

2021

## Exploring the Private and Environmental Events of Repeat Offenders Relative to Low Self-Control

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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Xavier Mims

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Walden University  
2021

Abstract

Exploring the Private and Environmental Events of Repeat Offenders Relative to Low  
Self-Control

by

Xavier Mims

MS, University of Phoenix, 2010

BA, Louisiana College, 2008

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Forensic Psychology

Walden University

February 2021

## Abstract

The dissection of self-control theory itself has served as a supplemental platform for understanding how the lack of self-control can perpetuate criminal conduct. Previous research has indicated that employing self-control theory to predict criminal behavior has been widely supported by various forms of test samples, measurements, and methodologies. However, there remains a gap in the current literature regarding the internal-motivative factors between the relationship of the offender's criminal behaviors and self-control theory. Partial understanding of what the offender experiences constitutes a significant disparity between subjective concepts and actual accounts based on an offender's view on his personal life. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative study while utilizing a structured interviewing construct was to account for the reoffender's experiences. Adults consisting of 8 males between 18–35 years were the selected sample size for this study; the Atlas.ti was administered to code responses. Findings from this research indicated that factors representing “environmental constraints” contributed significantly to self-control depletion among reoffenders. Based on the results, repeated contact with constricted environments influence persistent criminal behaviors. Recommendations for extending research regarding criminal conduct and low self-control should remain reliant on shared experiences introduced by reoffenders. Findings may be used by the criminal justice to promote positive social change by reducing reoffences.

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## Chapter 1: Background

### **Background of the Study**

Based on statistical reports (Durose, Cooper, & Snyder, 2014), since 2005 an estimated two-thirds of prisoners discharged from prison were disciplined for committing new crimes within 3 years of being released. According to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) highlighted evidence that self-regulatory deficiency among disadvantaged individuals aided researchers understand the connection between uncontrollable private events which are internally witnessed by an individual alone, impulsivity, and recidivism. Throughout the recent decades, research has proved the correlation between variables associated with criminal conduct and self-gratification. Many former inmates with mental or behavioral health problems do not adjust to society as effectively to stable inmates (Matejkowski, Conrad, & Ostermann, 2017). Therefore, mental deficiencies and behavioral health issues may play a significant role in motivating offenders to repeat offenses and failing to learn from their punishment. Their ability to disregard future consequences—for example, more severe punishments—suggest the importance of understanding the offender through his perception.

If criminal conduct is associated with the avoidance of societal boundaries, then offenders reject integration into society more than people who do not offend. These factors play a crucial role in an individual's persistent criminal behavior. Quantitative analyses continue to expand to help identify variables that may relate criminal behavior. Yet the gap in knowledge is not understanding what the offender is thinking or what he knows. By understanding the offender experiences and what motivates him to engage in

repeated criminal behavior. According to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), the offender's inclination to pursue self-gratification without considering the consequences explains the relationship between diminished discipline and offender conduct. Reoffending and the impact of self-control theory is presented as a societal problem among offenders.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Reoffending raises the question whether adult males are limited adaptability. There are notable explanations for an individual's tendency to persist in reoffending (Nagin & Snodgrass, 2013). It can vary due to personalities and desires. In their analysis of the future self and self-control motivation, Silver and Ulmer (2012) proposed that both male and female use feared perceptions of the self to undermine one's own capacity to postpone impertinent desires. Conversely, Andrews and Bonta (2010) noted that incarcerated males are subject to more punishment in contrast to receiving sufficient rehabilitation while serving their sentence.

Both quantitative and qualitative studies have been conducted to explore factors that contribute to reoffending. Silver and Ulmer (2012) reviewed 10 quantitative studies, 23 qualitative studies about recidivism, and 25 textbook references to recidivism. According to Silver and Ulmer, to deter the influence of reoffending, the offender must be motivated to participate in rehabilitative efforts to avoid reoffending. One qualitative investigation addressed adult males who continued to engage in criminal behavior. The study methodology included interviewing males who described their experiences before, during, and after release from prison. The results indicated that Montoya (2009) could categorize experiences and responses under themes that pertained to inside and outside of

the prison environment. Montoya explained that inmates reverted to criminal behavior due to the difficulty in bridging the gap between being in prison and release from prison.

Creswell (2009) indicated that the qualitative descriptions of variables provide a means of efficient exploration and understanding of individual meanings. There is a gap in the qualitative research on studies like Montoya's (2009), which explored inmates' perceptions of the challenges to recovery outside of prison. Therefore, the goal of this research is to investigate repeat offenders' insights into the conditions that led to their reoffending, including encounters with specific challenges that increased the risk for reoffending. This study may help to provide a clearer discussion as to what influences reoffending relative to low self-control.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study is Self-Control Theory. Gottfredson and Hirschi argued the inability to exert self-control is manifested by the lack of restraint from engaging in criminal behaviors. Silver and Ulmer (2012) explained that, based on the initial account concerning repetitive criminal behavior, repeat offenses are a result of being presented with temptation and opportunity to seek gain from criminal activities. According to self-control theory, inhibiting factors, such as the ability to delay immediate self-gratification, are a role in increasing criminal behavior. Hirschi's (2004) noted depleted self-control and crime analyzes the connection among the stages of self-regulation and criminal conduct.

Self-control theory is universally recognized for its explanations on criminal deviance and is recognized as being profoundly investigated within the scope criminal

behavior. Thus, the goal of this study is to investigate the motivational factors through the personal perceptions of the reoffender themselves. The reoffenders' thoughts and beliefs about the motivational factors that play a major role in persistent criminal conduct may lay the foundation for grasping the significance of low self-control. According to Vazsonyi and Huang (2013), empirical research has not provided enough support to determine the foundation of low self-control and how poor conduct is manifested within a behavioral spectrum. In this study, obtaining descriptive historical accounts are vital sources of information for deciphering the details linking to the deterioration of self-control skills.

### **Nature of the Study**

This research study explored the relationship between low self-control and recidivism. I obtained detailed explanations of offender experiences from a selected sample of offenders using structured interviews. One of the goals was to understand what the offender knew and how their struggles to maintain self-control contributed to their motivation to engage in repeat offenses. According to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), the cognitive requirements for most crimes are minimal and individuals who lack self-control do not have an academic background. One concept that was explored was the impact of having low self-control and an inability to learn from the punishment that follows criminal activity.

### **Definitions**

The following operational definitions are presented to ensure comprehension of the terms used in the study.

*Antisocial behavior.* In relation to opposing the rules of society, antisocial behavior has been recognized with having a direct relationship with criminal conduct. Anderson, Donlan, McDermott, and Zaff (2015) argued that antisocial behavior increases risks in local crimes due to and can generate unstable environment for other families. Evidently, the term suggests that individuals who engage in conduct that completely opposes the law lack remorse for the well-being of others. Such intent can possess covert and overt behaviors like being aggressive in nature or influenced by situational issues. Anderson et al. (2015) highlighted that the limits of self-control can result in aggressive acts of behaviors which can often transpire into criminal-related conduct.

*Child-rearing.* Child-rearing, or simply put as parenting, is important factor for child growth and development leading into the stages of maturity and adulthood. The parent possesses the responsibility of promoting emotional, social, intellectual, knowledgeable, and physical development. A sustainable and beneficial relationship between a parent figure and a child can reduce susceptibility to deviant peer influences (Kobak, Herres, Gaskins, & Laurenceau, 2012). The parent or parents serve as commo caregivers for the child's development and learning abilities to orient effectively to different environments and people. However, parenting skills often range depending on the parents and this plays a critical role within the child's capacity to learn. Burkhart, Rasmussen, Borelli, Brody, and Sbarra (2017) emphasized that attachment issues are a key factor in which the parent and child are disconnected from one another which then leads to the child experiencing negative emotions.

*Criminal behavior.* The meaning of criminal behavior refers to the functions and actions of an individual with criminal intent. According to Walters and Cohen (2016), the rise in criminal thought should help with predicting increased risks of recidivism. In addition, criminal behavior is often difficult to determine because of the nature vs nurture debate. Whether criminal behaviors are learned or genetically influenced, the persistence in criminal behaviors can continue to increase thus creating an absence of understanding how to avoid situations that lead to continued convictions.

*Environment.* The concept of environment alone establishes an imperative link with criminal behavior. Without the environment, an individual is unable to exhibit any form or action relevant to that individual's functions. Consistent with the development of criminal intent, Dich, Doan, and Evans (2017) argued that childhood temperament which is a stable set of behavioral and emotional dispositions (Rothbart & Bates, 2006), is a factor which underlines both resiliency and vulnerability to environmental risks. Environment involves the interaction between an organism, people, and other events taking place within a specific area. Exposure to different settings and people is relevant to explaining that some disadvantaged individuals are prone to developing criminal conduct due to the absence of resources. Dich et al. (2017) stated that negative emotions can transpire into more adaptive forms of functioning.

*Incarceration.* Incarceration is an alarming public health and social problem which can create long-term problems for affected individuals (Roos, Martin, Tsai, Afifi, Pietrzak, & Sareen, 2016). Troubled individuals who are placed within confinement as a penalty for violating societal laws are at a disadvantage for being able to learn and adapt.



Roos et al. (2016) supported the issue of incarcerated individuals and their families encountering hardship in relation to employment, and health (Thomas & Torrone, 2008; Western, 2002). Ineffective treatment strategies along with persistent punishment reduces the opportunities to learn from mistakes and prolongs criminal behavior when the individual is released back into society. Enforcing laws without the support of understanding the motivational factors that contribute to influencing criminal intent remains inevitable for troubled individuals.

*Psychiatric disorders.* According to Jacobson (2016), he stated that psychopathology merits investigation because of its broad impact. The strategy for incorporating psychiatric disorders into the context of criminal behavior is relevant to determine the motivational factors that influences criminal conduct. Given that psychiatric disorders have an adverse impact on cognition, it is plausible to conjecture that cognitive deficits may begin to progress over time (Masson, East-Richard, & Cellard, 2016). Regarding human development, the behavioral or mental health pattern of the individual becomes disrupted thus manifesting abnormalities in functional health. Individuals diagnosed with a specific form of mental disorder are at risk of struggling with adapting to different setting, conditions, and people. Contingent upon the magnitude of a definite psychiatric disorder, the individual is precluded in some functional area of his or her mannerisms to remain connected with normal society.

*Recidivism.* Once an individual develops the tenacity of becoming a risk to society, they also place themselves in circumstances that can lead to enduring repeated punishment by law. In terms of criminal behavior, recidivism reflects repeated criminal

offenses that lead to constant incarcerations. Bowman and Travis, J. (2012) highlighted that recidivism discusses an individual's reentry into the prison system. Recidivism involves the repeat of offenses exhibited by the individual which reflect the relapse of engaging in undesirable behaviors that are not socially appropriate. In this matter, former inmates face a greater risk of putting themselves in the position of engaging in repetitive criminal behaviors. Without the support of resources to help alleviate the desire to commit unlawful acts, many incarcerated individuals continue to encounter hardship by submitting themselves to illegal temptations. Hence, Bowman and Travis Jr. (2012) noted that a successful transition into society which includes exercising skills of independence, employment, supportive system, and behavioral stabilization are essential to deflecting recidivism.

*Self-control.* Self-control is referred to as the propensity to withhold certain actions after considering the consequences that may apply (Hirschi, 2004). To understand, it is a behavioral function of inhibiting one's own emotional responses from pursuing temptations which bring about significant risks. According to Vaughan, Boufford, and Piquero (2017), Hirschi's (2004) redefined concept of self-regulation describes whether if an individual care about the opinion of others. Vaughan and his colleagues highlighted that an individual has to generate boundaries to manage behavioral conduct when faced with certain desires or offending decisions.

*Self-control theory* (low self-control). The concept of the delay in self-regulation suggests that people lack problem-solving skills (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). In correspondence with criminality, criminals experience deficits in learning and

acknowledging the weighted consequences for their unlawful actions. Reactive responses outweigh proactive tendencies to decide a course of action before engaging in risky or inappropriate behaviors. Therefore, criminal conduct inhibits the ability to remain committed to long-term goals and interpersonal relationships because of the desire to seek easy and simple gratification (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

### **Assumptions**

This research was based on the following assumptions: (a) the study represents the general population of repeat offenders who provide an overall insight of their experiences relating to the influence of low self-control; (b) the reoffenders' insights should provide a clearer understanding of the elements that generate low self-control and persistent criminal behaviors; and (c) the rationale for the concept of the study is based on collecting relevant information based on what the reoffender knows.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The categories in this study sought to determine the motivational and internal themes that contributed to reoffending and low self-control. To collect perceptions from offenders, I targeted offenders who were currently serving probation or participating in mandatory community service. Interviewing the reoffenders did not permit the investigator to understand who was serving time for more severe offenses, such as murder, aggravated robbery, etc. Thus, highlighting experiences from reoffenders was chosen to accurately define issues that are contributing to the increasing rates of recidivism and how low self-control is both an internal and external problem.

An additional delimitation was that I interviewed only offenders who were serving community service, parole, or probation. The justification for targeting this group is due to the minor restrictions and stipulations placed on the individuals. The specific aspects of the study which addresses the literature centers on Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) perception of low self-regulation and offender conduct. The nature and closeness of the relationship between the offender and the motivational factors assisted with analyzing responses from participants who were repeat offenders, not first-time offenders. I believed that understanding what the offender experiences and how his actions would demonstrate a connection with either parenting concerns, attitudinal/behavioral barriers, environmental constraints, psychological deficiencies, and distorted internal states in the study. Data collection excluded any type of closed-ended assessments thus providing the offender open-ended on the functions of their problematic behaviors.

### **Limitations**

This investigation was subject to the following limitations: (a) the data gathered may contain biased interpretations provided by the reoffenders. For instance, reoffenders may have a tendency to inaccurately amplify their responses to each question; (b) potential biases that may influence the study's outcome may involve considering the responses of certain reoffenders over others; (c) reasonable measures to address the limitations of the study will involve providing a concise explanation as to the reason of its existence; (d) issues that may affect the investigator's ability to conduct the research effectively may include additional information not related to the study, time spent in

incarceration, and the amount of times an offender was apprehended. Additionally, the challenge with asking questions involves inconsistency and fatigue demonstrated between the interviewer and participant.

### **Significance of the Study**

This investigation should help to explain how reoffenders struggle with adjusting to society upon release from incarceration. There is growing concern about the increase in reoffending among adult males. The results should (a) explain this increase by summarizing repeat offenders' perceptions of the challenges they face in controlling reoffending; (b) the results could allow mental health professionals to become more familiar with re-offenders' attitudes, goals, judgment, insights, history, interests, and distinctive personalities; and (c) implications for social change may consist of improving social and working relationships between the reoffender and the community.

### **Summary**

The themes that emerged from this study may explain how low self-control influences criminal behavior. The course of the investigation relied on offenders' insights and how they perceive their lives and patterns of criminal behavior. The review of the literature presented in chapter two discusses research pertaining to the motivational issues faced by reoffenders along with the inability to learn from previous consequences to avoid criminal behavior. Chapter three will provide an outlook of the measurement tools, sample, and list of interviewing questions to capture in detail the experiences from each reoffender. Furthermore, the results which will be described in chapter four should verify which selected theme influences low self-control and criminal behavior. Lastly, chapter

five will conclude the overall study with the discussion of how the study can contribute to social change within the community.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

The phenomenological approach used in this study assisted with identifying the corresponding elements aligned with low self-control and potential motivators in reoffending parolees. The goal of this study is designed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the motivational factors relative to low self-control which contribute to persistent reoffending behaviors. The research questions are aimed at focusing on the themes that motivate offenders to continue to engage in socially inappropriate behaviors, thus leading to communal penalization or brief incarcerations. This chapter covers the following topics: theoretical foundation of self-control theory, parenting concerns, attitudinal/behavioral barriers, psychological deficiencies, environmental constraints, and distorted internal states.

To identify prospective, peer-reviewed articles (as well as books and grey literature), the following electronic databases—PSYCINFO and PsycArticles were searched for the years 2012–2020 using the following keywords: self-control, self-control theory, low self-control, and criminal behavior, I used the Boolean operators, AND and OR, to optimize the results. Abstracts were used to judge an article's relevancy to the research questions. The reference lists of the selected articles were searched for additional articles.

### **Self-Control Theory**

According to Desmarais, Johnson, and Singh (2016), 1 in 51 adults is on probation in the United States and 1 in 110 adults is incarcerated.

This statistic alone generates a concern about recidivism within the general population. In reference to Clear et al. (2014), early adult males outnumber their mature counterparts. Gottfredson and Hirschi's contribution to motivational factors that have an impact on recidivism reflects the concept of self-control theory. This foundation addresses the lack of control supplemented by the challenging experiences lived by the individual. Without proper guidance and direction, knowledge may be affected by the ability to adapt and learn from one's own mistakes.

As a method of presenting options and rights for offenders, inmates have the entitlement to participate in treatment and rehabilitation efforts to improve behavioral conduct. According to Silver and Ulmer, this movement is a grand comparison to self-control motivation, which presents that an individual can utilize more proactive forms of developing solutions to avoid future consequences. The investigators claimed that the capacity to contemplate future consequences stems from experiencing prior mistakes made in the past. In addition, the life-history theory, according to Dunkel, Mathes, and Beaver (2013), emphasized that personalities are developed throughout distinct stages in life. The relationship between an individual's life history and criminal behavior can exist within patterns of behavioral and attitudinal characteristics (Dunket et al., 2013). Therefore, the goal in determining the factors associated with reoffending is vital for exploring the manifestations and triggers for criminal behavior.

Identifying the triggers that may lead to reoffending may provide insight into the effects of low self-control. Such triggers or influences may relate to the absence of self-control and the ability to consider the future consequences. In addition, internal and



external variables relevant to depleted self-control skills may perhaps be built on disadvantages from both behavioral and environmental forms of learning. To elaborate, the external and internal variables included in the study focuses on ineffective parenting, attitudinal and behavioral characteristics, psychiatric disorders, environmental constraints that obstruct self-sufficient learning, and distorted internal states. The qualitative study provides a thorough and descriptive understanding of what an offender knows and how he is motivated to engage in repetitive criminal behavior. Along with the opportunity to understand him, the offenders' insight should provide substantial guidance in exploring the relation between low self-control and reoffending.

### **Theoretical Foundation: Self-Control Theory**

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) emphasized low self-regulation by addressing the delay in managing self-gratification. The absence of control itself could increase the risk of developing maladaptive conduct. Dunkel et al. (2013) supported Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) perception discussing the central position towards interpreting the factors concerning self-control theory. Dunkel et al. mentioned that Gottfredson and Hirschi examined numerous empirical investigations about inefficient restraint and criminal conduct. During the recent decades, investigating considerable factors relevant to low self-control has often been used to examine criminal tendencies in young children and young adult males. Young offenders within these stages of human development may often be faced with issues concerning ego depletion when factors interfere with learning to improvise and comprehend from behavioral errors. Masicampo et al. (2014) noted that

the reduction in individual discipline describes a condition causing the absence to exert regulatory skills.

Furthermore, self-control theory can be applied to gang related behaviors. Fox, Ward, and Lane (2013) highlighted that group dynamics in gangs increase the risks of an individual developing more violent and delinquent behavior. Fox et al. (2013) highlighted on Thornberry and colleagues (1993) advanced models for understanding gang-violence. The three models are addressed as the gang selection model, gang facilitation model, and gang enhancement model. The researchers presented the argument that the gang-selection model is linked with determining low self-control while the gang facilitation model detects high self-control. Fox et al. discussed that there are important initial differences in offending levels between people who want to join gang from those would refuse to join gangs.

Fox et al. (2013) explained that Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) argument on gang violence clarifies that such behaviors are nothing more than a selection effect. To measure their argument, Fox et al. examined 2,414 inmates for the study while the study was based on 2,008 relevant cases. The researchers used a survey consisting of a variety of questions focusing on the respondents' neighborhood or natural environment, self-control, involvement with crime, demographic, and family characteristics. The variables measured were noted as gang membership, violent crime, self-control, collective efficacy, disorder, and demographic variables. Results obtained for the study determined that participants who possessed low self-control possessed strong desires to join gangs along with less collective efficacy. Fox et al. (2013) also mentioned that respondents obtaining

high self-control perceived fewer environmental ailments. Overall, it was determined that participants acquiring low self-control were vulnerable to joining gangs and increasing the risk of exhibiting more violent behavior. Environmental influences and the inability to adapt verifies that an individual can become easily influenced with seeking pleasure than from learning from mistakes. To clarify, Andrews and Bonta (2015) presented the scope of the risk-needs-responsivity model (RNR) which is a model for evaluating and reestablishing individuals. The model is designed to identifying general personality and cognitive social learning perceptions on human growth and conduct (Andrews & Bonta, 2015).

### **Parenting Concerns**

Learning to understand how parent-child relations develop constructive behaviors may assist to uncover resilience factors within a child's adaptive capabilities (Lunkenheimer, Skowron, Ram, & Yin, 2017). As part of human development, not one person experiences the same learning opportunities or events. Kuhn and Laird's (2013) investigation on ineffective parenting presents levels of restricted opportunities towards children who are susceptible to neglectful supervision. It is discussed that parents take on the roles as leaders and provides for the household. However, restrictions in opportunities to guide and educate children elevates the risk of antisocial tendencies and other detrimental societal behaviors (Kuhn & Laird, 2013). Reduced self-control is described as acquiring qualities of impulsivity and thrill seeking (Doran, Alridge, Roesch, & Myers, 2011). The researchers indicated children who pursue restricted opportunities are more likely to lack regard for establish rules in society.

Children may often develop emotional and psychological detachment when parents seem to be absent from a child's needs or emotional support. According to Veira, Finger, Schuetze, Colder, Godleski, and Eiden (2014), such disruptions may involve exposing a child to at-risk or threatening environments. The researchers argued that many parents who commit more to establishing an unhealthy environment may influence a child to absorb more problematic behaviors. Veira et al. (2014) stated that multiple risks and protective factors may influence the development of externalizing behavioral problems. For example, Veira et al. provided supportive documentation discussing children who are prenatally vulnerable to harmful substances, such as cocaine, increase the risk for the emergence of behavioral health problems and defective brain regions produced by the drug (Lester et al., 2009; Li et al., 2011). However, it is believed that there are different levels of child behaviors and such mannerisms can be influenced by the degree of exposure to things such as drugs, violence, interacting risks, and other limited protective factors.

Veira et al. (2014) hypothesized that children exposed to detrimental substances or cocaine exhibit higher problem behaviors than children who are exposed to violence and maternal warmth. During examination, the researchers obtained a sample of 216 mother-child dyads with 106 (49%) children being male. The independent variables in the study were based on non-cocaine users and cocaine users. In addition, the dependent variables of the study were prenatal substance use, postnatal substance use, maternal sensitivity, maternal harshness, maternal occupational status, demographics, and years of education.

Veira et al. (2014) assessed the dyads for a total of 4–8 weeks; at the ages of 7, 13, 24, and 36 months; and 5 years. Results provided by the ANOVA used by the researchers, scores indicated by the ANOVA designated that the mothers were young and possessed lower parity (number of children; Veira et al., 2014). Mothers with low parity had high behavioral problems while mothers with high parity had high behavioral problems. Yet, child age in kindergarten yielded results stating that there were no problem behaviors. Veira et al. concluded that parenting quality is an imperative source for child learning and development. The examination contributed to extending the literature on developmental outcomes of high-risk children and how they adopt problematic behaviors.

### **Attitudinal and Behavioral Barriers**

A supplementary study investigating the framework of self-control theory is Brown and Jennings' (2014) explanation of crime and analogous behaviors. Brown and Jennings' were seeking to expand on the distinct operationalizations of Hirschi's revised account on the lack of self-control. It is mentioned in the text that Hirschi (2004) steered away from personality measures to adopt specific essentials from his interpretation on social control theory (Hirschi, 1969). Brown and Jennings highlighted that there is a minimal amount of evidence reflecting social bonds in its connection to self-control theory. Researchers acknowledged that self-control theory assumes that the absence of self-discipline creates a tendency to pursue long-term and short-term self-interest (Brown & Jennings, 2014). However, Brown and Jennings stated that Hirschi (2004) suggested

considering social bonds instead of personality measures are relevant for measuring self-control.

The applications for applying social bonds within the context of self-control theory details an individual's perception of what others may perceive of him based on his or her actions. Brown and Jennings' (2014) study only accounted for experimental assessments of Hirschi's (2004) reviewed account on self-control theory. For instance, Brown and Jennings gathered figures from 355 scholars from a major college. Demographics of the sample were 70% White and 56% female with an average age of 20.9 years (Brown & Jennings, 2014). The investigators designed a questionnaire to measure three operationalizations of Hirschi's (2004) revised concept of self-control theory. Brown and Jennings' effort of the investigation seemed germane to Hirschi's (1969) explanation of social control theory as it explains social bonds help lessen crime and analogous behaviors.

Brown and Jennings (2014) study detailed factors surrounding the distinct levels of self-control and they affected the behaviors of individuals. The independent variable of the sample is the crime and analogous behavior (CAB) scale modified which was created by Lynam et al. (1999). The dependent variables of the study included decisional self-control, social bonds, honor-based decisional self-control, and control variables (Brown & Jennings, 2014). The independent variable, or CAB, described in the passage is a self-monitoring report inquiring participants about criminal behaviors and substance abuse (Brown & Jennings, 2014). Brown and Jennings noted that the sum of yes and no were used to develop the CAB scale exhibiting suitable internal consistency. Moreover,

decisional self-control is based on perceptions from Piquero and Bouffard's (2007) drunk-driving scenario but uses a modified self-control assessment from Bouffard and Rice's (2011) study on average salience (Brown & Jennings, 2014). This decisional self-control variable centered on participant responses to scenarios involving drunk driving.

Additionally, the social bonds/self-control variable were measured on an eight-item scale to measure the importance of various resources in the individual's life (Brown & Jennings, 2014). This specific scale verified good internal consistency based on participant responses. In addition, the honor-based decisional self-control scale focused on the opinions of others (Hirschi, 2004). Brown and Jennings reported that his scale represented high internal consistency. Finally, the control variables scale measured situational factors in which participants were to imagine themselves in a drunk-driving scenario. This scale was congruent to the measure of deterrence theory which provided a rated response (Grasmick & Bryjak 1980; Jensen et al. 1978).

Outcomes in the investigation concluded that operationalizations of Hirschi's (2004) reconceptualization of self-control related to crime and analogous behaviors (Brown & Jennings, 2014). Brown and Jennings also declared that decisional self-control strongly associated with social bonds ( $r = .25, p < .001$ ) and honor-based decisional self-control ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ). The results clarified that Brown and Jennings believe that Hirschi (2004) revised concept of self-control is efficient for predicting crime and analogous behaviors. Consequently, though there are minimal amounts of analytical data discussing Hirschi's revised self-control theory, future studies should integrate concepts when data permits (Brown & Jennings, 2014).

Throughout the past several decades, researchers have also incorporated a behavior analytic perspective into self-control (McKeel & Dixon, 2014). In addressing the behavior analytic scope of self-control, McKeel and Dixon employed the relational frame theory (RFT) to describe the construction of regulating behaviors. This specific discipline discusses the human dialect and understanding as the person adjusts to diverse environments (Hayes, Barnes-Holmes, & Roche, 2001). McKeel and Dixon's study contribute significantly toward furthering the ongoing research of self-control. In the passage, the authors highlighted that self-control can be built on both positive and negative behaviors depending on the level of choice-making. Nonetheless, behaviors related to establishing self-control can vary among both humans and animals. For instance, McKeel and Dixon extended on the literature on understanding self-control by evaluating choice making in various organisms.

Self-control training or self-regulation is a method of treatment applied to an organism thus yielding the ability to maintain control of one's own choices (McKeel & Dixon, 2014). For instance, possessing self-control influences an organism to make choices based on being provided a more powerful reinforce or favorable outcomes. This comes with being able to remain calm and patient for extended periods of time, yet the results are beneficial. However, McKeel and Dixon argued the organisms without restraint tend to exhibit conduct that is irresponsible and grants less powerful rewards. The authors referenced a study from Ferster (1953) when he time constraints involving reinforcing pigeons. The results of the study discussed that high levels of impulsivity



outweigh the ability to exhibit self-control therefore indicating that there is an interference with learning how to adapt to aversive events.

The researchers of the study used a descriptive analysis to discuss the methods of effectively teaching self-control (McKee & Dixon, 2014). They mention that the Relational frame theory concept helps to alter stimulus functions with both larger and immediate rewards to establish either self-controlled or impulsive responses. To further explain the findings of the study, McKeel and Dixon argued that research demonstrating that process other than directly training an individual can play a major role with manipulating responses. It was identified in the passage that the results for many organisms can be favorable if they encompass the strength to withhold actions. Absence of this skill to exert self-control produces less-favorable outcomes with no room to expand the level of learning or experience with previous consequences. McKeel and Dixon stated that Binder et al. (2000) studied children with ADHD who were taught to exert self-control through verbal mediation to understand that longer delays produced greater rewards. This is like an organism which can generate the cognitive capacity to exert more positive forms of self-control.

To provide insight in regard to how external factors may manifest and influence criminal behavior, Anderson, Donlan, McDermott, and Zaff (2015) investigated how ecological factors may impact a child's or teenager's aggressive tendencies. Aggression can be viewed as a product of criminal behavior due to the risk of imposing physical harm to another individual or group of people. This method of aggression may often be influenced by the desire to achieve or obtain certain tangibles as a form of satisfaction.

Anderson et al. (2015) stated that the adolescence stage can be characterized as a period of when the child exhibits aggression, delinquent behavior, and violent tendencies. The researchers believed that self-control is a protective factor for deflecting unhealthy forms of learning. However, if self-control is ineffective or absent, children are more likely to display violent tendencies. Possessing a high degree of self-control can contribute to alleviating arrays of problem or criminal behaviors (Anderson et al., 2015).

To clarify how violent forms of behaviors are related to adolescent antisocial behavior, Anderson et al. (2015) referenced that elevated-violence in behaviors peak during the late-adolescent stage and early adulthood stages forecast tendencies to commit criminal conduct in the future (Dodge, Coie, & Lynam, 2007; Moffitt, 1993). Anderson et al. highlighted that adolescents tend to absorb knowledge from relatives and other people within their surrounding environment (Steinberg & Morris, 2001). To explain, Anderson et al. addressed youth antisocial behaviors by focusing on how individual strengths can be supplemented from support from family, friends, and other environmental sources. Self-control is regarded as a key factor for curbing violent antisocial behaviors. To examine their idea, Anderson et al. collected a sample from 8,782 adult participants in 343 regional groups (NCs; Morenoff, Sampson, & Raudenbush, 2001). The authors' intent was to understand the protective features that mitigate antisocial behavior.

Anderson et al. (2015) used the subscales from the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach, 1991) to evaluate hostile and offending means within youths. The test consisted of the adult participants giving an account through their responses about the behaviors of their child or children (Anderson et al., 2015). In addition, generalized social

support was examined by using the Provision of Social Relations scale (PSR; Turner, Frankel, & Levin, 1983); the assessment entailed researchers asking participants to report on the level of societal aid provided by their relatives and family members (Anderson et al., 2015). Also, the self-control variable was calculated by using inhibitory control subscale of the Emotionality, Activity, Sociability, and Impulsivity (EASI) Temperament Survey (Buss & Plomin, 1984).

Anderson and her colleagues used measures of neighborhood structure obtained from the 1990 U.S. consensus data report which included a 5-item Likert scale (Sampson et al., 1997). This specific measurement scale was relative to the Likert scale in which participants had to respond to items varying from a five-point rating scale with scores ranging from 1 (Very Likely) to 5 (Very Unlikely). The scale examined environmental circumstances in which neighbors or people who reside within the same natural environment who would most likely intervene with a child committing an inappropriate act. Results for measuring violent behavior and aggression, Anderson et al. determined that self-control exhibited by youths possessed reduced levels of aggression. The researchers also obtained similar results in measuring violence along with self-control and other protective factors. According to Anderson et al., family, social support, and neighborhood factors play an important role with aiding a child with deflecting violent or antisocial behavior with potent skills of self-control. With the support information presented in Anderson and her colleagues' study, children who are exposed to unhealthy environments along with receiving productive support are capable of learning how to destabilize early forms of criminal behavior. Individuals who lack self-control are most

likely not provided with such resources to help guide to becoming more proactive with their decisions.

### **Psychological Deficiencies**

Psychological deficiencies can well be manifested within the early stages of childhood thus contributing to the development of long-term behavior problems. A study conducted by Hallquist, Hipwell, and Stepp (2015) introduced how ineffective self-control and cruel discipline can increase the risk of developing signs of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). The research process was designed to examine the reciprocity of relations between negative parenting skills, self-regulation, and negative emotionality in young children (Hallquist et al., 2015). Adolescent girls taking part in the exam were assessed for the intended traits during their earlier years to predict the development of BPD symptoms as they mature into their late adolescent stage. It was mentioned that they assumed that adverse emotions during a person's childhood would determine the magnitude of BPD symptoms by the age of 14 (Hallquist et al., 2015).

Retrieving samples of the subjects were based on the Pittsburgh Girls Study which consists of 2,450 girls who were initially assess between the ages of 5-8. Hallquist and his colleagues (2015) followed the girls annually using an accelerated longitudinal cohort design. Also, the examination included targeting girls who were inhabited in low-income homes within a Pittsburgh community. According to Hallquist et al. (2015), the female participants involved in the analysis did not distinguish from minority race, family poverty, or single-parent homes. The researchers also included samples from adolescents in other neighborhoods; yet adolescents in low income homes were oversampled.

Moreover, the method of evaluating participants using in-homes interviews for both girls and the caregiver were revised yearly by skilled practitioners by simply operating a laptop (Hallquist et al., 2015).

Hallquist et al. (2015) described that assessing harsh punishment involved employing parent and child accounts on the Conflict Tactics Scale: Parent-Child version (CTDPC; Straus, Hamby, Finkelhor, Moore, & Runyan, 1998). Subsequently, caregiver reports used to measure negative emotionality at the age of 11 involved the Emotionality, Activity, and Sociability Temperament Survey (Buss & Plomin, 1984). The negative emotionality scale used by Hallquist et al. (2015) consisted of a subscale of 5 items which measured negative emotional responses by determining a descriptive frequency (e.g., 1 (a little), 5 (a lot)).

Poor restraint was examined by integrating the self-control subscale of the Social Skills Rating Scale (Gresham & Elliot, 1990). The approach to using this 10-item scale was scored at a higher value which reflected poorer self-control. Next, the variable poverty was measured by determining if the caregiver of the child was receiving support from public assistance. Evidently, Hallquist et al. (2015) remained consistent with oversampling low-income neighborhoods. During the first wave of evaluations, about 40% of families received support from public assistance. The researchers also included race as a binary covariate in structural equation types to manage racial variations (Hallquist et al., 2015). The minority race made up most of the assessment pool during the first wave. Finally, borderline personality symptoms were quantified by the International Personality Disorder Examination-Screen (IPDE-S; Lenzenweger,

Loranger, Korffine, Neff, 1997). This scale assessed how a child felt about herself and whether she wants the attention from others. Hallquist et al. (2015) referenced from the work of Chanen et al. (2008) by reporting that the IPDE-S was originally developed for adults but showed validity in assessing for signs of BPD.

Hallquist et al. (2015) primarily focused on girls in this study with the purpose of constructing a more distinct understanding of gender differences affected by BPD. Moreover, the statistical analyses performed in the study relied on a series of latent curve models (LCMs; Bollen & Curran, 2005). The scale's purpose served as characterizing the degree of alteration in poor self-control, harsh punishment, and BPD symptoms (Hallquist et al., 2015). The layout of the reports was presented on two tables separating distributional statistics and correlations among variables. Systematically, the researchers demonstrated concern for measurement invariance of the BPD construct. Hallquist et al. examined unrestricted configural invariance confirmatory factor analysis model where loadings and thresholds may potentially vary (Millsap & Yun-Tein, 2004).

Extensive results presented by Hallquist et al. (2015) further indicated that there was longitudinal change between self-control and harsh punishment. To verify the correlations between the variables self-control, harsh punishment, and BPD symptoms, longitudinal models had to adequately detect developmental patterns within the girls between the ages of 10 and 14 (Hallquist et al., 2015). In result, the linear LCM determined that harsh punishment was equivalent to the reports presented by the children between the ages of 10 and 14. Harsh punishment and self-control also demonstrated covariance in the level and rate of change at each age beginning from the first wave of

assessments. Hallquist et al. (2015) highlighted that children, 14 to 17 years old, had inadequate self-control skills. In addition, the beginning of developmental pathways seemingly affects girls who become 14 years old.

Within the outcome of the study, Hallquist et al. (2015) noted that harsh parenting presents a significant link to with the development of BPD symptoms. Though poor self-control, harsh punishment, and negative emotionality are directly linked to BPD symptoms, each factor varies among age. Hallquist et al. (2015) acknowledged that their study only addressed a limited set of concerns, yet the results remained reliable with the coercion model in numerous ways. It can be clearly defined from the text the poor self-control changes with age but is a defining factor for constructing BPD symptoms due to harsh punishment.

Due to potential and harmful conditions, many children face during the early stages of development, inability to learn and adapt increases the risk of inhibiting problematic behaviors. Without treatment, problem behaviors can transpire into more chronic deficiencies that lead to psychiatric disorganizations. In a study presented by Perry, Presniak, and Olsen (2013), they agreed that defense mechanisms play a role with personality disorders. The researchers believed that other types of mental disorders such as schizotypal, borderline, antisocial, and narcissistic personality disorders are also linked with developing defense mechanisms. In relation to low self-control, such psychiatric deficits limit an individual's ability to make appropriate decisions or respond proactively to various circumstances. Perry et al. (2013) noted that narcissistic and antisocial personality disorders share minor image-distorting defenses. The purpose of their study

was to introduce that psychiatric disorders contribute to developing defensive processes. Perry et al. (2013) referenced from the American Psychiatric Association (1994) people often possess defense mechanisms that do not only require mediation from people but can be automatically triggered in response to adverse events.

The subjects in the examination participated in a longitudinal investigation initiated in 1980 at the Cambridge Hospital (Perry et al., 2013). There was a total of 124 participants who contributed to the investigation. The age range of the participants were between the ages of 18-45 and each participant had to possess an IQ of 80 or higher, absence of alcohol dependence, and no diagnosis of schizophrenia. According to Perry et al. (2013), there were slightly more females than males in the study with a percentage of subjects being 55% females and 45% males. However, out of the 124 participants in the study, only 107 gave consent to be interviewed during the experiment. Additionally, the research later expanded the structure of the study by included Schizotypal Personality Disorder (Perry, O'Connell, & Drake, 1984) and Narcissistic Personality Disorder (Perry & Perry, 1996).

Each psychiatric variable: Schizotypal Personality Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder, Antisocial Personality Disorder, and Narcissistic Personality Disorder was applied to participants who had corresponding traits of either disorder. Perry et al. (2013) conducted semi-structured diagnostic interviews which lasted almost two hours during each session. Furthermore, the statistical analysis used for the study was a multivariate analysis in order to employ a continuous rather than categorical diagnostic variables (Perry et al., 2013). The effort of the analysis consisted of testing the



relationships between the suggested hypothesized defenses and each continuous diagnostic variable (Perry et al., 2013). Detection of hypothesized defenses in relation to shared unique variables were uncomplicated within each diagnostic variable.

Perry et al. (2013) were able to differentiate between each variable of personality disorders. To explain, the diagnostic breakdown included SPD 44 (35%), BPD 59 (48%), ASP 41 (33%), and NPD 10 (8%) without any symptoms of PD but Perry et al. (2013) were able to detect a strong association between ASP and NPD. They also reported that intercorrelations between all continuous diagnostic scales were nonsignificant, except between ASP and NPD (Perry et al., 2013). Moreover, the researchers believed that their efforts served as two purposes for which the study brings about an understanding about the defenses in four PD types. The second purpose determined similarity between the hypotheses which consisted of using reliable, systematic, and validated procedures for evaluating both defenses and diagnoses (Perry et al., 2013). Contrast to the favorable results, the limitation that was identified in the study is the reliance on a descriptive or qualitative assessment to measure each defense. Therefore, considering a quantitative approach assisted with transforming the numerical results into continuous scores. Perry et al. (2013) designed the study so the process can be replicated in future attempts to rather challenge or support the strategy of measuring PD defenses.

### **Environmental Constraints**

Environmental issues of cognitive development places significant limitations on the individual's capacity to advance or further self-knowledge. Self-knowledge not only includes enhancing intelligence but to also contribute to building self-awareness,

judgment, insight, affect, and content. When these attributes are hindered or restricted, negative behavioral characteristics like low self-control can influence persistent undesirable or favorably negative actions. Similarly, a study presented by DeLisi, Beaver, Vaughn, Trulson, Kosloski, Drury, and Wright (2010) tested areas concerning Gottfredson and Hirschi's theory on self-control by focusing on character and gender among institutionalized juveniles. The goal of this research effort consisted of addressing the issues with Gottfredson and Hirschi's assumption that self-control is not a characteristic or gender paradigm. To explain, previous research attempts investigating the areas of self-control have seemingly provided evidence that personality and gender correlate with the development of self-control (DeLisi et al., 2010).

Prior research attempts designed to assess personality facets are mentioned by DeLisi et al. (2010) about O'Connell's (2003) structural equation modeling. In the test, DeLisi et al. (2010) explained that O'Connell examined the influences of hostility and sensation-seeking within areas concerning employment, marriage, substance abuse, educational enrollment, and apprehension among a sample of 577 delinquents. To demonstrate the dimensions of self-control theory, DeLisi et al. (2010) derived a study from Haapanen and Steiner (2006) from which they obtained a sample of 813 juvenile delinquents with severe criminal histories. The data from this study was conducted between 1997 and 1999 to evaluate psychological issues among juveniles who were institutionalized. DeLisi et al. (2010) noted that the original study's goal involved investigating the effectiveness of the proposed instruments from the CYA Treatment Needs Assessment (TNA) battery. The samples of the study accounted for both males and

females of all races and backgrounds. The average age between both genders was 16.89 years but males were the predominant sample. DeLisi et al. (2010) focused on two measures of the study regarded as the Weinberger Adjustment Inventory (WAI) and WAI Personality typology.

DeLisi et al. (2010) addressed that the WAI objective is to assess broad, superordinate personality functioning among adolescents. In addition, the WAI Personality typology is based on a four-quadrant personality typology with the purpose of interconnecting the distress and restraint dimensions at age-appropriate means. The dependent variables of the study were represented by assault, assault against staff, assault against wards, sexual misconduct, suicidal activity, aggressive misconduct, and other/nonviolent misconduct. As defined by DeLisi et al. (2010), the tools used to measure institutional misconduct were identified as the MANOVA analysis. Importantly, sexual misconduct and suicidal activity were excluded from negative binomial regression analyses due to instability within the models (DeLisi et al., 2010).

Analytical strategies were divided into two forms of analysis known as the multivariate analysis and the negative binomial regression models. Results from the study indicated results on four different tables. Each table tested for MANOVA for Institutional Misconduct, Negative binomial regression model for assault against wards, assault against staff, aggressive misconduct, and total misconduct reviewed by parole board. DeLisi et al. (2010) concluded that violence against staff members were not a strongly predictor power for both males and females. However, inadequate self-control determined an relationship between males and crimes against workers (DeLisi et al.,

2010). Additionally, negative effects correlated between both males and females. The researchers also found that girls often have the tendency to assault staff if endured symptoms of distress, prior delinquency, and externalizing behaviors. Evidently, DeLisi et al. (2010) discovered that a substantial connection between depleted self-control and aggressive misconduct amongst male participants ( $b = -.42, z = -2.66$ ) thus differentiating from female participants ( $b = .30, z = .085$ ).

Information obtained from this study was built on contributing to Gottfredson and Hirschi's theory on poor self-control. Furthermore, DeLisi et al. (2010) acknowledged Cauffman et al. (2005) and Vaughn et al. (2007) insight concerning Gottfredson and Hirschi's assumptions on depleted self-control is connected to present character paradigms and can be operated using personality scales. Moreover, DeLisi et al. (2010) suggested a strong similarity between personality linkages to inconsiderate mannerisms and individuals with poor self-control skills. Results also suggested that there remains conflicting information about how low self-control is manifested. Yet, DeLisi et al. (2010) support that Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) construct of depleted self-control is efficient on behalf of determining predictive validity of antisocial and analogous behaviors.

Associated constructs addressing how low self-control affects individuals of distinct demographics or race is presented in Kirchner and Higgins' (2014) analysis in racial disparities and self-control. Kirchner and Higgins' (2014) purpose for conducting the study was to investigate the racial differences concerning criminal offenses under the concept of self-control theory. Though Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) study of

depleted self-discipline has gained acceptance and provision, gaps within continued research on the theory continues to persist (Kirchner & Higgins, 2014). Kirchner and Higgins attempted to close the gap by understanding the literature of self-control theory by explaining racial disparities in criminal conduct. In order to conduct the study, the researchers used data which was acquired from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY79). Kirchner alongside Higgins encompassed paternal and youth reports about criminal offenses.

The NLSY79 study included subjects from African American, Hispanics, and white respondents. This sample also included a total of 1,700 participants which was comprised of 900 males and 800 females based on offending reports dating back to 2006. In the study, there were 417 African Americans, 312 Hispanics, and 971 white respondents. However, Kirchner and Higgins' (2014) noted that missing data for which this type of inaccuracy can present prejudices and distorted outcomes (Brame & Paternoster, 2003; Brame & Piquero, 2003). In the attempt to alleviate the issue of absent statistics, Kirchner and Higgins employed complete evidence of maximum likelihood which describes Allison (2003) and Enders (2001) account supporting this strategy for reducing the degree of bias.

Kirchner and Higgins (2014) emphasized that parental management was assessed employing the Nofziger's (2008) measure, involving children between the ages of 6 to 8 years. Nofziger's (2008) measure focused on how monitoring and disciplinary were placed on the child. The measure was divided into two measures which first tested interaction and discussion between parents and child and the second focused on

expectations of the parents. Kirchner and Higgins (2014) reported that the scale consisted of a 5-item Likert scale type assessment which measure time. In addition, self-control was also measured by Nofziger's (2008) assessment on an 11-item measurement scale. Kirchner and Higgins reported that this specific measure was applied to the child between the ages of 8 to 10 years. This scale was based on the reports from the mother of the Behavior Problems Index (BPI) about behavioral functions of their child.

Responses from the Nofziger's (2008) scale which measured mother's responses was assessed on a 3-item scale centering on truth or fiction. In addition, Kirchner and Higgins (2014) measure for offending came from Turner and Piquero's (2002) self-report scale. This 9-item self-report was constructed for children or youths, 16–18 years of age (Kirchner & Higgins, 2014). This measure was scaled on a 4-point quantity which measured the duration of specific problematic behaviors. Finally, peer pressure was measured by the level of influence the peers have on other behaviors (Kirchner & Higgins, 2014). Kirchner and Higgins reported that this strategy was uniform to Pratt and Cullen's (2000) claim that peer pressure is imperative for an investigation exploring self-control theory to deter from misrepresent the models.

Kirchner and Higgins (2014) specified that the analysis comprised of a series of phases. The first phase consisted of demonstrating a descriptive analysis to measure normality in the data. Next, the second phase included Kirchner and Higgins' discussion of the correlations which were used to show that levels corresponded in variance. Finally, the third step included the introduction of the scale model which examined the dimensional qualities (Kirchner & Higgins, 2014). To understand, Kirchner and Higgins

stated that the scale type was originated via structural equation modeling (SEM) by Mplus 5.2. The model primary objective involved using a chi-square to make the process of analysis less complicating. Kirchner and Higgins stated that Kline (2004) declined to believe that the chi-square statistic is substantial due to being vulnerable to sample size; therefore, making a sizable sample significant to measure.

Results from the analysis yielded 4-step phase with the first step indicating that some measure were nominal. The second step yielded results for how much variance was shared between each measure. Consequently, the third step indicated results that the chi-square model was compatible with the data and the convergent validity was likewise present (Kirchner & Higgins, 2014). Finally, the fourth step Kirchner and Higgins (2014) analyzed the structural model for the data used to assess theories from Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) perception self-control theory. Moreover, chi-square was efficient in determining the scale incompatibility with the data alone but matched when it was examined along with the CFI (.95), the RMSEA (.04), and the WRMR (1.11).

The researchers inclined that the results provided some lead-way that there may be some discrepancies to the general context of self-control theory whilst attempting to correlate race and unlawful conduct. Kirchner and Higgins (2014) believed that the results coincided with Higgins and Ricketts' (2005) study which included the assertion of preliminary findings suggesting that self-control theory may be inefficient. Evidently, Kirchner and Higgins' influence on self-control theory and criminal conduct seemingly extended provision for the concept of depletion of self-control.

Gibson (2012) also addressed self-control and social disorganization positions towards comprehending with oppression amongst youths. Gibson accredited vulnerability to crime and violence is habitually influenced by the context of an individual's environment and behavioral patterns, the decisions they make, and individual differences which contrast from other people (Gibson, Morris, & Beaver, 2009). In other words, places, and locations matter throughout the creation of an individual's persona, attitude, and beliefs. Gibson argued that lifestyle choices can place a person at risk of victimization which are influenced by imposed structural neighborhoods. Persistent issues with low self-control in individuals who portray a role as an offender, or a victim significantly relates to the disadvantages of seeking self-gratification. Gibson described such social disorganizations as disadvantaged neighborhoods and considers these specific areas as strong environments. Disadvantaged environments are pragmatically described as a mixture of normative cultures which influence the antisocial and violent behaviors of other people (Gibson, 2012).

The purpose of Gibson's (2012) study is to present an understanding of the advantage that comes with possessing elevated self-control and depleted self-control in disadvantaged neighborhoods. It is communicated from that passage that individuals who exhibit self-control do not provoke individuals who commit a crime against them. In contrast, individuals with depleted self-control tend to become victims of more aggressive individuals due to poor decision-making. Gibson presented a potential issue within the context of depleted self-control and crime based on the victim's perspective. Gibson stated that individuals lacking self-discipline often play the role of the victim to



obligate themselves to short-term gratifications but avoid the punishments that follow with their decisions.

Gibson (2012) screened 40,000 subjects between the age ranges of 0–18 years old. The subjects included a combination of several different racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, family structure, and includes geographical boundaries (Sampson et al. 1997). The independent variable in the examination was low self-control which was represented by a 17-item measure for behavioral indicators of depleted self-control (Gibson et al., 2009; Gibson, Sullivan, Jones, & Piquero, 2010). The 17-item assessment combined with the Emotionality, Activity, Sociability, and Impulsivity Temperament Survey (EASI)-temperament instrument. Gibson reflected on Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) statement about their perception of impulsivity involving inhibitory controls reflecting the incapacity to postpone self-fulfillment. For instance, problems with resisting temptation is relative to indicating depleted self-control.

The items being measured for the examination was identified as violent victimization. Gibson (2012) reported that violent victimization was measured employing several questions from the Exposure to Violence (ETV) interview. The questions of the survey mainly included questions tapping on the problem of the participant being assaulted within a certain number of months. The variables included being slapped, hit, beaten up, shot, shot at, attacked, sexually battered, or being threatened. The analytic strategy used to examine the variables of the study proceeded several steps for testing the hypotheses regarding the structure of a specific neighborhood, low self-control, and violent victimization (Gibson, 2012). Gibson noted that bivariate comparisons were used

to measure victim and non-violence victims to verify the demographic and traits between two groups. In addition to the task, the multivariate logistics regression model was constructed to measure the connection between neighborhood structure and depleted self-control on victimization. Lastly, along with using additional sources of multivariate logistics regression models determined effects for depleted self-control on violent victimization, Gibson used conditional predicted probabilities to estimate the relation between depleted self-control and violent victimization in disadvantaged districts.

Results provided by Gibson (2012) were divided into 4 areas discussing the contrasts between victims and non-victims of violence, multivariate analysis predicting violent victimization, neighborhood hardship and aggressive oppression, and conditional possibilities of violent victimization detailing the differing influences of self-control. First, Gibson (2012) yielded results indicating that males experience victimization in contrast to females; however, 57% of males were victims of violence while 47% of males represented 47% of non-victims of violence. Gibson managed to estimate that older men within the black and Hispanic community were vulnerable to hostility. Furthermore, Gibson (2012) continued to address the hypothesis that violent victimization is highly connected with individuals who reside in disadvantaged environments.

Gibson used the hierarchical generalized linear model to estimate the affiliation among violent victimization and disadvantaged neighborhoods. Gibson yielded results that the bivariate comparisons confirmed that there was a lack of statistical evidence to determine a strong relationship between the 2 categories. The results of this measurement procedure claimed that community structural disadvantage lack the influence or have a

direct-statistical significance on violent victimization. However, Gibson indicated that male victims of violence equated to females within familiar-disadvantaged neighborhoods (odds ratio [OR] = 1.584;  $p < .05$ ). In addition, Gibson reported that older youths and youths living in single parent homes account being a victim of a violent crime (OR = 1.560;  $p < .05$ ). Demographical analyses also indicated that blacks are primarily the victims of violence compared to whites. Per Gibson (2012), while age, sex, and single-parent family structures reserved a substantial relation, the distinction in violent victimization between African American in contrast Caucasians is summed up by daily decisions and other associated characteristics.

By investigating the relation amongst depleted self-control and violent victimization for youths in deprived communities, Gibson (2012) highlighted that there is a significant correlation between each variable. A logistic regression model was used which assisted Gibson with indicating that youth who possessed depletion in self-control were victims of violence. Moreover, youths in deprived societies are within the vicinity leaving them susceptible to the influence of delinquent peers and absence of structure. Also, within more structured communities, Gibson managed to obtain correlations in results between lower disadvantaged neighborhoods and less-disadvantaged neighborhood with support from the issue of ineffective self-control skills. Gibson addressed that depleted self-control had a substantial connection to violent victimization for youths living in more habitable and functional environments.

Gibson (2012) included the conditional odds for violent victimization throughout the stages of depleted self-control for youths residing in low to high disadvantaged

neighborhoods. With the support of his results, Gibson claimed that youths who exhibit symptoms of depleted self-control become victims of violent crimes and have a history with being a victim to such offenses. Furthermore, in discussing the magnitude of violent victimization and low self-control, youths experience severe social obstacles that interfere with the capacity to learn and adapt efficiently. Youth consistently face issues with poverty, unemployment, and residential turnover representing a structural disadvantage for advancement in learning and adapting.

Crime within these specific environments are persistently high thus making the process of existence difficult for youths to avoid sporadic encounters of victimization. Gibson clarified that youths within disadvantaged neighborhoods face social pressures which may influence them to exhibit criminal behavior such as committing violence, retaliation, and other illegal activities. The implications of the study detail that depleted self-control possess broad array of influences within a spectrum of environmental and physical health throughout the evolving stages (Moffitt et al., 2011). However, the limitations to the study indicated a strict focus on adolescent behavior and restricted the study within the Chicago area. Though results prove that low self-control within youths reflect hardship in disadvantaged communities, conducting future studies with corresponding results within different and disadvantaged communities promote the arising issue of low self-control.

### **Distorted Internal States**

Prior research attempts to examine the relation between depleted self-control theory and criminal conduct have primarily focused on environmental and psychiatric

disadvantages. However, Turanovic and Pratt (2013) highlighted that low self-control creates an issue for coping with challenging events therefore triggering the urge to seek undesirable relief. This type of relief is known as substance abuse which can develop misleading decisions to cope with difficult issues. Turanovic and Pratt's rationale for presenting the report was to address how depleted self-control influences substance use and whether victims of depleted self-control commit violent crimes.

The method of Turanovic and Pratt's (2013) study included obtaining a sample of 1,463 subjects based on the data provided by Gang Resistance Education and Training Program (GREAT). Turanovic and Pratt (2013) noted the subjects were assessed on Agnew's (1992) perception on strains encompassing all unpopular and undesirable episodes that create distress among various individuals. This is identified as a negative form of coping which affects the decision-making capacity to distinguish which type of alternative is more suitable to escape problematic events. In addition to the measurement construct, Turanovic and Pratt used three waves of panel data from the fifth stage of the national evaluation of the GREAT conducted by Esbensen (2003). The independent variables from the study were identified as low self-control and victimization. To explain, Turanovic and Pratt measured the poor self-control variable with Grasmick et al.'s (1993) Low Self-Control Scale. The scale comprised of an 8-item composite measure meant to seize crucial features of risk-taking behavior and impulsivity (Schreck et al. 2006).

To further explain how low self-control affects coping, Turanovic and Pratt (2013) used a 3-item scale used to depict the number of instances that each subject was a victim of a violent act. Furthermore, the dependent variables in the study were substance

use and violent offending. Substance abuse include the following items: alcohol, marijuana, and other illegal substances. Next, violent offending was assessed to capture the duration of time since the last time a subject committed a violent act within the last 6 months. The analytic strategy designed to measure each variable consisted of a two-stage process. Turanovic and Pratt (2013) completed the task by first investigating whether oppression and depleted self-control are linked with drug abuse or whether both variables were correlated with violent offending. Since results between substance use ( $M = 2.19$ ) and violent offending ( $M = 1.87$ , variance = 15.75) were dispersed, Turaniovc and Pratt considered Long's (1997) strategy for using negative binomial regression models.

Acquiring results from the study were obtained by analyzing bivariate associations between variables utilized to approximate the regression models (Turanovic & Pratt, 2013). It is suggested from the text that key variables or the independent variables were strongly associated with drug abuse and violent behavior. Turanovic and Pratt (2013) also found that sufferers of hostility with depleted self-control engage in significant drug and alcohol abuse after experiencing oppression. This presents the issue with maladaptive coping skills because of the magnitude of the traumatic event experienced by the individual. Conversely, the researchers summarize the general strain theory contributed to the comprehending with victimization and other adverse events. Turanovic and Pratt argued that victimization is valuable for investigation compared to an independent variable because it is strongly involved with the mainstream of criminology. Though violent offending was considered, the link between the effects of violent offending and substance use may vary dependent on the individual and gender. Turanovic

and Pratt proposed that the results obtained from the study highlight the efficacy of combining key ideas from general strain and self-control concepts to present knowledge about violent behavior.

Without comprehending with the initial variables that seem to influence criminal behavior, the motive to continuously engage in unlawful conduct can often present a misleading picture of the overall functionality of a person. Such misleading patterns can be represented by severe mental illnesses that preclude an individual from learning to utilize proactive methods to make an appropriate decision. In addition to the distortion in overall behavior, Heinrichs and Sam (2012) examined the relationship between schizophrenia in patients and criminal behavior. Heinrichs and Sam highlighted that interpersonal conflict, criminality, dangerousness, and violence are seemingly related to schizophrenia from a communal standpoint; yet, due to the low prevalence of this mental disease, individuals diagnosed with the condition are often categorized as the victim rather than the perpetrator (Ascher-Svanum et al., 2010). It is explained that the persistence and social salience even without magnitude of schizophrenia-criminality link may underwrite the policies and conclusions harmfully affecting people with specific mental disorders (Heinrichs & Sam, 2012). Due to the relation between schizophrenia and criminal behavior, Heinrichs and Sam were concerned that crime-related choices reinforced motivational levels thus making the quality of life difficult for the offender. Limited access to service providers and other health and social services assigned to assist individuals with schizophrenia are evident.

Heinrichs and Sam (2012) argued that there is one potential explanation between schizophrenia and criminality in which variables rooted in the historical framework of the psychological disorder increases the probability of crime-related behaviors. Heinrich and Sam supported the arising issues of social disadvantages, lack of revenue, and scholastic disparities are substantial forecasters of misconduct within the overall population and is convincingly represented in the community of those who are diagnosed with schizophrenia (Kelly, 2000; Daly et al. 2001). Furthermore, Heinrichs and Sam stated that though violence is rare, individuals who are diagnosed with schizophrenia have often encountered law enforcement and almost a quarter of the sample have been charged with an offense (Brekke et al. 2001). To support, Heinrichs and Sam noted that homeless individuals engaged in non-violent crimes while violent crimes were more associated with those who suffered from a chronic psychotic and mood disorders (Fischer et al. 2008).

To examine the relationship between schizophrenia and criminality, Heinrichs and Sam (2012) recruited research participants from mental health facilities such as the Community Schizophrenia Service, Canadian Mental Health Association, Cleghorn Program, Challenging Directions Program, and the Hamilton Program for Schizophrenia. The general purpose of the examination was to verify the comparative and joint contributions of contextual to the prediction based on several crime-related indicators (Heinrichs & Sam, 2012). There were 151 participants accounted for in the study with 98 males and 53 females. Heinrichs and Sam stated that 98% (148) of the participants of the study received antipsychotic medication during data collection with 85% (128) receiving



treatment from second-generation drugs. The participants' varied between the ages of 21 to 65 years with an average age of 41.02 (SD = 9.38) while the mean inception of age in years reported 20.78 (SD = 5.40).

Heinrichs and Sam (2012) emphasized that the vocabulary section of the test indexed verbal capacity while matrix reasoning included letter-numbering measured auditory functioning memory, nonverbal communication, and symbol identification measured reactivity in visual processing. The independent variables of the examination included neurocognitive tests arranged to test several aspects of cognitive functioning. The tests included the Wechsler Intelligence Scale (WAIS-III; Wechsler, 1997) intended to measure terminology, matrix connectiveness, letter-number symbols, and symbol identification. In addition, the California Verbal Learning Test (CVLT-II; Delis et al. 2000), Conner Continuous Performance Test (CPT-II; Conners 2000) and Controlled Oral Word Association Test (COWAT; Benton et al. 1994) were also conducted to measure verbal memory, response inhibition, word generation and fluency, and learning acquisition.

Heinrichs and Sam (2012) used a logistic multiple regression scale to test the relative rationality of contextual and intrinsic themes for determining the influence of criminal conduct. The dependent variables of the examination included contextual (experience, history) measures and intrinsic (naturally belonging) measures. Results indicated data labeling intrinsic and crime-related themes yielded truncated typical intensities of functioning throughout reasoning factors. Heinrichs and Sam reported that a third of the members were indicted for an offense as they matured, and more than a

quarter were charged with convictions involving violence. Moreover, the violence category reported that one person was charged with attempted murder, another person was charged for stabbing, and another three charged for sexual assaults with the remaining sample being charged with minor assaults. Heinrichs and Sam reported the correlation between both convictions ( $r = .79, p < .001$ ) and violence ( $r = .52, p < .001$ ). The regression model comprised of the background factors were statistically substantial and indicated accuracy at 72%.

To summarize, Heinrichs and Sam (2012) believed that the outcomes of the investigation specified that contextual and intrinsic themes of schizophrenia and crime-related behaviors are imperative for grasping the purpose of criminal indictment within individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia. There are no specific implications; yet, men with schizophrenia and young individuals within the poor community are vulnerable to committing illegal acts. However, Heinrichs and Sam acknowledged that their study was limited using subjective reports and table records rather than considering court documentation to catalog crime-related actions. Evidently, Heinrichs and Sam's examination seemingly confirms the position of the socioeconomic and personal context of severe psychological disorders assist with comprehending with the criminal charges toward people with schizophrenia.

### **Summary**

The studies presented help provide an overview of the relation between low self-control and criminal behavior. Prior research centered on self-control theory and criminal behavior is chiefly supported by a quantitative form of language. In other words, much of

prior research examining self-control theory is dominated by quantitative analyses. While many articles presented in the literature confront the impact of low self-control, the contributions made have been generalizable to other people and settings. Self-control theory continues to expand the degree of knowledge which extends beyond both psychological and environmental dimensions. It is logical to consider that this area of behavioral health affects all people within a widespread population. Both internal and external factors can be considered but knowing what to explore and how to apply certain variables to the most precise measurement is the most challenging aspect of the investigation. The following Chapter presents the strategy for how the study is conducted along with the interpretation of the results.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The aim of this qualitative investigation was to explore how persistent low self-control influences criminal behavior or recidivism. As stated in Chapter 1, the themes included incompetent parenting, attitudinal and behavioral barriers, psychological deficiencies, environmental constraints, and distorted internal states. The participants proceeding with the study were exceptional because many of the participants of distinct backgrounds were exposed to variable environmental and internal problems that influence their reoffending. In addition, offenders between the ages of 18 and 35 are well active within the criminal justice system. A phenomenological analysis was used to provide substantial information for determining a relationship between the selected themes and their relationship to low self-control. The phenomenological approach was essential for linking information provided in detail, thus potentially corresponding to the themes. The phenomenological approach was used to understand the participants' lived experiences (Creswell, 2009), to focus on what the participants feel, believe, and how their attitudes were constructed throughout their life course.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

The research question was geared toward understanding the experiences of reoffenders. The offender provided an account of his history with personal issues, motivational tendencies, and other factors that had a major impact in the evolution of criminal misconduct. The research question addressed issues surrounding the actual themes discussed earlier in the study. According to Creswell (2009), the research

question reflects the central question of the study. He added that the central question is a comprehensive inquiry which propels the investigation of the central phenomenon within the study.

The central concept of the review consists of exploring self-control theory and identifying the themes on persistent criminal behavior or reoffending. To clarify, criminal behavior comprises of the interaction between the offender and the environment (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). Based on Gottfredson and Hirschi's analysis of self-control theory, depleted self-control provides the umbrella for a series of categories that serve as potential motivators for criminal behavior.

The study used a phenomenological approach. The purpose was to account for the offender's perspective on what underwrites his perception on the depletion of self-control and the motivation to pursue unlawful desires. Creswell (2009) defined this specific research strategy motivates the investigator to identify the essence of human knowledge concerning various phenomenon presented by the participants. In other words, offender experiences should provide important details relevant toward identifying potential motivational factors for developing criminal behavior. With increasing rates of incarceration, there is justification to conclude that programs and rehabilitation systems meant to help deter offenders from committing more crimes in the future is inefficient. In addition, grasping what the offender knows helps them to understand that their accounts and stories are important for paving a way for better treatment.

### **Role of the Researcher**

My responsibility in the study consists of two phases. First, the attempt to gain the participant's permission and trust to conduct the interview by introducing myself and elaborating on my purpose. This may perhaps help with the participant feeling comfortable and able to share more in-depth information. Finally, the transcription of information will take place. This strategy should provide the opportunity for the participant to take the helm of sharing his story and accounts. To explain, Punch (1998) indicated that a qualitative research approach can include the researcher introducing oneself as a member of sample group then becoming the objective observer. I do not have any type of personal or emotional investment in the relationship. However, it is my duty to inform the participants that results obtained for the study may highlight serious issues concerning reoffending.

Furthermore, to eliminate researcher bias, probing questions and avoidance of input are essential to collecting recounted information. Continually asking questions may assist with influencing the participant to become more responsive to questions and provide more extensive information. I possess a tape recorder, a pen, and notepad to write down information that is notable for obtaining and breaking down vital sources. Briefing the process of the study is presented to the participant after meeting with him. Also, included in the briefing, I shall present the participant's right to withdraw from the interview if he feels uncomfortable or threatened. As presented by Creswell (2009), seeking accessible research sites and encountering ethical challenges become an issue within the researcher's role.

### **Selection of Participants**

This sample size is comprised of eight young male-offenders who are currently exhausting their penalties or contributing voluntary time in community service within the Angelina County Justice System in Texas. The reason for the sample size is due to conducting interviews with participants; therefore, making it suitable to not over-satiate the research study. Considering the quantity of participants for the study, eight current offenders are arranged to be selected to maintain a close and working relationship with the participants. One of the goals of gathering significant information is to earn the offenders' trust into detailing their accounts and experiences. Furthermore, there is one county within the region and four census-designated and unincorporated communities. The population of this study entails interviewing a diverse group of individuals with the age range of 18–35 years old. Selecting participants is constructed from a random purposive sampling approach but the chosen participants possess convictions which range from minor to moderately severe offenses.

The selected sampling method is the purposive sampling technique, also called the opinion sampling method, which is a consistent tool for assessing the participant's characteristics (Tongco, 2007). The sampling effort involves organizing knowledge and experiences which donates to the causation of certain attitudes in individuals (Bernard 2002, Lewis & Shepard 2006). In addition, random purposive sample enables a more generalized approach for determining the results of the study and how the outcome may yield interests in other communities. The justification for selecting this sampling method for the investigation is due to the investigation possessing a small number of participants

and limited resources. Nonetheless, the purpose sampling effort assists in explaining the phenomenon of interest. The research effort should not be threatened by saturation due to the reasonable number of participants arranged for contributing to the study.

### **Research Question**

RQ1: How does an individual describe his lived experiences in relation to low self-control?

The following 10 interview questions sought to determine the relation between the themes serving under low self-control and recidivism:

1. What type of childhood did you have and who did you consider as a mentor?
2. What were some things that are meaningful to you in your life?
3. How does your attitude affect your ability to cope with various circumstances?
4. Please provide some personal weaknesses that influence your urge to demonstrate problem behaviors.
5. Please explain the potential barrier(s) that often lead to reoffending?
6. How does your level of motivation play a role with fulfilling your desires?
7. What resources are provided to you to help you avoid future arrests?
8. Please explain how your attitude when faced with adversity.
9. What are some personal interests which may help you with seeking opportunities at accomplishing your goals appropriately?
10. Describe the personal drawbacks that seem to reappear in your life.



### **Instrumentation**

The general interview guide approach is used to expedite the interviewing process for each participant. The purpose of the interview ensures that the participant can exercise some freedom when answering questions. Yet, the goal is to remain geared toward concentrating on the themes of the study and the same questions are provided to each participant in the study. This process can be complicated while providing either a standardized or informal method of conducting an interviewing process because of potential biased responses, drift from topic, or potential overexaggerating responses. Participant responses are organized to be measured based on corresponding terms, historical accounts, characteristics, and other behavioral exhibitions related to the themes projected for the study. With the opportunity of providing the participant a chance to express what they know about their drawbacks seems to be logical method for acquiring a more valid understanding.

The data for the study is planned to be collected in a room available for the participant. I shall take on the task of collecting data by documenting information important for the study and breaking down other sources of material that can be integrated into the collection. The duration of each session can be variable depending on the participant. They are not be provided a limited time but if the participant becomes less responsive or fatigued, I asked if he needs to conclude his narrative. In addition, I also possess a tape recorder to record respond to compensate for any information I am unable to document. Hence, when the participant feels if his interview is complete, he can inform the researcher and makes his decision to leave without facing any penalty.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The core ethical principles that are considered for this research study reflects privacy, confidentiality, and protection from harm concerns for each participant. Maintaining offender confidentiality consist of challenges due to the details that are provided in their personal recollections. While considering the privacy of the respondent and the integrity of the research design, presenting the basis of informed consent assists in deflecting, or minimizing ethical dilemmas. Supplementary efforts for protecting respondents include locking and storing voice recorders within storing cabinets which require a key for accessibility. Recorded responses within the voice or tape recorder will be transcribed and sorted by themes after meeting with the respondents. Regardless of beliefs, views, and attitudes of everyone, a person alone has the right to decide whether he or she wants to contribute to the betterment of research and possess the freedom to postpone or terminate their involvement if they do not feel safe. Furthermore, the role of the IRB for Walden University consists of implementing the regulations required for either approving or disapproving the research. Hence, it is imperative that the participants of this study possess voluntariness, demonstrate the knowledge, and capacity of the purpose of the investigation. In addition, before implementing research efforts, the right to withdraw oneself from the study without penalty or coercion should be shared before the investigation begins. As an ethical and professional practitioner and researcher, I have the primary duty to ensure the protection and safety of all participants involved with this study.

### **Data Collection**

The study is arranged to be conducted using multiple sources of documentation and responses provided by the participant. Documentation of participant responses assists with drawing conclusions about self-control theory. Prior to implementing the study, a written consent form will be issued to the participants addressing their protection of privacy and other confidential sources. The participants can accept their role or withdraw themselves from the study freely and without penalty. However, and if necessary, the participant(s) who do not complete the interview will be immediately replaced with another individual who fits the criteria for the study. Also, the substitute(s) is provided a written consent discussing matters as previously mentioned. Finally, there were two selected research targeted to obtain participants. One site was a drug court program, and the other site represented a community support system aimed at helping people in need of assistance.

### **Data Analysis**

This study used a qualitative method of data gathering. The qualitative analysis was comprised of similarities between participant responses, selected themes, coding, categorizing, and consistent comparisons. The eight interviews are planned to be documented and recorded for accuracy and transcribed word for word. The random purposive sampling aids in obtaining credible information and will be based on the sample chosen for the study. Information collected is to be transcribed word for word to compare interview responses to the themes presented in the study. The research questions that were formulated reflect the themes presented in the literature review section. In

addition, the responses and themes for the study are to be compared for further analysis. To help aid in the process of obtaining information, relevant sources from literature discussing self-control theory and recidivism assists in determining the corresponding elements provided within the offender's accounts. The phenomenological approach provides the offender the freedom to reflect on historical elements and experiences to address the probable issues with one's own low self-control and repeat offenses. The eight participants for the study make up a generalized group of individuals of all backgrounds and ethnicities thus representing a widespread understanding of self-control theory.

### **Summary**

This section restated the point of the investigative research through the presentation of the exploration question and organization strategies for the interviewing process. The participants are selected through a random purposive sampling technique for offenders serving in community service. Data collection and instrumentation strategies were presented to provide sufficient validity and reliability for the study. As described above, chapter 3 outlined the research methodology to explore and solve the research question. A general outlook reflecting descriptive accounts provided by the participants avoids the threat of any biased perceptions. Therefore, the following information in chapter four withdraws any control from the researcher to give each participant the liberty to communicate their experiences.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Introduction**

The phenomenological approach used in this study assisted with identifying the corresponding elements aligned with low self-control and potential motivators in reoffending parolees. The goal of this study is designed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the motivational factors relative to low self-control which contribute to persistent reoffending behaviors. These motivating factors can contribute to increased aversive feelings that accumulate over time, thus influencing an individual to take immediate action to achieve gratification and reduce aversive emotions (Dang & Hagger, 2019). Vaughn, Boufford, and Piquero (2016) highlighted the need to understand the selection processes, which describes determining the candidates fit for a specific criteria, constrained by low self-control, delinquent peer influence, and other casual factors of crime. The research questions are aimed at focusing on the themes that motivate offenders to continue to engage in socially inappropriate behaviors, thus leading to communal penalization or brief incarcerations. This chapter covers the following topics: demographics, setting, data collection techniques, data interpretation/analysis, results interpreting research questions, trustworthiness, and summary of results. I asked each participant does he feel comfortable with sharing his experience by responding to a series of questions and they responded yes. However, each patient did not want to be identified and I informed him that this interview remains private and confidential for their safety and protection.

### **Demographics**

Participant 1 was a 28-year-old African American individual who served 8 years in prison. He stated that he was indicted for aggravated robbery but agreed to a plea bargain to have an opportunity at being paroled. P1 admitted to committing the crime but believed that he had a dire reason to do what he did. P1 currently holds minor jobs in construction. He is complacent with the opportunity to gradually transition back into society but believes that his attitude while serving time within the correctional system periodically interferes with his relationship with people. Additionally, P1 also engages in community service events to keep himself occupied and in contact with his parole officer.

Participant 2 was a 34-year-old African American male who has experienced re-entry into the prison system twice within 10 years. He mentioned that he went down both times for possession of drugs, intoxication and disorderly conduct. The participant seemed to be at ease during our exchange agreed to participate in interview. He also engaged in community service activities to manage his time and maintain proper conduct.

Participant 3 was a 30-year-old white male who admitted to persistent encounters with law enforcement and engaging in small infractions. P3 stated that he is mostly cited for drug abuse and issues with aggression. I asked the participant if he ever served time with the correctional system and patient clarified that he only served a small amount of time in county jail to help him with recovery from drug abuse and domestic disputes. He added that he does not have a steady job but manages to get paid under the table. P3 would not discuss how he would make money but understands that his service to paying

his dues would demonstrate that he is cooperative with the justice system and seek treatment.

Participant 4 was a 24-year-old Hispanic male who agreed to participate in the study. He stated that he served a 3-year sentence for burglary of habitation but continues to have issues in the free-world. I wanted to verify with the participant the meaning of free world by suggesting that the term indicated society. P4 stated that I was correct but indicated he did not feel free at times because he continues to struggle with adjustment. He made the circumstances clear that he did not want his name to be acknowledged for the study but believes that his experience helps with establishing a more rehabilitative network for helping troubled individuals. The participant acknowledged the plan and felt more relieved from hearing the directions of the study.

Participant 5 was a 27-year-old white male who admitted to having a history of anger issues which have led him to being incarcerated for family assault. He is currently on probation to help him with learning how to work with people; yet he sometimes finds himself in confrontations with people he tries to work with. The participant requested to take part in community services events to challenge himself but during hours he is not working with a team, he also continues to struggle with maintaining relationships with his family and interpersonal relationship with the free-world. On his account, he stated that he stays with different family members but has the desire to own a home for himself. He has also agreed to participate in the study to give notice about people like him who struggle with the lack of knowledge of knowing how to simply cope with life's

difficulties. P5 seemed appreciative of the opportunity to tell his story and hopefully embrace his journey so far.

Participant 6 was a 33-year-old Hispanic male who is currently taking part in community service event based on his stipulations enforced by the state. By exhausting his time in county, he stated that he is committed to correcting his wrongs; yet, he continues to remain faced with conflict. The participant stated that he has a family which includes his wife and three children. Though he does not live with them because of his actions and choices, he stated that he receives extensive support from close family members and friends while respecting their borders. Like the other participants, I asked him if he would want to give a personal account of his experiences and knowledge about his wrongful choices he made in his life. With the understanding of the purpose of the study, the participant agreed. The participant seemed motivated and agreed to provide support for the study.

Participant 7 was a 25-year-old African American male who shared that he was incarcerated for repeated drug violations and burglary charges. The participant was cooperative and respectful as he agreed to participate in the study. I explained to the participant that his insight and recollections provides an imperative contribution to understanding why certain individuals lack the ability to make progress after re-entry back into society. P7 stated that while his insight and experiences may provide a clearer outlook on what motivates re-offenders to continue to commit crimes, he understands that he must learn to make progress himself. He explained that one of his commitments



toward progress is to follow the rules which is also a challenge due to circumstances that arise with himself and his family.

Participant 8 was a 19-year-old Hispanic male who is currently assigned duties to join in community service objectives. The participant stated that he was assigned to community service for minor infractions in which he chose not to discuss. I asked the individual if he would like to participate in a study which focused on understanding the point of view from offenders who continue to engage in minor to partially serious crimes. He expressed interest into the study but was unsure if he wanted to make the decision to participate due to the fear of getting in more trouble. I also added that his insight would be a vital contribution to the study. P8 agreed but stated that he has curfew, and his availability were limited because of his mother's rules and restrictions with the court.

### **Setting for Interviews**

Although the participants were eager to take part in the study, they were adamant about keeping their personal lives private from invasion of the public and exploitation. I continued to remain consistent with the plan to interview the participants face-face with the following materials: tape recorder, note pad, pen, and the list of questions formulated for the study. The objective was to use a note pad and pen to record information on paper for safety precautions. For instance, information from the sheet should supplement for any damages to the tape recorder, refusal from participants to use tape recorder, and damages to the tape used to conduct the interview and record the participants' answers. Unfortunately, each participant did not feel comfortable with being tape-recorded for fear that their voice being recognized by people they knew or people they did not trust (e.g.,

one participant thought that this researcher was a narc) and to maintain privacy.

Therefore, each participant and I agreed to traditionally transcribe information on pen and paper. I also informed each participant that the written information will be transferred to a Word document and their identify shall remain sealed from the public. In addition, the interview locations were chosen by the participants.

I managed to meet with Participant 1 in a small picnic area located at a park in his neighborhood during the evening hours. This time and setting were also convenient for me due to work and travel. Only one interview session was required to obtain the information needed for review. I made the participant aware that he can take time with his responses, communicate his insights, and most importantly, try to be as accurate as possible. With the low volume of people and noise, I was able to conduct the interview efficiently and in a timely manner. Fortunately, there were no interruptions during the entire session and the participant did not show any indications of being offended, harm, or distressed during the interview.

I made multiple attempts to meet with P2 during a 1-week period. After cancelled attempts, P2 contacted me to notify me that he was still interested in participating but family events were getting in the way. We managed to meet at a sitting area at the town's library. P2 clarified that he had plenty of time to discuss his views depending on the questions. I informed the participant that only one interview session is required but nonetheless do not be concerned with facing any times constraints. P2 demonstrated understanding and answered the questions to the best of his knowledge and ability. He

also showed a sense of comfort and when asked about the session, he stated that he felt relieved that he had a chance to express his beliefs on certain topics.

When I was able to contact with the participant, he immediately agreed to complete the interview. I informed him that the library may benefit for completing the interview efficiently because of the opportunity for privacy and inaudible atmosphere. The participant agreed to meet at a sitting area near the town's library but insisted that the meeting should be the only time he can interview. He added that he may be looking for job opportunities that assist him with earning more money and staying in touch with his family. Participant continued to show strong interest in the interview, and we managed to meet at the sitting area. Before the interview, I presented to the participant that his personal information is planned to be withheld to ensure his privacy and protection. The participant agreed with no further concerns.

I managed to schedule an interview with participant 4 with no problems. So far, a sitting area near the town's library has been the preferred area of choice considering availability and privacy. When I was able to contact the participant during a weekend, he seemed irritated but agreed to meet at the library. The participant indicated that he was upset with certain relatives in the household and he felt rattled at the time but informed me that he was inclined to help with the project. He seemed to feel better about the process and thankful that I acknowledged how he was feeling and choose to address the questions with no one around to possibly intrude on the interview. I encouraged the participant that there are no right or wrong answers, but the emphasis is focused on his insight to correspond to the questions asked. The primary goal was to conclude the entire

interview without any interference, disruptions, or sense of distress. The participant was notified of his privacy and confidentiality to the interview and participant agreed to continue with the interview.

The 5<sup>th</sup> participant was quite a challenge to contact and schedule. He did not answer at times but when he managed to contact me, I was at work. We were phone tagging at first, but he continued to show interest by apologizing when he left messages on my voicemail and when I returned his calls. We managed to catch up on the following weekend. I explained to the participant that sitting areas near the town's library has been the most convenient location to perform the interview. I continued that the facility does not require permission and was free of intrusion. The participant stated that the idea would be logical and he wanted to perform the interview outside because of the cemented tables and long seats. I agreed with the participant's consideration to perform the interview near the facility. The library has been the preference of choice for privacy therefore offering the participants the option of completing the remaining interviews at this location. As discussed with the prior participants, I ensured the participant his privacy and protection.

I managed to catch up with participant 6 and he gave thanks to my patience because he wanted to take the time to spend with his children. I explained to participant that sitting areas near the town's library has been the most preferred location for conducting the interviews. The participant chose to stay closer to home while conducting the interview. Participant did not want to disclose the location of his home and I informed him that his right to privacy and protection. The participant agreed and stated that there is

a garage free from interruption. He asked when the interview is concluded, is this the last time we meet, and I responded yes. Participant gave thanks due to wanting to keep activity around his children and home at a minimal. I then explained to the participant that only his personal accounts, insights, and opinions will be shared in the investigative study, not his name or other personal information.

The interview conducted with P7 was a difficult task. We managed to perform the interview, but he seemed to be upset and possessed a strong odor similar to alcohol. I informed the participant due to his health and disorientation that we have to schedule an appointment for another time. The participant objected to the idea and stated that he could answer the questions accordingly. I encouraged the participant to schedule another time because he appeared to be incapacitated which may distort his memory and ability to accurately reflect on certain issues. The participant agreed and decided to meet the following day to complete the interview. I considered sharing this encounter in the passage to show indication that many individuals continue to remain vulnerable to the challenges of day to day living. The participant and I were able to meet and I explained to him that his rights to protection and privacy are taken into consideration.

The final participant who is the 8<sup>th</sup> person to contribute to the investigation was the youngest out the entire group of men who volunteered for the study. I was able to meet with the participant after contacting him by phone. He stated that we were just in time to finish the interview because he was unaware of the disconnection to his phone. The participant preferred to complete the interview privately seated area but seemed slightly uncomfortable with the process. He looked around repeatedly, but I insisted that

everything is fine after being asked if he was stable enough to answer the questions. To bring relief to the participant, I explained to him that his privacy and protection of personal information is enforced. The participant agreed and managed to complete the interview.

### **Data Collection**

Throughout nearly a 3-week period, I was able to collect information on the 8 participants for the study by conducting recorded interviews. Prior to acquiring 8 individuals for the study, I met with the judge in charge of a drug court program and community service directors to request permission to speak with individuals who are currently participating or affiliated with the organizations. The judge and community service director gave approval for me to have the opportunity to use their programs as research sites. During the initial process of consulting with the judge and community support directors, I was informed that many individuals who participate in the programs are either assigned individuals or volunteers. Therefore, officials made a clear point that it is the participant's choice to consent to the investigation.

The locations were regularly active during certain times such as afternoon lunch and meetings scheduled for the evenings. Once I was able to become more familiar with the people participating in the events, I managed to sort out individuals who potentially have criminal histories by overhearing numerous conversations and historical accounts of their back stories. At first, I took interest by simply listening and donating some material I no longer found useful; then, I consulted with each participant privately by presenting to them my purpose gathering individuals for the investigation. This course of the study

took at least 2-weeks followed by time constraints with scheduling interviews due to the holidays. Many of the participants continued to either volunteer or work with the food bank and donation organization by means of networking with those visiting with the area.

Only one interview was conducted with everyone which is plausible for reducing the risk of exploitation. In addition, I informed each participant of the process of conducting the interview which involved using a list of questions, tape recorder, and a pen and note-pad. Each participant agreed to participate but insisted that they did not want their name mentioned in the study because of confidentiality and other potential ramifications. To begin, each interview was conducted within a spacious and quiet environment. I encouraged each participant to ponder on issues that have brought above problems within their lives instead of how the question is directly asked. For example, the participants needed to elaborate on the adverse intentions and the motivations that continue to interfere with the ability to remain committed to staying out of trouble.

Once I completed each interview, I used the Atlas.ti qualitative analysis program to help with coding information depending on the responses provided in each question. Each question possessed a connection with the listed themes for identifying how low self-control plays a role with persistent criminal conduct and behavior. For instance, certain sentences, words, and phrases that were connected to the themes decided for the study were transcribed and transferred to the Atlas.ti for coding and linking material with the selected themes. I was able to code one interview since the participants opted to avoid future encounters. Most importantly, with the participants deciding not to include their names or other personal information for the study, a consent was not required. Finally, I

encouraged the participants to be as honest as possible to help with the truthfulness of the investigation.

### **Data Analysis**

The information acquired from the interview were loaded and consolidated into the ATLAS.ti qualitative analysis program to group and code themes according to each participant's response. The selected material from the interview which gave relevance to the study were condensed under the identifiable themes categorized in the database. I preferred this route to keep the translation of information less convoluted. Roughly, a couple of participants provided minimal answers to some of the questions asked of them. Though difficult to determine whether their limited responses contributed or harmed the investigation, the process of configuring relative material into the program was straightforward. In addition, to accurately capture the significance of responses provided by the participants, I centered on an array of answers ranging from minimal phrases to placing an emphasis on main details included in extended responses. Therefore, highlighted responses and information associated with the specific themes were coded under each category. The process was also tedious due to having transcribe additional details with the pen and notepad.

Based on the answers provided by each participant in the study, the selected themes for the study became quite emergent. There was a significant connection between various sources of information supplemented from historical accounts, personal feelings, beliefs, attitudes, and desires within the responses. I completely restricted myself from providing personal thoughts and feelings about each participants' response. However, to



help providing insight in the responses, I asked the participants to look at each question as if they were geared for focusing on antagonistic views. Interpretations seemed to be more enriched by taking the role by demonstrating examples and explaining how the participant should include his harmful thoughts and desires into the questions.

### **Results from Interview Questions**

Investigative results were arranged according to the questions enquired of the participants. Documents obtained from 1 interview with each participant were explored and condensed to identify the relationship between the sources and selected themes for the study.

#### **Interview Question 1**

For the first interview question, I asked each participant to describe, what type of childhood did you have and who did you consider as a mentor?

The participants reflected substantially on their experiences involving the exposure to various settings, people, and other disadvantaged properties. As children, the participants perceived that their vulnerability to the environment may have paved a path to making socially inappropriate decisions. Misguided beliefs and the absence of teachings from positive roles models influenced disapproving attitudinal/behavioral barriers about how a person can thrive in society. For example, P1 reflected on how the hardship he experienced in his home while living with his mother and abusive stepfather transpired to other external issues. He detailed his encounters by stating it was difficult for me to focus in school, I could not get things that I wanted or needed so I ran with people that knew how. I knew the things I done was wrong in order to get money, but I

didn't know better, and my intentions continue to set me back until this day when I am faced with adversity. The participants provided imperative interpretations about how their developed attitudes interfered with their ability to recover and regroup from punishment. Environmental constraints were also evident because of the exposure to people and settings especially in disadvantaged communities. Though the participants considered that the childhood stage of human development is the most important period for learning, the effort of seeking affection and avoid abandonment was primarily a natural response if this resource was not available in the household. Clearly, fearing abandonment and the lack of constructive teaching relates strongly to parenting concerns. Reflections concerning child rearing were expressed in terms of mistreatment and negligence from parents. With compiling information delivered by everyone in the study, the participants seemed to believe that aggression manifested from the complications of noxious contact with the public. Additionally, aggression transpired into problems with managing conduct which then led to the development of criminal conduct. In fact, each participant conveyed that their reoffending behavior and inability to capitalize from their mistakes manifested during their childhood.

The selected themes structured under this question include parenting concerns, environmental constraints, psychological deficiencies, distorted internal states, and attitudinal/behavioral barriers. I managed to decipher each participants' response by connecting specific details, experiences, and words to the categories cited.

**Participant 1.** P1 presented that case of feeling abandoned and emotionally abused by his mother depending on circumstances. He included in his testament that his

father has been minimally involved in his life and when he moved to major city before being incarcerated, contact with his father lapsed. While living with his mother, the participant stated that their relationship deteriorated as he became older. In addition, when his mother got involved intimately with someone, he felt mistreated at times by both the stepfather and his mother through methods of harsh punishments. P1 admitted that the absence of parental guidance was a major factor with his inability to exert self-control. For instance, P1 spoke in regard to the lack of support from his mother and relationship with his stepfather by stating, this dude was slick, but my mama believed him over me which made me even angrier. I interpreted that there has been momentum gained from his experiences to react rather than considering more proactive approaches. He considered that abandonment and absence of father was a critical factor for his aggression. Therefore, his drive to gain access to tangibles is built through his aggression. Though he believes that exhausting his time in prison, he continues to struggle with using coping mechanisms to help him avoid simple infractions in public or go back to his old lifestyle.

**Participant 2.** P2 mentioned issues about enduring a difficult childhood. He did not exactly clarify details about what he experienced but he believed that with his father being out of the picture, he felt as though he needed to try to discover a male figure in his life. His mother took on as many responsibilities as she could to help take care of him and his siblings but as they became older, the process was too heavy on her. I interpreted that P2 placed his trust in people that he believed cared about him which explains his vulnerability to the environment. Without effective guidance from parenting, he was

susceptible to being exposed to the challenges presented. For P2, he seemed to continue to struggle with adjustment because he continues to live in the environment which led him to incarceration. He was minimal with his response but indicated that he just did not know what was right or wrong at the time. Due to his history, issues with adjustment continue to remain a problem because of not learning how to deflect his tendencies to avoid his use of drugs. He mentioned that abusing drugs at an incredibly young age is something that continues to haunt him to this day. Despite his traumatic experience, the irony of his situation is that he seeks ways to self-medicate to escape his thoughts.

**Participant 3.** P3 elaborated on an abusive childhood suffered from his parents. He articulated that he endured both emotional and physical abuse as a child which interfered with his ability to trust others. As he became older, he believed that most of his aggression and acquire resources stemmed from the negligence and abandonment he received from his parents. In addition, learning to identify with a person who may be of influence in his life was also hindered due to the mistrust and anger manifested from his childhood. P3 seemed clear about his harsh treatment within the household at a young age. He did not clarify whether he remains in contact with his parents; therefore, it is difficult to determine if he is well involved in his parents' life. Evidently, personal traits that were ineffective in learning to identify a positive leader or understand the difference between good and bad posed as a threat to learning and understanding consequences.

**Participant 4.** P4 spoke on the issue that his parents, mostly his mother, was not knowledgeable about how to teach him how to be a man. As a child, he indicated that he spent most of his time with his mother and his relationship with his father was unstable or

non-existent. He did not express anger for his parents, but he believes that his mother was at a disadvantage because she could not keep up with the world. With the mother struggling to furnish her children with necessities, the participant stated that his childhood was an emotional struggle. However, the participant considered his mother as a mentor because she never gave up on trying to make him happy and healthy. P4 was detailed with his response to the first question, but it is evident that the lack of teaching and emotional nourishment eventually influenced P4 to become dependent on obtaining resources in a socially inappropriate manner. Though serving time for his criminal acts has enlightened him to become a better person, he continues to find it necessary to acquire items but not in a legal fashion. The participant stated that he did not consider incarceration as a rehabilitative resource because of the treatment of inmates and what he believes in his perception, professional negligence from professional staff.

**Participant 5.** P5 stated that he did not have a relationship with his parents because CPS assigned his grandparents as his guardians. The participant's response to the first question was limited and he did not have a mentor. He indicated that his grandparents did what they could to care for him, but he gradually fell off track or took the wrong path as he became older. He spent an extensive amount of time with relatives, nevertheless most of his family are dysfunctional which did not construct a progressive avenue for the younger generation in his family. P5 was adamant about discussing his parents which may have yielded that the sense of abandonment played a role with his elevating aggression and anger. He showed no signs of distress while answering the

question. With no positive role model identified, his exposure into the unstable lifestyle of his relatives at a young age made him more susceptible to environmental issues.

**Participant 6.** P6 explained that he found enjoyment as a child. He mentioned that his mother and father divided their time to take care of him, but he mostly looked up to his father as a role model. He stated that while his mother was more of a quiet individual and was compliant with the rules of society, his father was more aggressive and tended to pursue goals or missions which involved breaking the rules. He seemed proud that he had the chance to spend time with his father which supplemented a substantial amount of influence on his life. However, being exposed to the nature of his father's behavior is evidence that the participant learned to manifest the idea of taking on tasks like his father's approach.

**Participant 7.** P7 presented himself as very cooperative and provided as much information as he could remember. At the start of the interviewing process, he was very brief with his delivery but became more comfortable after I enlightened him with the understanding that I or anyone else is no better than him. He experienced pauses in between his answers at times but managed to communicate information according to what was being asked. Based on the information provided by P7, he experienced being a recluse for much of his young childhood. He stated that he did not have any conflict with his father, but the connection was absent, and he understood that his father had to make a living. He addressed that he continues to do what he has to do to make money at times and it is difficult for him to maintain a steady job because of his past and issues with

people. At this time, participant 7 feels as though he must become aggressive with people to defend himself and himself alone.

**Participant 8.** P8 was the youngest individual in the sample. He presented himself as very cooperative and answered the questions accordingly. Recalling his childhood, the participant was able to recall events that seemed as if they happen recently. The participant provided an account which equates to the influence of low self-control by explaining, Man, my childhood was hard because it was just pretty much my mother, siblings, and me. I don't know my dad and hardly know anyone on his side of the family. We struggled a lot, so I came up with the idea of helping my mother getting what she needs for the house. This participant made it clear that he continues to remain influenced by the momentum of hardship that he endures as a young adult. P8 statement reflecting his childhood showcases the example that the momentum gained for exhibiting delinquent behavior can transpire from coming face to face with hardship and survival. He was not embarrassed to address something that he had to do but learning to adapt this behavior can create more consequences for him in the future. This participant seemed to be a confident individual and motivated to take chances after he sets goals and tasks to pursue.

### **Parenting Concerns**

Each participant articulated that they endured a difficult childhood under parenting concerns. However, their experiences did not deflect them from learning to identify that the absence of parenting played a major role with their inability to socially adapt. Based on their responses, the participants clarified many factors were involved

with the restrictions placed upon their lives as children. To substitute the void for leadership and affection, the participants learned to idolize external individuals or recognize the indigence experienced by people in the immediate family. I was able to interpret that parenting concerns served a vital barrier to each participants' childhood growth due to the many challenges presented within the household.

### **Attitudinal/Behavioral Barriers**

Details representing this category through the expression of each participant can be summarized as the developmental outlook on how life brings about different challenges. Without effective guidance, the participants managed to construct beliefs that seemed at odds with the perceptions of others around them. The participants take on a different view of life than from a person who seemed to have underwent stability within their own household and environment. This different life outlook supports the issue of the disadvantages of detrimental conduct can serve as a barrier for learning how to utilize more creative thinking when managing responsibilities.

### **Psychological Deficiencies**

The participants did not clarify whether they were diagnosed with any type of mental disorder while they were children based on the answers provided. The issues with conduct and misguided beliefs that have been adopted may potentially represent issues with impulsiveness, unstable moods, and aggressive behaviors. Yet, it was difficult to determine at this time whether any of the participants received psychiatric treatment in public or while incarcerated.



**Environmental constraints**

For the first question, each participant seemed to contribute a noticeable amount of information under this category. In reference to childhood learning, the participants seemed to become exposed to conflict early in life; yet, children are often supervised by elder individuals thus clarifying that each participant was not entirely exposed to the risks of environmental constraints that interfered with using self-control.

**Distorted Internal States**

For this category, a few participants lightly touched based on this subject due to misunderstanding of feeling abandoned. Thoughts of confusion, misinterpretation, and misguided beliefs were clearly demonstrated within the responses of participants discussing the absence of support and relatives. Unstable thoughts, feelings of variability, and inability to exert self-control during this period may deserve leniency. Conversely and without intervention, these participants were susceptible to persistent behavioral issues.

**Interview Question 2**

The question asked, what are some things that are meaningful to you in your life? is an attempt to comprehend the participant's interests and desires.

Responses reflecting this question did not require much input which may have helped the participants feel more comfortable with the interviewing process. There were no restrictions according to how the participant should respond. Whether the response included sources that are socially harmful or positively meaningful to the participant, honesty and truthfulness helped to identify the participant's motivational drive to

continue to exhibit reoffending behavior. Subsequently, many factors possessed the influence of such socially inappropriate behaviors and the interference with promoting self-control. Responses ranged from identifying family to individual gains as references to meaningful sources in one's own lifestyle. During this period, the participants highlighted that the transition from childhood to young adult relied profoundly on adaption from the early discord introduced to them.

**Participant 1.** This participant was confident within his response to this question. He managed to identify a few things pertaining closely to his family, personal beliefs, and interests. His answer was straight-forward, and I was careful not to make this question convoluted for him to understand how to answer. P1 seemed to indicate notable and meaningful sources which he ensures that he continues to strive toward. He did not verify the meaning of how he takes risks due to fear of exploitation and being penalized but his learned behavior seems to have emerged throughout adversity and social challenges.

**Participant 2.** This individual was also brief within his response to the question. When asked, he was hesitant at first but eventually answered. He also admitted he never really put the important things to mind because he felt as though he was just here to roam around. His life choices have predominantly blocked him from coming to the realization of understanding what is important to him. P2 addressed the issue that his personal weaknesses continue to interfere with his motivation to improve as a person. He avoided eye contact with me while answering the question and admitted that he was open to receive the enough support needed to withdraw himself from abusing narcotics and other harmful drugs. To explain, P2 detailed that, Other people have attempted to help me out

but I'm so far in it, being incarcerated didn't rehabilitate me from the desire to get a hit from time to time. Main details deciphered from the participant's response is that his family attempted to intervene with his behavior and incarceration which may provide evidence that unsuccessful attempts contribute increasing low self-control. In his case, the thought of failure may be inevitable regardless of the resources provided.

**Participant 3.** The participant had a minimal response to the question about the essentials in his life but admitted that he is working on adding to the list. I even encouraged to try to explore things, people, and settings that he may find interesting to make small conversation. The participant responded well to the attempt but mentioned that there is really nothing but to control what you can handle. Based on P3's response, his experience seems to be compressed with environmental issues which constantly seeking help from individuals such as his relatives and friends. Signs demonstrate that due to constraints with his time and need to obtain what is important to him does not leave room for improvement personally, emotionally, and psychologically. To understand, this participant elaborated on the concern with not being able to understand and capitalize from his mistakes which builds the momentum of continuing to exert problematic behaviors. During the interview, the participant seemed tense and worried but managed to complete the interview successfully. Key elements which participant 3 finds difficult to preserve are financially stability and functional health.

**Participant 4.** This participant identified elements that seemed to be positive and healthy for his well-being. It is evident that he possesses the aspiration to include his personal protective factors into his life by giving details in the following statement, I

want to say that family, finances, job, kids, education, religion, and education are important to me at this time because these are things I fight for. At first, P4 demonstrated reluctance when attempting to answer the question. He showed signs of distress while answering the question, but I informed him that he does not have to continue if he is uncomfortable. He responded that he would feel better if we would move on to the next question. I informed the participant that any answer is better than no answer and thanks for his participation to keep him comfortable with the interview. Factors that seem to present an issue with his path to success are lack of opportunities which serve under the theme of environmental constraints hindering self-control abilities.

**Participant 5.** This participant identified elements of importance in his life but also questioned protective factors contributed to his progress as a person. He mentioned that he often asks himself if he makes a difference in anyone's life but meaning this in a positive manner. P5 demonstrated the motivation to make progress as a person, but the lack of patience and reasoning has caused some disruption in his opportunity for improvement. He presented the issue with his parents being absent and neglectful of his existence which may emotionally prompt aggression with those external to his family. Also, his integration with people in the public continues to remain a risk to his safety.

**Participant 6.** This participant was very brief with his response but provided enough information to give insight about the struggles that continue to create a burden. P6 statement concerning elements he considers meaningful seem to provide persistent strength and motivation to his attitude and beliefs. However, his statement concerning his connections and his decisions to obtain resources for his family may indirectly specify

that he intermittently engages in behavior that are considered unlawful. This contention was just a theoretical assumption but support for the themes would become more prevalent as the interviewed progressed.

**Participant 7.** This participant clarified elements of importance in his life but mentioned that they also affect his ability to progress because of his beliefs and commitment. His involvement with people and his family seems to be a major strength that he demonstrated to make commitments to managing his health; however, he stated this is also a risk because of how certain members of his family perceive him. P7 suggested that though he is faced with constant conflict from not only external sources, but also his family is an exceptional amount of emotional strain. The participant realized the disappointment and traumatic concern for his progress continues to be threatened by hardship. For instance, he stated, the only problem is that I have problems with certain people in my family who often criticize me or accuse me of things I didn't do or say. After the disagreement, I leave and find a way to escape such as drinking or abusing pills, I get real depressed but I keep trying and keep giving people a chance because the man above wants me to do that. Therefore, the inability to seek a substitute from engaging his drug or alcohol-induced behaviors continues to strengthen the motivation for low self-control. Additionally, the participant was able to clarify that his faith influences him to continue with finding something healthy in his life.

**Participant 8.** P8 was very brief through his perception of elements that are meaningful to him. P8 indicated that family is a priority in his life. Thus, he indicated that he continues to struggle with his family which may give into account that resources are

scarce. This attitude may contribute to ongoing acts of conduct detriment and ways of providing support for the individuals he cares for within the household.

### **Parenting Concerns**

For this question, many participants for the study did not provide any issues involving child-rearing or parenting concerns when addressing meaningful factors. The participants' discussion about family when presenting their thoughts served as an umbrella for more than just their parents but the extended family as well. This extended view presented a more nourishing outlook on the importance of family involvement.

### **Attitudinal/Behavioral Barriers**

According to each participants' insight, they deemed to have developed a drive to defend for what they believed in. They understand that certain choices made came with strict costs, but it is a way of providing and believing in something they could call their own. The sense of being controlled was absent but knowing the corrective way of approaching challenges and coping with adversity feels as an unending course of learning. The responses served to not submit to society but being able to embrace one's own mistakes.

### **Psychological Deficiencies**

Responses or main details under this category was exceptional due to the participants reflecting on any discontinuities and hardship affecting mental stability and orientation. Although the participants did not provide information suggesting any clinical and psychiatric issues with the inability to reason or make effective judgements, their

lack of insight was distinctive in identifying impulsive symptoms contributing to the depletion in self-control.

### **Environmental Constraints**

A preponderance amount of information communicated from each participant reflected under this category. When discussing protective factors, the participants included an array of elements ranging from personal thoughts to environmental concerns. Participant interaction with the environment supports the issue that different circumstances can alter how a person is able to navigate their own trials. With the momentum of misguided learning adapted within their childhood and experiences as a young adult, the participant has only managed to advance his method of achieving his goals. Yet, the methods involved with their success increases risk as they become older along with more responsibilities.

### **Distorted Internal States**

According to the responses provided by each participant, their beliefs, views, and experiences assisted with the capability of enhancing traits and characteristics such as resiliency and motivation. However, without clear direction, the participants developed involuntary feelings perplexed with how challenges and conflict should be interpreted. The capacity to reason, problem-solve, and utilize critical thinking to effectively take a proactive approach to tasks or find stability.

### **Research Question 3**

The third research question stated, how does your attitude affect your ability to cope with various circumstances? Participant responses continue to serve under the

selected themes for the study to gain a widespread understanding of the motivational factors that play a role with low self-control and reoffending behavior.

I was able to acquire a substantial amount of information about the participants' attitude when coping with different challenges and uncomfortable trials. The participants recollected on problematic issues such as having the difficulty to explore alternative solutions to after encountering a dispute. Reliance on aggression, self-interest, and knowledge gained from past issues have directed the participants to believe more in using unlawful behaviors to seek relief. The grounds for reoffending may be subject to inexperience with effectively coping, reasoning, and controlling circumstances. Each participants' outlook on their inability to cope and seek alternative strategies for reducing the risk of reoffending was considerable for supporting the concerns with improving self-control tendencies.

**Participant 1.** Under this question, P1 included factors which focused on his desire to achieve his personal long-term goals. He considered that his personal relapses were significant barriers in his life due to the desire to achieve more. Though he has managed to find a job, he continues to struggle with relationships with people, family, and even himself. P1 may have potentially verified that his conflict with his family creates a great impact on his inability to cope. Dependency on the support from his family is well considered from his perspective but there is often failure because of the uncomfortable nature that his relatives may feel when they are around him. It can be determined that participant 1's struggles with coping is manifested by repeated conflict with environmental issues.



**Participant 2.** P2 was brief with his response to this question. P2 admitted that his unhealthy habits interfere with his ability to consider other means of improving himself as an individual. Low self-control is evident because of the persistent behavior in taking measures to supply his habit. Despite the effort of seeking assistance, he is more prone to sway toward finding relief through abusing drugs instead of using persistence in remaining committed to treatment.

**Participant 3.** This individual responded to the question briefly while discussing how he manages different events that place him at risk. P3 made notice that environmental issues persistent with deflecting his desire to explore replacement strategies on how to pursue different objectives. It appears that based on his response, the more he encounters people that are ruthless in nature, the more likely he is to become aggressive with people. This attitude signifies an unstable reputation for demonstrating detrimental conduct in public.

**Participant 4.** He stated that his attitude is supported by a compiling amount of knowledge over the years even during his time in incarceration. The participant made references about his past as an era that has taught him many things. Depending on circumstances, he seemed to conclude that though there is time for learning and correcting mistakes, the knowledge gained from his struggles often overwhelm his choices to avoid reoffending. The response provided by P4 suggested that his coping mechanisms are blocked through the tendency to retrieve the necessities required for personal nourishment. He also suggested that attempts have been made to adjust in his life, but the setting and the people make it difficult to overcome challenges that may

present more of a setback in his life. If he must take steps back, it is because of his actions and not the decision of another person.

**Participant 5.** This participant reflected on his inability to cope by placing himself in a vulnerable position with others. Family and people were key areas for which he stated that his involvement with others often led to disappointments which transpired to elevating his aggression. P5 expressed a disturbance in his attributes to reason. He seems to be dependent on aggressive tactics to help him with managing control of his situations. For instance, P5 explained his view on detestable individuals, when they show that they really don't have any interest for my situation, I call them out on it. I don't believe in that because I don't have a problem with telling the truth, I just got an anger problem. Despite his resilience, he remains reliant on his aggression in a method of defending himself as a person and his beliefs. To support this statement, he stated that, This is off and on but when you put someone in the position or if they possess the position of someone who should contribute to helping people, then do what you claim to do. Placing his trust with others has garnered the position of being vulnerable to failure thus influencing more aggression towards others.

**Participant 6.** P6 provided small detail describing how he uses his way coping when confronting an overwhelming situation. He expressed obstacles that reflect environmental issues due to exposure to the community and access to preoccupations which influence him to continue to experience setbacks. Rather than taking the initiative to explore other means of coping, P6 chooses to engage in activities that are unhealthy and unfulfilling. His issues continue to repeat themselves even if he believes that he

acquires a different result to his actions. Nonetheless, he admitted that his natural environment equates to a loophole that continues to present the same issues repetitively.

**Participant 7.** This individual presented the problem with resisting the urge to gain access to necessities that are required for his daily living. He addressed that though he makes the effort to exercise civility, he is bombarded with judgement and accusations. He often leads to not receiving help from people who also possess an inconsistent attitude. P7 stressed that importance of services needed to help people who are too far misplaced after being incarcerated or enduring destitution. By the participant stating that he makes the decision to leave people alone and partake in risky behaviors that may lead to him being confined, reoffending in this case is his only option if the environment is limited for resources. He explained, you just cannot get rid or go cold turkey from abusing drugs. So far in my life, when I get upset or angry with something, work in the streets is my therapy. I tried to seek help from professional counselors and attended programs, but their attitude was nonchalant. They did not care so why should I care. I got kicked out of a couple of programs because I became angry with mentors taking advantage of my time. Even with my family members, they say they would help me out with things but catch an attitude when it is time to offer.

**Participant 8.** He admits to looking for an altercation after enduring conflict. P8 stated that the altercation can either be verbal or physical, but it is with people he knows. P8 acknowledges that he is a young individual with more knowledge to learn but he seems to be at a great disadvantage due to being familiar with the community. His attitude is affected by his anger and vindictive personality to get even or gain access to

things for beneficial expansion. Environmental issues appear to overall play a role with his blocked ability to use more effective coping methods to deflect reoffending tendencies.

### **Parental Concerns**

Issues with child-rearing or parental matters is limited in this area. Each participant gave insight reflecting issues surrounding family and environment rather than focusing on how parental issues influence the ability to restrict their incomprehensible actions. Though learning was hindered during their early stages of childhood, maturity assists each participant with the opportunity to explore other areas for support.

### **Attitudinal/Behavioral Barriers**

There was a significant number of depleted attitudes of each participant responding to the question. According to their responses, decisions or problem-solving skills are disrupted after encountering a difficult situation. Instead of discovering relief or seeking a solution, the participants admitted that they choose to escape a situation and put themselves in an at-risk position. The inclination of acquiring healthy or harmful sources at the cost of their freedom was often identified. The participants have a set belief on retrieving what is valuable from their perception. Scarcity also plays a role with the increased motivation to react before considering the consequences to their actions.

### **Psychological Deficiencies**

This theme touched on areas reflecting emotional destabilization such as feelings of depression, sadness, anger, and impulsivity were present. Information serving under this category were substantial due to the participants being consciously aware of their

thoughts, orientation, judgment, and insight. In addition, emotionally induced behaviors can motivate an immediate and socially inappropriate reaction to escape a dispute.

### **Environmental Constraints.**

The participants stressed the issues with people, places, and events which gives indication that their natural environment presents a disadvantage to their decisions and actions. Their immediate environment consists of the elements for which they are familiar; yet they are constantly challenged by events that includes provocation and scarcity of resources needed to promote well-being and nourishment. Time given to people as a method of reconciliation can prove to be demanding with having to adjust to the attitudes of people and the situation at hand.

### **Distorted Internal States**

Minimal information was provided under this category which each participant considering that their way of escape is legitimate. The belief that their recurring actions of reoffending and risk-taking behaviors are a plateau to seeking reassurance is a precise representation of false convictions.

### **Research Question 4**

This question asks, please provide some personal weaknesses that influence your urge to demonstrate problem behaviors.

This research question targeted the participant's weaknesses that create potential barriers or obstacles which may be evident for delaying self-control attributes. Each participant admitted that their decisions and desires affect their ability to consider the consequences before and even during their exhibitions of problematic behaviors. Though

environmental and social challenges continue to remain persistent within their lives, they are unable to identify any progress made due to being exposed to familiar consequences that are not within their favor. During the interviewing process, I recognized that the participants were becoming more comfortable with each question that focused on what they knew. When having opportunity to discuss their situation and their personal issues, the participants may have provided minimal yet efficient information reflecting the specifics of their behavior.

**Participant 1.** This participant seemed to key in on internal issues that create a sense of impatience and worry. He stated that depending on the severity of his situation, the more pressure he feels, the more he becomes impulsive as means of seeking a method of escape. He was minimal with his response, but the delivery of his information alone was enough to identify the related themes. P1 voiced issues that may deflect his attitude which generate emotional distortions of how to perceive different situations. Aggression and impulsivity appear to be justified in his case of escape. However, these personal weaknesses seem to stem from his long history of considering these motivators.

**Participant 2.** This participant provided brief perceptions due to how the question is constructed. With his understanding how what is being asked and his personal problems, he was cooperative with delivery what was needed to interpret his response. P2 managed to discuss emotional matters which influence low self-control. He also admitted that by self-medicating, he continues to engage in offending behavior that places him at risk of suffering more stringent consequences. It appears that depressive symptoms are

apparent within his response along with problems within his attitude and lack of comprehension with criticism.

**Participant 3.** This participant was able to identify personal issues that hinder him from promoting higher methods for managing his self-control. He admitted that not knowing how to cope with certain people and situations influence him to become aggressive with people. He experienced severe risks when encountering law enforcement due to being argumentative. P3 seemed to provide a clear and descriptive explanation as to discussing personal weaknesses that preclude his ability to utilize self-control skills. A major point considered is that the participant sought resources to assist with reducing his level of aggression. However, he mentioned that the lack of knowledge on both ends from the professional and the consumer does not provide supportive results.

**Participant 4.** This individual responded to the question with brief responses. I encouraged him to focus on personal issues that continue to inhibit his ability improve self-control tendencies to condense efforts at avoiding reoffending. P4 seemed to present issues reflecting his lack of desire to pursue certain goals. The fear of failure carries an excessive amount of burden which then stems psychiatric symptoms such as sadness, impulsivity, and irritability. These symptoms appear evident; however, he did not indicate if he was clinically diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder or treated in the free-world or during incarceration. Psychological deficiencies can be identified within the participant's response along with misinterpretations.

**Participant 5.** This participant only provided a few words for his response to the question. He clearly provided what was needed for the question and I did inform him that

there are no required lengths in information. P5 seemed to target personal concerns focused on aggressive tendencies which can be prevalent for blocking communication skills. His statement of reasoning clearly suggests that he deflects knowledge, advice, and guidance from those who attempt to help him. His response to identifying his weaknesses may support that his level of aggression influences criminal conduct and high-risk behaviors.

**Participant 6.** This individual provided brief details when discussing his weaknesses. He added that he wants to make progress but feels that he is challenged with constraints with people and time. With having a family and the need to provide, he makes attempts at obtaining the resources needed such as getting paid under the table with petty jobs or simply stealing. P6 indicated that he continues to combat environmental issues that hinder his ability to advance along with forcing him to become more reliant on problematic weaknesses which place him at risk of reincarceration. He did not explicitly state how he obtains his resources, but it may be clear that he is being restricted from making progress in society.

**Participant 7.** This participant was cooperative with detailing his weaknesses. He presented himself as being vulnerable but was open to progress. His history of drug-abuse and other reoffending behaviors has established an unfortunate reputation in a well-known community. P7 implied that he may feel disgraced with his choices and due to the momentum of his actions and choices, he continues to put himself at risk. It is apparent that his defiant behaviors forced him to be goal-driven to satisfy his desires rather than



thinking about the consequences that may lay ahead. He admitted that his discomfort for people keeps him from succeeding the right way but trust level of low.

**Participant 8.** This participant managed to acknowledge that he is young and understood that he has many opportunities to make improvements before his consequences place him in a restrictive institute. P8 presented weaknesses stemming from aggression and lack of social connection. Elevation in his aggression may interfere with his ability to reason or settle differences with civility. Based on his response, it appears that environmental constraints, attitudinal barriers, and ineffective orientation skills are potential conduct issues.

### **Parenting Concerns**

Information reflecting parenting concerns as potential causes of weakness to participant attributes was not mentioned. This theme was voided under this question.

### **Attitudinal/Behavioral Barriers**

The major positive with his theme is that the participants did consider that their behaviors, decisions, and actions place them at risk of being incarcerated. Though they do give indication that they continue to engage in reoffending behavior, there is a reason for their actions. Until they can absorb other means applying more socially appropriate skills, it is assumed that their actions continue to persist.

### **Psychological Deficiencies**

Though not clinically supported, the participant provided information referencing symptoms related to clinically defined psychiatric disorders. In addition, there were also links between how they perceive their behaviors and actions with clinically defined

mental disorders. Therefore, behavioral barriers can cause psychological deficiencies regarding orientation, mentalistic, insight, and adaptive conduct.

### **Environmental Constraints**

There was a significant amount of information concerning how the participants manage conflict with their environment. The participants acknowledged that people and lack of resources within the disadvantaged community are a developmental issue for troubled individuals facing continuous conflict.

### **Distorted Internal States**

Misinterpretations based inability to reason and seek resolution during or after conflict seems to be evident based on the responses provided by the participants. The participants' decision to avoid seeking guidance and knowledge on how to cope with conflict causes them to drift more from learning stability.

### **Research Question 5**

The next question required a minimal response to eliminate fatigue during the interview. The question asked was formatted in this form, please explain the potential barrier(s) that often lead to reoffending.

Since participant responses were minimal, I decided to present participant responses in the following context below and conclude with discussing the themes connected to how the responses are interpreted.

**Participant 1.** I'm often unable to correct or learn from my mistakes, feeling pressured by challenging circumstances, disrespected, abandoned, no help from no one at times, and not feeling loved. These are the major reasons why I find it difficult to control my actions.

**Participant 2.** When my privacy or space is violated, lied too, upset, angry, and having a need to escape but to the wrong thing.

**Participant 3.** My aggression that usually leads to drug-induced behaviors, angry, aggression, tolerance level has been reached, feeling vindictive, and irresponsibility have been overwhelming for me.

**Participant 4.** This participant recollected on his history leading up to his decisions that continue to affect him daily with his response below: I struggled with almost a lot of things in my life such as having money. Not having money to care for myself puts pressure on me, feeling depressed and unloved, lack of stable resources in the community.

**Participant 5.** The following statement is provided below based on this participant's view on issues leading to reoffending.

Conflict with family and friends, feeling irritable, having those ideations of harming people. I give myself chances over and over to try to make amends but it's simply hard because of the mistrust for people.

**Participant 6.** Usually having problems with people, needing necessities for myself, financial issues, feeling pressured and worried.

**Participant 7.** When I feel that I can't achieve anything, not thinking clearly, alone instead of around people that love me, anger, feeling sad, and losing interests in things.

**Participant 8.** Finally, this participant provided the following statement about the motivations that influence him to reoffend:

When I need something for the home, when people owe me, in a bind, and when I have conflict with others.

### **Parenting Concerns**

Under this question, there were no factors that were identified in the participant response relating to parenting concerns.

### **Attitudinal/Behavioral Barriers**

In relation to attitudinal/behavioral barriers, information related to issues with displaying appropriate attitude were generally recognized. Each participant has somewhat reached a point in their life where punishment and consequences are not alleviating their tendencies to reoffend.

### **Psychological Deficiencies**

Minor sources of information were recognized under psychological deficiencies. Responses including aggression and impulsive behavior may give indication that psychiatric issues play a role with influence of low self-control.

### **Environmental Constraints**

Participant responses relating to environmental constraints were presented in a substantial form. People, places, and times across distinct settings continue to remain a challenge for harnessing low self-control and issues with criminal conduct.

### **Distorted Internal States**

As for distorted internal states, a few participants managed to mention issues with feeling abandonment and detested which may be another potential cause to aggression and low self-control. The participants seem to face conflicting problems on how to adapt to different people and attitudes though misinformation and lack of understanding.

### **Research Question 6**

RQ6: How does your level of motivation play a role with fulfilling your desires?

This question aims to explore elements that drive the participants' problematic behaviors. During circumstances in which they are faced with conflict or feel overwhelmed with the convergence of responsibilities, the participants were encouraged to reflect their own isolated thoughts that triggers their behaviors. Each participant managed to provide information supporting the factors that prevent them from evaluating the consequences to their actions.

**Participant 1.** This individual expressed that he makes efforts to provide for himself in the correct fashion but his motivational factors to criminal conduct results from trying to manage his lifestyle. Dependent on the situation, if he is unable to obtain resources needed to support or fulfill his desires, then he rejects the thought of using self-control mechanisms to lessen his drive. He did not entirely state how he engages but his

actions are a representation of low self-control. P1 indicated that his actions stem from the absence of essentials. From his response, deprivation seems to be a motivational factor that can create an overwhelming and stressful case. Additionally, the participant mentioned that his parents did not contribute to his teachings and morals.

**Participant 2.** This individual was direct with his response when providing one-word descriptions. He was brief but information communicated was enough to decipher his response to link details with the selected themes. Clearly, P2 struggled with coping with grief and lack of ambition. Environmental and internal limitations which restrict the capacity to use self-control are ongoing issues that establish a disadvantage for learning to replace what has been learned with more productive alternatives. This individual voiced that he was open to embracing his mistakes but also wants to give himself a chance to be patient when being presented with something that may benefit him in the future.

**Participant 3.** This individual's response to the question was geared surrounding his aggression. The participant's inability to manage his anger and think proactively before he engaged with people continue to consume his emotional imbalance. P3 was clear and direct with his delivery describing the motivations that put himself at risk. His choice to be aggressive with others proposes assaultive behavior that continue to grow as he becomes more frustrated. He admits that the actions were becoming more intensified.

**Participant 4.** The participant provided minimal answers to the questions. He briefly elaborated on the difficulties with adjustment. P4 tapped into variances describing

environmental scarcity of resources and gaps in emotional stability. I reinforced each of the participant's responses with praise to encourage him to complete the interview.

**Participant 5.** This participant seemed to provide a more detailed emphasis of motivational factors which restrict his ability to practice self-control. At this time, he agreed that his reoffending behavior is a medication for his believed failures. P5 presented elements significant to influencing negative thought patterns and perceptions. He suggested, just feeling hopeless, helpless, and even fearing failure can trigger sudden anger I understand that my actions are disapproving to others but I just don't know what else to do because I know I may fail. He also demonstrates poor self-confidence to take the initiative to try more healthier alternatives to replace his problematic issues. He appeared to be uncomfortable with presenting his thoughts under this question, but I rewarded him with positive praise.

**Participant 6.** The participant was very brief with his response to the question, but it is very well simplified that his motivation represented something that is meaningful to him in his life. P6 provided a reasonable but deterring understanding which represents his motivation to engage in reoffending behavior when he feels that it is necessary to commit to his actions. He mentioned, my family, that is it. If they need something, I get it regardless of the consequences. He considers that his family's struggles represent an environmental defect, yet his commitment contributes to his drive and he believes that this is a credible reason for his actions.

**Participant 7.** This participant reflected on issues that related to financial instability. He admitted that he does not have the opportunity to regroup due to not

having a steady job. P7 seems to be faced with financial and family struggles that influence his harmful decisions. Emotional disturbances, such as having to receive support and discipline seems to create confusion on how he should consider other options for production. For example, P7 stated, having to deal with constant criticism from my family. Accusations at most when they assume that I'm doing something that I'm not.

**Participant 8.** This participant factored in on the absence of not being taught how to determine the most suitable source for discovering solutions. The motivational factors delivered by P8 seemed simple but his decisions to exhibit disorderly conduct in the public can possess a significant amount of magnitude per report. He stated, for me, pressure, fear, confusion, disrespected, abandoned, and being blind to what is going on in the big picture. I'm young so I got plenty of road ahead of me, but I need to hurry up and make a decision on how I need to combat these issues.

### **Parenting Concerns**

Parenting concerns clarified the important of nourishment as a resource for a child during the early stages of his or her life. Therefore, childhood learning is imperative for adaptability but with the absence of guidance, immoral habits can transpire into stages of maturity. In this participant's case, his time is impacted with constant burden.

### **Attitudinal/Behavioral Barriers**

Information was minimal under attitudinal/behavioral barriers though responses support that a few participants are motivated to commit acts of reoffending when they experience episodes of aggression and judgement.



**Psychological Deficiencies**

The decision to engage in criminal activity serves under exhibiting impulsive behavior. The participants admitted that the moment of escape is necessary which verifies that self-control relies profoundly time and planning. Each participant response slightly contributed to psychological deficiencies.

**Environmental Constraints**

For discussion about environmental constraints, people and situations continue to create flaws in perception and plan development skills. Specifics provided by the participants gave lead-way that limited resources and a challenging environment is further their exposure to persistent obstacles. Probable misinterpretations of criticism and guidance mechanisms support the distortion in thinking clearly before considering proactive strategies.

**Distorted Internal States**

Distorted internal states present factors such as misinterpretation, false/negative beliefs, lack of understanding, and failure to pursue different goals due to assumed disfavor in results represents this category of distortion. A few participants managed to mention that the challenges of criticism and accusations are uneasy.

**Research Question 7**

The next question elaborated on effective resources for progress: What resources are provided to you to help you avoid future arrests?

Prior to asking each participant this question, I noticed that the participants gave insight that resources are limited and the resources available are not helpful. I attempted

to help them recapture whether there are resources such as additional mental health, rehabilitative, and anger management programs. Due to each participant not finding resources to rely on and practically rejecting the question, the following statements are presented in the text below:

**Participant 1.** Nothing really, depends on the person or organization. They just want to draw a check.

**Participant 2.** Ha, nothing that I can really think of.

**Participant 3.** There are resources according to the city and how much money they want to put into an organization. In my opinion, there are ineffective resources.

**Participant 4.** Nothing helpful

**Participant 5.** A few anger reduction programs but that's it to me because I have these problems. Are they helpful, no.

**Participant 6.** These places aren't trying to help nobody. They just looking to bring people in to make money and medicate us with those drugs. There are none, they're just buildings.

**Participant 7.** None because they don't want me there anymore. Rather not talk about it.

**Participant 8.** The only resources to me is my family and relatives. I don't really trust anything else out there from what I hear in public and people. I'll give it a shot one day.

Based on the response provided by the participants, it is clear that environmental issues are the overall constraint for practicing or seeking knowledge to self-control. The

participants seem disappointed with the question, but I informed them I wanted to see if they could try to recount whether they could remember any particular resources that may be helpful. Factors representing parental concerns, distorted internal states, and psychological deficiencies were absent under this question. However, the participants did demonstrate poor attitudinal or lack of confidence for the resources available to them in the public.

### **Research Question 8**

RQ8: Please explain your attitude when faced with adversity.

When presented to the participants, they mentioned that they believed they answered the question but introduced in a different phrase. I referred to previous questions which may have sounded familiar. Question 3 appeared to ask for similar instances of behavior when various circumstances. It was confirmed that the participants were addressing their concerns when they encountered adversity. Therefore, the participants rejected to answer question 8 due to similarities and my comparison with the question 3. I was not able to obtain information required for the question due to the anomaly. A couple of participants attempted to answer the question, but they repeated responses as they did before, and their responses were not recorded. None of the selected themes were identified under this question.

### **Research Question 9**

What are some personal interests which may help you with seeking opportunities at accomplishing your goals appropriately?

I attempted to capture the participants input about personal views on the types of resources or necessities that may benefit their lifestyle toward improvement in the future. Each participant managed to provide a range of a minimal to substantial amount of information exploring their thoughts of what should help the improve their behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. The purpose of this question was to help reduce fatigue and feeling tense. The participants were given the opportunity to provide their knowledge of their mistakes to present an idea of what may overall provide support to people with sensitive cases. In the following text below, I was able to acquire the participants' thoughts on elements that can contribute to the betterment of the community.

**Participant 1.** This participant acknowledged the concern that there are many people who are faced with similar situations such as his and providing the supportive network is efficient for community advancement. He also added that reconnecting with family was essential for progress and growth. P1 clarified that he was receptive to attending more structured programs to occupy his time off the streets. I asked him would commitment to programs be an issue if the city managed to be developed more strict and structured programs. He responded that it took repetitions but eventually he believes he should get to that exact point in his life.

**Participant 4.** This individual was brief but direct with his thoughts on the types of resources that would help benefit his situation and community. P4 also mentioned that with the increase in the creation of jobs, establishing more job programs can keep him interested but the immediate environment and lack of care is a great disadvantage for

him. His insight was deeply appreciated, and I encouraged him to continue with seeking those chances.

**Participant 5.** P5 focused on suggesting programs that helps with interpersonal relationships and building social relationships. He stated, it would be helpful if they would make therapeutic and relationship programs on how to teach people how to get along with others. I know there's good and bad things in relationships but I'm tired of cutting people off, I may need them in the future. He recognized that all people need help during parts of their lives and it's something that he needs to improve on rather than taking risky shortcuts.

**Participant 6.** This participant was brief and expressed the same interest as a previous participant discussing job programs. He explained that I enjoy learning new things the right way. I believe if there were programs to help people get jobs too start off, we can learn to make our way up and build a history for ourselves. It just seems that these days they are too focused on locking people up.

His insight justifies his commitment to his family and how finances can be earned legally. This participant's views on resources clearly relates to his situation and how he can be able to provide for his family and himself. As related to the previous participants, he signifies that he considers treatment if the process is effective with compassionate professionals.

**Participants 7.** A brief response was provided by this participant about his input of resources that benefits his opportunity for treatment. We need better drug rehab programs with committed professionals. I attempted to encourage the participant too

explore other areas that may benefit his chances at recovery, and he stated attending to drug rehab programs is his focus at this time. His response also signifies an environmental effort that may contribute to a healthier environment.

**Participant 8.** This individual provided an array of possible networks which peak his interests. He suggested that with people facing hardship at different ages, it is reasonable to make program versatile and adaptable. According to this participant, he stated, I think shelters, more food banks, rehab programs in general, and opportunities for jobs helps benefit people as young as me. I know I can apply myself but with that amount of interest, I have to move to the city and I know I'm not ready for that. By being young, he admits that he has been exposed to a range of challenges. P8 seemed to present a well-informed response to the question. He presents himself as very intelligent but opportunity to apply his potential skill has been suffered by a hiatus. The positive to his attitude is that he remains ambitious.

The themes which were mostly recognized under this question is predominately environmental constraints due to the participants referring to the need for improved community living. Parental concerns and distorted internal states were absent leaving only a minimal amount of detail for psychological deficiencies and attitudinal/behavioral barriers.

### **Research Question 10**

The next research question was another flawed or convoluted question. It was asked in this fashion, Describe the personal drawbacks that seem to reappear in your life.

The participants felt as though they already responded to this question. I referred to prior questions to compare with the question presented before I noticed that research question 4 related to what was being requested for the study. I felt the same when I vocally repeated the questions to myself. The selected themes did not relate to this question; therefore, this question was rejected by the participants and charted in as an error.

### **Discrepant Cases**

After review of results, I detected that at the beginning of the interview, the issue with parental concerns as a motivational factor to low self-control was heavily demonstrated. However, as the interview progressed for each participant, the theme discussing parental concerns and low self-control seemed to drift absent after the first question. In reference to questions 8 and 10, the participants believed that they responded to those questions but in a different context which refuted the value of the questions. Nonetheless, the questions presented to each participant gave freedom for them to reflect on their experiences that may have played or continue to play a role with their persistent criminal conduct. The additional themes which corresponded with participant responses throughout the interview were variable; yet, each response was thoroughly discussed. Overall, each participant elaborated significantly on environmental constraints which are primary complications that continue to affect their everyday livelihood. According to Mamayek, Paternoster, and Loughran (2017), the core of self-control theory is the ideal that self-control is a discrete feature that can account for any crime at different times and places. The participants agreed that though their childhood learning experiences were

deficient in structure, leadership, and guidance, they seemed to have developed a detrimental approach to navigating toward a stable lifestyle.

Throughout the investigation and reflections provided by the participants, I highlighted on the distinctiveness of the themes identified within the participants' responses to understand the extensiveness of their experiences. By allowing the participants to operate freely and without any restrictions, I managed to acquire the essentials vital to demonstrating the purpose of the study. Moreover, providing freedom and reassurance to the participants assisted with the process of understanding their beliefs and what they appreciate.

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

To interpret the data obtained from the interviews, I explored each participant's narrative based on their experiences communicated during the interviews. I was only able to perform one interview per participant due to their concerns with exploitation. With the freedom given to the participants to reflect on their past, I believe I was able to acquire credible means of support detailing the themes for each question. I shared my insight after each question were asked of the participant. The results of the study indicated that the selected themes were compatible with the functions and behaviors of the participants. It is clear to determine that these individuals are committed to specific roles to help them with adjusting to various challenges and hardships as everyday obstacles.

The opportunity for freedom to reflect on experiences, give reason, and highlight persistent problems within their lives is key to developing the foundation for more structured and beneficial networks for positive advancement. Furthermore, the discrepant



case of parental concerns providing the least amount of data supporting low self-control parallels mainly into the mature stages of the participant. The density in results articulated under parental concerns supports that the initial stages of learning is an imperative period for the child. I was able to gain an understanding of how each individual oriented to their situation, environment, and personal struggles. Evidently, each participant responded to each question with integrity which assisted with retaining a sense of comfort and ability to recall important events in their lives. Nonetheless, the participants continued to maintain a sense of responsibility toward recovery. The selected themes yielded that without knowledge and repetitions with managing issues, momentum with reoffending as means of escape continue to govern decision-making.

The interviews conducted with the participants were documented through transcriptions of material due to the opposition from participants against using a tape recorder. Information was uploaded on to the Atlas.ti to code the themes and apply responses consistent with each theme coded for the document. While participating in the interview, I made sure that not only were the participants aware of their right to privacy and confidentiality, I had to be comfortable with guiding the participants just in case they did not understand the meaning of each question. I recognized a few roadblocks during the process such as difficulty transcribing an array of information and anomalies with a couple of research questions. Most prominently, I managed to detect an abundance amount of material related to the proposed themes selected for supporting low self-control and the motivational factors contributing to reoffending.

### Summary

The greatest concern supporting the issue of low self-control and reoffending behavior served under the theme of environmental constraints. Evidence during the investigation yields that other supplemental factors such as distorted internal states, psychological deficiencies, attitudinal/behavioral barriers, and parental concerns contributed substantially to the investigation. To explain the influence of environmental constraints, each participant believed that environmental and community issues are clearly their biggest challenge. As they become older, they noticed that more responsibilities came with the path of survival. The biggest disadvantage seemed to start within their early stages of childhood and regression well into their adulthood. The presentation of the same events from different people is more likely influence the same behaviors along with producing the same results. The participants agreed that they are looking for an outlet to establish a more stable foundation in their lives but the lack of knowledge and guidance from learning and resources are quite overwhelming. Based on my interpretation from the study, environmental and naturalistic events govern uncontrolled behaviors and actions of those who are susceptible to the detrimental effects introduced as a risk to one's own livelihood. The supplemental themes for the study that trailed behind environmental constraints continues to be identified as critical factors that affect certain individuals during certain periods of time of their lives. Undoubtedly, environment is ongoing and can bring about conflict to destitute individuals.

In reference to Chapter 5, the purpose of the investigation and inferences of the findings are arranged accordingly, conforming to the conceptual framework. Further

recommendations and implications for understanding depleted self-control and how the theory plays a role with the motivational factors toward reoffending are stipulated with supported research to low self-control theory. The presented study provided a general and comprehensive analysis of the scopes that exist within the personal viewpoints of parolees, reoffenders, and individuals assigned under restrictions. Based on each account delivered by the participants, neither individual experienced the same circumstances. Nonetheless, their responses reflected the disputes and adversities the surrounding environments that contributed to the developmental structure of their personalities, attitudes, ideals, and agendas. Therefore, the following chapter detail interpretations of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations to propel extended research then finally, implications that could possibility draw more consideration about susceptibility among disadvantaged individuals.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Inferences, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this investigation was to explore the motivational factors that contribute to persistent low self-control and reoffending among male offenders, 18-35 years old. This process consisted of criminal conduct, absence of self-control, and the risk of reoffending behavior which place individuals in a position for reentry into the prison system. According to the results of the study, environmental constraints generated a greater obstacle in comparison to parenting concerns, psychological deficiencies, distorted internal states, and attitudinal/behavioral barriers.

At the beginning of each interview, the participant elaborated on how the lack of parenting and incompetent guidance contributed to the development of their attitudes and beliefs. Later, themes started to emerge as participants reflected on key events and situations. For instance, each participant discussed issues pertaining to their struggles during the adulthood as the questions proceeded during the interview. Moreover, there were two anomalies which were inherent within questions eight and ten. The questions affected the study due to the participants not being able to deliver responses. Even with the lack of information to gather for questions eight and ten, environmental constraints continued to remain a substantial concern with the participants. Based on their personal beliefs, the participants concluded that most of their inability to reconcile, reason, and problem-solve stemmed from constant hardship encountered in the community. A supporting theme that proved to be deeply affected by low self-control and reoffending tendencies were poor attitudinal/behaviors. These barriers which involve problematic

behaviors and poor adaptive skills were consistent with the participant's efforts to consider inappropriate behaviors as an outlet. Each participant acknowledged the same results with different forms of aggressive behaviors. Therefore, environmental constraints aligned with the lack of resources provided by recovery programs that are designed to assist disadvantaged individuals. By that I mean that rehabilitation programs (such as structured educational organizations, healthcare centers, social-integration systems, and other public classifications) do not the competent resources for promoting a progressive community. In other words, vulnerable individuals do not have the advantage of improving prolific adaptive skills which are restricted by deficits in learning.

Scales that assess criminals with a risk of recidivism limit participants to give insight on the following topics: what they know, the skills they have learned, their adaptive capacity, and demographics. Obtaining a personal narrative discussing each participants' past, present, and potential directions in the future included vital sources. Though issues with child-rearing drifted as the interview progressed, the learning and adaptive stages within the childhood period is vital for future development of an individual. Early behaviors can potentially transpire from what was learned in one's own natural environment thus clarifying that the individual may consider such learned behaviors as being norms. However, the results to maladaptive behaviors and criminal conduct are not nourishing. In addition, the emergence of environmental constraints throughout the entire investigation equated to learning behaviors coming into repeated contact with different places, people, and situations daily. During the study, it was

necessary to interact with individuals who represented different ethnicities and backgrounds.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

The major benefit of this investigation is that no one lives or encounters the same experiences. Each narrative account provided by each participant contributed massively to the results of the study due to enduring distinctive hardships and challenges. The strategy and the findings of the study is applicable for various disadvantaged communities. In discussing the selected themes of parental concerns, environmental constraints, attitudinal/behavioral barriers, psychological deficiencies, and distorted internal states, each scope was suitable for influencing issues with low self-control and the tendencies to reoffend. There were no specific themes to target for each question due to the risk of limiting the participant's response to each question. Main details related to the themes were identified and coded applied to the associated themes. Occasionally, information identified in the narrative to serve under multiple themes were applied more than once.

### **Perceived Barriers**

The participants perceived barrier(s) tallied mostly toward environmental constraints with attitudinal/behavioral problems not far behind. As mentioned before, it is relevant to consider that not all individuals experience the same challenges as would the next individual. The overall and different accounts recognized in the study provided each theme to be identified for each question. Therefore, an array of themes identified in each question were variable depending on what was communicated by each participant.

Expectations did not suffice during the investigation which assisted with keeping the interview interesting. Excluding questions 8 and 10 (which were identified as flawed by the participants), each theme played a role in the response according to which participant perceived the question based on their experience. At the beginning of the interview for each participant, parental concerns, attitudinal/behavioral barriers, and environmental issues were predominately identified as areas of motivation for low self-control. As the interview progressed, the responses became more variable which began to swing towards more environmental issues. Accuracy and validity in responses were difficult to determine; however, the participants were not hesitant in their responses. Due to persistent encounters with challenges in the public, the participants agreed or helped themselves realize that they are in the momentum of repetitively experiencing the same results when faced with adversity. The participants also admitted that they are open for the opportunity to seek a better living, but the lack of resources provided in the community are scarce or practices seem to be unethical or neglectful.

The themes of distorted internal states and psychological deficiencies were also identified from responses from a few participants. The participants did not verify whether if they possessed a history of psychiatric treatments or disorders, but some responses indicated that most of their actions were impulse-related. For instance, when faced with adversity, the participants highlighted that they frequently reverted to immoral tendencies without giving thought of the potential consequences that lie ahead. The participants believed that they could expect different results that may rule in their favor but to no avail. In this instance, their behaviors and actions can be linked to impulsive-related

tendencies. In addition, a few of the participants reported symptoms associated with depression, explosive-aggressive behaviors, and unstable moods. Moreover, problems related to distorted internal states represented maladaptive ideations such confusion, misinterpretation, inability to reason, and other maladaptive abilities. The participants continue to find their circumstances too difficult to make any adjustments. The knowledge absorbed since childhood and progressive encounters with destitution within their natural environment influences negative thought patterns and unhealthy methods to escape torment. For instance, responses concerning participants' urge to abuse drugs as a method of escape is an distortion in reasoning and understanding. Responses relating to conflict with family thus seeking controlled substances as a treatment enhancer is an example of poor self-control or failure to exercise self-discipline. Information identified as distorted internal states varied throughout the interviews depending on the participant.

### **Strategies to overcome barriers.**

The participants relied on learned maladaptive behaviors to assist with seeking relief before, during, and after conflict. For each theme, the participants used their own method of coping with adversity; yet their actions for which contributed to the similar and unfavorable results did not help with improving self-control abilities and reducing criminal conduct. From the study, environmental constraints and attitudinal/behaviors barriers were identified as the primary motivational factors contributing to low self-control mannerisms. Moreover, environmental constraints appeared to be constant with the participants thus manifesting adverse forms of attitudes and beliefs. For instance, the participants admitted that experiencing relapses create pressure and overwhelming



circumstances which forces them to immediately seek some type of escape. Depending on the participant, their actions ranged from engaging in isolated but illegal practices to socially mediated conditions. Although the themes of distorted internal states and psychological deficiencies were not as dense as the other categories, including these factors within the context of low self-control is substantial for explanation. To explain, situations that may appear confusing or misinterpreted by the participant can lead to a chain of events such as emotional withdrawal, aggression, anger, and seeking a scapegoat to justify their actions. In addition, their actions of reacting rather than considering the types of consequences that may come about is without question a priority. This form of behavior can give thought that symptoms of unstable moods and aggression can represent some form of psychosis which can lead to repeated offenses or criminal conduct.

Parenting concerns apparently did not have any strategies for deflecting barriers, but childhood experiences can propel a child's maladaptive behaviors well into an individual's maturity stages if there is an absence of early intervention for improvement. The participants were detailed with their responses and highly familiar with the structure of their community and people they encounter. Based on the knowledge provided by the participants, it seems that the lack of environmental resources to combat environmental conflict is one of the significant factors influencing aggressive-criminal conduct and increasing the risk of reoffending. Overall, there was an overlapping of themes within the totality of the participants responses. In other words, the participants continue to exercise what they believe is right instead of seeking to explore methods which are consider effective.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The participants of the study were selected because of these specific individuals possessed a history in criminal behavior and continue to exercise reoffending habits. These individuals were identified in a public setting and encouraged to contribute to a study which accounted for the knowledge they acquired. However, a major limitation to the study is that no one individual experiences the same events, settings, and people in the same form or fashion. This statement was presented due to the specific area chosen to conduct the study. As mentioned before, the recognized limitations of the study were due to the sample size of the investigation in which eight individuals were selected to participate. These individuals were also selected within a small geographical area which was a disadvantaged environment. The area in which these participants congregated to work for pay or perform community service hours was a minor and resourceful organization within the community. However, I was unable to determine whether 7 of the participants resided near or within this area. I was only able to verify one participant's house of residence, but I am unable to share the exact location.

The participants were selected within the same town due to the high volume of activity within the organization they participated. Many individuals who participated in community service or serving food to homeless often commute from nearby and smaller towns to conduct their duties. Again, I was unable to determine whether many of the participants were from out of town or living within the area. During the interviewing process, there were no issues with controlling the interview. I was able to expedite the interview due to the participants understanding of the questions being presented. Finally,

I managed to identify two misleading questions within the study. Due to the error, questions 8 and 10 were rejected by the participants because they believed that they beforehand answered the questioned but in a different form. This misinterpretation and misleading of information can equate to Lamb's (2016) provision to ask simply worded and formatted questions to avoid any type of anomalies.

I can acknowledge that the proficiency and accuracy within the participants' responses may be flawed or reliable. However, the consistency and speed of delivery of information shared is extensive enough for considerable amount of evidence that may explain the participants' issues with adjustment. It is also evident that my experiences from dealing with hardship may have slightly influenced my interpretations of the participants' response to certain questions.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Earlier in the passage, the literature review section presented plentiful number of resources which examined the scope of low self-control, reoffending, and criminal behavior. Yet, these investigations were based on using controlled elements which may have limited the participants' perspective on how low self-control influences reoffending behavior. Issues with avoiding or neglecting thoughts and tendencies to deflect episodes of reoffending were evident within the narrative of each participant. In this study, the participants were given the autonomy to discuss what they knew and how they oriented to various conditions with limited adaptive abilities in self-control. With the freedom to introduce their insight and describe the challenges they face daily which increases the risk of recidivism, the participants were able to present a larger scale of motivational

factors influencing reoffending behavior. Clearly, recommendations for furthering this concept of research require a phenomenological approach on advanced motivational factors that contribute to low self-control and reoffending behavior within a larger geographical location.

By narrowing down the conditions that may play a role with the lack of developing proactive abilities to postpone reoffending episodes, investigators can apply a more realistic approach to understanding the magnitude of low self-control. From this specific study, the participants seemed aware of the challenges and destitutions that threaten their well-being and safety. Nonetheless, without persistent guidance and discipline needed to prosper and adjust against an array of obstacles, the participants introduced a foundation for which opportunity for advancement and improvement is required but with the corresponding tools. In addition, a grounded theory approach can assist along with constructing more credible theories for gathering data supporting participants' views addressing their challenges. In addition, including research or attempting to target populations within more populated and urban areas should be considered compared to this study's small geographical location and number of participants. Though concerns with reliability, accuracy, and validity of participant accounts may be a risk in assessing a higher volume of participants, their experiences may with equate to the encounters that the participants addressed in this study.

The participants of the study not only addressed their issues, they also justified their actions along with providing an understanding that results are not favorable during significant periods of time. The selected themes presented in this study are substantial for

including more advanced studies geared toward explaining the influence of low self-control on reoffending tendencies. With different people and environments, it is plausible to suggest that more factors can be identified depending upon the geographical area and the availability of resources meant to provide community provision to disadvantaged individuals. Undoubtedly, the goal is to continue to gain insight from those with distinct personalities because of their encounter with life's difficulties. Limiting research efforts from a subjective position may ultimately limit the participant's capacity to recall issues that are unable to fit into certain research approaches. In addition, with the potential focus on larger areas and sample sizes in future studies, the presentation of experiences may introduce more extensive challenges that may elevate or increase motivational factors influencing reoffending behavior and absence of self-control.

### **Implications of the Study**

The growing concern with individuals who continue to exhibit problematic and criminal behaviors supports the vital impact of low self-control. The lack of effective elements served to destabilize adverse thought patterns along with the integration of maladaptive behavior can potentially inhibit the capacity to acquire enriched skills for human development. Based on the research efforts contributed to this study, it can be asserted that individuals who possess similar issues while living in more urban areas can introduce an influential scale. Learning is continuous and imperative for providing an individual the essential network for seeking prosperity and a healthy living. Individuals or people who encounter difficulties with adjusting due to reoffending behavior may potentially remain exposed to high-risk environments. The ability to exert self-control

stems from a history of success and failure through means of encountering different types of adversities. In contrast, learning can be delayed because of the absence of protective factors that can create a drift in emotional stability. In addition, environmental resources with the purpose of improving and expanding a community must include compassionate professionals and representative that help with laying the foundation for assisting vulnerable individuals. The participants in this investigation elaborated on how the deficient care provided to people in need of supportive services can create uncertainty within an organization. Therefore, considering what a person knows instead of organizing subjective and limited variables to highlight issues is more effective because people has a sense of involvement with treatment efforts. Larger geographical areas can benefit with the idea of targeting limited or ineffective resources provided to the public to ensure that the greatest amount of care can be provided to disturbed individuals. Including realistic concepts that can relate to the conditions of certain environments is vital for people who are challenged but can provide their viewpoint on what should be accommodating to the needs.

### **Social Change**

The individuals who participated in this study assisted with the formation of the investigation. Their perceptions and recollections of personal accounts about the motivational factors that play a role with low self-control and reoffending behavior may help to pave the way for more advanced systems of care. Overall, the participants stressed that environmental constraints become more of an impact on their well-being due to maturity and increased degree of responsibility. Inadequate knowledge in understanding

how to utilize more proactive skills does not assist with reducing the risk of repetitively exhibiting reoffending behavior. An implication for enhancing self-control skills and reducing the risk of reoffending is to provide the opportunity to people who seek such services. These specific organizations are only effective if organizers and professionals provide the most effective services well-matched to reducing distinct problematic behaviors. To explain further, the interaction between disadvantaged individuals and professional staff has the potential to be more efficient because of the contribution and involvement of both parties.

Improvements in more effective services can help disadvantaged individuals with exercising more proactive abilities, reasoning skills, relationships with people and family, interpersonal attributes, intellectual/adaptive capacities, and other personal traits that can be altered for the betterment in their lifestyle. More efficient outreach programs that assist people with limited skills, discharge from incarceration, and troubled individuals can promote lessons in teaching affected individuals on how to make a change for not just themselves but for their future self. Additionally, families can become more involved with the individual's road to success through support and intervention efforts. The participants in this study believe that within their natural environment, they are exposed to the limited and incompetent services and resources provided to them. However, the participants can seek opportunity by lending a voice of concern for people of their caliber by notifying city officials about the conditions of their community.

The barriers addressing parental concerns, psychological deficiencies, attitudinal/behavioral barriers, and distorted internal states can also be engrained within

the therapeutic scope of environmental services to educate individuals on seeking alternative methods for healthier living. The implications for social change by understanding what the individual knows can be exercised in more congested areas where crime rates are more complex. Organizers for effective services can establish a foundation of treatment based on the input provided by people who need assistance instead of relying on subjective beliefs and overgeneralizing efforts in believing that everyone can improve at the same pace. Inefficient services can create issues within community support, funding, and nonetheless shutting down the network which reduces the opportunity for people who seek recovery. The primary goal for sustaining therapeutic resources within the environment for improvement warrants people the leverage for avoiding unfavorable consequences in the future by making appropriate decisions.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

Therapeutic organizations which maintain the provision of providing effective services for individuals in need of assistance need to become more knowledgeable about including consumers within their treatment plan. This study introduced a method of considering the viewpoint of people who are affected by environmental challenges that influence or motivate their intentions to remain committed to engaging in wrongful acts. The risks of criminal conduct in disadvantaged communities continue to elevate if susceptible individuals are forced to make choices that jeopardize their freedom, safety, and well-being. Past offenders who are reintroduced into the free world can make progress by becoming more affiliated with the organizations collaborating with legal



officials. The goal is to help past offenders readjust back into society along with acquiring the adaptable abilities to improve self-sufficient behaviors for survival.

Networking organizations can consider the feedback and interests provided by people who are at risk of being arrested for serious crimes by implementing programs and agendas compatible for redirection. Therefore, this research endeavor can be used as an evidence-based practice for plan development strategies to help relate more with the people in the community. The ethical position in which organizations can hold professional service workers accountable for providing the most effective treatment tools for improving behavior most likely influence people to be increasingly dedicated to success.

### **Conclusion**

Individuals who are faced with persistent obstacles within their community environment and without beneficial resources are subject to regress over time. The chances involved with not being able to adapt to changes in societal rules creates a rising concern for people who do not possess the capacity to avoid reoffending and improve self-control tendencies. Low self-control propels reoffending behavior under this paradigm for criminal conduct due to the individual not being able to determine whether their wrongful actions lead to further and unfavorable consequences. Individuals who struggle with low self-control and impulsive behaviors understand that they have desires to fulfill but assistive resources can help with altering how they should demonstrate more constructive forms of mannerisms.

With increased knowledge on restraint and problem-solving skills, reoffenders can learn to hold themselves accountable for their actions and explore alternative methods for being successful with similar conditions in the future. From the expressions of the participants in the study, these individuals demonstrated that they are aware of the issues they encounter but are limited from advancing their knowledge because of historical complications leading to criminal conduct. The participants learned to appreciate the challenges they endured and are currently combating along with a sense of knowing that healthier forms of success is inevitable. In addition, the participants learned to identify their issues but the idea of seeking alternative strategies to assist with the betterment for personal progress is at a cessation. The category concerning environmental constraints continue to remain countless because without the environment, behavior is absent. Clearly, the responses provided by the participants in the study can initiate the beginning of expanding research targeting the motivational factors for reoffending and low self-control. With this effort, community organizations and contributions toward funding programs to help troubled individuals present more favorable and socially appropriate outcomes for the future.

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