TEACHING BEHIND BARS: THE TEACHING LIFE HISTORIES OF EDUCATORS WHO HAVE WORKED IN JUVENILE DETENTION CENTERS

A Thesis Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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December 2020

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Acknowledgements

Foremost, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Samara Akpovo, Dr. Mary Jane Moran, and Dr. Matthew Theriot, whose expertise and insights were invaluable during this process. I would like to acknowledge Dr. Sondra LoRe and Dr. Mitsunori Misawa for their unconditional support and for their valuable guidance throughout my studies. I would like to express my appreciation to my amazing participants for agreeing to be part of my study. In addition, I would like to thank my family and friends for their wise advice. Finally, I could not have completed this without the constant support and encouragement of my partner who continually challenged me to become a better researcher.

Abstract

This descriptive, qualitative study explored the teaching life histories of three educators within the context of working at juvenile detention centers in the United States. Systems theory and narrative inquiry informed the study and were used to guide the data analysis. Three sets of semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted along with photovoice artifacts with written prompts that were used to reconstruct the stories of the educators to uncover the themes. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis and the constant comparative method to ensure triangulation of data. Findings include: (1) intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, (2) emotional and contextual challenges, and (3) agents of change. This study contributes important knowledge to the field of correctional education by offering lived experiences in juvenile detention education settings and reveals the deeply situated nature of the teaching life histories of educators as related to their interactions with these environments. Implications for future research and practice include (a) the investigation of educators' experiences in alternative education settings along with their approach to correctional education in order to (b) delve more deeply into their individual experiences, as well as the (c) the promoting of life histories as a means to further understand an educators teaching experience and identity (d) illuminate the educators willingness to adapt in alternative educational environments.

Keywords: academic, correctional, educators, juvenile, life history, teaching

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As I walked down the hallways of the county juvenile hall, I saw the empty classrooms that were being used as the school in the detention center. The classroom walls were empty and displayed an uninviting white backsplash. The metal doors were heavy with their discolored appearance. There was only one a small window looking out into the hallways. I wondered how the youth learned in this stale and harsh environment and wondered how the educators felt about the gloomy teaching spaces. The youth often complained that their classrooms were boring. They further stated that the learning spaces made them feel sad because the environment and educators stifled their voices and creativity. On rare occasions, however, the youth talked about the educators who were supportive and fostered an exciting learning environment. It was noted that those educators, who they considered as good, did not last long at the juvenile detention center. This story recounts one of the many experiences I had while volunteering at a county juvenile detention center. What made me recount this anecdote was a conversation with an educator who decided to teach in a correctional facility. She expressed how much she enjoyed working with the youth but also expressed how overwhelmed she felt with the obstacles and frustrations that are found within these institutions. This ultimately led to her resignation. Thus, it was these vivid memories and anecdotal stories that led me to this current research study about the life histories of educators who have taught in juvenile detention centers.

For the purpose of this study, I have chosen to use the term educator instead of teacher. Educator is defined as “a person who provides instruction or education” while teacher is defined as “a person who teaches, especially in a school” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019). Since the

participants in my study work in an alternative education setting, a juvenile detention facility or juvenile correctional facility, it was most appropriate to adapt educator as the defining term. Throughout the literature review there are references for teachers, and teacher education such that this is the term that is widely used in research studies.

Juvenile reform in the United States (U.S.) can be dated back to the 1820's when the first sets of detention centers were established (Dumm, 1987). In 1839, in the Ex parte Crouse case, the court expressed "The House of Refuge is not a prison, but a school" in order to defend the reason why youth were incarcerated (Sanborn, 2017). The first juvenile court was not established until 1899 in Illinois (Fox, 1970). Prior to the establishment of the juvenile court, children and youth were viewed as small adults. This allowed them being tried as adults. Courts in the U.S. were influenced to modify their thinking by the 16th century educational reform movement that occurred in England (Sanborn, 2017). Soon after the establishment of the first court in Illinois, other states followed.

The purpose of juvenile detention centers and similar institutions was to teach life and trades skills to incarcerated children and youth (Mallett, Williams, & Marsh, 2012; Steeves & Marx, 2014). The pedagogy was adopted from the English Bridewell institution ("Juvenile justice history," 2019) and operated under philosophy of *parens patriae* (Sanborn, 2017). This meant the state had custody over the child and was able to make decisions over what happened to them (Sanborn, 2017). Throughout the years, juvenile reform continued to go through changes along with the education system that was in place. Soon both, the justice system and education system, would begin to have influence on the decisions made within those institutions.

The changes regarding juvenile reform that were incorporated in both of these institutions attempted to include developmentally appropriate practices towards children and youth while also increasing safety measures at public institutions. The unintended consequence of these measures increased the amount of youth being expelled from educational institutions and sent to detention facilities while decreasing the focus on supportive practices (Muschert & Peguero, 2010). This modification on acceptable and tolerable behaviors in schools and regulations around consequences became known as the school-to-prison pipeline (Mallett, Williams, & Marsh, 2012; Marsh, 2014; Muschert & Peguero, 2010). Since this movement, schools have increased the amount of expulsions given to students. The behaviors behind these expulsions include criminal behaviors and minor typical developing adolescent behaviors (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). The zero-tolerance policy has dramatically increased the amount of youth who get involved with the juvenile court (Advancement Project, 2005; Carter, Fine, & Russell, 2014).

Additionally, the U.S. is the leading country in the world with the highest incarceration rates (Barnert, Perry, & Morris, 2016; Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine, 2016). Due to the growth of the populations within correctional settings, the Office of Correctional Education was created in 1991 (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Youth in the U.S. are generally held accountable for unlawful behavior at an earlier age (e.g. 6-years-old) and are six times more likely to be incarcerated as compared to youth in other industrialized Euro-Western countries (Petteruti & Fenster, 2011). Between 2015 and 2016, the U.S. juvenile justice system contained 41,000 youth (Wagner & Sawyer, 2018). Correctional facilities in the United States hold approximately 60,000 youth on a daily basis (Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2015). Youth that are high-risk for incarceration include those that have 1) mental health

disorders, 2) learning disabilities, 3) substance abuse problems, and 4) those who have been maltreated in addition to having combinations of other risk factors (House, Toste, & Austin, 2018; Kincaid & Sullivan, 2019; Mallet, 2013; Thompson & Morris, 2016).

Youth from minoritized and low-income groups are more likely to face extreme discipline outcomes from zero-policy schools and more likely to be incarcerated (Hockenberry & Puzzanchera, 2018; McNulty-Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2000). For example, African American youth are six times more likely to be arrested than Euro-American youth. Latino youth are three times more likely to be arrested as compared to Euro-American youth (Mallet, 2013; NCD, 2015). Moreover, once an individual has had contact with the juvenile justice system there is an increased risk of re-incarceration (Aizer & Doyle, 2015; Gatti, Tremblay, & Vitaro, 2009; Mallet, 2013). "Many of these young people never reenter the mainstream educational system, and the loss to society is immeasurable" (NAACP, 2005). Studies have shown that both arrests and incarceration have negative impacts on mental health, self-esteem, self-efficacy of youth and often leads to learned helplessness (Barnert et al., 2016). These mental health issues make it difficult for the youth to reintegrate into society (Goodstein, MacKenzie, & Shotland, 1984; Horwitz and Scheid, 1999; O'Brian, 2001; Sugie & Truney, 2017). In addition to this, youth in these institutions are constantly faced with stigma, negative perceptions, and ideas of who they are (Cox, Visker, & Hartman, 2011; Crosby, Day, Baroni, & Somers, 2015).

While there is research about the negative effects of incarceration, less is commonly known about the individuals who choose to work in these spaces and about careers available within these institutions. Less is also known about the types of educational opportunities and

work that can be conducted with these populations. There have been programs with the juvenile court that aim to help first time offenders in these institutions through group counseling sessions. One program from the Southeastern U.S. showed promise in the results achieved by the youth but due to the lack of support and resources, they were not equipped to serve the diverse populations seen at juvenile detention centers (Choate & Manton, 2014). Similarly, educators who go into these spaces often feel that they were not prepared to teach in this context (Gregg, 2018). Due to the lack of training in these institutions, the U.S. Department of Justice and Education proposed guidelines to increase the quality of education in juvenile detention facilities throughout the country (U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, 2014). This plan asks centers to hire qualified faculty, provide trainings for their educators, and use teacher evaluations with similar rigor to those that are used in the public education system (U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, 2014). The plan is not enforced at the facilities, but it is a recommendation made by the Department of Education and Justice.

Chapter Summary

The gap in knowledge about the careers and staff at these institutions in the literature and the lack of coherence in the education system within juvenile justice across the United States justifies the purpose and rationale to study the teaching life histories of alternative educators for this study. The methodology of this study is guided by the life history approach and the data are analyzed through the theoretical underpinnings of systems theory and narrative inquiry. The key tenets of each of these will be highlighted in chapter two in addition to the motivation to teach, a brief overview of the educational demographics in this population, and counter-narratives of job satisfaction in these environments. Following the literature review, the study's purpose and

procedures will be described in chapter three. Chapter four will consist of the study's three findings. Finally, the study's discussion with limitations and implications for future research and practice will be included in chapter five.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Life stories of teachers have been studied for many years (Goodson, 2014; Lortie 1975). Though there are varying types of research that are conducted in regard to teachers and educators, the literature indicates that there is a continual need for research that includes the voices of educators (Goodson, 1991, 2014). The need for research in education and about educators has long existed and researcher Lortie (1975) identified this gap early on:

> It is widely conceded that the core transactions of formal education take place where teachers and students meet… But although books and articles instructing teachers on how they should behave are legion, empirical studies of teaching work and the outlook of those who staff the school - remain rare. (p. vii)

Understanding the personal lives and perspectives of teachers leads to better understanding their practice within the classroom (Goodson, 2014; Lortie, 1975). One way to further study this is through the life history perspective (Goodson 1981, 1988, 1992, 2014; Goodson & Walker, 1991). From a life history perspective, researchers are able to capture how the individual lives of teachers influence their work inside of the classroom. This chapter outlines why the life history approach is appropriate for this study along with research that focuses on educators in detention centers.

Life History Approach

The use of story has been an important part of teacher education research. Elbaz (1990) stated, “the story is the very stuff of teaching, the landscape within which we live as teachers, researchers, and within which the work of teachers can be seen as making sense” (p. 31). By

storying the experiences of educators, Clandinin et al., (2006) have shown that the meaning of teaching emerges as a tangible construct. Furthermore, Carter (1993) discussed how stories "give meaning to events and convey a particular sense of experience" and examined teachers' stories as ways of knowing (p. 8). This is why it is important to continue to learn about the stories of educators.

Life history and teacher story research come from the practical and pragmatic tradition in education research that seeks to demonstrate the complex professional identities and knowledges of educators (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Clandinin & Connelly 1992, 1995; Cole & Knowles, 2001; Dewey, 1902; Eisner, 1985; Goodson & Sikes 2001; Henderson & Gornik, 2007). This type of research provides stories of teaching, learning, and identities. Life history and teacher story research carry an understanding of teacher identities, knowledges, and curriculum practice with students (Jupp, 2013). It also recognizes teacher's positionality within a school. Life history and teacher story research recognizes that teachers have power even going against the odds (2013). "Studying teachers' life histories and teacher stories allow us to valorize teachers' professional processes of becoming as a means of understanding professional identities along with teaching and learning" (2013, p. 3). Life history research narrates, constitutes, and emphasizes teachers' identities and professional knowledges in educational contexts (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, 1995; Cole & Knowles, 2001; Goodson, 1992, 1995; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). The importance in life history research is that it shows the value of their story rather than diminishing teachers' identities, understandings, and knowledges that develop in their life and teacher stories.

Most life history research of teachers has focused on individuals who teach in traditional school settings although it has also focused on teachers working with marginalized populations. Along with storying the lives of teachers who work with marginalized populations, this research method is also used to study ethics and professionalism in educational settings (Goodson, & Choi, 2008; Johnson, 2007). This study adds to the literature by being one of the first studies to explore the teaching life histories of educators who have worked in detention centers in order to understand what life events lead individuals to choose these careers and why they continue working in these contexts.

Motivation to Teach

Researchers such as Herzberg and Maslow have discussed extrinsic and intrinsic motivations that influence professional decisions (Herzberg et al., 1959). According to Herzberg, extrinsic factors such as working conditions, job salary, and safety contribute to job satisfaction, while commitment, and proficiency of job skills are motivators that are intrinsic sources of satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). Recent research has continued to support prior research on extrinsic and intrinsic motivators that influence the career decisions of individuals (Jehangir, Telles, & Deenanath, 2019). Those motivators can arise from critical incidents that occur in an individual's life (Tripp, 1994, 2012). Critical incidents are events that influence individual's perceptions and practice (Goodson, 2014; Tripp, 1994, 2012). Research states that individuals are also driven to their career choice by external factors such as financial security and internal factors such as a sense of purpose (Jehangir, Telles, & Deenanath, 2019; McMahon & Watson, 2008). In addition, researchers Ryan and Deci identified psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and interconnectedness as additional driving forces behind intrinsic motivation

(Ryan & Deci, 2000). In studies of job satisfaction and motivation in the field of education, research shows that having positive relationships among factors such as salary, work hours, and control contribute to the motivation to remain working in educational settings (Smerek & Peterson, 2007).

For educators working in a correctional context, extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors may be different depending on personal and professional satisfaction from their roles within the organizations that they are part of and may depend on their relationships with their students (Tewksbury & Vannostrand, 1996). Research on sources of motivation among educators suggests how having different role perceptions can lead to different levels of job satisfaction among educators (Corbin, 2001). For correctional educators, many who are volunteers, extrinsic factors of motivation are likely secondary to the intrinsic motivations derived from the interpersonal relationships they develop with incarcerated students (Tewksbury & Vannostrand, 1996).

A quantitative study, conducted on 486 juvenile justice educators by researchers Houchins, Shippen, Schwab, and Ansely (2017), showed that one third of their participants did not know why they went into that field in the first place while two thirds of their participants stated that they went into that field for better employment opportunities or for personal reasons such as moral conviction. Existing research on educators who have worked in correctional facilities reveals that despite the limited educational backgrounds of many incarcerated individuals, researchers Edwards-Willey and Chivers found that correctional educators had similar expectations for their incarcerated students as those they had for their students in traditional settings (2005). The reasons for their these expectations were that although

incarcerated students had less access to educational resources like learning material, educators in this study perceived incarcerated students as more motivated to learn and committed to the understanding and the content of each class (Edwards-Willey & Chivers, 2005). Similarly, researchers Osberg and Fraley found that incarcerated students are rated as more motivated, interested, and attentive than students in traditional courses (1993). The most common motivators reported by the faculty in this study when deciding to teach in a correctional setting, rather than the traditional setting, are the eagerness of students to learn and their willingness to engage in discussion (1993). Additional motivational factors reported by correctional faculty in this study included to be able to assist in the rehabilitation of incarcerated individuals, helping those in need, in addition to improving their own self-improvement (Tewksbury & Vannostrand, 1996). In one study of correctional education, researcher Tewksbury and Vannostrand (1996) reported that educators in correctional settings had high levels of job satisfaction that derived from their sense of social compensation, which further defined their roles as educators, and their feelings of achievement reflected in the learning of their students. Communication researchers have used the memorable message framework to uncover additional personal motivations derived from relationships and experiences in different contexts (Nazione et al., 2011). In terms of teacher motivation, memorable messages may serve to remind individuals why they do what they do which then helps guide future behavior by preventing or overcoming burnout and low job satisfaction (2011). In turn, prison educators believe they have the potential to impact the organizational culture within which they work and transform the lives of students who benefit from their instruction (Kamrath & Gregg, 2018).

Correctional Education Environment

Although educational programs for juvenile offenders are offered and required throughout the U.S., there is not a system in place that can uniformly inform us about how these programs run and interact within these institutions (Black, 2005). Each state is allowed to run their education program differently which means that their hiring processes and requirements can be completely different from one state to another (2005). A report by Rosales stated that there are approximately 15,000 educators working in correctional centers across the country (2007). Although some of these institutions do not require teacher licensure, most of the educators that work in these institutions have been through educational training programs (Smith & Hofer, 2003). Working within correctional settings can be challenging and can take physical and emotional tolls on individuals who are working in these environments, which leads to high turnover rates (2003). Additionally, many educational staff in these settings often feel that they are not prepared to work in these environments (2003).

Researchers Spinaris, Denof and Morton (2013) explained that individuals who work in correctional settings are exposed to the effects of trauma by working in these environments. A study conducted by Michals and Kessler (2015) found that educators in these settings at times experienced disrespect from the correctional officers and due to the procedures to enter the facility had they had to be searched every day that they arrived at work and then had to wait on approval to enter their work space. These are factors associated with correctional facilities. Mader (2015) reported that new teachers often felt unprepared for responding to the diverse student populations within their classrooms. Within the juvenile detention center classrooms, it is not uncommon to have a wide range of learning deficits within a classroom without the

educator's knowledge (Alisic, 2012; Iasevoli, 2007; Foley & Gao, 2004; Gehring, 2007; Katsiyannis, Barrett, & Zhang, 2012; Kincaid & Sullivan, 2019; Nance & Novy, 2011; NCD, 2015; Thompson & Morris, 2016; Zable & Nigro, 2007). Juvenile detention centers are not always equipped with the necessary academic and emotional support or supplies for their students (Houchins, Shippen, & Cattret, 2004; Zetlin, Macleod, & Kimm, 2012). Additional research from Kamrath and Gregg (2018) found that a common theme among educators who decide to leave the job was a lack of support from administration. Additionally, research shows that these educators experience emotional distress when their students are abruptly transferred to other facilities and often maintain distance from learning about their charges in order to maintain a healthy emotional balance (Michals & Kessler, 2015). Crosby, Gay, Baroni and Somers (2015) stated that in order for teachers to successfully work in these settings, they must have trauma-specific knowledge and be able to balance their work and personal life to create proper self-care practices for themselves. The research shows that there is a need for quality professional development and support for these educators (Birman et al., 2007).

Agents of Change

Educators and teachers are often viewed as potential agents of change (Van der Heijden, Geldens, Beijaard, & Popeijus, 2015). Teachers can use their agency to influence change in their work environments (Sannino, 2010). Hattie (2012) states that in order to be an agent of change, teachers must see themselves in this way first. He believes being an agent of change is a mindset that focuses on positively influencing student learning (2012). Agents of change often look at learning as a lifelong process in which they are constantly reflecting on their teaching practices (Eteläpelto et al., 2013); they are individuals who have mastered teaching skills such that they

can modify practices to fit a wide range of learning abilities (Hattie, 2012); they take risks and creative approaches to influence their organization (Le Fevre, 2014) and often collaborate with others to create change (Hattie, 2012).

Within correctional education research, educators often modify their curriculum to best serve their student population and provide forms of creative resistance within their classrooms (Flores, 2012). Bullis and Yovanoff (2002) found that positive connections with education help build resilience in youth who are incarcerated. A study by Flores (2012) found that educators within this context are socially conscious of the inequalities their students were facing and often spoke about discrimination, injustice, sexism, and white privilege in their classroom. Michals and Kessler (2015) found that their participants did not agree with the way in which the justice system worked. Some of their participants shared how they often tried to change the negative perspectives of others regarding the population they served (2015). The researchers explained how this was a difficult task for the educators and reported that some of the educators decided to focus on helping their students rather than change the opinions of others (2015). Educators in these spaces not only have an opportunity to create change within their organization but can also attempt to modify the perception of others regarding this population and can have a positive effect on their students.

Theoretical Perspectives

Narrative inquiry and systems theory have helped situate the findings in this study. These two frames of knowledge complement each other such that they focus on story and context which are important in life history. Narrative inquiry has been studied as a way that individuals inform their lives and as a way that participants communicate lived experiences. This framework

provides insight into the experiences of individuals by allowing participants to retell their life histories as teachers. Narrative inquiry acknowledges that lived experiences are part of our identities (Bruner, 1987). Additionally, “narratives are our way of knowing” (Goodall, 2008). This allows the life history of an individual to become their own “truth”. Narrative analysis examines information as a whole which includes the individual and their environment rather than looking at specific pieces (Greenhalgh, Russell, & Swinglehurst, 2005). Narrative inquiry investigates the experience of an individual through a storyline or narrative that is iterative, incorporates critical reflection from actions in the environment, and interprets data from those environments and made by researchers (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). Research has found this approach advantageous in illuminating teacher development (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Golombek & Johnson, 2004). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) and Conle (2000) outline that the three dimensions of a good narrative include temporality, sociality, and place. The interaction of these dimensions creates a balance that is important in generating a successful narrative (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). In this study, narrative is utilized to retrospectively construct the life history of the educators from a sequence of events that highlights critical incidents and decisions that shaped their paths to becoming educators at a juvenile detention center. It is an approach that allows the voices of educators to be chronicled through narrative voice.

Ludwig Bertalanffy established general systems theory (GST) in 1955 (Chen & Stroup, 1993, p. 448). Systems theory outlines that:

1. A "system" is an ensemble of interacting parts, the sum of which exhibits behavior not localized in its constituent parts.

2. A system can be physical, biological, social, or symbolic; or it can be comprised of one or more of these.

3. Change is seen as a transformation of the system in time, which, nevertheless, conserves its identity. Growth, steady state, and decay are major types of change.

4. Goal-directed behavior characterizes the changes observed in the state of the system. A system is seen to be actively organized in terms of the goal and, hence, can be understood to exhibit "reverse causality."

5. "Feedback" is the mechanism that mediates between the goal and system behavior.

6. Time is a central variable in system theory. It provides a referent for the very idea of dynamics.

7. The "boundary" serves to delineate the system from the environment and any subsystems from the system as a whole.

8. System-environment interactions can be defined as the input and output of matter, information, and energy. The system can be open, closed, or semipermeable to the environment.

Systems theory interlocks with narrative inquiry in that it highlights context and construction of how decisions are made (Patton & McMahon, 2014). In constructing the life histories of educators, systems theory can be drawn upon to effectively look at the array of educators' stories that illuminates those memories, feelings, and experiences that drive their narratives. This theory is often used in cases where career trajectories do not fit an individualist frame because individuals do not take a linear path to determine their career (Fitzgerald &

Hammond, 2001; Lim, 1997; Stead, 2004). Additionally, systems theory considers both interpersonal and external factors while allowing individuals to be active agents in their decision-making process and views the pathways to careers as fluid (Patton & McMahon, 2014). This theory highlights the intersections of identities and positionality that the educator has within their environment (McMahon & Watson, 2008).

Chapter Summary

The life history research method allows researchers to dive deeper into understanding the positionalities of educators. Although alternative education and life histories of teachers have been studied for decades, there is a lack of understanding surrounding why some individuals choose a career path as an educator in a detention center. Most commonly alternative education settings such as those in juvenile detention centers have diverse populations of students with a wide arrange of needs in the classroom. The literature chronicled the unique experiences of teachers in these settings. Educators are influenced by several factors when reflecting on job satisfaction such as perceived support, relationships with staff, and safety. Educators are also influenced by their classroom environment. Teachers are guided by their knowledge gained through formal and informal education, and they are also guided by intrinsic and extrinsic factors and personal experiences. The literature exemplifies the many contextual and social influences of educator's pathways; therefore, the study will be guided by systems theory and narrative inquiry. This review of the literature reveals that there are many influences regarding why educators chose these educational settings and unveils the gaps that are in the field.

CHAPTER III

PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES

Despite the rapid growth and variability of youth who are placed in the criminal justice system, there continues to be a lack of uniformity within the correctional education system in the US. There have been few studies that focus on the educators who work in this system. As such, the purpose of this study is to explore the life histories and professional trajectories of educators in juvenile detention centers to uncover how, when, where and why these educators have selected to work in this context. This research seeks to answer the following question: What are the teaching life histories of educators who teach in a juvenile detention center?

Rationale for Life History Approach

This research employed a life history approach combined with narrative inquiry and photovoice as conceptual and methodological tools. As an approach of narrative inquiry, life history provides a unique methodology to obtain and structure personal and professional stories. Atkinson (1998) defines the purpose of life history methodology as: "Getting the story also means knowing how to invite stories as responses rather than reports. The real points, or messages, that want—and need—to be made through life stories are in actual stories" (p. 31). Not only is life history a way to learn about the stories of others but it takes planning and knowledge on how to guide the development of narratives that are organically constructed by the participants. Life history research generates various forms of data to create a narrative. Such data may include diaries, photographs, artistic pieces such as paintings or poetry, personal documents and objects but most importantly interviews (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Goodson & Choi, 2008; Janesick, 2007; Labaree, 2006; Riessman, 2008; Sherwood & Freshwater, 2010; Tierney &

Clemens, 2013). This study included a three semi-structured interview research design coupled with a photovoice project, which asked participants to read and complete two prompts and choose three photographs for each prompt that best told their story. Then they were asked to write a short description of each photograph (see Table 2). The use of multi-vocal and multi-modal data sources and methodologies insured triangulation of the data and created thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973).

Life history research is often used in fields such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, and education, among others (Atkinson, 2007). The life history approach allows for in-depth understanding and provides the opportunity to learn about information that cannot be gathered through traditional questionnaires. It is a way to access stories, events and perspectives that otherwise go unnoticed to the public. It also brings awareness to the complexity of narrative events and insights of marginalized groups (Janesick, 2007; Scanlan, 2012; Suarez-Ortega, 2013) and can be used as a methodological tool when seeking to uncover just and unjust social practices (Janesick, 2007). As such, the method aims to understand complex social and cultural processes that shape an individual's life story. Thus, it is an appropriate approach when looking at educators who chose to work in alternative education settings such as juvenile detention centers.

Rationale for Photovoice Methodology

For the purpose of this study, photovoice is included as an additional data source to inform and more fully understand the educator's life history. It is a strategy that helps bridge narratives and contributes to the triangulation of the research data (Geertz, 1973). Photovoice is a research method that uses pictures to document the participants' realities (Novak, 2010; Thomas

& Irwin, 2013). It allows participants to showcase the most significant parts of their narratives through capturing moments with photography. The goals of photovoice are: 1) to empower people to show and reflect strengths and concerns, 2) to promote dialogue and knowledge, and 3) to reach people in power (Wang & Burris, 1997). It was developed by Caroline C. Wang of the University of Michigan and Mary Ann Burris of the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London (Wang & Burris, 1997). In 1992, they created Photo Novella as a way to influence the policies and programs that affected rural women in China (Wang & Burris, 1997). Photovoice has three theoretical frameworks: Empowerment education, feminist theory, and documentary photography (Freire, 1970; Wang & Burris, 1997). In this study, photovoice is used to tap into an additional modality through which the educators can express their teaching experiences. Interviews as well as writing can be limiting but when they are combined multiple ways of knowing create a fuller view of an individual's experience. This method has the potential to augment's an educators' voice. This combination reflects the mosaic approach (Clark & Moss, 2011). The mosaic approach, a multi-modal approach to documenting experience, offers insights into participants' lives in ways that traditional modes of data do not (2011).

The strengths of Photovoice include the power to provide people with the ability to express their concerns, outlooks, perceptions, and narrative stories through photographs. In addition, this methodology allows participants to choose what is important to their life history and to showcase those events (Novak, 2010). Photovoice allows the participant to develop skills in reflection and understanding of individual life stories (Chio & Fandt, 2007). It allows both researchers and participants to make connections and view their environments and life histories from different perspectives.

Photovoice can become a way to communicate narratives of differences, needs, histories, and strengths within a population. While there are photovoice projects that include teachers, many of the existing projects consist of middle, high school, and adult educators and student led projects. Of these projects, fewer have focused on alternative education educators. This further supports the importance of this methodology by adding to the current literature.

Photovoice can be used to deepen knowledge by having participants take part in a narrative inquiry where each educator draws upon their own experience (Cook & Quigley, 2013). This methodology allows an educator to have the ability to represent her life history visually by taking photographs of how she views herself in the role of an educator. Photovoice is an engaging way to connect educators to one another and to build collaborations and discussions with their peers while helping researchers understand their roles, life, and history. Limitations to consider are the use, maintenance, and availability of cameras as well as the organization of the pictures, film development, and tracking the proper return of cameras (Novak, 2010). For the purpose of this study and to avoid these limitations, the participants used their cell phones to take photographs.

Institutional Review Board Approval

Approval from the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) was sought and gained to amend the 2019 study focused on "Teaching Behind Bars: The Life Histories of Educators Who Have Worked in Juvenile Detention Centers." Once approval was granted by the IRB, all of the participants received copies of informed consent via email. See Appendix A, B, and C. Participants were then asked to submit a signed consent form denoting their acknowledgment of the objectives of the research project, the voluntary nature of the study, the confidentiality of

their responses, and the contact information of the principal investigator of the study. As PI, I also informed them of the methods that would be employed to protect their identities as well as how the data would be protected and stored.

Participant Selection and Context

Purposive snowball sampling was used to recruit participants. The local juvenile detention center was contacted through email and asked to forward the email to current or past educators. The email provided information about the study, a consent form, and a basic scheduling system that would allow participants to make an appointment for their initial interview. Additionally, the study was modified to include educators throughout the U.S. Educators who have worked at juvenile detention centers were contacted. The participants for this study consisted of three educators who taught at juvenile detention centers. Pseudonyms were assigned after the consent forms were received. Demographic information can be seen in Table 1 which is located in the appendix along with other tables and figures for this study.

Juliet is a White female educator who obtained graduate degrees in leadership and library science along with a teaching credential in special education. Currently, Juliet is the lead teacher at a juvenile detention center in the Eastern part of the U.S. Adrian is a Latino male who obtained a graduate degree in special education along with a multiple subject teaching credential. Adrian is a resource specialist in a juvenile detention center in the Western part of the U.S. Kurt is a White male who obtained graduate degrees in computer science and divinity. Kurt teaches undergraduate courses in computer science at a college in the Western part of the U.S.

Study Rigor

The study includes three participants. This number is low but there are still important findings to be told from this dataset. Following the guidelines in *Naturalistic Inquiry* on establishing trustworthiness by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Merrian's (1995) article on *What Can You Tell from an N = 1?* I have listed the strategies that were employed to strengthen the rigor of the study. The internal validity of the study was established by:

1. Triangulation - interviews, photographs, written narratives, and phones calls have been used in this study to further explore the life history of the participants.
2. Member checks - member checks tool place during a follow-up phone call once the data is analyzed with focus coding
3. Peer/Colleague examination - consistent examination of the themes occurred throughout the analysis process
4. State of researcher's experiences - a researcher's reflective journal was kept throughout the study
5. Submersion in research – the researcher and participants engaged in this research project through constant communication across three consecutive months

Reliability of the study has been established through:

1. Triangulation - through the use of multiple methods of data collection, this study has shown consistency.
2. Peer/Colleague examination – these checks ensured themes were coded correctly and that there was consistency throughout the analysis.

3. Audit Trail - I specified the ways in which data were collected and provided descriptions of the participants.
4. External Validity - the literature review ensured the integrity of the findings from this study.
5. Thick description - thick descriptions were created as findings were generated for this thesis.
6. Multi-site design - all participants came from different sites and two worked outside of this state.
7. Modal comparison - the participants come from diverse educational backgrounds which depicts the ability to show how they compare to the general population who work in more traditional education settings.
8. Sampling within - the heterogeneity of the sample shows that some generalizability may be possible.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher must be made explicit when conducting qualitative studies since the researcher is the instrument of how the data are gathered. This section is provided to show transparency and trustworthiness of the researcher. It ensures that the reader can examine the truthfulness of the research as being free of bias that would contribute to the trustworthiness of the research and to the reader's assessment of the ability of the researcher to remain neutral (Peshkin, 1988; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). As a researcher engaging in a qualitative study of educators who work in a juvenile detention center, I have many experiences that have shaped my views of juvenile detention centers and educators who are within those spaces that must be

presented in order to conduct this study by showing transparency. This section outlines my position within the study.

I am a Latina, female who has a passion for social justice. I come with different perspectives that are embodied in the state I lived in prior to moving here. Before beginning my master's program, I was a mentor and an advocate at a juvenile detention center for three years. In that role, I was responsible for helping develop lesson plans and activities for the youth, as well as providing guidance and mentorship at the center. While in this role I was in constant communication with my fellow advocate peers and with the youth involved in the justice system along with educators who worked at the center. In addition, I worked in alternative education settings prior to starting this program. These experiences have shaped my passion for working with these populations.

Data Collection

Participants were interviewed individually. Three semi-structured interviews that lasting approximately 60-90 minutes each were conducted. In addition, the participants were asked to complete a photovoice project. The data collection process took two to three months. The first semi-structured interviews took place during our first meetings. In addition to the first interview, during this meeting instructions for the photovoice project were discussed. The instructions included how to take and choose photographs, the ethical considerations around taking pictures of others, and explanations about the prompts along with the narrative portion of the project. This information can be seen in the appendix. Participants were instructed to take or use 5-8 photographs and choose 3 to submit and describe. They were given four guiding questions to aid in the written description of the photographs. Photographs and narrative descriptions were

submitted through email and discussed during the second or third interview. The second interview took place two to three weeks after the first interview. Before the interview began, participants who had completed the photovoice project explained their project and described the photos they had chosen. The third interview served as the last interview that included any final thoughts and a brief conversation around the photovoice project.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen for this study because they allow researchers to have open ended questions that still remain flexible for the participant and the researcher can follow other in-depth areas of the interview (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree; 2006). All of the interviews were recorded using the researchers cell phone. Participants were allowed to choose the location to be interviewed as long as it was in a private setting. Additionally, a journal to jot down notes, themes, or thoughts was kept in order to reflect on the research process (Janesick, 2014). The researcher journal was used to adapt an introspective look on the research and to reflect on potential biases.

The interview recordings were transferred to a private password protected and secure OneDrive immediately following the interview. After uploading recordings, the original files were deleted. Pseudonyms were given during the transcription of the data. Transcription files were also saved under their assigned pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality. Identifier details were removed. Additionally, participant photographs and descriptive narratives were transferred from email to the OneDrive account. The OneDrive account was only accessible by the PI.

The interview protocol was adapted from a modified version of McAdam's Life Story Interview (2008). This procedure attempts to assist participants to recount their life in conceptual frameworks. The modification aimed to focus on the participants major events that would

contribute to a career decision. The photovoice protocol was adapted and modified from Wang, (1999) and McIntyre, (2003). The prompts followed a semi-structured format that allowed participants to best narrate the importance of the photographs in relation to their teaching identities. Although a variety of events can contribute to making these decisions, for the purpose of this study, the intent was to examine critical incidents that played a major role in their life.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in life history research mimics similar techniques used in qualitative research. Life history is a subset of narrative inquiry which provides an in-depth qualitative approach. Three approaches were used to analyze all the data. Data analysis techniques and steps can be seen in Table 2. The first set of interviews were analyzed using an analytical process adapted from Suarez-Ortega (2013) along with open coding. This focused on examining the first set of data for critical incidents. Critical incidents were defined as events that changed the projection of the educator's life histories. Educators identified the event that led them to turn towards teaching in detention centers, they described the event in detail and included everyone who was involved. These critical incidents within the narratives provided potential areas for further exploration in the following interviews. With the second set of interviews, I proceeded to use a focused coding technique in order to narrow down the concepts and code them into chunks of themes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Saldana, 2013). I also compared the narratives from the second interviews to that of the first sets to look for incongruity (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The last approach was adapted from Rubin and Rubin's analytic memo method (2012). This consisted of looking at all narratives and artifacts from participants and my analysis of the data. Through constant comparison of all available data, this process led to the creation of

a life history narrative for the participants that was both trustworthy and transparent. A member check with the participants was conducted by going over transcripts and themes found in the narratives in order to revise for accuracy before reporting the results (Janesick, 2011). For the concluding step, after familiarity with the interviews and photovoice documents, a peer and the PI went through each interview and photovoice project together, adding comments and challenging each other's initial thoughts, and discussing interpretations of the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Mile & Huberman, 1994). This process helped ensure the trustworthiness of the research.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the research question, purpose, and procedures have been described. The primary purpose of this study and the chosen methodology that is congruent with the intended purpose have been described. The aim of this study was to explore the life histories of three educators who have worked in juvenile detention centers. To capture the complexity this, a life history and photovoice method were selected that included interviews and images selected by each participant. The data analysis approach involved three processes guided by Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Saldana, 2013; and Suarez-Ortega 2013.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The analysis of both the interview and photovoice data revealed three over-arching themes that include: (1) intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, (2) emotional and contextual challenges, and (3) agents of change. These themes were recurrent and present in the teaching life histories of all the participants. The data set includes elements of the educators recalling instances related to their decision-making progress to go into this field, their responses to the correctional environment, and how they have come to enjoy the career they have chosen. The quotes used in this section are accompanied by the dates of the interviews and photovoice project to show the continuity and recurrence of the themes. While there are some differences among the teaching life histories of the educators, the findings also include similarities amongst participants. The findings are presented person by person to show the uniqueness within each teaching life history. Example statements from each of the themes can be seen in Table 3. The aim of this study was to answer the following research question, what are the teaching life histories of educators who teach in a juvenile detention center?

Juliet's Teaching Life History

Personal and Professional Stories

Juliet first entered the field of education as a teacher in a special education classroom. During that time, Juliet completed her graduate degree in library science and began working as a media specialist in an elementary school after she graduated. A few years after working as a media specialist, Juliet found a job as an English teacher at the local juvenile detention center. During her time working as an English teacher at the juvenile detention center, she got married

and relocated to a different state due to her husband's new job placement. Once she relocated to the new state, she sought out a similar job position in the city's juvenile detention center. Currently, Juliet is the lead teacher at a juvenile detention center in the Eastern part of the United States.

Teaching at a detention center was not originally part of Juliet's career path, but after the school district in her county eliminated the library science positions, she was forced to reconsider what she wanted to do with her degrees. Immediately after this happened, she reflected and told herself, "'I really don't think I wanna be an elementary school classroom teacher. Well, let me see what else is available?' And so, I looked to see, and there happened to be a gal retiring from a detention center" (Transcript, September 26, 2019). This critical incident in her career led her to teach in an alternative education setting. After finding the opportunity to work at a detention center, Juliet contacted the center and talked to the woman who was retiring from the educator position. The woman who was retiring told her about the job and the tasks involved. Julia further explained her interactions,

> I met with the gal who had done her whole career there, and I thought, 'Okay, how bad can a place be if she's taught here for 30 years?' I got to meet with everybody else, and I thought, 'I think that this might not be bad.' (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

After this interaction, Juliet decided that she did, in fact, want to work there and expressed this to her spouse. Her husband was hesitant about her safety in a detention center. Juliet recalled, "My husband was like, 'You wanna work where?'" (Transcript, September 26, 2019). After listening to her husband's concern, Juliet asked the detention center if she could take her spouse on a tour,

they agreed, and she then took him on a tour of the detention center to assure him that it was a safe place in which to work. Once he felt that she would be safe working in that environment, she committed to working at the center.

Throughout her years working in a detention center, Juliet has heard how these students are often perceived as dangerous and deviant. Despite this, she has continued to work as an educator in a juvenile detention center. Juliet expressed the feedback she receives from others,

> Once they [adults] hear where I work, they have lots of questions. Among them is usually 'isn't it hard to work with criminals?' That's when I tell them that thankfully each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done. It's often met with a puzzled look. I continue explaining that if we always got what we truly deserved, we'd all be in for a world of hurt. (Photovoice Narrative, November 5, 2019)

Juliet's empathy towards her students was evident throughout our interview. When she recounted stories such as the one shared above, she would sigh when she repeated the comments people had about her students and reaffirmed the positive statements she made about her students. Juliet continued to share similar experiences and instances throughout our interviews where she had to defend her students and where she has to provide reasons for why she chose that career. Another response she gives people is that her students are still children regardless of where they are placed. This was not always her perspective though. She learned to see her students as students rather than as criminals when she began working with this population. She recalled,

> Before working in juvenile detention settings, I felt that if someone committed a crime, they should be punished and didn't give a lot of thought to whether they were a minor or not. I now struggle when hearing that a 15-year-old will be charged as an adult. I realize

> they've done wrong but know there's so much more to it than that. (Photovoice Narrative, November 5, 2019)

This statement shows Juliet's personal growth within the field. Through experience and time, Juliet has learned to navigate these spaces by acknowledging the students as people, first, instead of criminals and by correcting the negative labels and perspectives others have given these students. She also acknowledges this growth in her photovoice project.

Juliet continues to enjoy her job and is continually learning how to balance the perceptions of others regarding her students, along with her emotions, and the expectations the school district requires of her. Juliet summed up her thoughts by expressing that at the end of the day, it is important to show kindness to others and learn how to accept differences. She also explained some of the strategies she has incorporated within her classroom to make the space welcoming for students. These strategies are ideas she has come up with on her own and not those that are required of her job. For example, she noted,

> I use essential oils that I have in roller bottles. Whatever we can do to make this a calm and safe feeling place. You know, some people kind of go, 'Well, why would you, you know, do that?' I mean, 'Why not?' (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

Actions such as this one shows the commitment she has towards her students. She continues to try to make her classroom into a safe learning environment even though her job doesn't require that she go out of her way to create such space. Despite the questions she receives regarding the extra money and work she puts into her students; Juliet continues to research ways in which she could better assist her students.

First Finding: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivators

In the first finding, Juliet's teaching life history shows recurring themes of extrinsic and intrinsic motivators in both the interviews and in the photovoice project. The first extrinsic motivator occurred when she was searching for jobs after the district had eliminated the media specialists' positions. This external force made her search for a career that would fit both the requirements she was looking for and those that her graduate degrees covered. During this search, she found a position that she was interested in. She stated,

> I was highly qualified in special education and English. That's what they were looking for. An English teacher that was certified in special education. Okay, well there we go. So, I tried it. I thought, 'You know what. This is, actually I feel like this is where I need to be. This is my niche.' (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

In this quote, Juliet shows both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. The extrinsic motivators come from the detention center job qualifications that were requested. The intrinsic motivator is her inner thought regarding the niche she had found in her career path. Later during the interview, Juliet shared another extrinsic motivator for working at a detention center.

She explained, "You don't have to deal with phones, inappropriate clothes, and you really don't deal with a lot of parents, because the parents don't get involved so much. it was just letting them [students] know that someone cares about them" (Transcript, September 26, 2019). This quote relates back to when Juliet was retelling the process of searching for her next job. Initially, when Juliet was considering other teaching positions in the education system, her hesitation was going into the public education system. Juliet contemplated her initial thoughts on working at a school,

> ‘I really don't think I wanna be an elementary school classroom teacher.’ I told myself. That's a lot, you know, you're teaching everything to the little kids, and there's a lot of assessing, all the time assessing. I really didn't see myself working in the classroom with the elementary school kids, I liked the kids but the job itself, it's just, it's a lot. (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

This quote shows the different work environment that is found in correctional education. Working at a juvenile detention center seemed to eliminate most of Juliet’s worries and was a better fit with what she wanted to do as a career. The way in which these two sub systems, correctional education and general education context, differed and how the interactions between those with the focal system (Juliet) was what lead to her motivation to obtain a career in this field.

During the time that I was interviewing Juliet, she attended an event sponsored by the local school district in which keynote speakers spoke about their experience as students and as educators. Each keynote speaker had a unique story on how they had found a passion for the field of education. One of the keynote speakers stood out to Juliet so much that she asked to take a picture with him for the photovoice project. In order to maintain confidentiality, I will not be sharing the picture, but I will share the narrative. Juliet recalled the event and summarized what the guest speaker had talked about,

> He believed his teachers kept him from making choices that could have landed him in jail. That touched me because I often wonder what my impact is. He reminded us that everyone deserves multiple chances – I needed to hear that!! (Photovoice Narrative, November 5, 2019)

This event highlights the larger system that educators are part of and further demonstrates how educators can impact each other's experience through the use of personal stories. The message in this passage can be seen as an intrinsic motivator. In this passage, Juliet shares her wonder about what type of influence and impact she has on her students. Through the story of this keynote speaker, Juliet received confirmation on the power educators have in the lives of their students.

Another example of an intrinsic motivator in her life history also came up in her photovoice project. You can see the photograph Juliet included of a small snowman that one of her students had given to her in Figure 1 which is located in the appendix along with the other photographs. The image is of a snowman craft project she had her students do in one of her classes during the winter.

She wrote:

> I had discussions with the girls about self-worth. Many of them sold their bodies for drugs or money. During one of our discussions she sat in her seat and just cried into her hands. The topic was 'what do you wish your teacher knew about you?' She raised her hand and asked if she could talk. She wanted me to know that she'd been listening to what I'd been telling them. Around Christmas, the girls made these cute little snowmen. My student came into the class with this one and said she wanted me to have it to remember her by. (Photovoice Narrative, November 5, 2019)

This excerpt from Juliet's photovoice project depicts internal motivators in her decision to stay in this career. The way in which the educator is the focal system but has constant impact with subsystems such as the classroom is further highlighted in this excerpt. These interactions led Juliet to remain motivated in her career. She continued to share, "She's reached out to me a few

times–just wanted me to know that she's graduated and went to prom last year. My grammar lessons might not have stuck but something much more important did and that's what matters!" (Photovoice Narrative, November 5, 2019). These critical incidents have created a deep impact on the career trajectory of Juliet. The positive interactions such as the growth of both the educator and the students between systems show the exchange of interactions that help individuals stay within a larger system. Juliet was able to see the growth in her students' self-esteem and confidence in the timespan of their stay at the detention center. These types of positive interactions continue to re-assure her that she is helping her students gain critical skills. Juliet chooses to continue to teach in this space because she sees the need and has adapted her teaching practices to best fir her students. The motivational factors in her life history as an educator have continued to motivate and solidify her career decision.

Second Finding: Emotional and Contextual Challenges

The second theme, emotional and contextual challenges, speaks to the external and internal obstacles Juliet has faced throughout her teaching life history. As mentioned before, her husband's initial reaction to her new career path, although supportive, was met with questions of safety. This posed as an environmental obstruction due to the setting of her new job. Often times, when sharing that she works at a juvenile detention center, this creates both reactions of surprise and concern from others. Juliet expressed, "I hate to say it, but people are like, 'Oh that must be so scary?' 'Uh, no, I think where you are, is kinda' scary'" (Transcript, September 26, 2019). Juliet's response demonstrates how she conceptualizes the general education environments versus the education environment within the detention center. She commented that detention centers have security plans in place that ensure her safety while public education settings to do

not meet those same standards. She also shared another common response she receives, “I get a lot of people who say, ‘Oh, you teach where? Oh, it must be so hard. Oh, you must be like a saint’” (Transcription, September 26, 2019). This response also emerged in her photovoice narrative when she talked about another response that she gets from people who learn about her job, Juliet wrote, “Among them is usually ‘isn’t it hard to work with criminals?’” (Photovoice Narrative, November 5, 2019). After getting these reactions from people, Juliet then goes on to explain how her work environment is safe and secure, how her students are still children, and how she does not find it difficult to work with them.

Juliet also spoke about the hardship of balancing her emotions and perceptions. Although she generally believes that her students are children who got caught in unfortunate situations and understands the reasons that they are placed there, she still finds herself trying to balance personal emotions. Juliet talked about an event that occurred during the first detention center she worked at. She contemplated on the idea of emotional challenges,

> I had a boy at the other detention facility whose parents did not want him, and he was well aware. He was trying really hard. He behaved. He had been a repeat offender. But he finally was pretty good, and he was asking us if ‘Is there any way you can try to find me a placement because I know I can't go home.’ It was just…how heartbreaking to know. I mean, that just broke my heart. (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

This quote demonstrates the internal struggle Juliet went through while trying to understand and be empathetic towards the situation. Juliet points out that she understood part of the fault came from the misbehavior of her student but throughout this experience she continued to come back

to the fact that he was just a kid. This interaction demonstrates the impact subsystems have on focal systems. The personal lives of Juliet's students were impacting the emotional balance in her life as an educator. Additionally, Juliet explained that she tries her best to avoid stories surrounding the reasons to why her students got incarcerated and often avoids reading their charts. The charts of the students contain detailed information about their case and about their criminal history. This is another example of how different systems come together to create different impacts. Context cannot always be removed from the environment; so, as much as Juliet tried to remove herself from the personal lives of her students, she was still impacted.

During our second interview, Juliet spoke about the ways in which she tries to set boundaries as a way to help manage her emotions within her workspace. "I told the kids, 'I don't wanna know your charges. I'm not here to judge you. I'm human, and if I were to find out something you did something heinous; how do I not look at you differently?'" (Transcript, November 7, 2019). Juliet has actively worked to prevent learning about the charges her students have although the charges are listed on the attendance sheet. She avoids looking at the charges when she calls out attendance and only focuses on their names. She added, "Staff will say, 'You know what they're here for?' 'I don't wanna know.' I don't wanna know. And I've told the kids, 'you guys are talking about your charges, you know, it's a rule. You're not allowed to" (Transcript, September 26, 2019). As emotional balance is important to her, Juliet has adapted a few strategies to work with the obstacles she faces in this environment in order to help manage her emotions.

Apart from this challenge, she also faces a different one in the classroom that further highlights more complex issues in the prison industrial complex. Juliet explained aspects of her classroom when she remarked,

> [Students] range from 12 to over 17. They're in classes together and it's not easy. It's like playing racket ball. You got kids at different grades. They are not up with standards. Not only is it the ability but also maturity. (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

This is an obstacle that is not often faced by educators who teach in traditional K-12 settings. Most traditional classrooms are typically made up of students who are of the same or of similar age or those whose knowledge and skills are at or close to grade level expectations among their peers. The composition of Juliet's classroom creates an additional challenge for those who teach in detention centers. This shows the restrictions these educators are faced with in these spaces. Juliet is not frightened by her students and has shown genuine care and investment in their educational growth.

Third Finding: Agents of Change

The last theme, agents of change, reflects how Juliet's life history is not just about her career trajectories but also about the changes she hopes to create along the way. This theme was found throughout the life history of all participants. During the end of our first interview, Juliet told me about some of the classwork assignments she gives her students. For example, she expressed that she enjoys giving her students work where they have to consider different perspectives. "I give them puzzles. We're looking at things differently. I'm trying to find you other ways to look at things and to find a way to agree to disagree without having to hurt

somebody, either verbally or physically" (Transcript, September 26, 2019). The assignment Juliet describes above shows one of the many ways that she has tried to help her students. By giving her students assignments that provoke critical thinking, she hopes that this will help her students navigate future social obstacles. Juliet understands that as an educator, she has the potential to make a difference in the lives of her students. As such, systems theory highlights the powerful interactions one can have when two systems meet. In this case, one system is Juliet and the other is her students. When both of these systems interact, the potential for intervention occurs. Since Juliet is restricted to only what happens in her classroom, we do not know if these interventions are successful, but she hopes that these assignments do make a difference in their lives. She also talked about another assignment that she continually gives her students as they come into the detention center. The specific assignment came up during our first interview as well as in the photovoice project when she included an image depicting signatures (See Appendix for Figure 2):

She chose this image because throughout her years of teaching she has had her students practice their signatures. When Juliet entered correctional teaching, as previous research has shown, she quickly learned that the students in her classroom had an array of abilities and differences. For example, earlier in the study she explained that one thing she notices is that her classroom is composed of students whose maturity levels and learning levels vary. She gave an example of a young boy who mimicked the behavior on an older boy because he admired him, but the older boy found it annoying. She then explained to the older boy that the other student was much younger and was just showing admiration for him. One thing she noticed was that most of her students did not know what a signature was and by default, did not know how to sign

their name. Again, she is limited to only knowing her students' progress while they are at the center but continues to teach them these skills in hopes of making a change in their ability to succeed in life. She explained that although this is not part of the district's curriculum, it is a skill she values because she has seen her student make great gains across the time they spent at the detention center due to assignments as this one.

In the photovoice prompt, Juliet spoke about one of the assignments she continually gives to her students:

> I ask to see their first week [signatures] to compare to the current week [signatures]. They most proudly show me. You can't believe how much pride they take in knowing how to sign their name!! Some fight me at first – 'I can't do this! This is stupid!' I remind them they can't do it YET and ask that they just try a few times and put it away. I've had at least two students in the last month make comments that reinforce my belief in the importance of taking class time each day to practice. After signing his library card, my student pointed at it and said with a huge smile, 'YOU did that for me – thank you!' (Photovoice Narrative, November 5, 2019)

This quote demonstrates the pride Juliet has for the progress her students make. It also shows how her values and beliefs shape her goals through the assignments she continues to implement in her classroom. Juliet's story shows how she constantly strives to help her students. The significance of this assignment turned into a critical incident for Juliet's teaching practice. Juliet explained that she has continued to implement this assignment in her classrooms because she wants the students to gain a real-life skill that will help them when they leave the detention center. Not only do her students enjoy this assignment, but Juliet has seen that her students find

pride and develop self-worth once they learn how to sign their name. Juliet's hope in her students' futures has guided what she teaches in these educational spaces thus creating her teaching practice as an agent of change. Juliet mentioned how she is given the state curriculum and standards which she teaches, but she also tries to include curriculum that allow her students gain valuable skills that can be applied in their personal lives.

Another practice Juliet has adopted into her classroom is using quotes that she has found to be motivating in her own life. In the photovoice project Juliet added an image (See Appendix for Figure 3) depicting a quote that she uses with her students. In the description of the image, Juliet recalled,

> I've been using this quote with my students for many years now. I say it often enough that those that are here for a few months can usually recite it. I ask them to help me explain it to those that are newer to our class. I hope sharing this quote with them and what it means in my life – you must take accountability for your wisdom once you get it – sticks with all my students. This is especially true for those that don't come back to me for one reason or another. (Photovoice Narrative, November 5, 2019)

This excerpt helps show the impact Juliet hopes to have in the lives of her students and establishes transparency between her and her students. Juliet validates the importance of this quote by holding herself towards these standards and by hoping that her students will follow her lead. The quote demonstrates forgiveness for prior mistakes and makes a request for improvement. As Juliet stated, this is important for youth who are in detention centers because it allows them to reflect on their life while also think about how they can make adjustments.

In addition to the classwork assignments that she implements in her classroom, Juliet also finds ways to motivate students to enjoy learning. One way that she shared with me was through increasing the types of books in the detention center's library. Juliet described the ways in which she has fundraised for her students along with how her husband supports her career.

> When I'm not here looking at book reviews, and stuff, I'm trying to find grants that we can use to get books because our library was all donations. A law firm paired with me to get some books for the kids. Some that they could take home with them and we got a couple. I got a $2,000 grant from Dollar General recently to be able to get books for our library. 'What books that I have in my library in the previous detention center that I know the kids really like and that I wanna get here?' and so I do a lot of that. I'm all the time looking for certain things for the kids. I think that most teachers would say that. It's not one of those jobs where you're an assembly line worker. You think about the kids. We had our Go Fund me from the lawyers for the books and his [my husband's] work donated a couple of hundred dollars because he had asked them. 'I appreciate that,' and he was like, 'Well, I know how hard you work to do well by your kids.' And so, you try to do what you can. Specially to try to get them excited about some things that they may not have seen before. And when they feel success under their belt, then you start thinking, 'Okay, it's worth me spending the money on those things, because it's a big deal.' (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

The story of Juliet demonstrates the amount of work she puts outside of her educator role in order to help her students. This highlights how systems overlap. This excerpt demonstrates

how her career influences her personal life outside of work and how others (i.e., the lawyers) come to interact with the primary system of educators at the detention center. She ended her story by tying it back to ensuring that her students remain informed and motivated during their time in the detention center.

Towards the end of my last interview with Juliet, I asked what the most important value she had related to her teaching and she responded that the most important value was showing kindness. She then added that statement and further explained, "You know, be kind to them as young minds, young learners, and that will rub off. And then, you would have a nicer generation of people" (Transcript, November 21, 2019). Her value of kindness and her perception of how individuals hold the power to influence the future generation demonstrates that through her work and through her interactions with her students she hopes that they will one day project similar responses toward others. The challenges highlighted in her life history demonstrate the mutual impact systems have on each other and how the interactions can lead to productive change. Juliet is an agent of change because she has identified a need that the standard curriculum cannot provide the students and she has taken action.

Adrian's Teaching Life History

Personal and Professional Stories

Adrian entered the field of education while he was completing his undergraduate degree in liberal arts. During this time, he began working as a baseball coach for a middle school after his younger brother asked him if he could coach his team. While he was finishing up his bachelor's degree, Adrian asked his advisor about potential career paths and his advisor told him, 'You might want to get a teaching credential, you know, as a backup.' And Adrian responded,

‘Teaching credential? What are you talking about?’ (Transcript, September 26, 2019). Adrian had not considered teaching prior to his advisor’s advice. After this conversation, Adrian began taking courses in education and completed his education field work. “And [after] doing the field work and going in the rooms and, spending time with those kids, I just was like, ‘Yeah, I could teach’” (Transcript, September 26, 2019).

Adrian first began teaching at a non-profit residential program that housed youth who were in the foster care and youth who had been in the juvenile justice system. He continued to work there until he completed his graduate degree. After the completion of his graduate degree, he decided to teach at a non-public school. This school was designated for students who had been in the juvenile justice system and those who were transferred over from the public education system due to behavioral problems. “If everything had been in a perfect world I'd still be there right now but unfortunately, I got married, had kids, and I needed to make more money, so I went to work at the school district” (Transcript, September, 26, 2019). Adrian reflected on his time at the non-public school and recalled how much he liked working there. While Adrian was working in the public education system, he taught in a general population class. During this time in his life, he went through a divorce and ultimately decided to work at a school for adults. It was then that he first heard about correctional education. While working at the school for adult learners one of his student’s educational interpreter suggested that he look into correctional education. When Adrian left the job as an adult educator he returned to the non-public school where he had originally worked. After one year of working at the non-public school again he decided to apply to teach at the local correctional facility. Currently, Adrian is a resource specialist in a juvenile detention center in the Western side of the U.S.

Similar to Juliet, Adrian had not planned on following a career path in teaching. Adrian contemplated his career path and explained, “I never thought I would be a teacher. I remember vividly when I graduated from high school, I remember going, ‘I'll never be in a classroom again’” (Transcript, September 26, 2019). As Adrian spoke about this memory, he laughed as he recounted his initial thoughts on teaching and reflected on his career trajectory. Unlike Juliet, Adrian’s trajectory to teaching in a correctional facility was not linear. His ultimate decision to work at a correctional facility came about after he returned to his initial teaching job. He recalled,

> I left the adult school, went back to the elementary school where I started. And I remember when I went back it was like that movie Lean On Me, because when I was there, 11 years earlier to now, it was like when Morgan Freeman works out and they say, ‘Welcome to the jungle,’ and the school just deteriorates. ‘Sit down. Shut up. Be quiet. Stop doing that. Sit down.’ Is what I would hear as I walked by. They [the students] would continue throwing food. I was walking through there just going, ‘What is going on here?’ And after one year, I said, ‘That's it. I'm gonna apply.’ And so, I did, and I got hired. (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

Although Adrian originally enjoyed working at the non-public school setting, when he returned, the school had made changes that created a different experience for him. Adrian explained that the elementary school had merged with the middle school. This seemed to increase the behavioral problems of the students. During the year of his return, Adrian recalled that he would hear constant arguing from teachers and students. In the quote above he remembers how food fights would break out during lunch and that it was difficult to ask the

students to stop. The new changes and behavioral outbreaks left Adrian to believe that the school had fallen apart. The environment was now less structured due to the increase of students and the limited amount of personnel. This critical incident led him to apply for a position to teach at a correctional facility.

Adrian explained that his first exposure to correctional teaching was nerve wreaking. He had never been exposed to these populations or to the environment prior to applying to the position and nobody had prepared him for the difference in structural and environment change that he is experiencing. “I remember I went [in] and it was very intimidating. It wasn’t like I hadn’t been teaching but I had never seen anybody with tattoos completely covering their shaved head, and obvious gang tattoos” (Transcript, September 26, 2019). Adrian brought to mind vivid memories of his first experience within the facility throughout our interviews and in his photovoice project. He continued to share his initial experiences as he recalled these memories. “I remember the third day there I was looking up at the fences, and I go, ‘What am I doing here? What did I ... get myself into?’ It was very intimidating” (Transcript, September 26, 2019). Adrian’s emotional reaction included deep concern and fear when he began his career.This was one of the first memories Adrian recalled. In our interview, I could see that he was reliving that initial sense of anxiety through the facial expressions he was making. Into his third day, Adrian could already see the how his environment was affecting him, and he was not sure if he would stay. This not only demonstrates how this field impacts individuals but also shows how educational programs do not prepare their students to enter into these spaces.

Throughout our interviews, Adrian recalled moments where he had felt in shock with this new system and explained how this new experience had been daunting and nerve-wracking for

him. This was Adrian's first experience with the criminal justice system and both the environment and system were intimidating for him. He had never imagined himself working in a place where there are constant security checks, where the buildings were surrounded by barbed wired, and where students were defined and labeled as criminals. Every aspect of this new working environment was intimidating and new for him. The environment of the correctional facility left a strong impression on Adrian. So much so that it began to affect his emotional well-being. Adrian further explained by detailing one of his experiences,

> I had a panic attack one day. This was very foreign to me, being in a prison. And seeing people that were incarcerated and covered with tattoos and reading some of their stories and being behind three sets of fences. It definitely had an effect on me. Imagine if you were stuck in school all the time, you know, and, or you went to summer camp and you were there every day. You were stuck at the same camp the whole time; so, you don't get to go home. And people have to come visit you. And it's near a dump and there's an adult facility on the other side. (Transcript, October 8, 2019)

Adrian showed empathy for his students throughout our interviews as he often reflected on how they must feel to be locked up while he gets to leave every day. Adrian demonstrates strong emotional ties to his students. He has made it his mission to stay in this educational environment in order to continue to help those who made need him. He would refer back to the perspectives of his students while he recounted the experiences and instances when he, himself, felt trapped, anxious, or depressed. It seemed that he was dismissing his own needs. Despite of the balance of emotions this job requires of him, Adrian is determined to remain working with this population.

Adrian's job has become more than just a job to him but more of a calling, a purpose. He has seen his hard work pay off when his students leave the facility and pass the GED. He further explained his reason for staying,

> There is hope for any inmate that is willing to meet me halfway, to invest in his own success, to increase his knowledge of the world in front and beyond him. To instill pride in oneself. An inmate's educational success is my primary mission. I must use every motivational tactic I know to motivate the incarcerated individual. (Photovoice Narrative, November 21, 2019)

This excerpt demonstrates how Adrian has found sources to ground and remind himself of why he remains in this career. Regardless of the barriers he has to overcome while working in this space, he has been able to see his work pay off through these positive events.

First Finding: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivators

Adrian discussed multiple intrinsic and extrinsic motivators throughout our interviews and in the photovoice project. As previously stated, his first intrinsic motivator to work in the field of education was established after completing his education field work for his undergraduate coursework. This experience helped him further develop his confidence in potentially working as an educator. Once he felt that he was capable of teaching, he looked into graduate programs that would help him reach his new goal. It was this event that later led him to apply to a graduate program for his teaching credential. Although teaching had its difficult and challenging moments, positive statements from his students helped him stay motivated in this field. Adrian stated, "at the end of the year or when they were getting ready to leave, they would come up and say, 'Hey, thank you,' you know, 'I appreciate what you did for me'. And that was

rewarding" (Transcript, September 26, 2019). Adrian continued to hold onto these positive teaching memories over the years and explained how these are the types of things that continue to remind him the purpose of being an educator.

Further into our first interview, Adrian shared that while he was working at a non-public school he got married and had children. This was a critical incident in his life. It was then that he knew that he would have to find another job that paid better wages and that had benefits that would include his family. "I had to go into corrections [education], to make the kind of money that I'm making now, you know, I had to leave public school" (Transcript, September 26, 2019). While taking correctional education into consideration, he returned to a non-public education setting but it was no longer what he wanted it to be. Adrian explained that the public education system just wasn't paying enough for him to continue to contribute to his family's needs. The way he expressed his decision to go into correctional education was to say that this was the only path he had left, and despite feeling hesitant about this career path, he is grateful that it has worked out for him. After some years of being married, he got divorced and decided to change careers. This was another extrinsic motivator that was made possible due to his divorce.

Adrian was left as a single father of three and needed to make ends meet. In our first interview, he shared that his final push to work in a detention center came almost right after he got divorced and while he was working as an adult educator. This time period occurred when the economy was doing poorly, and Adrian was concerned over his finances. Adrian recalled,

> I had a student with an interpreter who was a former correctional officer. And he told me about correctional education. It was right around the time of when the

> economy really went bad. I was trying to make ends meet. And I was like, 'What am I gonna do?' (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

As system theory explains, the interaction between two systems often leads to change. The interaction between Adrian and his student led to the introduction of the student's interpreter which led to an exchange of information that ultimately guided Adrian toward where to go. Adrian was concerned about the downfall in the economy and became worried about his income during that time. His concern for financial stability shows up as a recurrent motivator throughout the interviews and in the photovoice project. Figure 4, which can be found in the appendix, depicts this recurring theme. Working as a detention center alleviated those concerns for Adrian. Adrian selected an image of a near empty wallet (see figure 4) for one of the photovoice narratives that asked about a vivid memory that influenced his career choice.

Adrian wrote:

> I was having major problems making ends meet. This photograph reminds me of a time when my rent was increasing, my bills were piling up, and I was barely making it. I'm a single father of three kids and I had to figure out a solution. That solution ended up being me applying and taking a job as a Correctional Education Teacher. I am willing to do anything for the sake of my children. (Photovoice Narrative, November 18, 2019)

In this excerpt, Adrian states that he was willing to do anything for his children which was one of the main motivators for seeking a job at a correctional facility. The search for this job became a sacrifice he made for his family. Not only does this highlight the complex realities of individuals in the field of education, but it also demonstrates how macro level systems impact micro

systems. The image from the photovoice project, Adrian's narrative excerpt, and the recurring theme of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation throughout the interview show how the triangulation of these data sources helped him explore options and guided his decision to choose this career path. Additionally, the recurrence of this theme shows how external forces are deeply embedded in the career choices individuals make. Once Adrian was hired at the detention center, he did not bring up any comments regarding financial concerns. Adrian mentioned that correctional education was paid a bit better than what the public education system had previously offered him.

Similar to Juliet's motivator, Adrian also spoke about the differences in public education and correctional education. The following quote shows how the working environment influenced Adrian's life as he often reflected on his life in comparison to those who were incarcerated. This quote also gives an insight into the workload he carried when he worked in public education when he recalled,

> It makes me appreciate my freedom I don't have to stay there all day and they're [incarcerated individuals] going to be there the next day and some are lifers. I used to spend hours grading papers, going to coffee shops, do my progress reports, to do my report cards. It was a lot. (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

In this quote, Adrian shares the amount of work public education expected from him. This is also reflected in Juliet's concerns in public education. It also demonstrates how the system of public education was impacting Adrian's personal time when he was away from that system. The public education system overlapped with his family system. While Adrian was working as a teacher in the public education system, he found himself searching for more time to complete his work. He

often had to go to coffee shops and finish grading and completing reports. The amount of work he had to take home began interfering with his personal time and with the time he got to spend with his family. Once he got hired at the detention center, he noticed that this was no longer an issue. He was able to complete all of his work while he worked and did not have to take any home. Adrian's family system and work system often conflicted while he taught in the public school system.

From the time I first contacted Adrian to participate in my study, he showed interest in the study because he wanted to potentially help other educators in this field. At the end of our first interview he stated, "I am interested in participating in your study as I think it will help bring our mission to light and help us improve along the way" (Transcript, September 26, 2019). The possibility of change and transformation motivated Adrian to share his experiences. His passion and motivation to continue in this field was shown through both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators along with events that continue to inspire him.

Second Finding: Emotional and Contextual Challenges

The second theme illuminates the internal and external challenges that Adrian has faced throughout his teaching life history. Similar to other careers in education, teaching in this field has both internal and external obstacles. During our first interview, Adrian recalled early memories of his impression of the detention center. These impressions remain as a strong memory for him as they had a shocking effect on him. During the start of his career, he questioned whether he wanted to remain in this field as it seemed to be full of negative events he had never been exposed to before. In the following excerpt, he outlines the details of one of the many events that occurred.

> The juveniles fight each other. The first time I ever saw anybody get in a fight in corrections was at the juvenile facility. I was standing there and out of the corner of my eye I saw some movement. I looked, and I just saw two punches. They went to the ground and they fell. I could only see their feet. Then I saw a CO [correctional officer] run up. And it was the first time I ever seen anybody pepper sprayed. I saw them and the thing just fanned out, like this big orange cloud. And he did it once and then he had to do it again. They got two blasts of it. And next thing I know, I see one guy, he's handcuffed and he's going one direction. [The] other guy's handcuffed, he's going another direction. And they're putting them in their rooms and they're walking off. (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

This quote demonstrates the unique aspects of working in these spaces. Adrian expressed his shock of seeing physical fights break out and the use of pepper spray to separate the students. Adrian talked about the difference in experiences he faced in the adult correctional facilities compared to those he faced in the juvenile detention center. Despite previously working in an adult correctional facility, Adrian had not been exposed to fights within the centers. These initial events that unfolded during his first-year teaching at the center proved to be a great obstacle for him. He was not expecting this career to have such challenges as he had not been trained to work with populations that had been involved in crime and had not experienced the effects of weapons such as pepper spray when he completed his credential program. These events led Adrian to constantly question his ability to remain in this space and in this field. He also spoke about the first impressions he had at the job in his photovoice project. He attached an image of a person

who had a lot of facial tattoos. Due to privacy concerns, I will not be sharing the image, but I have included the description of the photograph below, Adrian stated,

> This image is of a person who has covered their face and body in gang related tattoos. This is what you see in correctional facilities. This shows the shock and horror that I felt when I first started working in a correctional facility and saw inmates covered with lots of tattoos like this. I hadn't considered how I would feel seeing things like this over and over again. This was an extremely vivid and meaningful memory when I think of things that stick out in the line of work that I chose to be in. This photograph represents how my life would never be the same again...how could they be? (Photovoice Narrative, November 18, 2019)

This excerpt further shows the internal conflict Adrian was going through when he first started this job. For him, tattoos were a vivid and visual reminder of the correctional setting. The excerpt highlights factors that should be taken into consideration when preparing future educators to work in these facilities. The recurrent theme of this challenge shows how deep these impressions impacted him. He often described feeling nervous and anxious within the walls of his workspace. This points to one of the different hardships educators in these spaces have in comparison to educators who work in public education. The emotional impact these physical institutions have on both individuals who are incarcerated and those who work in these spaces is strong. Not only did this quote give us a vivid description of his work environment but also shows how working here will likely have an impact for him, forever.

Working with the younger population was nerve wrecking for him but he remained in this career because he enjoyed helping his students grow. He also saw instances where the youth

helped him out. One example of this was during a time when Adrian was stuck in a section of the detention center where pepper spray had just been dispersed. The young inmate saw him struggling and asked a correctional officer for assistance. He recalled,

> I went to one of the units where they had had an altercation and it was over. I start coughing and every time I take a breath, I feel the chemical going into my throat. I'm just coughing and coughing. And the COs [correctional officers] are in the cage, so it doesn't drift in there. 'Do you not see that I'm having some problem here?' And there's the youth mopping. Another guy's standing there. They're not coughing at all. I walk up to the cage and one of the youths, bangs on it. 'He needs to get out.' Then they buzz me out. I finish coughing as I'm walking away. My throat burning the rest of that day. I asked, 'How come you weren't coughing? I couldn't even breathe in there.' he goes, 'Oh, you get used to it.' And I said, 'You get used to it... And how do you get used to it?' (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

This example shows how the different subsystems within the correctional facility interact and impact each other. The subsystem of educators is exposed to the actions taken by the subsystem in which the correctional officers are situated. Adrian has had to deal with the aftermath of pepper spray when it is sprayed to contain students. This quote also shows how Adrian was reflecting upon how students adjust to substances that he felt were toxic to him. Last, Adrian also spoke about the power differentials within the detention center and how students would attempt to act tough in front of students who were from rival gangs.

Not only did the students have a power struggle with other students but also with correctional officers and other staff. This often played out in the classrooms and the educators

were left trying to work through these problems to best help the students. Some of the defiant behaviors in the classroom were due to the students not being able to get in contact with their family members or due to other factors that were out of their control. Being frustrated because of these events often led to a challenging classroom environment. In Figure 5, one can see an image of an inmate who seems to be upset. Adrian described what this photograph represented for him when he lamented,

> This inmate may be upset over the events of the day, not being able to see family, things not going the way that he wanted or expected, and/or the reality of his circumstances and the prospects of not being at home with his loved ones. It reminds me of the many inmates I have come across. Their lives will now inevitably be changed forever in unimaginable ways. It is my job to help inmates find the willingness to pursue an education. Education is not usually a priority for a person who is locked up. Getting these people to buy in and trust that you are invested in helping them to succeed, while knowing that they have a natural tendency to try and manipulate, lie, cheat and steal from you, is no easy feat. (Photovoice Narrative, November 18, 2019)

Adrian addresses the difficulties that this population constantly has and shows empathy towards these individuals. He also talks about the barriers educators face when trying to motivate them to further pursue their education. This quote reveals how Adrian positions the identities of the incarcerated youth as compared to his identity. Throughout our interviews, Adrian continued to compare his freedoms versus those of his students and how it may be difficult for the students to be motivated when they do not get to leave at the end of the day. Adrian contemplated on a

few of these memories and expressed that at times, these students do not see the purpose in continuing with their education. This seemed to happen when the students received additional bad news about their case. One example Adrian shared was that of a student who was frustrated and did not want to contribute to the class and instead was becoming a distraction in the class. This had happened this the student was unable to make a call to him family. Adrian saw that the student was visibly upset and went over to talk to him. Adrian approached the student, "'Okay. Okay. Hold on. Tell me your story. Tell me what's going on, and we'll see what we can do."' (Transcript, September 26, 2019). In this example, Adrian shows his understanding about how systems can impact each other and the hopes that his guidance will help them succeed at the center and the students' futures outside the correctional system. He was preparing his students to re-enter society. As Adrian addresses in this narrative, he interprets his educator role as someone who is supposed to help motivate his students despite of the challenges he has faced along the way.

Third Finding: Agents of Change

The last theme represents a depiction of Adrian's perspective of his role within his work environment. Similar to Juliet and Kurt, Adrian pointed to the obstacles of this job as well as his shared vision of helping others succeed. This was an evident theme throughout my interviews with all of the participants. This was present in Adrian's photovoice project as well. One example of how he viewed his role, and of how he viewed his students can be seen in Figure 6 which is located in the appendix. Figure 6 depicts inmates setting up a bookshelf while carrying books.

Adrian expresses lessons learned when he recalls,

> This is about inmates using books/education to ascend to a better life. In correctional facilities, many freedoms and things we take for granted can and are taken away. Education, knowledge, diplomas, GED's and degrees. There is hope for any inmate that is willing to meet me halfway, to invest in his own success, to increase his knowledge of the world in front and beyond him. To instill pride in oneself. (Photovoice Narrative, November 18, 2019)

The image chosen by Adrian shows a side to juvenile detention centers from which everyone is not aware. Within juvenile detention centers, there is an education system that is in place, but it is often left to the youth to decide if they want to continue with their studies or if they want to end their studies. Each center decides how they want to run their education program and how they will enforce it. Some centers have more structures than others and some have educators who are committed to their students while others do not. The participants in this study often talk about the freedom they have in teaching which relates to the structure of their own workplace.

Throughout our conversation, Adrian talked about his limitations as an educator. He reflected on how he tries to help students and that this help cannot be forced upon them. This quote further demonstrates the position Adrian is in much of the time. He re-states that the students must meet him halfway because he is aware that he cannot take them out of that place. It shows how the interaction between the student subsystem and larger prison system may be a place that creates intervention through educational attainment – or not. This is where the system comprised of educators provides a framework and people who help students with this. Throughout our interviews he compared and contrasted views of those who are incarcerated prior

to working with this population and talked about how his career changed his opinion once he met his students.

This is an image that illustrates the possibilities these students have despite their current situation. Adrian's narrative about this image reminds people about the freedoms these students no longer have. He adds how education is something these students take pride in because it is one of the things, they are allowed to pursue during the time they are incarcerated. He also speaks about his willingness to help his students when the students show an investment in education. He understands that there are limitations to what he can do in his position but acknowledges his ability to assist in the ways that he can. In the image below that was used in his photovoice project (see Figure 7) he continues with the theme of educational success.

> This is an inmate [who is] overcome with emotion because he is graduating. I have repeatedly seen over the years. Many incarcerated students are so accustomed to failing that it is ingrained in their minds. Breaking that cycle is no easy task for them or their teachers. I play a small part in bettering another person's life. I have taken what I have learned and have given it back. That is what educators are supposed to do...give it back. I help make a difference in the lives of others while I live. Over the course of my 30-year career, I have always said, 'I had the easy part. I just had to tell them what to do. They had to do the studying, complete the assignments, and take the tests. The credit is all theirs.' (Photovoice Narrative, November 18, 2019)

This quote conveys Adrian's commitment to his students throughout the years he has been teaching. It further shows how educators play a role in creating a space where students can move forward with their individual progress. Since the participants were not allowed to take

photographs of their students, some chose images that were not identifiable but that were available online. Figure 7 depicts a man in a graduation gown who seems to be crying. Adrian included this image in the photovoice project because it is something that he has seen in his line of work. As previously stated, education is something his students pride themselves in and focus on while they are incarcerated.

Adrian shared with me a few stories of his students who wanted to obtain their GED during their time at the detention center because they wanted a better life for their kids. He also explained how those individuals who obtain their GED's are granted more freedoms and sometimes are given shorter sentences at the detention center since they are showing willingness to change. In the narrative, Adrian further explains how he views his job as something easy when compared to the work and effort his students put in to obtain a degree. He also expresses his view of the responsibility educators should have for their students. Agents of change often view their role as something they are supposed to do more so than something to check off of their schedule. This is evident throughout Adrian's teaching life history. Below, Adrian's commitment to change the system and to give back further illustrates his commitment and work ethic,

> There's this mentality within corrections, 'Do your eight and hit the gate,' you know. That means you're paid for eight hours, do your eight hours and go home. I was working on this [preparing for the interview], and I told one of my coworkers about it. She goes, 'Oh, I wouldn't do that. I do my eight hours and my time after work, that's my time.' I told her, 'Well, you know, I'm trying to hopefully help someone who's trying to better understand the youth correctional facilities and operations. Maybe this will help teachers in the future. Maybe they'll make it better for them. I

> feel like it's a worthy cause and I don't feel like I'm wasting my time.' I feel like I'm making a contribution, and it's about giving back, you know. (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

This except demonstrates the complex interactions between systems due to the individuality of everyone in these systems. In a system where individuals do not seem to care about the population they work with, the interactions may not be as fruitful as those interactions with professionals who do care about the population they work with. Adrian had already answered all of the interview questions and we had gone over the instructions for the photovoice project, but he continued to share his views and experiences with me. The quote above demonstrates the value Adrian sees in telling others about the population he works with and it shows how he is standing up for his beliefs to his co-workers. It is evident that he doesn't see his job as just a job but rather an opportunity to create a change in someone's life. In the following quote, he continues to share his philosophy on giving back when he remembers,

> I attended university with a scholarship called the Community Involvement Program. They taught to give back. We [the university] gave you a lot to show appreciation for and to give back. That's what it's all about, helping others. You made it; now you are to help somebody else make it. That's what I'm trying to do over there at the detention center. (Transcript, September 26, 2019)

These two quotes are from the end of our first interview. This demonstrates how the university system, which is a macro level system in the world of education, impacted his conceptualization of education and instilled values of community in his practice. Adrian shared his excitement to be recruited for my study. He talked about giving back to the community and

helping others. In this quote he explained how the values of the university he attended impacted his views and how he is continuing to embody these values in his work. Adrian's teaching life history demonstrates his hopes to be able to help his students achieve their goals and progress in society.

Kurt's Teaching Life History

Personal and Professional Stories

Kurt's career trajectory first began in the technological world of computer science, then he transitioned to government jobs, later he went into the corporate world of technology, and finally he went into teaching. His career path, after obtaining his graduate degrees, began in the technical field of computer science. This led him to have enough experience to transition into government jobs where he worked for the federal government. First, he worked for the Department of Defense and then he moved into the national park service as a computer analyst. Kurt explained, "I made a family decision to leave the federal government. It was not probably what I wanted to do, but it was the best thing for my family. And I'm glad for that decision" (Transcript, September 30, 2019). After leaving his government job, Kurt entered into the corporate world where he worked developing software and computer networks. During this time, Kurt got divorced and later remarried. After remarrying, he and his wife moved to the West side of the country in order to be closer to his wife's children who needed them at the time of this transition.

His first teaching job was in the Western part of the country and was for a for profit university. Kurt did not stay at this job for long. He was quite unhappy with the internal politics

of the university and he began to question his purpose within that university. He recounted his experience in the following story,

> In the third quarter that I taught with them, I read an article that said education for profit focused their recruiting efforts based on how much financial aid they were able to obtain. They were going after the students that had the biggest bucks. At that point I said, 'This, this is time to leave because this is not a place I want to be if that's true.' And it coincided with what I was seeing. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

Kurt went into teaching because he wanted to teach his students and hoped he would make a difference. After multiple interactions where he was indirectly instructed to give students a passing grade because the students were a source income for the university, Kurt began to question what his actual role was within this university. The article he read regarding for profit universities reinforced the doubts he was beginning to have and provided support for his decision to quit. Kurt began to see that the morals, beliefs, and practices of his co-workers and of the university did not align with his own and he decided it was best for him to leave. After this experience, he decided that he did not want to work at for profit universities. Instead, Kurt applied and obtained a job at the local community college where he is currently employed. This is where his work in teaching at the detention center began. His work with the juvenile detention center began through a program run by the community college. Kurt expressed that teaching in correctional facilities in either adult correctional education or juvenile correctional education is written into their job contract.

Kurt shared that teaching was a passion he had stumbled along the way while working as a computer analyst. Kurt explained, “Becoming an educator was almost an accident” (Transcript, September 30, 2019). His first opportunities in the field of education was through adjunct positions at universities while he traveled and continued to work as a computer analyst. The following quote is about the first time Kurt considered teaching as a profession. Kurt recounted the story below,

> I was in charge of a computer system and there was a lot to do. They just hired three of us. So, I thought, ‘Hey, I'm gonna go over to the University and see if maybe they got a computer science student. We'll work out some kind of internship.’ I get over there and I start talking to the one and only computer science professor they had at the university. We talked for quite a while and he says, ‘Hey, so you got a master's degree, right?’ And I said, ‘Yeah.’ And he says, ‘Would you like to teach some?’ (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

This story demonstrates Kurt’s pathway towards the field of education. He begins his journey with the interest in hiring interns to assist him and his colleagues and ultimately takes an adjunct position at the university. Similar to Juliet’s and Adrian’s life history, Kurt’s teaching trajectory into the juvenile justice system was unplanned. His arrival to correctional education took years. Kurt’s work in the juvenile detention center and correctional education was through a program run by the college he works at. When he got hired at the community college where he is currently employed, he found out that teaching at a correctional facility was a requirement at that institution. Having previous experience working with these populations through his pastoral work in jailhouse ministry, Kurt did not hesitate to teach in these facilities. “I really wanted to do

it. I kinda have a heart for some of those guys [youth at detention centers]" (Transcript, September 30, 2019). It was evident that Kurt enjoyed teaching at the juvenile detention center because throughout the interview his face would light up and he would smile when recalling his interactions with the students. Kurt explained the turning point in his teaching history, "Teaching at the adult correctional facility and teaching the youth facility marked a turning point. I had a realization that almost anywhere you go, there's a hunger for learning" (Transcript, September 30, 2019). This turning point led to a transformation in his teaching style that he had never imagined. This hunger for learning showed him that sometimes it is not that the students do not want to learn but rather that they have a different style of learning, but their motivation remains. He moved from simply teaching through power points and lectures to transforming his classroom into a hands-on learning experience that would benefit an array of learning styles.

First Finding: Intrinsic and extrinsic motivators

Kurt's teaching life history shows both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators throughout. The first extrinsic and intrinsic motivator came after his second marriage. Kurt explained how getting married became a motivator for this move,

> I got remarried to a woman that was originally from the Midwest, but her kids had grown up in the West. And that's what brought us back to the West. We saw things happening to our grandkids that mirrored kind of the concept of generational curses. (Transcript, September 20, 2019)

His new family structure encouraged the move to a new location which required him to change jobs. The value of family is further reinforced when Kurt spoke about a generational curse which was negatively impacting his stepchildren. This event also speaks about an extrinsic motivator

that was out of his control. At the time of the move, his wife's children were living in the West part of the country and were having personal issues. Kurt and his wife wanted to help them out and decided that the best way to do this was to move closer to them. This relocation is what ultimately led Kurt to find himself teaching at a juvenile detention center.

After Kurt had settled into the new city, he took a job as a professor. This directly led to teaching in correctional facilities due to the laws around community colleges and correctional facilities in that state. Kurt explained:

> The community college where I teach is required by law to provide educational opportunities for incarcerated individuals. When I got hired, I don't know if they were just asking the new guy or what, but they reached out to me. They were starting up a program there. And I said, "Sure." So, I taught there. And I was kind of the obvious choice, but I also really wanted to do it. I have a heart for some of those guys. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

This quote demonstrates the extrinsic motivator that came from his new job. The college was under state contract to provide educational services in these facilities and had written this into their contracts for faculty positions. Essentially, the state is the macro system which enforces a subsystem of educators, those who teach at community colleges, to provide educational services to the prison system throughout the state. Macro level politics influence the direction of Kurt's teaching life history. Although it was a requirement by the college, Kurt was asked before he was made to teach in these facilities. He also expressed how he actually wanted to teach in these settings once the opportunity was offered because he is fond of this population. Further into our interview he added, "Programs like this, reaching out to incarcerated individuals, is a good idea"

(Transcript, September 30, 2019). This ties into Kurt's beliefs and values. As mentioned earlier, Kurt is also a pastor and has provided ministry in these spaces. Both of his careers reinforce his value of human life and wanting to help individuals.

In addition to the factors that were out of his control, some of the things that motivated him while he was teaching in these settings was the motivation his students demonstrated. Kurt referred to this as a turning point in his teaching career both inside and outside of the correctional facilities. He continued to share some of the positive experiences he had at the juvenile detention center. While telling me these stories his face would light up with a huge smile as he recalled the memory of his students. It became evident that he truly enjoyed teaching in these spaces. Kurt shared,

> That was an awesome class. Those guys [his students at the juvenile detention center], most of them had taken a bunch of various correspondence courses. They were just excited to have somebody standing there in front of them, talking to them that they could ask questions and get into a conversation with. They were just eager. Everybody was amazingly respectful. Calling me sir and I was like, 'No man, my name's Kurt, please.' I appreciated their respect and also, their honest. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

This quote demonstrated Kurt's appreciation towards his students and the value he places on learning and on respect. It shows the feedback loop between the two systems, educator (Kurt) and students. The enjoyment, motivation, and respect these students showed towards Kurt intrinsically motivated him to continue to teach in these spaces. Throughout our interviews he continued to recall moments where his students showed respect and motivation while taking his

course further showing how reinforcement of his values guide his motivation. Similar to Juliet's and Adrian's experience, his students also seemed to truly appreciate and wanted the opportunity to learn.

Additionally, Kurt spoke about the freedom in teaching in this space. He talked about how the conversations at the detention center were different than what he was used to because there were less formalities. Kurt further explained,

> The kids, they ask me directly. 'Well why are you conservative?' You know. And it's like, well 'Why do you make [the] choices you make? You know?' Because I believe it. I really enjoyed that. The kids always were willing to engage in any kind of deep discussion and share their viewpoints with great fervor. (Transcript, November 11, 2019)

Similar to Juliet and Adrian, Kurt mentioned that he liked the freedom of teaching and class structure within this system. Kurt enjoyed teaching at the detention center because his students encouraged deeper conversations and Kurt viewed them as capable to hold such conversations. He also talked about how he was able to modify the content and mode of education as he went. This is another motivator that was found in Juliet's and Adrian's teaching life histories. It is important to note that the students in these facilities can opt out of going to class. It is often their choice to attend classes and to further their education. Kurt also talked about his positive experience in the center due to the assistance he got from the educational administrator. He expressed his gratitude towards the educational administrator:

> Thank goodness for educational administrator in the classroom [at the juvenile detention center]. He had been there for a while. He really cared about the kids

> There were times where he ran interference for me. He would come up to me you know, ‘Hey, well you know, those guys who were siting over there, I just asked them not to come back 'cause they obviously weren't into the class. They were just looking for a place to go and hang out.’ He was a huge help. I could see it too that some of the things that I normally do on campus, the way I teach, you can't take a bunch of young guys that have nothing to do and expect them to sit there and enter into a discussion about the Power Points that are on the wall. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

This quote demonstrates the way in which Kurt was able to find guidance from other educators at the detention center. It also shows how Kurt began to change the way he structured his course by taking into account that the students were incarcerated. It is important to highlight how other educators and administrators can help new incoming educators throughout their initial integration into this new space. This quote highlights the importance of support for educators. Through the passion and care shown by the educational administrator Kurt was further motivated to adjust his teaching style to best fit his students. The constant support he received made his transition smoother. Kurt continued to share his teaching experience below. This quote also shows how Kurt wanted to create a better learning space. Kurt continued,

> And so yeah that was a really awesome place just of learning that we just change up on the fly. The way, I wanna, I need to teach a class depending on who I'm teaching. And those students just really seemed to appreciate it. By the time we got through the semester we had the students that really wanted to be there. Then it was

> just very interactive. Just lots of questions, lots of comments, lots of discussion, lots of ideas about how to tackle this problem. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

Kurt's quote describes a difference that he saw in this teaching space in contrast to what he was used to. This space provided more flexibility also a difference sense of motivation within the classroom. Kurt's students were open to changes and modifications and adjusted pretty well to these changes. The interactions between these two systems seemed to flow well thus they were able to create change. I continued the interview by asking about his experience with this population and he explained how this was not his first exposure to correctional facilities. Outside of his faculty position, Kurt is also a pastor. He shared how his experience as a pastor in correctional facilities was similar to that of being an educator for this population.

> With my other halves [careers], I'm actually a pastor as well. I have done some jailhouse ministry. So, to me, it seemed for the most part, if you're coming in and there is a certain amount of respect for people that come in that want to help them. I wouldn't have wanted to, in particular the, the adult facility, gone in their just walking the halls or something. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

Kurt works in two completely different systems, but he has found ways in which the teaching of one influences the other. Kurt's prior experience had informed him of what to expect from his students and how he should present himself in these spaces; thus, fueling his decision and motivation in the opportunity to teach there. The notion of respect continued to be very present throughout Kurt's teaching life history in the juvenile detention facility. Kurt continued to share his outlook in teaching his course.

> I really, really wanted them to learn something. I didn't want this [class] just to be a place of come and sit for a couple hours and listen to some old guy up there drawing on and on about something that's really boring. My desire was to engage them and teach them and help them learn something. The fact that two of those students then came up to me and said, 'Hey, you know, we're going to go on,' that was a huge win for me. (Transcript, October 14, 2019)

In contrasts to Adrian's teaching narrative, Kurt talks about how working with this group of students actually helped him. In this excerpt Kurt showed his motivation and desire to teach his students. He also describes how the changes his students were making was something that really impacted and motivated his teaching. Kurt had previously explained that some of his fellow faculty only taught as a job but did not really care for their students. "It did not seem that he really wanted to impart knowledge to those who trusted him in what he presented in class. It was this conversation that let me to commit to pursuit of excellence in my teaching" (Photovoice Narrative, November 11, 2019). Kurt's students' success was really important for him. Along with this quote he included an image that depicts words relating to hope (see Figure 8 in appendix).

> As we travel through life there are many, many pieces that come at us almost constantly. I believe we need to communicate well - this includes listening not just speaking; we must be willing to consider what we hear and not simply dismiss it because we disagree; walk with compassion and kindness - instead of anger and hatred. (Photovoice Narrative, November 11, 2019)

This image was important to Kurt because it represented his motivation to teach these students along with listing what he believed are the qualities of a good educator. Kurt spoke about the faculty who were doing the "bare minimum" in their job and how he "Never will I allow myself to plunge to such a low. Students are coming to my classroom to learn, and I have committed myself to providing them that knowledge with excellence" (Photovoice Narrative, November 11, 2019). The narrative that accompanies this image further demonstrates Kurt's approach as an educator along with his motivation to teach. The Figure 8 along with the excerpt above show how Kurt embraces change as it comes. His motivation to teach his students in ways that they are able to grasp the concepts and learn the material is both an intrinsic and extrinsic motivator such that he is intrinsically motivated to make sure his students learn while in his class and the extrinsic motivator is the application students will be able to make once they have completed the course.

Second Finding: Emotional and Contextual Challenges

The challenges Kurt faced in his teaching life history were similar to those faced by Juliet and Adrian but there were also differences. What appeared to impact Kurt more were the structural and institutional barriers that came along with teaching in these spaces while Juliet and Adrian focused more on how to keep an emotional balance. One of the first obstacles for Kurt arose during his second week of teaching at the detention center. The excerpt below depicts a structural and financial restriction that can arise when teaching in these facilities. Kurt depicted one of these moments,

> Man, we crammed, I think about 60 guys in this room, an educational room that had a single window air conditioner. And it was west facing, and it [the class] was in

> the afternoon, so the sun was shining through these windows. It was just hotter than blazes. But you know, it was interesting. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

Here, Kurt described one of the space related limitations the facility had. Detention facilities have different rules and regulations surrounding how many individuals are allowed in a room but in Kurt's case it seemed like the students who wanted to take the course were allowed to do so. Although having lots of students interested in the material of the course is a great thing, the mixture of bodies in the room, lack of air conditioner, and amount of sun rays created a challenge that is often avoided in educational settings that are well funded. Kurt did not complain about this but simply shared one of the many differences he saw while teaching in this space. He also talked about the limitations on the materials he could use with his students. Kurt recalled one of these events:

> We couldn't actually do programming. That's against their policy to allow inmates to program computers. That was the place that said, 'Hey, you know what, you can teach. You know the material. You don't need the Power Points. Just come in with knowing the topics that you're gonna cover that day and go from there.' In particular, now in my programming classes. I'll put a problem and say, 'Okay, so what...How do we build the code to do this?' And then through discussion in the class, we actually write the code. And some of that comes out of that time with the guys at the detention center. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

As mentioned earlier, Kurt teaches courses in computer science. Usually his students use computers in his class to practice what they are learning. Juvenile in detention centers often do not have access to computers. "I completely changed the way I taught that class" (Transcript,

September 30, 2019). This created an obstacle for Kurt. After figuring out a creative way to engage his students at the detention center, Kurt learned that there were multiple ways he could teach this subject matter. He explained how teaching in the detention center influenced the way he taught at the college. Although this was an initial challenge for Kurt, this experience forced him to look at his topic through a different lens which he has now included as part of his classes at the college. Later in our interviews, Kurt came back to this topic and talked about the way he modified his teaching methods within the center. He recalled our earlier interview and added to his narrative:

> In the first interview I shared [that] I had to change the way I taught my class because they were not (laughs) going to sit there and listen to me lecture and talk with PowerPoints. We [had to] find a different way to teach the material. And come up with more project-oriented or hands-on stuff. That was a good challenge. In the middle of a semester to change how I actually taught a class. I was pretty comfortable with that and then all of a sudden, like, 'Oh, wow, dang. Um, this ain't gonna work.' I wasn't keeping their attention. And I totally get that. You have to do something that engages them. It was clear to me that the students weren't getting what I was trying to impart to them. I had to figure out... find... figure out a way to engage their attention, first of all, and then, reinforce that in some manner to..., so that they actually learned something, you know. (Transcript, October 14, 2019)

Kurt recalled having to try to engage the students with the material without having the equipment needed for the class. He mentioned the comfort he had taken to his original teaching method and that is why this became a challenge. He was also used to teaching an older population and had to

find ways to engage the youth in the center. Mid-way through the semester, the detention center allowed him and his students to have access to laptops which helped Kurt's class. He then moved on to describing the student population and the untold rules within this population. He continued to explain,

> You can see you know, okay so the African American students were sitting over there, the Asian students over there, the White guys over here, the Hispanics here. You know, and there was a couple of guys who seem to like to cross the boundaries. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

In this excerpt, Kurt describes the divides that he saw within his classroom. He talked about the structure of prison culture that is often very present in juvenile detention centers. Kurt explained that this did not create problems because most of the juveniles knew that they were not supposed to cross paths with members who they did not affiliate with, but the tension was present. This topic also arose again in our third interview. He further explained which aspects of this culture can pose as an obstacle because some students do not want to change but he also added in that through incarceration, some individuals find the space to grow and "step away" from gangs.

> Some have a gang mentality. They're just trying to be tough and not show any weakness. That's somewhat true in the adult facilities. Those that are really sold out to the gangs, they're not gonna change. The gangs are still in the prisons but some of them will use that place of stepping into incarceration, as a way to step away from the gangs that they were a part of on the street. (Transcript, November 11, 2019)

When Kurt was describing the excerpt above, he appeared surprised that this prison culture was present in the facilities with younger populations. He said it was more evident than in the adult correctional facility. His assumptions of both populations were immediately changed when he began teaching. Throughout the interviews Kurt also shared some of the initial responses and reactions he was getting from his students.

> Sometimes it was like, ‘Hey, dude, this is about the dumbest you know, whatever, then why do we have to study this?’ Then it was like, ‘Okay well ...let's talk about that’. But they were honest. You know if something was boring them to tears, then they spoke up. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

Kurt laughed while he was sharing this story because it was something that he had not expected from his students. Throughout his teaching career outside of the detention center, he had mostly encountered students who would follow his lead and who would not question his teaching methods. These were also students who were accustomed to the public education system and had been following traditional learning styles. The students he encountered in the detention center had different experiences with the education system. This excerpt shows a reaction he was not accustomed to. This type of reaction made him reconsider his teaching methods and led to change. Kurt had to figure out the best way to proactively interact with these students.

> To begin with we had some [students] that really didn't want to learn. I was really hesitant about calling them out in the middle of class. So, I talked to the guy from the education department that was at the facility. ‘Should I call 'em out in class?’ He says, ‘That probably wouldn't go over well because then you're challenging them. Maybe at break just talk to 'em.’ It was never really a fear. It was just like,

> ‘Man, what do I do with these guys?’ Because I mean part of what got them where they're at was their lack of respect for authority and rules. That became a challenge. After the first couple of weeks it settled down. But it was hard because my desire is to teach them. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

This example was similar to what both Juliet and Adrian experienced within the classroom. Juliet and Adrian mentioned that the power differentials in the class caused tension and if students were causing disruptions they would be taken out and placed back into their rooms by the guards or correctional officers. In Kurt’s case, he decided to approach the educational administrator before confronting the students and before talking to the correctional officers. As opposed to Juliet and Adrian, Kurt taught in this space as part of his contract with the college he works at and did not have the same relationships with the other staff in the center as Juliet and Adrian did. Again, Kurt was reminded of the untold rules within this population as the educational administrator mentions how Kurt’s reaction could be seen as a confrontation. One of the last challenges Kurt faced while teaching at the detention center was his frustration with the justice system. This was something that came up throughout our interviews tied into the photovoice project. Kurt further explained some of the restrictions these this population is faced with,

> One of the things I did learn was that in the juvenile facilities they [the court of law] can keep them up until they're I believe it's 23. And the fact is that once you finish the high school program, they don't have anything for you to do. They've pretty much cut out all the things that they used to have like autobody or culinary stuff. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

Kurt was somewhat limited to the change he could create within his classroom because at a macro level, the prison system had been cutting funding for these institutions. The lack of care for the students really struck Kurt. “In talking with the individual from the education department, it was really sad what's going on in particular juvenile facilities across the state. They've cut a bunch, a lot, of the programs” (Transcript, October 14, 2019). Kurt explained that the lack of programs for these students prevented them from seeing a future for themselves. This tied in with one of the images he chose for his photovoice project. Figure 9, which is found in the appendix, depicts a quote that states three rules that Kurt tries to follow. The image has a quote that Kurt holds dearly as an educator. Below he describes why this quote is valuable to him and to his teaching philosophy.

> The idea depicted in the photo to the left is so very true. Do what is right - if you aren't going to do it right then perhaps it should not be done. Your best effort is always as much as you can give, so give it your all. To sum it up - show people you care - hopefully, that is what your heart truly desires. (Photovoice Narrative, November 11, 2019)

His values and beliefs shape what he takes into his classroom. He holds himself to standards that he expects of other educators even when it appears that others do not care about their students. Kurt continually shared the ethical considerations educators should have for their students. Kurt further explained that his frustration with how these students are treated comes from his belief in “doing what is right” and to him, the system was not helping these students. The lack of funding and the continual decrease of activities for the students seemed like a disservice to what the detention centers are supposed to do. Despite of the flaws he saw in the system and the

challenges he encountered while teaching here, Kurt was glad that he got to work with these students and that he was able to provide a class they enjoyed.

Third Finding: Agents of Change

Throughout the interviews and the photovoice project, Kurt mentioned how he just wanted to make sure that his students were learning from his class. Similar to Juliet and Adrian, he felt that his purpose was to teach them a skill that they could use to further their own life. The first story Kurt included on his photovoice project spoke about the development of his philosophy as an educator. The story is shared below, and the image can be seen in Figure 10 which is located in the appendix.

> One of the individuals had been teaching for several years began to share some thoughts about his teaching philosophy. He mentioned how he viewed his students as ants. He enjoyed seeing if he could get them to simply follow one another - likening it to how ants simply follow one another wherever the one in front goes – the rest follow. I found this incredibly appalling. 'How is this man even allowed to teach students?'. It was this conversation that let me to commit to pursuit of excellence in my teaching. Never will I allow myself to plunge to such a low. Students are coming to my classroom to learn, and I have committed myself to providing them that knowledge with excellence. (Photovoice Narrative, November 11, 2019)

Similar to Adrian's experience with some of his co-worker, Kurt also met individuals who did not seem to care about their student population. Interactions with systems that are not supportive and not likely to create a positive change but may lead to negative changes such as a decrease in

motivation from the students. This excerpt from the photovoice project demonstrates Kurt's mindset in what an educator should be along with the responsibilities that along with being an educator. Kurt explained that to him, an educator is not just someone who teaches but someone who is responsible for the students in their classroom. The interaction in this excerpt led Kurt to continuously work on his teaching philosophy as he continues to work as an educator. He felt responsible for his students. Kurt continued to face instructors with similar mindsets to that of the other faculty member while he was at the detention center. Kurt added:

> I talked to some of the students that had been there [at the detention center] for a while and they said, 'Oh yeah [for] the culinary [class], we just sat and watched the Food Network all the time.' They didn't do anything. It was really sad to me. I get frustrated with when people say, 'Oh, you know I got this great government job with the state, but I don't have to do anything.' Then it's like, 'Man. but you're dealing with young men or young women. You should be trying to help them do something with their life.' (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

This is another example of Kurt's frustration with educators who are not teaching their students. Kurt shared that he deeply believes that educators who are not trying to help their students should not be teaching. By not providing actual courses and accountability, the way the system treated the students at the detention center did not seem to help them successfully return to society. Throughout Kurt's work in the detention center, he continually worked in ways to improve his teaching in order to engage and help his students learn. He expressed his frustration that other faculty did not care about the students. He did not know how such people could be

allowed to teach others. Kurt truly wanted the best for his students and continue to provide guidance for them. Kurt added one of his students' comments below.

> I had students that told me before I left that, 'I'm getting out in August and I've already started applying at a college' I just thought, 'There. That's what we need to be doing. Engaging these students and trying to find a place of interest that they can build on for their life.' And not just say they're a bunch of no good nothings. I got my job and as long as they aren't causing trouble, nobody is gonna come looking. (Transcript, September 30, 2019)

This quote shows the potential for positive change when systems interact. Kurt, being the primary system, was able to interfere with the system of students which led to some of his students applying to community college. Through Kurt's class, this student had found the motivation and confidence to apply to a community college while he was at the detention center. This made Kurt very happy. In our second interview, he further detailed a story about two of his other students.

> They were about to be released and each one of them separately came up to me and said, 'This has been just really a great semester. I've already contacted a community college near my home. I'm gonna enroll as soon as I get out and study computer science.' To me, whether it was that class that I taught them that was the motivation or if that was something they were already considering. Just the fact that they were leaving the facility and stepping into something new with a plan, with an excitement, with a motivation. That's why I teach. I want to try to help. If I can get

> it to a new level or affirm them in what their hearts is saying, I think that's just awesome. (Transcript, October 14, 2019)

Kurt's story shows how he constantly strives to help his students. The significance of his class and teaching philosophy helped some of his students find the next path. Kurt explained that he has wants his students to gain knowledge that would help them when they leave the detention center. Kurt's hope in his students' futures has guided how he teaches in these educational spaces thus creating his teaching practice as an agent of change. Kurt shared a few examples that demonstrate his willingness to work with his students.

> I have a student right now that is saying he doesn't want to be a software engineer. I said, 'Okay. So, look at some other aspect of computer science.' He did and he continues to come to me. I want them to make their decisions. I don't wanna be the one that says 'Oh, this is what you need to do.' It's like, 'Hey, what do you wanna do? What makes your heart happy?' We spend too much of our life in our job and if we're not happy with our job, then you should find a different job. (Transcript, October 14, 2019)

This excerpt shows the impact Kurt hopes to have in the lives of his students. It is important because it demonstrates Kurt's' understanding around the impact educators have on students. In addition to the teaching, Kurt also finds time to help students find different careers that fit within their interests. He explained how being available for them and providing multiple options that his students could follow if they went into the field of computer science. In the following except, Kurt continued to demonstrate his commitment to his students.

> Not everybody learns the same way. Whether it's kinesthetic, or whether it's visual, or actually doing it. If somebody doesn't get it, it doesn't do me any good to repeat it the same way five more times. It's like, 'No, here. Let's look at this in a different way. What's another way we could look at the same concept or same material?' I want my students to learn not just be able to check oh we went through that chapter and that chapter. Yeah, we did, but did my students learn anything? (Transcript, November 11, 2019)

The story that Kurt shared demonstrates the amount of work he puts outside of his educator role in order to help his students and it also demonstrates how experience in different fields have helped his understanding of education and learning. He ended his story by tying it back insuring that his students continue to learn the content. Throughout our interviews, Kurt stated the importance of educators because of the impact they have on their students. This was something Kurt continually spoke about. He also commented on the constant respect he had towards his students and added, "don't stereotype these guys because they'll blow you away" (Transcript, September 30, 2019) as he was used to people perceiving these students as people who did not have a future. Kurt ended our interview with stating, "I really think that we, we being society, could do a lot more for incarcerated students" (Transcript, November 11, 2019). His philosophy as an educator, his willingness to work with his students in assuring that his class would benefit them depicted his role as an educator as an agent of change.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, interview and narrative excerpts along with images from individual photovoice projects were used to illustrate the main themes that emerged from the data to

formulate the findings. The three findings in the teaching life history of the educators consisted of (1) intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, (2) emotional and contextual challenges, and (3) agents of change. The researcher constructed each of the educator's teaching life histories from the interview transcriptions and photovoice project images. Participant teaching life histories included exemplars related to external and internal motivator factors, environment and social factors, and individual agency. Each theme was influenced by context and self-agency. The responses by the educators revealed some differences between each of their teaching life histories but also revealed similarities in their experiences of how they came to teach at a detention center along with what they experienced while working there. Theory and context were intertwined throughout the findings to situate the excerpts. These findings are further discussed in chapter five, as well as the limitations and implications of the study.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS

This study adds knowledge to the field of education by exploring influential factors of personal experiences and life histories that shape one's understanding of the teaching life histories of educators who have worked in juvenile detention centers. This study aimed to explore one main question: What are the teaching life histories of educators who have worked in juvenile detention centers? Findings suggest that educators' teaching life histories are constructed through: (a) intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, (b) emotional and contextual challenges, and (c) being agents of change. Moreover, educators talked about the different ways teaching in juvenile detention centers differs from more traditional education settings. Additionally, each educator referred to the juvenile detention center in which they worked, differently. Julia referred to it as the juvenile detention center, Adrian referred to it as a correctional facility, and Kurt referenced it as the youth facility. Last, findings suggest that an educator's teaching life history and experiences create a bidirectional influence between one's agency and context when placed in a challenging environment.

It is important when reading stories and research about correctional facilities to remember that there is not a system in place that can uniformly inform us about how the educational programs within these facilities are run (Black, 2005). Each state is allowed to run their education program differently, they are allowed to have different hiring processes and the requirements for their staff can be completely different from one state to another (2005). Based on the literature review, life history and teacher story research seeks to demonstrate the complex professional identities and knowledges of educators (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Clandinin &

Connelly 1992, 1995; Cole & Knowles, 2001; Dewey, 1902; Eisner, 1985; Goodson & Sikes 2001; Henderson & Gornik, 2007). This research provides stories of teaching, learning, and identities. Research states that individuals are driven to their career choices by external factors such as financial security and internal factors such as a sense of purpose (Jehangir, Telles, & Deenanath, 2019; McMahon & Watson, 2008). Researchers Spinaris, Denof and Morton (2013) explained that individuals who work in correctional settings are often exposed to the effects of trauma by simply being in these environments. Juvenile detention centers are not always equipped with the necessary academic supplies for their students which can make teaching in these spaces a challenge (Houchins, Shippen, & Cattret, 2004; Zetlin, Macleod, & Kimm, 2012).

Additionally, being an agent of change is a mindset that can include the focus on positively influencing student learning (Hattie, 2012). Agents of change often look at learning as a lifelong process in which they are constantly reflecting on their teaching practices (Eteläpelto et al., 2013), mastering teaching skills and modifying practices to fit a wide range of learning abilities (Hattie, 2012), taking risks and engaging in creative approaches to influence their organization (Le Fevre, 2014), and often attempting to create change (Hattie, 2012). Prison educators believe they have the potential to impact and transform the lives of their students (Kamrath & Gregg, 2018). There is more research needed to chronicle the stories of educators (Goodson, 2014). Thus, this study aims to contribute to the body of literature by exploring three educators' teaching life histories to better understand how they first decided to work in these settings, what motivated them to continue, how they perceived their roles within this space, and the experiences they shared from teaching in these environments.

This study intended to recreate and re-construct the teaching life histories of these three educators through the use of semi-structured in-depth interviews and photovoice as a way to help represent and explore the experiences they faced as educators at detention facilities. The remainder of this chapter includes the study's discussion, limitations, and implications for future research and practice.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to explore the teaching life histories of educators who have worked in juvenile detention centers. Findings from this study hold the promise of making contributions to the literature on correctional education in two ways. First, the findings suggest that an educator's teaching life history must be understood through individual and contextual characteristics since the motivation to seek out jobs in the field of correctional education can be derived from various reasons. One interesting reason being that there is strong relational aspect in this teaching career than compared to those found in the public education system. Second, environmental influences such as the juvenile detention centers, themselves, have a different impact on the individual educators and their agency to help students motivates them to stay in these careers. The discussion section focuses on the findings which include: (1) intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, (2) emotional and contextual challenges, and (3) agents of change. This discussion begins with the contribution of how teaching life histories of educators are valuable, followed by the discussion of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that guided educators onto their career paths, the obstacles the educators faced while working at detention centers, and concludes with the perceived mission or calling that each educator has to be able to create change in this student population.

Previous research shows that comprehending the personal lives and perspectives of teachers and educators leads to better understanding their practice and to further study these phenomena a life history perspective is an appropriate research method to use (Goodson 1981, 1988, 1992, 2014; Goodson & Walker, 1991). Through semi-structured interviews and photovoice projects, similarities and differences in teaching life histories were uncovered. Each reconstruction of a teaching life history explored stories of how finding this career was unplanned and discovered, personal motivators to remain in the field, challenges that were faced while in this space, and the educators' agency to create change for their students. These life histories were governed by individual characteristics and contextual influences, demonstrating how narrative inquiry allows the co-construction of stories while systems theory explains how career decisions are made (Fitzgerald & Hammond, 2001; Lim, 1997; Stead, 2004; Patton & McMahon, 2014). This finding illustrates the importance of continuing to research the teaching life histories of educators because most research that has focused on educators in correctional facilities has focused on practice rather than on teachers' teaching life histories. Other studies in this field have also primarily focused on the turnover rate of teachers who are in correctional settings.

Several excerpts from each of the participants illustrated that they originally had not planned to work as educators and had not considered careers in juvenile detention centers. Through external events they were led to the field of education although their agency that, in turn, led them to work in juvenile detention centers as suggested by systems theory where individual characteristics and extrinsic motivators shape motivation (Patton & McMahon, 2014). For example, Juliet's initial career was terminated by the school district and as she was looking

for her next career, she knew that she did not want to teach in a general education classroom. After finding an opening as an educator at the local juvenile detention center, through individual agency, she then sought out further information to see if this job would suit her needs. It was after finding out that the job would suit her that she committed to working there. In the examples described in this study, career decisions were informed by many experiences in the life histories of each educator.

The influence of extrinsic and intrinsic motivators continued to be present throughout the teaching life histories of the educators. The first and most prominent theme of the teaching life histories are the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that led each educator to teach at a detention center. One example of this was Adrian's need for financial security for himself and for his daughters. At the time of his search for financial security, the U.S. economy had hit a recession that negatively impacted Adrian. He had already been teaching for a while so he was searching for a job that would meet his skill set and also satisfy his income requirement. Although he was hesitant when he first heard about correctional education, he knew that he would get paid better in that field, so he eventually decided to apply. Financial security served as an extrinsic motivator to search for a job in correctional education. As systems theory proposes, different aspects of context, identity, and positionality influence what careers individuals choose (Patton & McMahon, 2014). Here, Adrian was motivated to go into the field of correctional education because he was in search of financial security.

Participants discussed critical incidents in their lives that initially led them to choose this career. Each participant talked about their personal experiences, what caused them to look into correctional education, what they wanted from a career, what they were looking for, and the

external motivators that helped influence their decisions. This finding and process is similar to the findings of Jehangir, Telles, and Deenanath (2019) regarding how complex career development and career journeys are for individuals. The educators in this study had careers prior to taking on teaching at juvenile detention centers which further shows how career pathways are fluid and not stagnant (Fitzgerald & Hammond, 2001; Lim, 1997; Stead, 2004).

Furthermore, when the educators began teaching in these spaces, they discovered a personal drive to help their students gain skills that would help them once they got out of the detention center. This motivated each educator to continue to work at these facilities. Their photographic inspired narratives suggested that they believe that their role as an educator is to help motivate students to succeed beyond their classrooms. Their career as educators became more than seeking financial stability but also a way to help youth who were at a disadvantage. For example, Kurt spoke about how he would make sure that he was teaching his students in ways that best fit their learning styles so that they can better understand the subject. Additionally, he worked with students to figure out potential careers they could follow in the field of computer science. This was a similar finding by researchers Kamrath and Gregg (2018) in their study of prison educators.

The second theme that emerged was challenges. In this theme, participants talked about the obstacles, barriers, and restrictions they faced while teaching at the juvenile detention center. The educators shared how at times it was a challenging work environment, but they held onto their motivation of potentially helping their students. They also expressed that although there were days when it was difficult, they knew that they were capable of being successful. Other research studies have found that in spite of the struggles, individuals who had goals and

motivation to succeed found ways to overcome barriers (Risco & Duffy, 2011; Storlie et al., 2016). In this theme, Adrian talked about the effects the structure of the facility, the prison culture, and the behaviors he saw in the detention center had on him. Adrian recounted personal stories of panic attacks he got when he first worked at the detention center. This was his first exposure to correctional settings and what he saw and experienced has deeply impacted him. Despite of his initial shock, he quickly found that the students just needed someone who would listen to them and work to help them.

Last, the participants viewed themselves as agents of change. The way the educators saw their interactions with the students and with the environments helped them make meaning of their career as an educator within the correctional education system. Systems theory purports that individuals are active agents in their decision-making processes which supports the complex nature of agents of change (Patton & McMahon, 2014). This theme revealed how the educators used their careers to help others. They saw their role as more than just an educator but as individuals who could potentially help create change for their students and provide their students with tools that would help their future. The educators recalled times where they felt that their advice, classwork, and careers created change for the student population that they served. They also talked about challenging moments that they had with students and how understanding that the students were being defiant due to needing helped allowed them to continue to try to help them. Similar studies have found that individuals who work in these spaces do enjoy their job despite the challenges (Flores, 2012; Macomber et al., 2010). Flores (2012) found that educators in these settings attempt to create change through teaching critical pedagogy. Although the

educators in this study did not mention using critical pedagogy, they taught their students critical skills that would increase their adaptability outside of the detention center.

Limitations

This story chronicled the life histories of three educators who have worked in juvenile detention centers. Further, the population of this study consisted of well-educated professionals with a significant amount of teaching experience. Due to the overall educational levels and teaching experience of this population, it can be assumed that most participants were socio-economically, middle class. Therefore, it is unknown if the life histories of these educators are generalizable to others who work in detention centers. Future studies with larger and more diverse cohorts of educators who have worked in juvenile detention centers may reveal how diverse each person's life history can be and may show different career trajectories as those in this study. Furthermore, following a group of educators for a longer period of time may lead to additional understandings not found in this study. In analyzing the data, there was no distinct discovery regarding monumental experiences among participants. Despite the small sample size, this study fulfilled its aim and the findings from this study captured the "richness and holism, with strong potential for revealing complexity" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 10) of the life histories of educators who teach in juvenile detention settings and serves as a catalyst for future research and practice.

Implications for Future Research

This study generated additional questions while attempting to identify the life histories of educators who have worked in detention centers. This study has uncovered characteristics of three educators that are worth pursuing in future research. These characteristics include a

willingness to adapt, and an ethic that guides their decisions to not only seek teaching in correctional facilities but also to remain at these facilities. More research is needed to understand the dispositions and the ways educational programs can best prepare teachers whose goal is to teach youth who are incarcerated. One significant area that needs further examination within correctional education is the relationship between teaching and the classroom environment. The two systems, educators and students, interacted in ways in which they both had an impact on each other. As noted earlier, while educators have more freedom on the topics they teach, there are examples of the lack of educational resources in these spaces. One opportunity to further examine could be through a more thorough narrative study. This would enable future researchers to further explore how stories and relationships between educators and students create subsystems within the correctional education system and how they work together to overcome barriers to resources. By searching for patterns and themes between the narratives of the educators and their students this research would be valuable in the field of prison education. It would provide researchers insights on the nature of how the prison industrial complex impacts the development of educators when they are in these spaces. Collecting and analyzing the educators and students' stories would add to the research body of correctional education.

Another area worth investigating is the use of alternative modalities as research representations. While this research paradigm is expanding, the quantity of such research methods is still sporadic in correctional education research. By actively encouraging additional modes of representations such as photographs, artwork, or other creative means, social science researchers may be able to increase the exposure to a more diverse audience. Alternative modes of representation offer opportunities to engage readers at different levels. This does not imply

that the rigorous standards of qualitative research should be abandoned but alternative methods should be added to offer different perspectives for both researchers and participants. Scholarship on educators within juvenile detention settings would benefit by replicating this research study in diverse geographic locations. In addition, future research should include an array of modes of representation to help ensure the voices of the students at these institutions are well represented toward a further understanding of how these particular learning environments and the impact and influence these educators have on their students.

Lastly, more life histories are needed for research studies aimed at understanding more about the experiences of teachers in correctional programs, the motivation to remain or not, and the impact on the learning lives and self-esteem of the youth they teach. The educators in this study expressed that there is a lack of understanding from others regarding the student population and the educator population within correctional settings. Though the data of the current study could not support this claim that was mentioned only once or twice, it seems that this may be an important future focus of study that should be explored in future research studies. Future research may benefit by investigating incarcerated student perceptions of their education and classroom environments.

Implications for Practice

This study suggests multiple implications for practice. At the macro level this suggests that there should be modifications to educator programs such that this educational environment is not often included in higher education programs. Educator or teacher training programs should be modified to include awareness of alternative education settings such as correctional education

which would benefit both teacher practitioners and future students. This can be done by introducing course materials in these programs that allow teacher practitioners to consider and reflect on how different educational settings have different needs and different requirements. Given that the U.S. is one of the countries with the highest incarceration rate in the world, it should be required that educator programs and other higher education programs incorporate training and acknowledgment regarding prison populations specifically for educators that seek to work in this field. Educator programs should also include internships that allow future educators to gain experience with this population before receiving their certification. There should be systematic efforts to incorporate educational courses on the prison industrial complex and training to work with this population at all levels of the U.S. education system. The goal of these changes to the educational programs is to better prepare educators to help their students successfully reintegrate into society once they are out of these institutions.

Additionally, this study has pedagogical implications for youth who are in the prison education system. This study illuminated insights into the environments in which educators teach and highlighted the challenges the youth go through while in this system. Classroom strategies and activities that focus on improving the life skills and general education of students should be taken into consideration by those who work in these spaces. This is essential because, as some of the educators mentioned, some students are not meeting the educational standards for their age group and have fallen behind in the system. By including classwork and curriculum that both helps students gain the skills needed to reach grade level and teach them skills that would assist them to face social barriers, there may be a higher chance of successfully reintegrating into society. Approaching these spaces from this standpoint would provide the opportunity for

educators and educational administrators to develop programs that examine which skills would be most valuable for their student populations. In order to do this, educators would have to help develop these practices through lesson planning, classroom management, educational psychology, and career planning. Ultimately, educators have the opportunity to transform their practice and the educational context they are in by incorporating educational administration and other educators into the stages of teaching in order to create a network of support for all children who are incarcerated in the U.S.

The study was designed to explore the life histories of educators who worked in juvenile detention centers, how they decided to pursue this career path and what they encountered in this career using semi-structured interviews and a photovoice project. The educators recollected events in their lives that influenced their career choice and on how they perceived their role within that space. In doing so, three findings were prominent, all illuminating factors of personal characteristics and contexts. Participants shared their teaching life histories and image representations of what has motivated them and stood out throughout their career. The significance of personal motivators and contexts were so prominent that it was clear that life histories must be studied at an individual level to really understand how individuals form their decisions to go into specific careers and to remain in those jobs. Through the research methodologies, this study allowed for triangulation of the data despite having a small participant sample. Still, the study fulfilled its purpose and contributed to the literature related to educators who work in juvenile detention centers.

Chapter Summary

This study was designed to explore the teaching life histories of educators who worked at juvenile detention centers and to identify and explore what events and decisions led each educator there and their experiences within the detention centers. Educators recounted experiences from their lives and retold stories on how they came to teach at a juvenile detention center. In doing so, three over-arching themes were prominent, all illuminating the personal experiences and contexts of each life history. Participants revealed that there were intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in their histories. They further described the significance of emotional and contextual challenges in their experience. Though the methodologies of this study allowed for the exploration of genuine stories, the sample was small. Still, the study fulfilled its purpose and contributed to the literature related to the teaching life histories of educators who have worked in juvenile detention centers.

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APPENDICES

Consent Form

Consent to Take Part in a Research Study

Title: Teaching Behind Bars: The Life Histories of Educators Working in Juvenile Detention Centers

Principal Investigator: Karina Beltran, Department of Child & Family Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Samara Akpovo, Department of Child & Family Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

We are asking you to be in this study because you are an educator at a juvenile detention center. We want to learn more about the life histories of educators who work in juvenile detention centers. We are particularly interested in how life events lead to careers in alternative educational contexts. Educators will participate in three 60-90-minute structured interviews. All interviews will be audio recorded on my cellular device and will be uploaded to a password protected and secure OneDrive. Participants can select where they would like to do the interview. Participants will also do a project using photographs without the presence of the researcher. The information in this consent form is to help you decide if you want to be in this research study.

If you are interested in learning more about this study, please continue reading below.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to further examine the life histories of educators who work in alternative education settings, specifically educators who work in juvenile detention centers.

How long will I be in the study? If you agree to be part of the study, your participation will last from 9 to 12 weeks and will involve three 60-90-minute interviews and a project with photographs called "photovoice." The photovoice project will take you approximately 2 to 3 hours over 1 to 2 weeks and will be done on your own time without the researcher present. You will determine which pictures to share with the researcher. If clarification on the about any of the data is needed, I may follow-up with you one time within two months after the project with a brief 15-minute phone call where I will take notes while you clarify any ideas shared.

What will happen to me during the study?

You will be asked to do the following:

1) Participate in 3 structured interviews that will take 60 to 90 min over the course of 9 to 12 weeks that will be audio-recorded. You can select the location where we will hold the interview. All interviews will be audio recorded on a cellular device. If you prefer not to be recorded, I will take detailed notes of the interviews.

2) Complete a photograph project that will consist of taking 5-7 photographs, choosing 3 and writing descriptions for them that fit the prompts. I anticipate this will take you approximately 2-3 hours over a 1 to 2-week time period to complete. You will email the photos and descriptions through UTK Vault or if you prefer, I can pick up these documents from you. The researcher will not be present during this project.

3) Participate in one 15-minute follow-up phone conversation where I will take notes. In addition to these activities above.

I may quote your remarks in presentations or articles resulting from this work. A pseudonym will be used to protect your identity and to assure confidentiality.

What side effects or risks can I expect from being in the study?

To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life. If you feel stressed or uncomfortable talking about certain life events you may ask for a break, ask to stop the interview, or change the subject. There is a chance that confidentiality of the information we collect from you could be breached – we will take steps to minimize this risk, as discussed in more detail below in this form. A risk to participating is that due to the small number of participants in this study, you may potentially be identifiable by your demographic information. To address this, all data will be kept on an access restricted drive, and you may choose to not answer questions on the demographics section that you believe may help identify you.

Are there benefits to taking part in the study?

You may not directly benefit from your participation in this research study. Potential benefits for society may be that more awareness of the uniqueness and challenges to the field of education in alternative settings will be recognized. Additionally, this study may influence the way in which teacher education programs approach methods of educating pre-service teachers about teaching at alternative settings, specifically at juvenile detention centers. A benefit may be that participants become more reflective about why they have chosen to work in an alternative school context with youth.

How will you protect the information you collect about me, and how will that information be shared?

Your responses will be de-identified, which means your name will not appear on any materials. Instead, a coding system will be used, and this consent form will be kept separate from other materials in a locked box in a secured and locked office. De-identified audio-recorded interviews will be stored on password-protected, secure server that are only accessible to the primary investigator. Audio recordings will be deleted from the password protected cell phone directly after de-identification. De-identified audio recordings will only be viewed by the primary investigator. I will transfer all recordings, field notes, and photovoice documents to a private password protected and secure OneDrive immediately following the interview. Once photographs and narratives are received, they will be de-identified and uploaded onto OneDrive and will be given pseudo names. These documents will remain in the OneDrive for 6 years. If you prefer not to be audio-recorded, I will take detailed notes instead. The notes will be de-identified and transferred onto the OneDrive, physical copies will be destroyed. We will not use your real name or name of your workplace. If information from this study is published or presented at scientific meetings, your name and other personal information will not be used. We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information or what information came from you.

How many people will be in the study?

About 1 to 5 educators from a juvenile detention center in Tennessee will take part in the study.

What will it cost me to be in the study?

It will not cost anything to participate.

Will I be paid for taking part?

In exchange for your time, a $15 gift card to Dunkin Donuts will be given for your participation. In the event that you want to withdraw from the study and no longer participate, you will still receive the $15 gift card.

Is the Investigator paid to do this study?

The investigator is not being paid to enroll people in this study.

What are my rights as a research participant?

Participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer. We can take a break, stop and continue at a later date, or stop altogether. You may select to withdraw from the study without negative consequences anytime during the study. If you would like to stop participating, please inform the investigator. You will not be penalized in any way for deciding to stop participation. Your decision to participate or to decline to participate in this study, or discontinue/stop your participation will not affect your relationship with your employer in any way. Should you decide to withdraw from the study, the researchers will ask if the information already collected can be used.

Future Research

Your research information may be used for future research studies without obtaining additional informed consent from you, but the research information will not be shared with other researchers. All of your identifiable information will be removed before any future use.

Who do I call if I have questions about the study?

Questions about the study: Contact the researchers, Karina Beltran (kbeltran@vols.utk.edu, (530) 848-8614) or faculty advisor, Dr. Samara Akpovo, (smadrid1@utk.edu, 307-343-3884).

For questions about your rights as a research subject or to speak with someone other than the research team about the study: You may contact the UT Institutional Review Board (IRB) at:

1534 White Avenue

Blount Hall, Room 408

Knoxville, TN 37996-1529

Phone: 865-974-7697

Email: utkirb@utk.edu.

The IRB is a group of people that reviews studies for safety and serves to protect the rights of study subjects.

Can I stop being in the study?

You may withdraw from the study at any time. There are no consequences if you withdraw from the study.

Could I be removed from the study?

You may be withdrawn for the study for any of the following reasons: The principal investigator may stop the study.

Consent for use of contact information to be contacted about participation in other studies Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

_____ (initial) I agree to allow the researchers to use my contact information collected during this study to contact me about participating in future research studies.

_____ (initial) I do not agree to allow the researchers to use my contact information collected during this study to contact me about participating in future research studies.

CONSENT OF PARTICIPANTS:

I have read or have had read to me the description of the research study. The investigator or her representative has explained the study to me and has answered all of the questions I have at this time. I have been told of the potential risks, discomforts, and side effects as well as the possible benefits (if any) of the study. I freely volunteer to take part in this study.

_____ _____ _____

Printed Name of Participant Signature of Participant Date

_____

Phone number for follow-up call

Consent for Audio-Recording:

_____(initial)Yes, I agree to audio-recording

_____ (initial) No, I do not agree to audio-recording

Acknowledgement of Release:

I, _____, grant the researcher Karina Beltran, the right use photographs that I have taken for research purposes. I authorize her, assigns and transferees, to use and publish the same in print and/or electronically or display and/or promotional purposes. I understand that **no image** of children or youth with whom I

work can be used for the photovoice project.

I have read and agree to the above:

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

_____ _____ _____

Printed name of Investigator Signature of Investigator Date

IRB NUMBER: UTK IRB-19-05270-XP

IRB APPROVAL DATE: 07/18/2019

IRB EXPIRATION DATE: 07/17/2020

Interview Protocol & Script

The Life History Interview (Adapted from Dan P. McAdams, 2008)

First Interview:

General Questions

1. What is your age: _____

2. What is your gender affiliation? _____

3. Highest level of education: _____

4. Educational background

Major of study: _____

Highest degree earned: _____

Teaching credential: _____

5. Current position: _____

6. Years of teaching experience: _____

7. Ethnicity: _____

Introduction

This is an interview about the story of your life and of your **life as an educator in an alternative teaching context.** I am interested in hearing your life story as a teacher, including parts of the past as you remember them and the future as you imagine it. The story is selective; it does not include everything that has ever happened to you. Instead, I will ask you to focus on a few key things in your life as related to your professional life as a teacher in a juvenile detention center.

There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. Instead, your task is simply to tell me about some of the most important things that have happened in your life and how you imagine your professional life developing.

The interview is for research purposes only, and its main goal is simply to hear your story. We collect teachers' life stories in order to understand the different ways in which people in our society and in others live their lives and the different ways in which they understand who they are. Everything you say is voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. (McAdams, 2008).

A. Life Chapters

Please begin by thinking **about your teaching life** as if it were a book or novel. Imagine that the book has a table of contents containing the titles of the main chapters in the story. Please describe very briefly what the main chapters in the book might be. Please give each chapter a title, tell me just a little bit about what each chapter is about, and say a word or two about how we get from one chapter to the next. As a storyteller, what you want to do is to give me an overall plot summary of your story, going chapter by chapter. You may have as many chapters as you want, but I would suggest having between about two and seven of them. Please keep your descriptions of the chapters relatively brief.

Now I would like you to focus in on a **few key scenes** that stand out in the story which helped inform your decision of **becoming an educator**. A key scene would be an event or critical incident that took place at a particular time and place. Consider a key scene to be a moment in your life story that stands out for a particular reason – perhaps because it was especially good or bad, particularly vivid, important, or memorable. For each of the key events, I ask that you describe in detail what happened, when and where it happened, who was involved, and what you

were thinking and feeling in the event. In addition, I ask that you tell me why you think this particular scene is important or significant in your life. What does the scene say about you as a person? Please be specific.

Next, I want you to think about a high point, low point, and a turning point that has occurred in your teaching experience.

1. High Teaching Point

Please describe a scene, episode, or moment in your life that stands out as an especially positive experience **in your teaching**. This might be the high point scene of your entire life, or else an especially happy, joyous, exciting, or wonderful moment in the story. Please describe this high point scene in detail. What happened, when and where, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this particular moment was so good and what the scene may say about who you are as a person.

2. Low Teaching Point

The second scene is the opposite of the first. Thinking back over your entire life, please identify a scene that stands out as a low point **in your teaching**, if not the low point in your life story. Even though this event is unpleasant, I would appreciate your providing as much detail as you can about it. What happened in the event, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this particular moment was so bad and what the scene may say about you or your life.

3. Turning Teaching Point

In looking back over your life, it may be possible to identify certain key moments that stand out as turning points in **your teaching** -- episodes that marked an important change in you or your life story. Please identify a particular episode in your life story that you now see as a turning point in your life. If you cannot identify a key turning point that stands out clearly, please describe some event in your life wherein you went through an important change of some kind. Again, for this event please describe what happened, where and when, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling. Also, please say a word or two about what you think this event says about you as a person or about your life.

Second Interview

B. Teaching Memories & Challenges

This next section considers the various **teaching** memories, challenges, struggles, and problems you have encountered in your life as an educator.

1. Positive Teaching Memory

This would be a very positive, happy memory from your teaching experience. Please describe this good memory in detail. What happened, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, what does this memory say about you or about your life?

2. Negative Teaching Memory

This would be a very negative, unhappy memory from your teaching experience, perhaps entailing sadness, fear, or some other very negative emotional experience. Please describe this bad memory in detail. What happened, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, what does this memory say about you or your life?

3. Challenge as an Educator

Looking back over your entire career as an educator, please identify and describe what you now consider to be the greatest single challenge you have faced. What is or was the challenge or problem? How did the challenge or problem develop? How did you address or deal with this challenge or problem? What is the significance of this challenge or problem in your own life story?

Third Interview

C. Personal Ideology

Now, I would like to ask a few questions about your fundamental beliefs and values and about questions of meaning and morality in your life and in your approach towards teaching. Please give some thought to each of these questions.

1. Single Value

What is the most important value in human living? Please explain.

2. Teaching: Political/Social Values

How do you approach political or social issues? Do you have a particular political point of view? Are there particular social issues or causes about which you feel strongly? How does this affect your teaching? Please explain.

3. Teaching: Change, Development of Religious and Political Views

Please tell the story of how your religious, moral, and/or political views and values have developed over time and affect your teaching. Have they changed in any important ways? Please explain.

4. Teaching - Single Value

What is the most important value in teaching? Please explain.

5. Other

What else can you tell me that would help me understand your most fundamental beliefs and values about life and the world as it related to teaching? What else can you tell me that would help me understand your overall philosophy of teaching?

IRB NUMBER: UTK IRB-19-05270-XP

IRB APPROVAL DATE: 07/18/2019

PhotoVoice Project

Participant Photovoice Protocol

Photovoice Educator Project (Adapted from Caroline Wang, 1999 & Alice McIntyre, 2003)

Directions: You will have two prompts for this project. For each prompt, take 5-7 pictures that help you answer the questions below. After you take the 5-7 pictures, you will choose the three best photographs, for each prompt, that you feel best tells your story. Then you will write a short description of each photograph. You may use old or pre-existing photographs. I will not be present during this project but you may contact me if any questions arise.

Photographs: For ethical considerations, please avoid taking pictures of other people. If you feel that it is essential to take pictures of people in order to answer the prompts, please blur/pixel their face or any identifiers. You **may not** use photos of youth or children whom you work with.

Narrative: You will be using four guiding questions to describe the message in each photograph. Think of this as a caption or description for your photograph. Please do not use real names of students. Use a pseudo name if you want to mention individuals by name.

Submission: Once you complete the photovoice project along with both prompts, you will submit these documents to me through UTK Vault. I have attached a sheet with instructions on how to do that. You will use Vault to email me the documents. My email is kbeltran@vols.utk.edu

Prompts: Please read the prompts listed below.

1. Vivid Memory That Influenced Career Choice

Please identify one scene that you have not already described (in other words, do not repeat your high point, low point, or turning point scene) that stands out as especially vivid or meaningful.

This would be an especially memorable, vivid, or important scene, positive or negative, from your life that influenced your choice to stay in this field. Using photos, please describe this scene in detail, tell what happened, when and where, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling. Also, what does this memory say about you or where you are in life now?

2. Wisdom Teaching Moment

Please describe an event in your professional teaching life in which you displayed wisdom. The episode might be one in which you acted or interacted in an especially wise way or provided wise counsel or advice, made a wise decision, or otherwise behaved in a particularly wise manner. What happened, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, what does this memory say about you and your life?

Constructing Your Narrative

After you have selected three photographs, use the questions below to identify and explore the concerns related to the project topic that is illustrated in the photos. Think of this step as constructing a caption and description for each picture. The description of the photographs should answer the following questions:

1. What do we see here?

2. What is really happening here?

3. What does this photograph mean to you?

4. How does this relate to the prompt?

Instructions on how to use Vault

How does a non-UT individual access Vault?

External individuals who wish to use Vault must register for an account first.

1. **Go to the Vault website**: https://vault.utk.edu

2. Enter the email address you would like to use and choose **Register**.

3. You will receive an email with a link to activate your Vault account.

4. Create a password for Vault by entering and verifying the new password. Choose **Set Password**. You will then be prompted to log into Vault.

6. You are now able to send documents through email through a secure site.

IRB NUMBER: UTK IRB-19-05270-XP

IRB APPROVAL DATE: 07/18/2019

Open Coding

- Teaching was unplanned
- Family matters
- Life events lead to career change
- Confidence in teaching skills
- Difficult job
- A job worthwhile
- Intimidating environment
- Work environment affects personal feelings
- Outside negative perspectives
- Student focused teaching
- Hazards in work environment
- Gang mentalities
- Gangs
- Better pay
- Different setting than public education
- Helping make a difference
- Lack of motivation from students
- Low resources at facility
- Student focused classwork
- Youth provide respect and protection
- Compassion mindset
- Kindness is important
- Supportive administration or staff
- Balance personal emotions
- Going the extra mile for the students
- Caring profession
- Balancing judgements
- Motivate students
- Educators should help students
- Responsibility for students
- Students felt pride in their progress

Focused Coding

Open Codes	Focused Codes
• Teaching was unplanned • Family matters • Life events lead to career change • Confidence in teaching skills • Difficult job • A job worthwhile • Intimidating environment • Work environment affects personal feelings • Students felt pride in their progress • Outside negative perspectives • Student focused teaching • Hazards in work environment • Gang mentalities • Gangs • Helping make a difference • Lack of motivation from students • Low resources at facility • Student focused classwork • Youth provide respect and protection • Compassion mindset • Kindness is important • Supportive administration or staff • Balance personal emotions • Going the extra mile for the students • Caring profession • Balancing judgements • Motivate students • Educators should help students • Better pay • Different setting than public education • Responsibility for students	Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivators Emotional and Contextual Challenges Agents of Change

Table 1

Demographics and Participant Information

Pseudonym	Age	Ethnicity	Years of Experience	Educational Background	Current Position
Juliet	50	White	27 years	Master's degree in Leadership Master's degree in Library Science Special Education & Emotionally Impaired Teaching Credential	Lead Teacher
Adrian	52	Mexican American	30 years	Master's degree in Special Education Multiple Subject Teaching Credential & Learning Handicap	Resource Specialist
Kurt	64	White	32 years	Master's degree in Computer Science Master's degree of Divinity	Professor

Table 2

Data Analysis Iterations

Data Phase	Research Procedure	Purpose
After 1st Interview	Critical Incidents/ Open Coding	Develop life history narrative
Photovoice Project	Dialog with participant through exchanged photographs	Add photographs to the life history narrative, look for recurring themes
After Open Coding of 1st Interview	Focused Coding	Explore concepts
After 2nd Interview	Focused Coding	Develop specific conceptual terms
After Open Coding of 2nd Interview	Conceptualization of life narrative	Provide additional information of important life history events
Final Interview with Participant & Member Check	Comparison between interviews & Participant reviews themes	Create life history narrative & check for fidelity

Table 3

Themes and examples

Themes	Example Statements
Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivators	You don't really have to do a lot of counter paperwork, and it was is working with the kids, and letting them know that someone cares about them - Juliet
Emotional and Contextual Challenges	I had a panic attack one day. This was very foreign to me, being in a prison and seeing people that were incarcerated - Adrian
Agents of Change	Just the fact that they were leaving the facility, leaving that season of their life, and stepping into something new with a plan, with an excitement, with a motivation. That is, to me, why I teach. It is because I want to try to help - Kurt



Figure 1

An image of a snowman created by a student



Figure 2

An image depicting different types of signatures



Figure 3

An image depicting a quote from Maya Angelou



Figure 4

Image of a near empty wallet



Figure 5

Image on an inmate in his cell



Figure 6

Inmates stepping up on a bookshelf



Figure 7

A person wearing a graduation gown while showing emotion



Figure 8

Image of a word cloud showing words such as thoughtful, empathy, and caring



Figure 9

Image of a quote



Figure 10

Image of a quote by Aristotle

VITA

Karina Beltrán was born in El Paso, Tx. She attended the University of California, Davis and completed a Bachelor of Science in Human Development, a Bachelor of Arts in Chicano Studies and a minor in education. For her graduate studies, she joined the Department of Child and Family Studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville where she completed her master's degree.