also note a significantly lower family support score of 1.63 ($p < .001$) compared to those with decent relationships, who reported a score of 5.37. In relation to friend support, those with poor family relationships reported a low score of 2.71 ($p < .05$) while those with decent relationships reported a score of 4.35, which is notably better than those with poor relationships. The final score for significant other did not show any significance but those with decent family relationships did have a higher score of 4.41 than those in poor relationships. Nonetheless, those with poor family relationships were closest to their significant others with a score of 3.45.

	Decent (N = 27)		Poor (N = 23)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Family support	5.37	1.82	1.63*	1.51
Friend support	4.35	2.20	2.71*	2.20
Significant other support	4.41	2.49	3.45	2.44

Table 11.4. ***Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Family Relationship** Family support ($p < .001$); friend support ($p < .05$).**

Table 11.5 investigates social support in relation to religious beliefs. Here, those without a religion scored lower in terms of family support (3.20) than Christians, who reported an average score of 4.04. Christians also fared better regarding friend support at 4.08 over those without a religion at 3.02. The only significant difference, however, was in terms of significant other support and here Christians scored on the desirable range at 5.27 while those without a religion scored only 2.43 ($p < .001$). The Christian emphasis on marriage may have a role to play in this result or perhaps significant others refer to close Christian friends; whichever it is, it appears that Christians are more likely to report a better relationship with someone they consider special.

	No Religion ($N = 24$)		Christian ($N = 26$)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Family support	3.20	2.32	4.04	2.65
Friend support	3.02	2.53	4.08	2.07
Significant other support	2.43*	2.21	5.27	1.93

Table 11.5. ***Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Religion* p < .001.***

Table 11.6 looks at the number of prison experiences and social support and finds that those with only one term of imprisonment also exhibited the highest support across the board, with family and significant other support being significant at 5.38 ($p < .05$) and 5.58 ($p < .01$) respectively. Those who were incarcerated more than once tend to see a dramatic drop in their support as the table below shows.

	1 time ($N = 13$)		2 to 5 times ($N = 14$)		6 to 10 times ($N = 14$)		11 or more ($N = 9$)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Family support	5.38	2.19	3.21	2.16	2.48*	2.38	3.44	2.70
Friend support	4.75	1.80	3.71	2.41	3.06	2.40	2.44	2.30
Significant other support	5.58	1.98	2.83	2.44	4.58	2.08	2.44*	2.40

Table 11.6. ***Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Number of Prison Experiences**** **Family support ($p < .05$); significant other support ($p < .01$).**

In terms of accommodation, the homeless fared worse than those who had shelter from the elements in terms of their support from family and significant others. While those with shelter reported family support at 4.19 and significant other support at 4.89, those who are

homeless reported family support at 2.58 ($p < .05$) and significant other support at 2.83 ($p < .05$). Table 11.7 below depicts this condition.

	Homeless ($N = 18$)		Sheltered ($N = 32$)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Family support	2.58*	2.21	4.19	2.52
Friend support	3.01	2.31	3.91	2.35
Significant other support	2.83*	2.20	4.89	2.44

Table 11.7. ***Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Accommodation Type* p < .05.***

The last two categories of age and profession do not yield any significant differences in their variable categories. For age, each group appears to have groups that they are closer with than others; however, the scores are generally close enough that it does not appear that age makes any real difference pertaining to the different supports. Table 11.8 displays the results.

	50 to 55 ($N = 11$)		56 to 60 ($N = 20$)		60 and above ($N = 19$)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Family support	3.23	2.46	4.06	2.45	3.46	2.67
Friend support	4.11	2.49	3.11	2.31	3.80	2.29
Significant other support	3.34	2.61	4.06	2.54	4.22	2.44

Table 11.8. ***Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Age Category***

Table 11.9 examines the relationship between previous profession and social support and although there are no significant relationships, it is clear that professionals fared a lot better than all persons previously employed in other fields. For family support, professionals saw strong support at 5.95, very strong support for friend support at 6.45, and strong support for significant other at 5.60. This makes sense because professionals tend to specialize and therefore have specific networks that they are a part of.

	Professional (*N* = 5)		Skilled Labour (*N* = 7)		Semi-Skilled (*N* = 10)		Unskilled (*N* = 15)		Unemployed (*N* = 13)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Family support	5.95	1.23	4.21	2.67	3.60	2.37	2.77	2.41	3.52	2.71
Friend support	6.45	.51	3.82	1.97	3.20	1.97	3.03	2.14	3.33	2.67
Significant other support	5.60	2.61	4.43	2.70	3.13	2.70	3.73	2.34	4.00	2.58

Table 11.9. ***Means and Variances for MSPSS Scores by Category of Profession***

The sample's social support scores are rather poor although different factors do appear to make a difference. High family support scores are tied to individuals without a drug history, decent family relationships, only having been to prison once, and having shelter; high friend support was linked to lack of a history with drugs, being employed, having a decent family relationship; and, high significant other scores were associated with having no drug history, having a job, being affiliated to Christianity, only going to prison once, and having sheltered accommodation. In terms of social support, drugs are a major problem as its consumption negatively affects every form of support.

Summary of Quantitative Data

The quantitative data verifies the points raised by the qualitative data segment of this study. The findings from the quantitative segment confirmed that the most troubling factor shared in the qualitative data take a large toll on elderly ex-prisoners. The quantitative data also added strength to interview findings by pointing to how drugs can potentially ruin lives while religion—Christianity in this case—was shown to have positive effects on elderly ex-prisoners. In comparing which of these factors make a significant difference in the interviewees' confidence in being able to stay away from offending, we find that decent family relationships and shelter help in that difference. Tables 12.1 and 12.2 lay out the results.

	Decent (*N* = 27)		Poor (*N* = 23)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Ceasing offending	1.41	.69	1.91*	.79

Table 12.1. ***Means and Variances for Other Items by Family Relationship* p* < .05.**

	Homeless		Sheltered	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Ceasing offending	1.94*	.80	1.45	.72

Table 12.2. ***Means and Variances for Other Items by Accommodation Type* p < .05.***

Reviewing each item, the sample had levels of general distress, social dysfunction, and anxiety/depression that were slightly unhealthy; perceived more devaluation and reported more rejection experiences as well as used more coping strategies than normal; were less positive and more negative in their outlook than the normal population; possessed below average subjective well-being, spiritual well-being, and existential well-being; and, did not feel that they had much family, friend, and significant other supports. In this assessment, the sample could be said to be emotionally and socially disadvantaged overall. One encouraging result, however, is that the sample is unlikely to return to a life of crime, so chances of recidivism are low.

Test Administered	Results	Interpretations
Substance Abuse Scale (SAS)	1. Drug history: 80% 2. Alcohol: 1.86 3. Smoking: 5.56 4. Pills: 0.52 5. ICE: 0.31 6. Heroin: 2.20	1. Majority of participants with drug history 2. Used alcohol sometimes in last 6 months 3. Smoked always in last 6 months 4. Used ecstasy rarely in last 6 months 5. Used ICE rarely in last 6 months 6. Used heroin sometimes in last 6 months
General Health Questionnaire (GHQ)	1. General distress: 2.14 2. Social dysfunction: 2.18 3. Anxiety/Depression: 2.00	1. Slight general distress 2. Slight social dysfunction 3. Slight anxiety and depression
Perceived Devaluation/Discrimination Scale (PDDS)	1. Perceived devaluation: 1.38 2. Rejection experiences: 0.55 3. Coping by secrecy: 0.59 4. Coping by withdrawal: 0.43	1. Slight perceptions of devaluation 2. Some rejection experiences encountered 3. Slightly above normal coping by secrecy 4. Socially normal coping by withdrawal
CRIME-PICS II	1. Perception of the seriousness of current life problems: 2.98	1. Some reported a greater number of serious life problems — that may affect adversely the risk of criminality
Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)	1. Positive affect: 25.2 2. Negative affect: 22.0	1. Lower than normal positive affect 2. Higher than normal negative affect
Subjective Well-Being Scale (SWBS)	1. Subjective well-being: 3.28 2. Spiritual well-being: 3.23 3. Existential well-being: 3.33	1. Below normal subjective well-being 2. Below normal spiritual well-being 3. Below normal existential well-being
Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)	1. Family support: 3.65 2. Friend support: 3.60 3. Significant other support: 3.97	1. Poor family support 2. Poor friend support 3. Poor significant other support

Table 13.1. ***Summary of Quantitative Findings by Tests Administered***

Test Administered	Demographic Characteristics							
	Work	Drugs	Shelter	Family	Christian	Prison	Profession	Age
GHQ								
General distress	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	×	×
Social dysfunction	✓	✓	×	✓	×	×	×	×
Anxiety/Depression	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	×	×
PDDS								
Perceived devaluation	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×
Rejection experiences	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×
Coping by secrecy	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Coping by withdrawal	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×
CRIME-PICS II	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	×
PANAS								
Positive affect	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×
Negative affect	✓	✓	✓	×	×	×	×	×
SWBS								
Subjective well-being	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×
Spiritual well-being	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×
Existential well-being	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×
MSPSS								
Family support	×	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	×
Friend support	✓	✓	×	✓	×	×	×	×
Significant other	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×

Table 13.2. ***Summary of Significant Differences in Quantitative Findings by Demographics and Tests***
Notes. For description and analysis, please refer to GHQ results in pp. 45–49; PDDS in pp. 49–53; CRIME-PICS II pp. 53–56; PANAS pp. 56–60; SWBS pp. 60–64; and, MSPSS pp. 64–68.

Conclusion

In looking to better reintegrate elderly ex-offenders into society, this study found three major needs that require to be urgently met. These needs are adequate accommodation, legal employment, and good family relationships. The study also found two factors that influence future criminality, the first being drug use, which places individuals in a position where recidivism is more likely; and the other being religion, which predisposes individuals towards law abidance. In the conclusion, we will survey and integrate recommendations from stakeholder interviews.

The plight of elderly ex-offenders is no small thing however, and while everyone needs shelter, employment, and good family relationships, this is more so for the elderly ex-prisoner. The emphasis on rehabilitating young offenders has helped in maintaining a low-crime society, yet the needs of elderly ex-prisoners have generally not been given much attention. Our study reveals, however, that elderly ex-prisoners actually face unique challenges to their rehabilitation and these challenges may tilt them to returning to a life of crime despite their age. Unlike other groups, elderly ex-prisoners actually suffer from total isolation because their systems of support have gradually collapsed through their incarceration experiences. We investigate the main pillars that have become unavailable to them in this section while looking at solutions before putting a picture together of the multiple challenges facing elderly ex-prisoners as they reintegrate.

One point that does require consideration in this report is that the elderly status of these individuals does provide a dilemma for policy. On one hand, the elderly could be seen as having many issues and being too difficult to look after because of their age. Not doing anything on this basis, however, will lead to increased possibility of recidivism because of the pressures they face. On the other hand, the elderly themselves report that their age makes them unwilling or unable to return to a life of crime, which subsequently decreases that possibility. This situation is one that implies no social cost for ignoring these elderly individuals in policy. Nonetheless, this report does assert that aiding the elderly is a large part of the project to better society in the long run as it informs good character by example rather than by cost-benefit analysis. If society itself will not set an example to care for the elderly when they are in need, then there leaves little incentive for the next generation to care for the elderly as well, which worsens the situation. Thus, it is important that society pays attention to the needs of elderly ex-prisoners in order to help them reintegrate and provide them opportunities to contribute to its growth and good.

Accommodation

Returning to the system of needs, the interviews have noted that shelter presents a large gap in the physiological needs of elderly ex-prisoners. From the physiological difficulties posed by a lack of accommodation, the quantitative data also verifies that there are significant psychological and attitudinal disadvantages. One major link in the interview data is how the lack of accommodation leads to difficulties obtaining employment as employers are wary of applicants without addresses. This connection is also sustained by the data as Table 14, using Fisher's exact test, shows.

	Homeless (N = 18)		Sheltered (N = 32)	
	N	%	N	%
No employment	17*	94.4	23	71.9
Employed	1	5.6	9*	28.1

Table 14. ***Association between Accommodation Type and Current Employment* p* = .05.**

Indeed, Stakeholder 1 actually points out that being homeless is not only a very real part of an elderly ex-prisoner's experience, but also puts them on a path that could end up in criminality again as they return to their old ways due to lack of other supports. Stakeholder 1 shares,

> Most families would abandon repeat ex-offenders. It seems that those with 10 convictions with prison sentences or more seem to be stuck in a vicious cycle of prison, homelessness, and crime due to the need for money to survive or to feed their drug habit. The fact that they are homeless forces them to rely on their old peer groups and makes them vulnerable to returning to their bad habits, like drugs.

Homelessness does not help reintegration in any way and needs to be tackled. A possible solution to this is increasing the capacity and ability of halfway homes to address the homeless situation. Halfway homes are an important part of the transition for post-release individuals—especially if they are elderly—and provide society with an opportunity to aid and guide the reintegration process. Stakeholder 3 points out that,

> They need halfway accommodation and food before they find a job and return to the community. It is easy for them to return to their drug addict peer group without living in halfway hostels since most do not have family support.

Stakeholder 2 also notes that, given the government's social security structure, it would be better for the government to provide funding to NGOs rather than directly offering accommodation. She argues that,

> It is probably not a good idea for the government to offer accommodation directly. The government can set up a fund and support NGOs to do this instead. These hostels may then provide them support until they have to enter an elderly home when they require nursing care.

Stakeholder 2 asserts that those who are placed in government housing can end up alone and disconnected from a wholesome community that could help them reintegrate. She shares a case that stuck with her and notes,

> We have a case where a client got a public housing place and immediately left the treatment. He turned the public housing flat into a nest for drug addicts and died of overdose there. It is very difficult for them to live alone, while trying to kick the habit. The loneliness is very hard to bear for them.

Some of the interviewee did see that public housing did not help the condition of elderly ex-prisoners though the data in general shows that some shelter is better than none. At the very least, being able to stay in a shelter is one step in re-establishing a system of support for them to meet their various needs. Stakeholder 2's point is important in that the government and NGOs do have to coordinate their resources better to provide comprehensive reintegrative care.

Employment

Employment presents a very special problem for elderly ex-prisoners because their age makes it difficult to justify hiring them and their criminal record presents an additional challenge in their search for a job. One such challenge noted in the qualitative data section is that of stigma, where elderly ex-prisoners choose to not look for work that may involve the employer going through a criminal background check. In this way, their lack of physiological stability (accommodation) and self-esteem have a detrimental effect on their motivation to obtain their security need of employment.

Despite many interviewees no longer looking for work, the benefits of employment are clear. Having current employment is tied to less distress, social dysfunction, and anxiety/depression; less self-report on the seriousness of current life problem; positive and negative affects; and subjective well-being, spiritual well-being, and existential well-being. Across the board, employment lifts up an individual and appears to place them a reintegration track.

One of the major outcomes of having no employment while trying to reintegrate is boredom. This boredom occurs because they have nothing legitimate to do and yet, as they work towards becoming a good citizen again, they also have nothing illegitimate to do. This places them at risk of returning to crime because it always offers something to do whereas the legitimate world may refuse them in doing even menial tasks. In this way, employment helps to occupy their time and keep them occupied. Another means of achieving this without having to find employment is to orientate them towards

community activities. Giving them a purpose could provide a strong drive to contribute back to society and their immediate communities when they are at an age where employment is difficult to come by.

To this extent, Stakeholder 2 seems to have a comprehensive solution to this issue when she shares,

> I am planning to set up a hostel and I am thinking about how to motivate them, find jobs for them, and create a community to help them. Given their age and educational level, the most they can do is volunteer work like cleaning. We will also start a new church fellowship to help them and have similar aim. The hostel will be open during the day so they do not need to be outside all the time. I would like to create a feeling of home for them. Through volunteer work, I would like them to understand how to care for others, as others have cared for them in the past.

Providing elderly ex-prisoners with accommodation and other basic needs while having them do volunteer work would meet many of the needs that would give them purpose and hope again, firmly placing them on the path back to normalcy. It is not so much money as it is a mission that will set them back towards a productive life. Nonetheless, it has to be conceded that this is not a solution for normal employment, in which case a place that provides basic resources and services to prepare for and obtain jobs may be more effective. For the CSD, Stakeholder 1 points out another possible solution to facilitate in employment for elderly ex-prisoners, noting,

> There may be difficulties with structuring courses to the needs of short-timers, given that some certified courses have fixed lengths. However, can CSD offer more courses? It would be good for society as certain professions have large demand now, such as construction. They can increase incentives to take training that way as well.

For the criminal justice system itself, Stakeholder 1 also believes that it is important for Hong Kong to reconsider how criminal background checks are accessed and used, so that they will not become party to discrimination. He highlights that,

> Hong Kong is still very conservative in cleaning up criminal records, with only convictions leading to prison sentences of less than 3 months or fines of less than HK$10,000 qualifying for applications of criminal records to be expunged. The Privacy Ordinance also offers little protection. Right now, any employer can check an employee's criminal record. In many Western countries, only employees of specified professions can check criminal records.

Apart from privacy, Stakeholders 1 and 4 also point out that it should be possible for criminal records to be expunged and for certain professionals to resume work in their trade at a lighter and more restricted manner. Stakeholder 4 offers,

> For example, a lawyer may not be able to get back to his old profession. However, he may be allowed to be a legal clerk or paralegal. The society may lose skills if they are not employed in their old professions.

And Stakeholder 1 further argues,

> If there is no relationship between the profession and the crime, then they should be considered rehabilitated after a certain period of time. Their crimes have already been punished through prison sentences.

These solutions will help individuals return to professions and start to contribute to society again. Indeed, the qualitative and quantitative data shows that professionals have a good chance at reintegrating and then contributing back to society as normal and upright citizens. It would thus be recommend to bring them back into the fold of normalcy and to allow them to put their talents back into service.

In the end, placing elderly ex-prisoners in some form of employment is crucial to their rehabilitation and reintegration because it gives them a purpose and helps them find their place in society again. While the data does show that this may increase a sense of discrimination because of more contact with other people, the other scales show that this can help their psychological health and their road to reintegration.

Family Relationships

Elderly ex-prisoners not only have a difficult time finding shelter, they also have a difficult time maintaining it. The difficulties they encounter, either social or psychological, in attaining employment works to make their situation more desperate. The nexus of these conditions, however, can be located in their poor family relationships. Throughout the study, it has been noted that family relationships play a significant role in the amount of distress, perception of the seriousness of current life problems, positive and negative affects, and sense of well-being experienced by elderly ex-prisoners.

Pertaining to the family, the elderly find themselves in a more desperate situation because they may have grown old going in and out of prison. Such an experience and a track record of unreliability work to worsen the relationship between the elderly ex-prisoner and their family. Table 15 shows that while not showing statistical significance, does show that repeat offenders appear to have a worse relationship with their families unless they are past the 11-time imprisonment threshold, by which point it is possible that the family has either come to accept them or have found other means to otherwise maintain some decent relations with them. Nonetheless, this data should only be taken as an indication of an association between family relationships and number of times imprisoned as there is no statistical significance to firmly establish this link.

	Decent Relations (*N* = 25)		Poor Relations (*N* = 22)	
	N	%	N	%
1 time in prison	9	36.0	3	13.6
2 to 5 times	5	13.5	8	32.0
6 to 10 times	5	13.5	8	32.0
11 and more times	6	16.2	3	12.0

Table 15. ***Association between Family Relationship and Imprisonment Times***

Nonetheless, stakeholder observations have highlighted the connection between family relationship and re-offending, as Stakeholder 1 shares,

> If [the ex-offenders] are elderly, they normally would not have family support. For the first few times of offending, they would probably enjoy some family support. However, after several times, their families start to lose hope and fear the negative impact towards other family members.

This will certainly bring about a deterioration in family relationships and when family support is removed, the elderly ex-prisoner finds himself without social support and material resources that would provide a better chance at reintegration. A deficiency in the love and belonging need of family support therefore has an impact on the other deficiencies in the system of needs. Apart from losing the psychological value of sharing life and troubles with intimate others, other immediate deficiencies without family support are the physiological need of shelter and the security and safety need of employment as they are also intertwined with one another. The fact that they are elderly also makes their situation more desperate as, traditionally, the elderly in Hong Kong rely on younger generations of the family to provide for their livelihoods. A poor relationship is therefore detrimental, especially since elderly ex-prisoners are at an age where they are physically vulnerable.

For this reason, good family relationships are important to provide elderly ex-prisoners the emotional and physical needs that help them reintegrate. It is important therefore to investigate possible ways in which to improve family relationships for the inmates before and after release. Such family-focused restorative justice would provide a strong foundation for elderly ex-prisoners to rehabilitate as they will be in a better position to meet their needs of accommodation and community, which helps to bolster their self-esteem and encourages them to participate in community building activities, if not employment.

Drugs

Apart from the needs of accommodation, employment, and good family relationships, it was clear that an addiction to drugs underlaid the life of crime and the repeated imprisonments found. Cross-tabulating the data and using Fisher's exact test, we can see how much a history with drugs worsens their situations. Some interviewees have noted that addictive nature of drugs and admitted how hard it is to stop using it, and indeed, the tiny reports of using methamphetamine and regular use of heroin still reported in the sample prove extremely concerning in this regard.

The effect of drugs is also clear in looking at data concerning their family relationships. As Table 16.1 shows, those who have used drugs before are significantly more likely to have poor family relationships and almost all respondents who have never used drugs reported decent family relationships.

	Have History (*N* = 40)		No History (*N* = 10)	
	N	%	N	%
Decent relationship	18	45	9*	90
Poor relationship	22*	55	1	10

Table 16.1. ***Association between Drug History and Family Relationship* p < .05.***

Drugs also had a detrimental effect on respondents' ability to acquire and maintain housing as Table 16.2 reveals that almost every respondent with no history of drugs are living in sheltered accommodation while over a third of those who with a drug history are homeless.

	Have History (*N* = 40)		No History (*N* = 10)	
	N	%	N	%
Homeless	17*	42.5	1	10
Sheltered	22	55	9*	90

Table 16.2. ***Association between Drug History and Accommodation Type* p = .05.***

Pertaining to current employment, Table 16.3 shows that those with a drug history are overwhelmingly without a job while those who did not consume drugs before tended to be more even split between the employed and unemployed.

	Have History (N = 40)		No History (N = 10)	
	N	%	N	%
No employment	36*	90	4	40
Employed	4	10	6*	60

Table 16.3. ***Association between Drug History and Current Employment*** ***** $p < .01$.

Finally, it is also clear that those who had a history of drugs were worse off in relation to bring imprisoned. Repeat offenders are overwhelmingly drug abusers while many who did not have a history consuming drugs tended not to continually return to lives of crime, as can be seen below.

	Have History (N = 37)		No History (N = 10)	
	N	%	N	%
1 time in prison	5	13.5	7*	70
2 to 5 times	11*	29.7	2	20
6 to 10 times	12*	32.4	1	10
11 and more times	9*	24.3	0	0

Table 16.4. ***Association between Drug History and Imprisonment Times*** ***** $p < .01$.

From the above data, it is clear that beneath the factors and deterioration of elderly ex-prisoners livelihoods in the past was an addiction to drugs. Placing the data in a coherent string, drug addiction could be the reason why many elderly ex-prisoners became involved in petty crimes in the first place. This would then lead to their arrest, conviction, and imprisonment, and as long as they are unable to break their drug habit, they are always at risk of returning to petty crimes as a means of sustaining their drug addiction. Drugs, of course, also bring along a community of people that deal in and use drugs, which makes stopping addiction even harder.

Once an individual is caught in this cycle of addiction, their other behaviours also become destructive. Even if it is not committing petty crimes, these individuals could turn to their families for money and eventually wear out relatives and hurt relationships. Then,

as addicts continue to return to prison time and again, families could lose hope and work to eventually move, possibly even severing ties. This loss of family support then further reduces the possibility of reintegration because accommodation becomes less accessible and the psychological strength from familial support is reduced. This impacts an individual psychologically and ultimately leads them to a state of hopelessness making the search for employment an insurmountable burden to them that is made more difficult by the possibility of criminal background checks. For our sample, this cycle has brought them to an age where they are ever more in need of those things that their addiction to drugs have robbed them of, thereby creating a difficult and destructive situation in their lives.

Because of this, it is possible to see how one characteristic—having a drug history—can be tied to increased distress, social dysfunction, and anxiety/depression; greater number of the serious life problems they faced; decreased positive and increased negative affect; decreased existential well-being; and less support from family, friends, and significant others.

To this end, attacking the issue of drugs is a vital fight against crime and one that simultaneously addresses prevention and rehabilitation. For the elderly, this is something that becomes increasingly urgent so as to help them live wholesome and productive lives again. Through this investigation, it was noted that a major challenge for the system is to find effective methods that direct individuals to lose interest in drugs outside the system while they are still within the system. In other words, it is important to rehabilitate them from drugs while they are both in society and in the correctional system. In this way, Stakeholder 1's suggestion for alternative sentencing should be seriously considered. He argues,

> Increasing the length of sentencing for repeat offenders by the Court may have little effect on preventing them from breaking the law in future. One reason repeat offenders break the law is to feed their drug habit. In this case, the Judiciary should consider alternative sentencing like sending them into drug rehabilitation, which may be volunteer-run or faith-based treatment centers, as they have better success rates.

It would also be important to increase post-release drug treatment programmes because the interviews also showed that individuals have a premature sense of victory over drug abuse in prison due to the controlled environment they are in. Some degree of treatment after release would be important for those who do not opt for alternative sentencing therefore. Either way, this problem is one that needs to be more effectively dealt with to first alleviate the pressures on elderly ex-prisoners and to also ensure that individuals do not grow into elderly ex-prisoners.

Christianity

The study found that the Christian faith fashions a comprehensive response to the challenges faced by elderly ex-prisoners. As drugs jeopardize many areas of life for individuals, the Christian faith and its organizations provide comprehensive support for elderly ex-prisoners to rehabilitate. While more research should be done to see if there are differences between faiths, the data gathered in this study found that Christianity does address many of the needs previously noted. Stakeholder 1, who works for a secular organization, pointed out that,

> Faith-based organizations can take care of [elderly ex-offenders] longer. For example, there is normally no end to church fellowships. Therefore, they can offer a source of support for ex-offenders not to go back to their old ways. Religion is for life. Even if elderly ex-offenders are able to find work for a while, they will have to face a longer period of retirement and religion may help them to find meaning in their lives better.

Stakeholder 1 also adds that Christian organizations are able to direct elderly ex-prisoners towards new communities and establish longer term care through their structural organization, saying,

> I think that faith-based organizations may be able to help them more, as a church has pastor and fellowship groups, providing a new source of friendship network. NGO may not able to provide so much aftercare.

The value of a new community is important for elderly ex-prisoners because it offers them a new group of friends that discourages deviant behaviour and connects them to people and opportunities that they may otherwise be isolated from. In providing a new community, Christian organizations can address some of the gaps left from a lack of familial support. To this end, providing more support for Christian organizations could help to address the elderly ex-prisoners at some level. Stakeholder 4, who is from a Christian organization, points out that,

> If the CSD works with faith-based organizations, both sides should benefit substantially, not to mention society as a whole. Faith-based organizations offer a lot of free social work and care for ex-offenders. One of the main issues these individuals face is housing or somewhere to belong to—a sense of community. This issue affects reoffending rate as well as life satisfaction. Having a sense of belonging surely helps them to overcome crime.

A more comprehensive summary of how Christianity helps elderly ex-prisoners is seen in Stakeholder 4's observation when he said,

> From a personal perspective, I think faith is important because of three aforementioned reasons. First, it offers a sense of belonging. Second, it offers purpose. Third, it offers access to resources. You are part of a community. You know what you live for. You know that you are here because you give glory to God. You can join Christian

> voluntary groups as peer counsellors. You get to know people outside the criminal groups through church networks, enabling you to gain employment more easily. By going to church, you can network beyond the normal social peer groups that ex-offenders usually encounter.

These three areas correspond to the same categories of need found in the study and when an organization can simultaneously address these different areas, it has a distinct advantage in helping care for elderly ex-prisoners. Through comprehensive care facilities, Christian organizations alleviate the many pressures brought about by the deficiencies in their various needs. One possible means of improving care for elderly ex-prisoners is then to further support the work of Christian organizations through funding. More research is needed to investigate if it is faith-based organizations in general that could make such a difference, or only Christian organizations specifically; from this specific study, it is clear that Christian organizations play a meaningful role in elderly ex-offender reintegration.

System Disintegration and Reintegration

As those who are repeatedly incarcerated in the prison system age, their dependence on society and their social circles increases. Eventually, there comes a point when these individuals are deemed unemployable and can no longer obtain their own meaningful source of income, which only deepens their sense of need. Throughout this study, a pattern that leads to offenders becoming old and eventually coming to a place where there is little that could be done to rehabilitate them becomes noticeable in the lives and experiences of the interviewees.

Because the pattern begins with drugs, there is a difference between those who were in professional jobs before conviction and those who were not. Those who were previously professionals did not commit crime due to the lack of money for drugs and tended not to become caught in the cycle of crime noted in many other elderly ex-prisoners. It is those who had a history with drugs that found themselves more trapped in a cycle that leads to numerous imprisonments and it is those that found themselves in increasingly more difficult situations to rehabilitate with each incidence of imprisonment. Those who had a history with drugs therefore showed the most problems and it is essential to prioritize drug rehabilitation alongside any project of reintegration. To this end, the suggestion on alternative sentencing for criminals with drug use should be seriously considered as it could reduce the persistent petty offending witnessed in elderly ex-prisoners.

Those who have a history of drug abuse and continue to use drugs post-release find themselves trapped in a cycle. Whereas individuals who committed more serious crimes may learn from imprisonment and become deterred from re-offending, those with a history of drugs may actually become more resolved after imprisonment because they have experienced prison and do not see it as enough of a cost to desist completely. Indeed, in the interviews, it was clear that those with a drug history understand how their

disadvantaged lives are the result of being unable to address the addiction, reiterating that drugs were too alluring for them to quit. In this way, the major pattern noticed in elderly ex-prisoners is that they were previously caught in this cycle of drugs and incarceration.

Within this major pattern, other factors are affected that make their situation even more difficult. One of these factors is that of family relationships since the family is the most affected by the individual's drug habits. This could come in the form of disappointment and distrust, or in the form of loan sharks and theft of their belongings because of the need to fund the habit. The family distances itself from the individual as they continue down the path of offending because of their addiction, and eventually the relationship worsens, if it is not altogether severed. This deteriorative relationship then touches on the individual's physiological and safety and security needs.

With the family relationship broken, Hong Kong's residual safety net falls apart. In the city, most of the social welfare needs are being addressed by NGOs and people who volunteer their manpower and services to the greater good. Many of the elderly are therefore taken care of by their immediate families or through the provisions of their families. The government sees itself more as responsible for the coordination of various social services than as a provider (McLaughlin, 1993). However, because most of the elderly ex-prisoners have poor relationships with their families brought on by their abuse of drugs, they find themselves without basic care once they are released into society.

The lack of family support effectively means the lack of accommodation, especially with Hong Kong's high land prices, which then leads to the difficulty of getting employed. In this way, as long as they are allowed to continue to walk the path of drugs, they become generally unable to reintegrate into society properly. For this reason, it is important to address the problem of drug abuse while they are still within the justice system and establish some system that continues to track their progress to stay off drugs. Without addressing this, elderly ex-prisoners will remain a large problem in society as addicts who are unable to help themselves grow old in the corrections system.

The hope is to end this pattern of disintegration and prevent people from returning to prison continually for the same underlying reason until they become elderly and there is little chance for proper reintegration regardless of what programmes are implemented. Figure 3 provides a diagrammed description of the pattern noted amongst elderly ex-prisoners.

The figure above applies to all ex-prisoners but in the context of this study, we must understand these processes in light of aging. Looking at the process on the left, criminal behaviour that is free from drugs tends to have a straightforward path that helps reintegration after imprisonment. Because the individual is not necessarily a career criminal, imprisonment is effective as a deterrent and the support of the family is generally retained, which then satisfies other parts of the system of needs. This creates a context and environment that aids in social reintegration and gives them the opportunity to become elderly like other individuals in Hong Kong.

On the other hand, what we note in this study is that most individuals who are addicts tend to commit crime out of desperation for money to continue funding their drug habit. When they are caught and imprisoned, this is generally ineffective because although the prison environment helps put them off drugs for the duration of their stay, they are not committed to their desistance from drugs. On release, many things could happen and if they have not yet overcome their addiction, they may return soon after release to a lifestyle of drugs or may desist for some time until the problems in their lives make them feel as though they need drugs to alleviate their stress. Failing to address the problem of addiction therefore places them at risk of committing crimes to continue funding their habits again and if they are caught again, or if they hurt the family to fund their drug habits, then their relationship with their family begins to disintegrate. As they age, this situation becomes more desperate and when they are elderly it appears near hopeless.

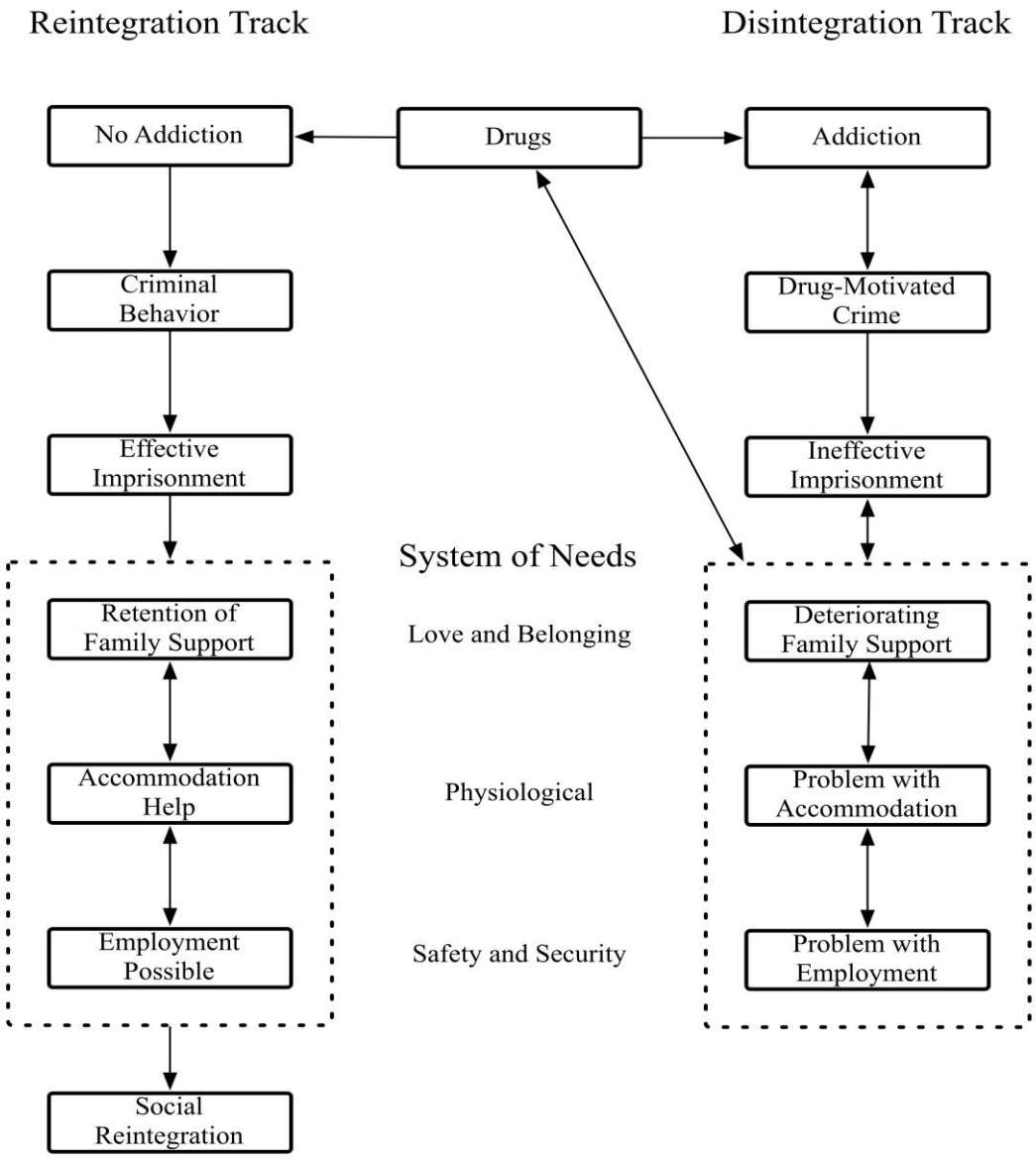


Figure 3. ***Reintegration and Disintegration Process from Offending***

That said, this report concludes that two major areas need to be focused on. The first is preventative, where the government and NGOs should work to bring individuals off the disintegrative track before they reach an age where their situation has become almost hopeless. The second is care, where the government and NGOs should work to address the needs of individuals that are caught in this desperate situation and work towards relief. Because the aim is to reduce the number of ex-prisoners becoming elderly in these desperate conditions, the solution for care needs to be large in the short-term and smaller in the long-term for it to be justified. These points will be incorporated into the recommendations.

Recommendations

While stakeholders have noted possible changes society could make to aid reintegration in the Conclusion section of this report, this report advocates Stakeholder 2's suggestion of building a specialized hostel for elderly ex-prisoners. When the data is investigated in detail, the study finds two accommodation conditions to be detrimental: homelessness and renting compartmental bed-spaces. We therefore assert that neither homelessness nor bed-space compartments are acceptable solutions because both produce conditions that lead to higher likelihood of offending.

The establishment of a special hostel will help because it is both a short-term and long-term solution, and it also addresses the areas of most need in the lives of elderly ex-prisoners. The problem of elderly ex-prisoners is unique because it could be a long-term problem if society does not address underlying causes, and it is also a short-term problem because the elderly will eventually pass on. Where society addresses the underlying causes, the problem will become one that is purely short-term as we care for the remaining generation. A special hostel can work both long-term and short-term because it can be flexible enough in the long-term to continue serving special populations for reintegration while also immediately meet the concerns for elderly ex-prisoners.

The special hostel that we are recommending digresses from Stakeholder 2's suggestion in that we believe it would be better to set a maximum care duration of 2-3 years, rather than indefinite length of care. We also stress that such a hostel should be focused on providing therapy and helping individuals build up a healthier mindset to place them on a reintegrative track where they could become active members of society again. A special hostel also addresses the major reasons that elderly ex-prisoners reported as motivations and temptations into re-offending. Specifically, it interrelatedly addresses the following needs:

- **Accommodation:** The physiological provision of shelter is an important part of the reintegration process. A special hostel is primarily a place of accommodation. With specialized care and a focus on therapy, it looks to be more focused on addressing the psychological and other motivational needs of clients. This makes it more than a place to live, but also a place to grow.
- **Drug rehabilitation:** Being in a shelter allows for the opportunity to assist clients in rehabilitating from drugs as well as monitoring their progress. The shelter, through provision of accommodation and basic needs, can also alleviate any longings they have for their deviant peers and keep them away from such influences. A special hostel ultimately helps clients physically abstain from drugs and steadily severs their link to deviant peers.

- **Community:** A special hostel addresses the need of a support network even where individuals have not been able to reconnect with their families. A hostel, as part of its therapeutic focus, could help them to rebuild their relationships with family members and significant others, or find them a community where they can feel valued and supported. Here, the findings on Christian communities also help as individuals could be linked with churches for more permanent communities.
- **Mental health:** The special hostel should have trained mental health professionals that help in the assessment and provision of mental health services to clients. This will address the difficulties of social readjustment as well as psychological, attitudinal, or other impediments that is making it difficult for them to reintegrate into society and maintain stable communities.
- **Purpose:** Special hostels, because they can be centralized, can alert clients to any job or volunteer opportunities that they hear of or that organizations are specifically seeking from them. These hostels can also help clients looking for work or volunteer opportunities actively pursue these goals. It is important for elderly ex-prisoners to have a sense of purpose in their lives and this is achieved most readily by giving them an occupation with which they can identify with and contribute back to society through.

As among the most immediate solution that can be acted upon because several NGOs already have hostels in place and possess the project experience to create more, this report recommends foremost the creation of special hostels. The major barrier against creating larger or more hostels is the lack of funds and resources. A large step forward between government and NGO cooperation could be the funding of these hostels. These hostel spaces would immediately help elderly ex-prisoners by providing them accommodation, community, abstinence, therapy, and purpose. Figure 4 provides a graphic representation of where this recommendation intervenes to break the cycle of disintegration.

Beyond the creation of special hostels, there are other some other measures that can be derived from the conclusions. This report believes that addressing the issue of elderly ex-prisoners requires the creation of two coinciding conditions: 1) reducing the number of elderly offenders, and 2) caring for current elderly ex-prisoners. We address the first condition.

There are firm steps that society can take to prevent offenders from repeating their crimes until they become elderly, and those steps have to be taken when offenders have

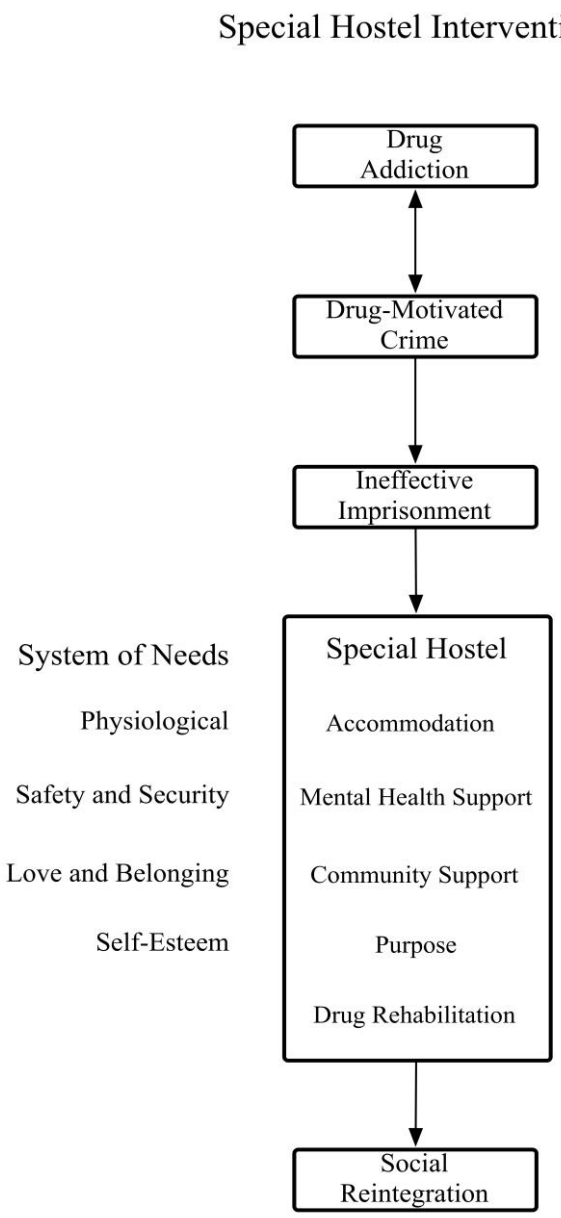


Figure 4. ***Special Hostel Intervention Towards Reintegration***

not reached an age where it is difficult for reintegration programmes to work. Preventive recommendations from the findings of this report encompass the following:

- **Create above 50 category in CSD:** The CSD should create a category for prisoners above the age of 50 in order to better identify and address the needs of this population. The age of 50 is one where an individual is approaching retirement, and to be in a correctional facility at that age places an individual at high risk of faltering when they return to society. Creating a category for above 50s would help the CSD notice the specific needs that this group require to take appropriate action in rehabilitating these individuals.

- **Create a more comprehensive transition scheme:** The CSD should collaborate with specialized NGOs to create a meaningful transition plan for ex-prisoners about to be released. As noted in the data, those imprisoned have good impressions of the service provided by the CSD. Unfortunately, they have felt that the CSD fell short pertaining to the transition of prisoners back into society. We recommend that the CSD identify and liaise more with NGOs that could provide essential post-release care services to facilitate reintegration. For instance,
  - **CSD collaboration with drug rehabilitating NGOs:** Collaboration that ensures continuity in drug rehabilitation programmes especially post-release, so that their time away from drugs in prison does not go to waste and an individual's abstinence is maintained. Achieving this is important for reintegration because it gives families hope that these individuals have turned away from their past deviant lives and also makes them more reliable overall.
  - **CSD collaboration with family-related NGOs:** Collaboration that allows for offenders and their families to reconcile and go through counselling. The study has shown that poor family relationships place individuals at higher risk of recidivism when they are released and in family-focused societies such as Hong Kong, being part of a family implies roles and responsibilities that ex-prisoners may not otherwise have. Thus, the corrections service should encourage reconciliation in family relationships by allowing more visits to family members and arranging optional family counselling sessions by NGOs pre-release to begin developing a relationship. Family concern NGOs can then follow up these cases post-release.
- **NGO help in job seeking:** NGOs should provide resources to help such individuals seek jobs. The most basic resource would be to provide stationery and help to prepare documents in their job applications. This could also be taken to mean helping individuals prepare their résumés and providing some sessions on interview skills if required. If individuals do not have jobs, this may also mean encouraging them to carry on until they find employment.
- **More emphasis on anti-discrimination campaigns:** The government should address the issue of discrimination of ex-prisoners through campaigns that promote the hiring of such persons. In the case of those who are more advanced in age, the government should consider taking the initiative by employing them into different posts for the upkeep of their facilities if possible, or more skilled positions if they are deemed capable.
- **Faith-based programmes:** Government and the CSD should support faith-based programmes within correctional institutions and allow faith-based organizations consistent access to inmates to establish relationships for post-release. This continuity and commitment to individuals helps to ensure that they are continuing to move in the direction of rehabilitation. While the CSD already works with many NGOs to

ensure meaningful post-release care, this recommendation specifically highlights faith-based organizations because they appear to also provide a philosophy and worldview that could help with social reintegration.

The hope is that by implementing and developing these various facets, society will be able to provide the conditions that take ex-prisoners away from a life of crime and reduce the number of individuals who grow elderly by going in and out of prison. The steady decline in those incarcerated through the years is encouraging as it shows that the corrections service and Hong Kong, as a society, is capable in providing legitimate opportunities for individuals to meet their needs. A reduction in the number of ex-prisoners growing elderly and still at risk of offending due to poor life circumstances should be a primary goal to better use the human resources within society.

Nonetheless, there are many individuals who have aged as repeated petty offenders and there remains the need to care for them. Because the hope is to bring about a reduction in their numbers, solutions on this front need to be larger in the short-term and then smaller in the long-term. For this to work, the government and NGOs need to work together and coordinate their resources in order to provide a flexible and responsive care service.

- **Volunteer opportunities:** NGOs should provide comprehensive care services that offer volunteer opportunities for elderly ex-prisoners to keep them busy, especially if they are without work. Volunteer work provides these individuals with a sense of purpose and could motivate them to work towards a more normal life despite being more advanced in age. Having these individuals volunteer their strength also increases an organization's manpower with little or no cost, which could contribute to overall productivity.
- **Faith-based post-release intervention programmes:** Government and the CSD should support faith-based organizations' post-release intervention programmes through funding and other material resources. Faith-based programmes have demonstrated effectiveness in the interviews and its contribution has been verified by the data set. The programmes provided by these organizations also appear to be comprehensive and long-term, which largely addresses the needs of elderly ex-prisoners and even offers them a positive life outlook.

These recommendations relate to either extending or increasing the capabilities of NGOs to do their work and calls on the government to simply support this work because it would be the most effective way to care for elderly ex-prisoners while other measures work to decrease the number of ex-prisoners becoming elderly in distressful situations.

References

Audit Commission (2015) *Director of Audit's Report* (Report No. 64). Hong Kong SAR, China: Audit Commission. Available at: http://www.aud.gov.hk/eng/pubpr_arpt/rpt_64.htm

Broome, K. M., Knight, D. K., Knight, K., Hiller, M. L., & Simpson, D. D. (1997). Peer, family, and motivational influences on drug treatment process and recidivism for probationers. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *53*, 387–97.

Cheng, S., & Chan, A. (2004). The multidimensional scale of perceived social support: dimensionality and age and gender differences in adolescents. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *37*, 1359–69.

Correctional Services Department (CSD). (2014). *2013 annual review*. Hong Kong SAR, China: Hong Kong Correctional Services.

Goldberg, D. P., Gater, R., Sartorius, N., Ustun, T. B., Piccinelli, M., Gureje, O., & Rutter C. (1997). The validity of two versions of the GHQ in the WHO study of mental illness in general health care. *Psychological Medicine*, *27*, 191–7.

Frude, N., Honess, T., & Maguire, M. (1994). *CRIME-PICS II manual*. Swansea, UK: M&A Research.

Hofstede, G. (1984). The cultural relativity of the quality of life concept. *The Academy of Management Review*, *9*, 389–98.

Lemert, E. M. (1967). *Human deviance, social problems and social control*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice–Hall.

Li, W. H. C., Chung, J. O. K., Chui, M. M. L., & Chan, P. S. L. (2009). Factorial structure of the Chinese version of the 12-item General Health Questionnaire in adolescents. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, *18*, 3253–61.

Link, B. G., Struening, E. L., Rahav, M., Phelan, J. C., & Nuttbrock, L. (1997). On stigma and its consequences: Evidence from a longitudinal study of men with dual diagnoses of mental illness and substance abuse. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *38*, 177–90.

Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper and Row.

McLaughlin, E. (1993). Hong Kong: A residual welfare regime. In A. Cochrane and J. Clarke (Eds.), *Comparing welfare states: Britain in international context* (pp. 105–40). London, UK: Sage.

Nankervis, A. R., Cooke, F. L., Chatterjee, S. R., & Warner, M. (2013). *New models in human resource management in China and India*. London, UK: Routledge.

Paloutzian, R.F., & Ellison, C. W. (1982). Loneliness, spiritual well-being, and quality of life. In L. A. Peplau and D. Perlman (Eds.), *Loneliness: A sourcebook of current theory, research and therapy* (pp. 224–37). New York: Wiley.

Rajasakran, T., Sinnappan, S., & Raja, S. S. (2014). Purushartha: Maslow's need hierarchy revisited. *Anthropologist*, *18*, 199–203.

Shek, D. T. L. (2005). Paternal and maternal influences on the psychological well-being, substance abuse, and delinquency of Chinese adolescents experiencing economic disadvantage. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *61*, 219–34.

Tang, W.-R. (2008). Spiritual assessment and care of cancer patients (in Chinese). *Journal of Oncology Nursing*, *8*, 13–25.

Society for Community Organization (SoCO). (2002). *Survey report on ex-offender needs 2002* (in Chinese). Hong Kong SAR, China: Society for Community Organization.

———. (2009). *Ex-offender difficulties in job-seeking* (in Chinese). Hong Kong SAR, China: Society for Community Organization.

———. (2013). *A study on enhancing successful employment rate for Care and Support Networking Team (CASNET)*. Hong Kong SAR, China: Society for Community Organization.

Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention (SRACP). (2013). *2012–2013 annual report*. Hong Kong SAR, China: Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention.

Sutherland, E. H. (1947). *Principles of criminology* (4th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott.

Wahba, M. A., & Bridwell, L. G.. (1976). Maslow reconsidered: A review of research on the need hierarchy theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, *15*, 212–40.

Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measure of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *54*, 1063–70.

Wei, J., Zhou, L., Wei, Y., & Zhao, D. (2014). Collective behavior in mass incidents: A study of contemporary China. *Journal of Contemporary China*, *23*, 715–35.

Yik, M. (2007). Culture, gender, and the bipolarity of momentary affect. *Cognition and Emotion*, *21*, 664–80.