FROM CONVICTION TO EMPLOYMENT: A meta-review on offenders and work reintegration

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Introdução
The global prison population is approximately 11 million. Although incarceration seems to convey the idea of public safety, it has proved ineffective in reducing recidivism. Stable employment is one of the best predictors of post-release success. Nevertheless, offenders and ex-offenders, especially those recently released from prison, face substantial barriers to many types of legal employment. Previous research explored incarceration and employment; most of these studies focus on the Global North context, still presenting it from a limited perspective, focusing on only one social actor.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo
To understand the social actors' perspectives on the positive and negative outcomes for the employability of people in and released from prison, we anchor this research on the Person-Environment-Fit theory, which is the level of compatibility between a person and the work environment. It has four dimensions of person fit: to the job, to the supervisor, to the group, and to the organization. Therefore, this study presents the following research question: What are the restrictive factors, facilitators, and consequences of the reinsertion of offenders and former offenders in the labor market?

Fundamentação Teórica
Ex-offenders often face social stigma that can affect their ability to find and keep a job. This can lead to discrimination from hiring managers who feel a sense of responsibility for society's expectations. Unfortunately, this not only harms ex-offenders job prospects but also negatively impacts the workforce. Employers must recognize the value that ex-offenders can bring to their organization and offer them the same opportunities as other job seekers. By doing so, they can help break down the barriers that ex-offenders face and create a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

Discussão
This meta-review indicates that researchers, practitioners, and individuals involved in the criminal justice system find employment to be an essential component that benefits many social actors. However, the perspectives about the phenomenon have been fragmented across multiple disciplines, addressing the social actors isolated and considering the barriers to the reentry labor market as a failure of an individual effort by the offender and former offender. The outcomes are associated with the level of adjustment of the individual considering the different perspectives of PE Theory.

Conclusão
This research endeavored to address and mitigate the barriers that impede the successful reintegration of (former) incarcerated into the workforce, thus fostering sustainable and meaningful employment opportunities. Through a meta-review, this study analyzed the restrictive and facilitators factors along with the consequences of the reinsertion of (former) offenders in the labor market. It also offers a comprehensive framework supported by the PEF theory, including the major social actors. Lastly, this research suggested thematic research avenues based on the framework.

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