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## African American Male Ex-Offenders' Experiences of Housing Support and Other Postincarceration Services

Joyce Denise McPhee  
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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Joyce McPhee

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Walden University  
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Abstract

African American Male Ex-Offenders' Experiences of Housing Support and Other  
Postincarceration Services

by

Joyce McPhee

MPhil, Walden University, 2020

MPA, Barry University, 2016

BURP, Florida Atlantic University, 2013

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Public Policy and Administration

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November 2022

## Abstract

Many male African American ex-offenders lack resources that would allow them to become successful in reentering society. The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of male African American ex-offenders regarding homelessness and the search for housing after release from incarceration. Schneider and Ingram's theory of social construction of target populations was the framework for the investigation. Data were collected by conducting semistructured interviews with 12 adult African American male ex-offenders from the South Florida region of the United States who were experiencing homelessness. Participants self-selected by responding to a flyer posted at a shelter. Data analysis included use of Saldana's socio-emotional and behavioral coding to identify themes related to participants' experiences with housing, mental illness, addiction, employment, and job training. The results indicate that participants felt socially constructed as dependents, with challenges in obtaining employment, training, and housing, and the sense of being powerless. These results may lead to positive social change by educating policy makers about African American male ex-offenders' firsthand experiences of the impacts of homelessness. Early intervention may support the rehabilitation of the postincarcerated population by decreasing homelessness and promoting market-driven academic literacy training, and job programs.

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## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	v
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Background.....	3
Problem Statement .....	11
Purpose of the Study .....	14
Research Question .....	16
Theoretical Framework.....	16
Nature of the Study .....	18
Definitions.....	18
Assumptions.....	20
Scope and Delimitations .....	22
Limitations .....	23
Significance.....	24
Summary .....	26
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	28
Introduction.....	28
Literature Search Strategy.....	31
Theoretical Framework.....	32
Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Constructs .....	36
Social Construction and Implications for Policy and Politics .....	40
Young’s (1990) Five Faces of Oppression .....	43

Homelessness, Causes, and Demographics in the United States .....	45
Racial Oppression of African Americans: Historical Overview and Background .....	52
Racial Oppression of African Americans in the U.S. Mass Incarceration System.....	57
Mental Illness and Substance Abuse Among African American Male Ex- Offenders.....	62
Summary and Conclusions .....	69
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	71
Introduction.....	71
Research Design and Rationale .....	73
Role of the Researcher .....	76
Methodology .....	77
Participant Selection Logic .....	77
Instrumentation .....	80
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection .....	81
Data Analysis Plan .....	81
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	86
Ethical Procedures .....	88
Summary .....	89
Chapter 4: Results .....	90
Introduction.....	90

Setting .....	90
Demographics .....	91
Data Collection .....	91
Data Analysis .....	93
Coding.....	94
Results.....	98
Redistribution ( <i>f</i> = 182).....	99
Alternatives ( <i>f</i> = 176) .....	99
Resources ( <i>f</i> = 176).....	99
Policy Issues ( <i>f</i> = 161).....	100
Policy Limitations ( <i>f</i> = 144) .....	100
Behavioral ( <i>f</i> = 336).....	100
Distribution ( <i>f</i> = 330) .....	100
Regulatory ( <i>f</i> = 324).....	101
Redistribution ( <i>f</i> = 182).....	101
Constituent ( <i>f</i> = 176).....	101
Alternatives ( <i>f</i> = 176) .....	102
Resources ( <i>f</i> = 176).....	102
Equitable ( <i>f</i> = 126) .....	102
Practically ( <i>f</i> = 150).....	102
Principles ( <i>f</i> = 150).....	103
Organization ( <i>f</i> = 127) .....	103



Jobs ( $f = 215$ ).....	104
Training ( $f = 214$ ) .....	104
Housing ( $f = 186$ ).....	104
Policy Issues ( $f = 161$ ) .....	104
Policy Limitations ( $f = 144$ ) .....	105
Drug Treatment ( $f = 38$ ) .....	105
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	105
Summary .....	109
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations .....	110
Introduction.....	110
Interpretation of the Findings.....	115
Limitations of the Study.....	120
Recommendations.....	124
Implications.....	127
Conclusion .....	132
References.....	137
Appendix A: Request for Permission to Post Participant Recruitment Flyer .....	166
Appendix B: Authorization to Post Participant Recruitment Flyer .....	168
Appendix C: Participant Recruitment Flyer .....	169
Appendix D: Interview Protocol.....	177

## List of Tables

Table 1. Preliminary Coding Framework .....	xx
Table 2. Aggregate Codes .....	xx
Table 3. Themes and Codes Related to the Social Construction of Target Populations (Policy Formulation) .....	xx
Table 4. Themes and Codes Related to the Social Construction of Target Populations (Policy Experience) .....	xx

## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

African American men are disproportionately represented in U.S. federal and state prisons. During the first half of the 2010s, African American men accounted for 32% of those incarcerated in the United States (Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), 2011a; Maschi et al., 2014). At the end of 2018, African American prisoners in state facilities represented 62% of those incarcerated for a violent offense (BJS, 2019). In 2019, the percentage of prisoners eligible for parole for nonviolent crimes dropped to the lowest level in 30 years (BJS, 2019).

Those who are paroled or who complete these sentences experience a number of employment and reintegration barriers. These include a lack of adequate housing, mental health hospitals, drug treatment facilities, training programs, and jobs that are suitable for ex-offenders. African American male ex-offenders experience exploitation and discrimination in finding permanent employment to sustain essential needs (Ricci & Barry, 2011). These ex-offenders also face isolation in the absence of skills, social inclusion, and opportunities. Communities planning and orderly development are intended to address inequities such as housing affordability, availability, accessibility, and insecurity from systemic discrimination. United States Housing and Urban Development (HUD) policy is intended to provide housing assistance to applicants, but ex-offenders appear to be less likely to receive housing than non-offender applicants. Some African American male ex-offenders never received housing referrals, long-term psychiatric treatment, or continued rehabilitation post-incarceration than other ethnic

groups (Hinson & Bradley, 2011). These findings are line with exploitation theory, which hypothesis that one group does not receive what another group receives (Hinson & Bradley, 2011). Rehabilitation efforts during incarceration and community reentry programs postincarceration are necessary to providing African American ex-offenders with the support they need for a successful reentry. Such efforts may also lead to a reduction in reincarceration, for which African American men are at a greater risk (Ricci & Barry, 2011). Receiving early intervention in rehabilitation while incarcerated help protect postincarcerated populations from homelessness, victimization, discrimination, and relapse, and recidivism by building character through training and developing life-changing competencies (Rossvanes, et al., 2018). Redefining rehabilitation may inspire normative behavior and help the ex-offender to reintegrate into the community (Rossvanes, et al., 2018). Successful reentry is a critical element to equip the ex-offender population with a positive outlook, skillset initiatives, expanding entrepreneurship possibilities, and permanent housing placement. Sustainable rehabilitation may promote the meaningful transitioning of participants.

Chapter 1 includes a discussion of the problem of homelessness among African American male ex-offenders. I will state the problem and purpose of this study and delineate the research question as it relates to the conceptual framework for the study. An overview of the nature of the study including a description of the sample population will also be provided. Definitions of key terms will be

provided, and the assumptions, scope, and delimitations, and limitations of the research will be explored. Finally, the significance of this study for positive social change will be briefly discussed.

### **Background**

African American male ex-offenders become homeless for several reasons. One reason is their homelessness before prison; they have no domicile to return to other than the streets. In addition, they may have completed the rehabilitation period before being placed in housing. Finally, ex-offenders may be unskilled, have mental illness or physical illness, and unemployed, resulting in being discharged to the street (Remster, 2013). Subsequently, the African American male ex-offenders remain at risk of being homeless for more than two years after release from prison, and would be more likely to recidivate (Remster, 2013). If the ex-offender experienced residential instability, the reentry process was disrupted, and the ex-offender did not receive housing security, treatment, and other planned programs to secure employment (Remster, 2013). Technical parole violations included no contact, homelessness, broken curfew, failure to report, and failed drug tests all resulting in the risk of returning to prison (Remster, 2013).

African American male ex-offenders need market-driven academic literacy training and job programs requiring hands-on skillsets that require sustainable income to meet (HUD) policies. These HUD policies are designed for public housing applicants, typically requiring 30% of their adjustment income (HUD Public Housing Program, n. d.). Sustainable intervention training programs include performance, information, and ideas to improve the required curriculum for adult learners. A feasibility study of the

practicality of the adult vocational school must provide clear accountability structure essential for protecting the risks of cost, benefits, performance, and expectations of the proposed public, private, partnership (Anderson, 2015). The constructionist theory hypothesizes that understanding new ideas prerequisites the precondition of existing knowledge before integrating concepts (Anderson, 2015). The magnitude of new ideas must align with its fit with existing practices (Anderson, 2015). Educators must implement a meso-level for those students who fall between the micro and the macro levels of analytical data of academic proficiency (Anderson, 2015).

Reintegration challenges begin with the inability to find employment because of the lack of skill set, and weak social ties complicate the reintegration in various ways. Public perception of Public-Private Partnerships PPP needs new intervention and sustainability for the African American male ex-offenders (Anderson, 2015). Restrictions created by the absence of public resources impeded the reintegration process. The disadvantages of mass incarcerated target populations experienced critical gaps in education, literacy, and verbal comprehension. Recent evidence underscored challenges identifying specific demographics and ineffective literacy programs (Silver et al., 2020). These social disadvantages undermine the reentry program-focused and effectiveness of the African American male ex-offender successful transitioning back into the community (Silver et al., 2020).

Social construction, policy design, and lack of funding were the culprits resulting in government inaction directing the private sector to produce sustainable market-driven resources adaptable for ex-offender community transitioning. The job training programs need public-private partnership interdependency with robust investment-based stewardship that promote correctional continuum in adult literacy programs to maximize basic skills in a limited period (Nordtveit, 2004). Public, private partners can be defined as a risk-sharing relationship of a shared objective grounded in special interest collaboration, and social equity sustainable intervention critical in public policy-design assessment tools. The PPP is an advantage over outsourcing where the private partner objectives align with public policy (Nordtveit, 2004). Past practices revealed the absence of social construct which led to rigid economic systems that constrained local government regulations to seek solutions to physical infrastructure policies.

Substance use education and awareness has become the most prevalent form of drug-related services. The therapeutic community TC has become a comprehensive substance treatment in the prison population (Stanton-Tindall et al., 2015). This type of treatment has been consistently associated with sustained outcomes in the prison environment. TC treatments operate on the key principle that drug disorders are complex; behavior change depends on the adoption of prosocial behaviors (Stanton-Tindall et al., 2015). Individuals who participated in the TC treatment sustained abstinence 47 to 60 months after prison release and has also been effective in reducing mental outcomes related to drug abuse (Stanton-Tindall et al., 2015). Individuals that did not complete the TC program was likely to be reincarnated in six months of release (Stanton-Tindall, et al.,

2015). Reoccurring substance users and those with mental health are candidates for the TC treatment. Despite the established factors associated with recidivism in the criminal justice literature, less emphasis was placed on behavioral health factors related to the outcomes of the TC treatment programs in the urban community.

Serious mental illness (SMI) treatment is inaccessible for the African American male ex-offender target population. The prescribed treatment for people with SMI may include inpatient treatment, respite care, assertive community treatment, coordinated specialty care, supported employment, and cognitive behavior (Interdepartmental Serious Mental Illness Coordinating Committee, 2017). Approximately two-thirds of the estimated 6.7 million adults receive mental treatment. Nearly a third of these patients receive medication only and no mental health behavioral services that include psychosocial or psychotherapeutic treatment (Interdepartmental Serious Mental Illness Coordinating Committee, 2017). Among the 63% of patients treated for co-occurring SMI and substance abuse disorders, only 14% received specialized substance treatment (Interdepartmental Serious Mental Illness Coordinating Committee, 2017). These effective treatment models exist but are not widely available (Interdepartmental Serious Mental Illness Coordinating Committee, 2017).

African American men in the U.S. have long been socially vulnerable due to their race, ethnicity, and social class (Harley et al., 2014). Many in the African American male ex-offender population have enhanced psychological risks resulting from confinement (Harley et al., 2014). These include physical deterioration, mental illness, illiteracy, sub-par intellectual capacity, learning



disabilities, communication challenges, poor mental development, and substance abuse tendencies (BJS, 2011-2012, 2017; (Harley et al., 2014). Prior research revealed that the longterm mass incarceration creates the risk of premature death as a result of poor health (Weidner & Schultz, 2020). Federal and state prisons reported medical problems of prisoners such as learning, speech, hearing, vision, mobility, and mental impairment (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2019). Reintegration policies that raise concerns for ex-offenders include housing, employment, and education deficits especially in urban communities. Ex-offenders are also challenged with finding secured permanent housing and gainful employment, sustainable drug treatment, and behavioral management (Fox et al., 2016; Herbert et al., 2015). However, few studies have addressed an ex-offender's risks of housing insecurity issues such as mental illness, relapse, unemployment, and reincarceration intertwined with the homelessness factor.

I used Young's (1990) five faces of oppression (FFO) as part of the conceptual framework to explore the social construction of the African American male ex-offender target population, the implications for political justice, and policy changes as presented by Schneider and Ingraham (1993) in their social construction of target populations (SCTP) theory. SCTP is a tool for investigateing the cultural characterizations of group behavior and well-being affected by public policy (Schneider & Ingraham, 1993). Social construction theory influences and shapes both public policy and public administration in policy design. Political pressures from grass root organizations argued devised punitive, punishment-oriented policy to change negatively constructed groups.

Public officials designed geographical maps that depict target populations based on both the stereotypes and their public perception of assumptions, belief, and public opinion (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Social constructions are stereotypes about particular groups that were created by politics, culture, socialization, history, media, religion, and literature. Lowi's (1972) typology argued that the relationship between public policy and democracy is based on two dimensions of probability coercion of benefits distribution, which produced four types of policy: distributive, regulatory, redistributive, and constituent, of which only one resembles a competitive model of pluralist democracy. Pluralism is policy design with multiple groups sharing political power (Schneider & Ingraham, 1993).

This research also includes how FFO (Young, 1990) may explain part of the reason for African American male ex-offender homelessness. Young examined the concept of justice and distribution that improves the prison institutional conditions necessary for obtain housing and treatment to further qualify for other essential public assistance such as training, and employment to sustain a successful reentry back into the community. Young (1990) also argued that the concept of justice referred to injustice primarily in two forms: (1) disabling a target population is the inability to express their needs, thoughts, and feelings; (2) and groups of oppression suffers inhibition of their ability to develop and exercise expression and the capacity of their essential needs. These constraints raise concerns about the distributive patterns that involve decision-

making procedures on labor and culture. This qualitative study focuses on whether Young's variables of exploitation, marginalization, powerless, cultural imperialism, and racial violence have predictive value in explaining homelessness among African American male ex-offenders.

African American male ex-offenders experience barriers such as a lack of education, recidivism, poor mental health, and in some cases physical health issues (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016). This pattern is evident in the past decade. Among 12 to 14 million ex-offenders in the United States, one in 15 are ex-felons (Bureau of Justice, 2011a). Further, Ex-offenders have accounted for 1.5 to 1.7 million workers who have lost jobs or could not find work because of their criminal background (Schmitt & Warner, 2011). African American males had encountered discrimination being treated unfairly because of their criminal background (Taylor et al., 2018). Bureau of Justice statistics report revealed over half of the African American criminal population suffers from mental health (Taylor et al, 2018). The African American male ex-offenders also face considerable barriers in their social, civic, and economic environment. The outcomes of these many barriers include housing instability, unemployment, poverty, and poor health created which are exacerbated by limited access to essential resources (Taylor et al., 2018). The Bureau of Justice Statistics Revised 2011-12 Report (BJS, 2016) also revealed the medical problems of state and federal prisoners' conditions continued from 2011. African American male prisoners continued a higher rate of 46.0 community supervision of the sample size of 4,594,412 and had a higher level of disability from

chronic conditions such as heart condition, diabetes, COPD, kidney disease, asthma, cancer, and hypertension (high blood pressure) (BJS, 2016).

Racial violence is another systemic form of oppression among members of a particular group such as the African American male ex-offender population simply because they are members of that group (Young, 1990). This form of oppression, defined as racial violence, are systemic attacks that consist of cultural dominance, stigmatization, and social injustice is prevalent among the African American male ex-offender population (Young, 1990). Dominant group-wide dissemination that favors any majority group that subsequently constructs differences by the lack of housing and jobs for groups African American male ex-offenders. Dominance is brought on by group reinforcement of its position bringing the target group under measure of its dominant norms (Young, 1990). Further, mass imprisonment exacerbates social inequalities and has severe consequences for poor Black individuals (Miller et al., 2015). Carceral expansion for the Black community has socially categorized and denigrated their community both materially and symbolically (Miller et al., 2015). In the United States, approximately 45,000 local, state, and federal laws restrict former prisoners from participation in the social, civic, and political process, which results in their inability to actively improve policies, resources, and assistance for the Black community (Miller et al., 2015). Therefore, a need to change and or add policies and programs that prevent racism, poverty, exclusion, and subsequently reincarceration of the African American male ex-offender population needs exploration (Miller et al., 2015).

James Baldwin a civil right activist set out to bring change to an era of Black oppression (Miller et al., 2015). A new social agreement transformed the urban landscape of the inner city and altered its sociality. This study will address the perception of the homeless African American male ex-offender.

### **Problem Statement**

Housing insecurity among African American male ex-offenders in one urban area in the United States was the focus of this research study. Among the general homeless population, an ex-offender is up to 11 times more likely to become homeless than a non-offender (Fox et al., 2016). Homelessness and factors associated with homelessness are not well understood; however, researchers have suggested that risk factors such as mental illness and reentry programs complicate the transitioning process. More than 50% of the criminal population has suffered from mental illness at higher levels than the general public (Fox et al., 2016). The process of deinstitutionalization of psychiatric services led to community-based care over the past 50-years; long-stay psychiatric treatment no longer exists, at least at the state-sponsored level (Killaspy, 2007). This development can explain some of the epidemic levels of homelessness among the African American male ex-offender community.

The system established for prisoner reentry is not working for the African American male ex-offender population, research shows. The policy does not address issues of housing insecurity, job availability, unsuccessful training programs, effective drug treatment, and mental illness awareness that socially and economically impacted the Black community. The Black community may lack the necessary resources that support

successful reintegration (Williams et al., 2019). In particular, the failed education systems have negatively impacted the quality of life in the Black community (Williams et al., 2019). These social economic factors have significantly limited the African American male ex-offenders' ability of finding housing, employment, and literacy programs for educational development (Williams et al., 2019). African American male ex-offenders are at risk of returning to their communities in which the presence of high levels of racial inequality increase the likelihood of reincarceration (Williams et al., 2019).

Deep-seated such as mental health issues and sicriminated may also account for the issues that African American male ex-offenders' experiences with reentry programs. African American male ex-offenders have experienced a higher rate of racial disparities leading to critical barriers to reentry; health issues from long-term incarceration also make maintain employment more difficult (Mahaffey et al., 2018). Higher rates of mental health problems are a result of deinstitutionalization and the inaccessibility of community-based mental health services offered in its aftermath. Discrimination and oppression are prevalent in the United States and impact the African American male (Egleton et al., 2016). Historically, African American male ex-offenders have historically experienced homelessness from inadequate rehabilitation planning. This may be the result of policy discrimination that contributes to inequality and inequity in their socioeconomic status, which in turn has led to scarce resources related to housing,

employment, physical health, and mental health and created instability in their lives (Egleton et al., 2016).

There is a gap in the policy and the theory literature that has hindered the construction of a comprehensive multi-system of support for African Americans at the individual, family, and community levels. Maschi et al. (2014) contended that institutionalized discrimination begins in the community. Employment qualifications, low education, aged, and mental and physical health related issues have negatively impacted some Black individuals (Maschi et al., 2014). Maschi et al. explored homelessness issues for African American ex-offenders that continued years after incarceration and noted that the social disadvantages of economic sustainability affected a smooth transition and to reintegrate in the community.

African American men suffer from mental wellness issues with little attention paid to the failure of the reentry process and modern policy theory (Shippen et al., 2017). Shippen et al., (2017) argued that the ex-offender's life is impacted by economic, social, and cultural factors directly related to employment, psychological health, and well-being. These socio-economic challenges were linked to the increase of a relapse, which led to substance abuse, reincarceration, and mental illness. Consequently, a decline in the Black community's quality of essential resources led to the African American male ex-offender committing a new crime and returning to prison (Shippen et al., 2017). I used Young's (1990) FFO and Schneider and Ingram's (1993) SCTP theory to explain homelessness among the African American male ex-offenders.

Policy design has long been the purview of political science and has changed the formulation, implementation, and consequences of the policy process (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Social construction targets the cultural characterizations portraying groups in normative and evaluative terms. The social construction theory argues that target populations can have a strong and powerful influence on the way public officials shape both the policy agenda (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

The African American male ex-offender population has not received long-term psychiatric treatment, continued rehabilitation, and housing referrals, when needed or required. Private market housing is also cost-prohibitive to individuals with criminal convictions, as well as those who are either underemployed or unemployed (Egleton et al., 2016). Federal, state, and local policy regulations bar those with criminal convictions from living in government supported public housing. Power does not need to be implemented through control. Nonetheless, Egleton et al., (2016) examined the empowerment strategies that policymakers used by not actively opposing, embedded a major economic oppression through the political process. Empowerment and equity fail without the balance of transformation of major societal systems and institutionalized structure. Therefore, the African American male ex-offender population needs the attention of the criminal justice community to address these service shortfalls.

### **Purpose of the Study**



The purpose of the study was to explore how have male African American ex-offenders located in a large urban area of South Florida have experienced social constructs of messages, participation, orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison. I used Schneider and Ingram's SCTP (1993) to examine the implications of policy formulation and implementation and how they relate to modern policy and theory. The African American male ex-offender population has experienced a high rate of unstable housing, drug abuse, and mental illness as well as multiple reentry challenges that lead to high recidivism (Nyamathi et al., 2014). Substantial government organizational control that favors the majority group has subsequently constructed differences by negating housing and jobs for the African American male ex-offender (Nyamathi et al., 2014). Vague definitions, terms, and practices in policy guidelines have continued to housing insecurity for this population (Saldana, 2016).

I hope to enhance an understanding among prison reentry personnel and the criminal justice community so that the barriers of the African American male ex-offender population might lessen. This understudied area in the reentry process highlights the importance of structural factors that can positively impact the Black community. Increased awareness of sustainable intervention strategies may also improve the services and support provided to African American male ex-offenders during the transitioning process.

This study may make an original contribution to the field of public policy and administration. It may also begin to fill a gap in the literature by exploring dominant

group dissemination and homelessness and the differences in policy and theory. I collected data by conducting individual interviews with homeless African American male ex-offenders in the South Florida area. Creating a time line is critical to developing each section of the project and knowing when the data are complete and ready for analysis (Saldana, 2016). In Chapter 3, I further describe the methodology for data collection and analysis.

### **Research Question**

The research question that this study addressed was, How have male African American ex-offenders located in a large urban area of South Florida experienced social constructs of messages, participation, orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison?

### **Theoretical Framework**

I used Schneider and Ingram's SCTP theory (1993) to explore the research question. Interview questions focused on participants' perceptions of the public's assumptions, belief, and opinion based about them. I examined issues of marginalization, cultural imperialism, and racial violence models that deny power, rights, and opportunity to an individual because they belong to a particular group. In addition, during the interviews, asked participants to consider the dominant political discourses at the time of their release from incarceration. These assumptions, beliefs, and opinions will be discussed in Chapter 2. Young's (1990) FFO was used to inform the negative or adverse aspects of Schneider and Ingram's, 1993 SCTP.

Social construction in policy design is critical for target populations to effectively achieve their goals and accrue long-term benefits as opposed to short-term ones. Elected officials focus on various policies to change the adverse impact experienced by marginalized groups (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Still, elected officials are more likely to adopt policies that are beneficial to powerful groups who are linked to a broader or special public purpose, according to Schneider and Ingram (1993). The second area of congruence policy design is constructed to punish the less powerful groups. Unlike the African American male ex-offender outlier group, the influential community segments has positive social construction to draw attention to their issues and legislative agendas.

The policy rationale is a critical element in the design of a policy because it legitimizes the goals of the target population (Schneider & Ingraham, 1993). Policy makers develop policy tools that are the right fit to support the implementation process and safeguard intended social change. Rationales support social justice in the setting of policy goals and selection of the target population and tools to gauge public indicators to identify target group members. Policy design that yields to contenders who flood public fora promotes fear that dissuades others from creating controversial intent (Schneider & Ingraham, 1993). Target groups are pushed to private sector responsibility. Some target groups are seen as deviants responsible for the individual outcome and receive little to public support to design policy incentives (Schneider & Ingraham, 1993). Schneider and Ingram (1993) also noted that Lowi developed developed the advanced the view that policy is the culprit of politics; in other words, politics creates policy with a special interest agenda (Schneider & Ingraham, 1993).

Young (1990) contended that the distribution of wealth, income and other essential goods were explicitly limited under the concept of oppression also known as dominant political discourse. Developed by Young, FFO explains how social groups such as African Americans suffer injustice in the form of oppression. The framework explains the oppression of social groups via exploitation, marginalization, powerless, cultural imperialism, and racial violence. I used FFO to supplement Schneider and Ingraham's (1993) SCTP theory to provide a theoretical foundation for analyzing African American male ex-offenders' experiences with homelessness and housing insecurity.

### **Nature of the Study**

I used a qualitative research design involve preliminary, pattern coding, and category coding to analyze data and develop themes. I used a qualitative study approach to collect and analyze data representing comprehensive, systemic, and in-depth information about the population of homeless adult African American male ex-offenders living in one county in Florida. The method of inquiry was individual in-depth interviews (see Patton, 2015). The participants include 12 adult African American male ex-offenders, aged 18 and older, who were experiencing homelessness at the time of the research. Florida had the third-highest population of individuals experiencing homelessness at the time of research (State of Florida, 2016). The county chosen has a high rate of chronic homelessness in Florida (State of Florida, 2016).

### **Definitions**

The following definitions are relevant to this study, the stated research problem, purpose, and research question:

*Disability:* Any condition that impairs the body or mind. A disability causes participation restriction and activity limitations (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). Conditions may be the result of influences of the onset and course of mental illness and substance abuse and other overlapping health and physical issues affect on recovery (Padgett et al., 2016).

*Ex-offender:* An individual who has been convicted of a punishable crime (both misdemeanor and felony) and who was subsequently incarcerated and released (Law Insider, 2013).

*Homelessness:* A phenomenon that occurs when an individual or family who lacks a fixed, permanent, and adequate residence. Individuals experience persistent instability marked by two or more moves and lack the resources to obtain permanent housing (Federation of American Scientist, 2018).

*Housing insecurity:* Housing instability that is accompanied by income instability and poor education quality, health, and well-being (Leopold et. al., n.d.). The relationship between homelessness, housing insecurity, and incarceration is a distinct and complexity and not yet adequately understood (Herbert et al., 2015).

*Mental illness:* Health conditions that change emotion, thinking, and behavior (American Psychiatric Association, 2018). It is associated with distress in social, work, and family bonding activities.

*Reincarceration:* The readmission of a person to prison within a specified follow-up period for revocation with a new sentence (Chintakrindi, 2014).

*Recidivism:* Commission of a new offense within a specified follow-up period resulting in a new sentence of either incarceration or probation (Recidivism and Reincarceration, n. d.).

*Reintegration:* The process of transitioning an ex-offender back into society; it is the action restoring elements regarded as disparity to unity (Oxford Languages 2020).

*Substance abuse:* Compulsive drug-seeking that leads to negative consequences (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2018).

*Unemployment:* Jobless individuals who are actively seeking work, and available to accept a job (Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015)).

### **Assumptions**

An assumption is also an inductive methodological process that is mutual and simultaneously shaping the factors emerging into the policy design (Simon, 2011). The purpose of assumptions is to make a relevant study of the experiences. For example, the homeless African American male ex-offenders, to find housing after release from prison. Research should begin with an investigation on philosophical assumptions examining the phenomenon in nature (Creswell et al., 2007). The researcher investigates the organizational values, conventional methods, and its described expression of African American male ex-offender's ability to secure housing, employment and continue a drug free environment. In

research, policy assumption underlying approach observe different situations and make decisions taking actions harmonious with policy objectives (Schneider & Ingraham, 1990). These policy actions involve policy compliance that adheres to rules, utilization, and opportunity that suggest self-initiated measures to promote social change in policy and goals. The framework to create policy tools is emphasized in behavioral characteristics found in research from a theory of actions and decision-making, including current policy initiatives. There are five reasons to address a need to ameliorate social, economic, and political roadblocks: 1) the law is not clear or mute in direction or authorization in policy; 2) lack initiatives or capacity to take actions; 3) agreement to the explicit values already in place in the means or ends; 4) situations that conclude high levels of uncertainty surrounding the nature of the problem that is not known; and 5) when it is unclear what should be done and the motivation to get it done (Schneider & Ingraham, 1990). Further, policy tools should be addressed by authority, incentives, and capacity using symbolic aiming to exhort proclamation that influences perception, values, and ways to reduce uncertainty.

There are two methodological assumptions identified in this proposed study. First, that exploitation, marginalization, powerless, cultural imperialism, and racial violence can be used to explain the homelessness experiences of African American male ex-offenders. A second assumption is that in addition to homelessness, African American male ex-offenders face other challenges such as mental illness and substance abuse. Opendakker (2006) asserted that it is critical for the researcher to observe the direct social impact and examine prior knowledge of the organizational culture.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

Self-assessment is critical in understanding and explaining causality that lies within multilevel policy-making processes (Wellstead, 2017). Sabatier's advocacy coalition framework held three basic premises: policy change, policy subsystems, and belief systems in the role of policy-oriented learning (as cited in Wellstead, 2017). Continuous self-assessment was considered for this study as well, but Young's (1990) five faces of oppression was better suited and was ultimately selected. Sabatier (1988) presupposed unit of analysis requires an understanding of policy changes that occur within political subsystems (Wellstead, 2017). Behavior adversely affected by mental illness creates a systemic problem that can spread throughout reentry transitioning and can socially exclude the ex-offender. The second path of indirect policy proposals is significant changes that occur within subsystems that may appear less controversial in multi-policy relationships. Measuring the social impacts of policy change requires gauging the 10-to-20-year performance of local governments.

Organizational culture must define the scope of delimitations, which include parameters to change public rejection and establish a better rapport with ex-offenders, regardless of gender and race. Young (1990) argued that the FFO in social group marginalization influence cultural imperialism in the criminal justice population. The African American male ex-offender suffered injustice through distinct social exclusion. According to Kennington (2013), African Americans are



exceedingly and disproportionately affected more than any other group. The criminal justice system has significantly imprisoned the African American male ex-offender as identified in selective conviction rate, and inversely stratified the criminal population to comprise a lower percentage in the White non-Latino population. Mass incarceration disproportionately created a strain on the disadvantaged African American community who is ill-equipped for deprivation placed by the marginalization of post-prison stigma (Kennington, 2013).

Recent studies contended that the interactive effects of two constructs require an examination between the preexisting characteristics of mental illness and the rehabilitative process during and after prison (Kennington, 2013). The post-carceral conditions linked to poor adjustment impacted housing accessibility, drug treatment availability, mental health affordability, financial security, and alarmingly raised a concern about the African American male ex-offender population. Kennington (2013) observed that mass incarceration was the culprit of punitive policies creating poor sociological outcomes in marginalized African American communities. Desegregation tactics pointed to racial disparity disrupting social relationships in the reintegration process of entry-level jobs. Numerous disciplinary infractions also disqualified the ex-offender from public housing.

### **Limitations**

Many scholars contend that the most significant weaknesses in reentry literature are the lack of theory (Maloney, Bazemore, & Hudson, 2001). Much of the research and studies on developed interventions do not state the theory of change. Berghuis (2018)

argued that the recidivism policy had blurredred boundaries in the transitioning of the reentry process that affected employment, housing, and substance treatment, revealed in an increase in recidivism. This study will be the first to use Young's (1990) framework to examine homelessness of the African American male ex-offender and, therefore, will contribute to the theory literature. Other biases include race, offense, term, and background. A prejudice that possibly can affect the inquiry of the African American male ex-offender and homelessness phenomenon include my prior knowledge and experiences of planning and public administration tools.

Biases that possibly affect the study of the African American male ex-offender and homelessness phenomenon would be planning policies and public administration tools. The researcher is aware of bias that can occur in systemic errors introduced in data, sampling, and selection that might encourage an outcome favorable of the study. Potential researcher bias will be managed by writing impartial interview questions and avoiding pre-existing assumptions. Homogeneous sampling, a form of purposive sampling will be used to identify the African American male ex-offenders. Participants in a homogenous sampling will share the same characteristics, such as culture, race, gender, education, background, location, and socioeconomics to ensure an accurate assumption about a particular group.

### **Significance**

African American male ex-offenders are plagued with homelessness and mental illness. These challenges can lead to recidivism and the inability of this

population to establish a home, family, and what many would consider a normal life. Wade (2009) estimated an average of 5.6 million adults served in state and federal prisons. Approximately 90% of these prisoners were released back into the community and face challenges in finding basic needs such as housing, employment, mental health, and substance abuse treatment (Wade, 2009). Ex-offenders also experienced several issues preventing them from successfully transitioning from correctional institutions back into the community. Failure to find employment and lack of training skills force them to live on the street. The mental health conditions, education, training, and fear of victimization adversely impacted the African American male ex-offenders from a successful transition back into the community (Wade, 2009). Housing unavailability is the leading factors of homelessness in the United States. Hardin and Wille (2017) argued that minimum wages did not keep the pace of the increase in housing cost. Risk factors associated with homelessness are education, incarceration, physical health, mental health, and substance abuse. Other causes are the lack of human capital and a well-paying job linked to imprisonment. Physical disabilities and mental health issues are predictors of homelessness and potential risk factors. Homeless individuals have unmet health needs. Another alarming issue was longterm consequences of homelessness and the lack of preventive health care. Substance abuse increases the risk of being homeless and lacks self-discipline. Housing shortages were prevalent in the reentry programs, and temporary shelters had become the norm for the homeless.

## **Summary**

An estimated of half of the prison inmates are symptomatic substance abusers who will reintegrate back to the community (Link & Hamilton, 2017). It is common to find ex-offenders relapsing and re-offending in the first months of post-release (Link & Hamilton, 2017). Public health and criminal justice have integrated health and substance abuse as a life-course of stress and strain paradigms identifying criminal behavior (Link & Hamilton, 2017). Temporal relationships were the cause of drugs and crime throughout the reentry process; the level of individual need for essential services was a critical factor in recidivating (Link & Hamilton, 2017). It is argued that individuals under the influence of drugs will commit crimes because they are psychopharmacologically influenced, economically compelled, or systematically exposed to a criminal environment (Link & Hamilton, 2017). The reentry process was a package with various stressors of essential need such as housing, employment, and complying with release conditions were casual factors that led to reinitiating the use of drugs and committing crime through a chain reaction of social risks (Link & Hamilton, 2017). Despite the growth factors of what contributes to recidivating, the measured outcome should be examined by the desistance to abstain from crime instead of a discreet event (Kilmer, 2016). The reentry process's central focal point should be the intensity of the essential needs rather than the duration and the program's curriculum.

Consistently, scholars focus on violent behavior and victimization among the criminal population. Literature asserted that ex-offenders who struggle with

mental illness are at risk with recurring victimization. Policastro, Teasdale, and Daigle (2016) argued that individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder experienced influenced victimization risk that led to recidivism. However, it is still unclear the internal characteristics of those with a personal disorder that leads to revictimization. The African American ex-offender has a higher risk of recurring victimization because it is prevalent in the Black community. Some research suggest the African American population yield mixed results of higher rates of victimization than the White population. Policastro, Teasdale, and Daigle (2016) further argued that race across race indicated an insignificance in prediction of victimization. The focus of Chapter 2 will be a literature review of the existing literature.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

Regional socioeconomic indicators have failed to identify the causes of homelessness. The systems-level homelessness outcome reporting normative Framework includes planning, organization analysis, community review, data collection, data validation, empirical analysis, stakeholder input, dissemination action, and evaluation as regional marketing indicators of homelessness (Austen & Pauly, 2012). In the United States, researchers using these indicators have linked homelessness to rent-to-ratio income and noted a growing number of individuals and families becoming homeless. Scholars maintained that housing market fluctuations were caused by deinstitutionalization, mental illness, substance abuse, and unemployment rates.

Socio-economic marketing indicators have revealed that certain subpopulations are at risk of becoming homeless. Chronic homeless individuals are those who have been homeless for 1 to 3 years, per U.S. Department of Health and Human Services criteria, Byrne et al. (2014) reported. The African American population has the highest percentage of reported chronic homelessness, as shown in studies, and consistently has only a 2-year housing retention of rising housing markets and low rental vacancy rates.

Homelessness has become a major focus of urban planning in the last decade. The nature and the extent of the problems associated with homelessness remains critical and unclear in many aspects. Changes in geospatial data (target

populations) and demographic diversification of populations experiencing homelessness indicate that subgroups other than the White American population have not been included in urban planning (Crane & Takahashi, 1998). The homeless status, causes, and consequences of homelessness reflect the absence of adequate and specific policy initiatives (Crane & Takahashi, 1998). Literature has shown that homelessness is related to increased incarceration (Crane & Takahashi, 1998). The McKinney-Vento Act of 2000 was the first U.S. law to address the homeless problem (Hafer, 2018). The policy was designed to provide funding for a host of homeless programs administered across various federal agencies. However, it was fragmented and cumbersome to service providers and did not fully support the community (Hafer, 2018).

According to some observers, the McKinny Act would have worked better as a comprehensive policy as opposed to a set of diverse spending programs such as emergency shelter, permanent housing, food, health care, mental wellness, and jobs and training programs when funding was available (Hafer, 2018). The McKinney Act did not require federal intervention. Hafer (2018) argued that the restructuring of new systems was the path for new political influence and massed special interest in the policy-making process. As Markowitz (2006) noted sociologists and criminologists have affirmed the need to increase social control, criminal justice, and mental health.

A proposition of social disorganization theory is that the absence of self-control increases the risk of criminal activity. Community-based services do not provide the same adequate care and social control, as do psychiatric hospitals do (Markowitz (2006)). The absence of psychiatric care has been strongly linked to homelessness, crime, and re-

arrest for the African American male ex-offender. Illicit drug use has been linked to criminal behavior, social and human capital, demographic characteristics, and the criminal justice system (Myrstol & Fitzpatrick, 2011). Measures to address and define homelessness has not been adequate. Despite the federal government's historical efforts to develop a continuum of care model to address the acute housing, the outcome was a quick channel for emergency shelter (Poole & Zugazaga, 2003). The poorly planned housing model exposed individuals to a destructive cycle in which they receive few to no social resources. Burdens became oversubscribed, especially for those that society view as misfits.

The United States does not have a progressive model for reentry programs to reduce homelessness. This lack of a model translates into the absence of public policies concerning homelessness. There has been an alarming increase in urban homelessness and a lack of secure housing. Housing unavailability has policy and ecological implications (Toro et al., 1991). The environmental analogy has four principles highlighting different ways of understanding social context and relationships. Toro et al., (1991) further argued that the homeless policies need adaption principles to carefully consider all circumstances and possible consequences of the demands, opportunities, threats, and expectations. Their research revealed that the criminal justice system exacerbated the punitive policies and practices that were intended to address trauma, mental illness, unemployment, substance abuse, and homelessness. Westcott (2015) asserted that 1,574,700 offenders are incarcerated in the United States prisons; 6,899,000



prisoners are released from prison each year, and many remain under supervision. The social economics remains tenuous for the African Americans returning to an impoverished community. In 2013, the unemployment rate for African Americans slowly declined from a peak growth in 2010, reaching 11.9% as compared to 5% for the White population during the same time frame (Weston, 2015). Many ex-offenders experienced social structural trauma from cultural discrimination, homelessness, and financial insecurity. Also, post-incarcerated adults have robustly reported social trauma related to their experiences of unemployment, homelessness, separation, and oppression, revealing cumulative trauma across the course of life triggered imprisonment. In this chapter, I review the literature on the study phenomenon. This chapter also includes discussions of the literature search strategy, and theoretical framework, and a conclusion.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

I used the following search databases to examine topics related to homelessness among African American male ex-offenders: Criminal Justice Database, Sage Journals, Political Science Complete, SocINDEX, and Taylor and Francis Online. I used search terms, sometimes in combination, to identify relevant literature: These included *racial oppression of African Americans historical overview and background*, *racial Oppression of African Americans in the United States mass incarceration system*, *homelessness in the United States*, *general overview of employment, and training, homelessness, causes, and the demographics in the United States*, and *interrelated mental illness and substance abuse for African American male ex-offenders*.

For the iterative search process, I used the following terms to identify germane scholarship: *ex-offender, homelessness, race, gender, mental illness, substance abuse, unemployment, and education*. I used terms from the field of urban and regional planning such as *comprehensive development master plan, redevelopment, industrial cities, target populations, urban sprawl, and geospatial locations*. I also included terms from public administration such as *public health programs, public housing, affordable housing, education, training programs, employment incentives, and public private partnership*. Public policy terms related to policy tools such as *adaptive resource management, adaptive environmental assessment and management, and modified policy iteration*, were also included.

### **Theoretical Framework**

I used Schneider & Ingram's SCTP (1993) theory and Young's (1990) FFO to explore participants' assumptions, belief, and opinions regarding factor that fostered exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and racial violence and that led them to be denied privileges, power, rights, goods, and services because they belonged to a particular group. Schneider and Ingram's, 1993 SCTP theory contends that the social construction referred to cultural characterizations of individuals and groups whose behavior and well-being are affected by public policy. Young (1990) argued that the distribution of essential goods, income, and wealth was underrepresented as defined under the concept of oppression and was not well understood in the new social movement in

the dominant political discourse to design policy. The new left social movement that originated in 1960s to the 1970s shifted the meaning of the concept of oppression defining social injustice (Young, 1990). The ideology of the new left believed that individuals suffered injustice not because of tyrannical power that coerces or the use of the wrong social control (Young, 1990). The new social movement argued that individual practices was intentional and liberal society was to blame (Young, 1990). Oppression refers to systemic constraints on groups resulting in intentional and cruel policies (Young, 1990). Oppression is structural, in other words, it is the social construction of policies as opposed the choices of that target group. Its causes are embedded in norms not proven such as habits, symbols, and assumptions underlying institutional rules of the consequences of those regulations (Young, 1990).

Social construction involves the normative and evaluative characteristics of a specific group portraying a positive or negative term. The social construction target populations are determined by agenda-setting, legislative behavior, policy formation, and design. Schneider and Ingram (1993) argued that the social construction theory of target populations holds powerful influence on public officials shaping both policy agenda and the actual designing of the policy. Public officials are pressured to provide a beneficial policy approach to the influential group with positive constructs, yet adversely devise punitive, punishment-oriented policies to continue the negative construction to a particular group. Social construction embeds policy affecting their orientations based on the participation patterns. Different populations receive different messages that ineffectively resolves a particular group's issue in specific target populations. These

target populations become withdrawn from previous consequences of poorly designed policies that discouraged citizen participation from fighting policy construct detrimental to their group. African American male ex-offenders are considered deviants and are negatively constructed because they belong to a specific group. Consequently, the deviant population received no control positively or negatively; the benefits of social construction were undersubscribed (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

The ideology of the policy design approach began in the 1980s to address issues that deterred inventing variables that affected design, selection, implementation, and evaluation (Schneider, Ingram & DeLeon, 2007). Policymakers typically construct and distribute benefits based on influence or negative terms that construct burdens reflecting and perpetuating in a particular community. Policy design was intended to bring social change. However, the social construct of the policy design appeared to deliberately fail in its nominal purposes in solving problems that brought justice to a particular group. The policy design theory argued that the framework of social construction explained the dilemmas in a democratic polity. For example, policy design departs from the typical reproduction of power and social construction to introduce social change in institutions. In contrast, these powerful relationships continued to have an adverse effect on the target population (Schneider, Ingram & DeLeon, 2007). Policymakers respond to powerful groups that manipulate social construction to build their political base. This political discourse results in differential treatment

of a particular target group and adopting poorly designed policies that exhibit social injustice (Schneider, Ingram & DeLeon, 2007).

Young's (1990) FFO and Schneider and Ingram's (1993) theory of SCTP will be used to guide the study. I will examine African American male ex-offenders who have suffered from homelessness. Young (1990) argued that the African American subpopulation suffered injustice in the form of oppression. Young (1990) explained the oppression of social groups included exploitation, marginalization, powerless, cultural imperialism, and racial violence as grounded theory to evaluate the proposed argument's nature and validity.

Schneider and Ingram's (1993) theory of SCTP described key elements of policy design that serve critical policy goals, target populations, and policy tools. Modern government must focus on the policy resolution rather than special interest. The SCTP can perpetuate positive change in powerful groups to achieve economic effectiveness in equality, equity, and essential resources. Social constructionism raises awareness of how knowledge is constructed and understood (Andrews, 2012). Constructivism explains how people view the experiences of the mental-ill such as the African American ex-offender target population through a cognitive process, whereas social constructionism observes their social development as opposed to lack of emotional skills (Andrews, 2012). The institutionalized society expands to future generations resulting in routinization and habitualization (Andrews, 2012). Policymakers see subjective reality as achieved secondary socialization. Subsequently, people's lenses identify or originate from the

social realm of the target group instead of individual perception. Social constructionism has been criticized for the conceptualizing realism and relativism (Andrews, 2012).

The Marxism theory struggle for power and survival. This theory of false consciousness signals deception and self-deception of illusion as a necessary condition of life (Berger & Luckman, 1991). The relationship between the domination and those dominated revealed the influencing effect on the process of social construction (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). This kind of social construction glosses over the existence of those individuals who are required to endure those conditions (Polizzi, 2019). For example, the social visibility of the African American male ex-offenders is exclusively regarded as dangerous or a threat (Polizzi, 2019). Therefore, these assumptions led to immediate social construction that affected housing security, employment, training, mental health, and drug treatment, projecting a permanent criminal shadow on this target population (Polizzi, 2019).

### **Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Constructs**

The Florida Statute, 944.705 (2021) of the State Correctional System, defines the release orientation program must include employment skills, money management skills, personnel development planning, special needs, community reentry concerns, community reentry support, and any other appropriate instruction needed to ensure the inmate's successful reentry to the community. The Department of Corrections is mandated to provide risk and need assessment to assist the offender with community specific reentry services (Florida Statute,

944.705, 2021). These reentry services include counseling, for housing, job placement, substance abuse, and mental health. However, the Inmate Handbook, under Planning for Release stated that there is no free transitional housing made available for sex offenders (Inmate Orientation Handbook, Revised 2018). The Department of Corrections may contract with private sector to provide education institutions and employment opportunities for released offenders (Inmate Orientation Handbook, Revised 2018).

The role of release planning in meeting the reentry challenges to assess housing security was tied to stable employment, and skillset for the African American male ex-offender. Local government budget deficits resulted in the developing, training, and placement opportunities in the Black community (Vigne et al., 2008). Research done by the Department of Corrections revealed that participation in transitional placement in employment and monitoring intensive employment services in the first three months following release would reduce the risk of parole revocation, felony conviction, and incarceration (Vigne et al., 2008). Policy needs to allow for more incentive programs for the released prisoner to receive pre-screened referrals and more private sector participation in the selection process, bonding program, and tax credits was needed to support the reentry process (Vigne et al., 2008).

The theoretical framework explains the path of the research by grounding it firmly in theoretical constructs (Adom et al., 2018). The aim is to build research findings that are meaningful, acceptable, and ensures the measure of how useful the results are in the study (Adom et al., 2018). The theoretical constructs help the researcher in stimulating research while extending knowledge by providing direction and impetus research inquiry.

It is critical for the researcher to compare multiple definitions of that applies to the terms: marginalization, cultural imperialism, and racial violence in this study about homelessness and African American male ex-offender. The conceptual framework provides a guide to the study to enhance the empiricism and rigor of the research. The conceptual framework contributes to a body of knowledge and elements that align with the study, and the research design.

This literature review includes the following the two theories. First, the FFO, including four sections: (a) Homelessness, Causes, and Demographics factors in the United States that contributed to a public health crisis; (b) Racial Oppression of African Americans Historical Overview and Background accounted for racial disparities in housing equality; (c) Racial Oppression of African Americans in the United States Mass Incarceration System continued an ongoing discrimination in criminal justice and reentry; and (d) Interrelated Mental Illness and Substance Abuse for African American Male Ex-offenders suffered homelessness, social exclusion, and social inequality (Olivet et al., 2021).

Young's FFO (1990) argued that certain groups were denied the appropriate product of wages using social ideologies of natural superiority and inferiority characteristics of exploitation which is the central function of class structure in the absence of normative behavior (Young, 1990). Second, various groups are marginalized by being excluded from social integration and the public good. Marginalization deprives some African Americans culturally and practically of economic growth. Third, these groups are powerless under the



structure of transfer of capitalist power. Thus, individuals belonging to a disadvantaged group are often excluded in decision-making that impact the conditions of their lives and actions. Fourth, cultural imperialism dominates powerless groups by the social division of labor -- who works for whom, who does not work, and how the content of work defines one institutional position relative to others (Young, 1990, p. 58). The dominant group-wide dissemination becomes the norm and as a result, constructs differences that oppress some groups such as African Americans in the U.S. culture.

Moreover, in her discussion of violence, Young (1990) describes the racial violence against African Americans prevalent in the 1980s and beyond. Young argued that violence is systemic because it is directed at members of a group simply because they are members of that group (Young, 1990, p. 61). The African American man lives in fear of attack and harassment. Cultural dominance of harassment, intimidation, degradation, humiliation, and stigmatization revealed that the violence phenomenon of social injustice was and continues to be morally wrong. Systemic violence is direct victimization shared by members of oppressed groups liable to a violation. Young's (1990) FFO will be used to examine how oppression explains and informs homelessness for African American Male ex-offenders.

Second, the Schneider and Ingram's theory (1993), argued that the SCTP can be used to shape both policy and design. The literature review will consist of two sections. The first section will discuss the FFO and the second will review critical concepts that positively construct target populations.

### **Social Construction and Implications for Policy and Politics**

The power of social construction redefines the materialistically based sociological theory of reality and is the ground-breaking work of Berger and Luckmann, (1988, 1966). Dreher (2016) supported Berger & Luckmann argument that social power is differentiated through objective verses subjective reality. Social power theoretically is the differentiation of *objective reality vs. subjective reality* (Dreher, 2016). Policymakers' theoretical distinction led the assumption that society failed to include the objective of actuality of the social impact; society does have objective facticity (Dreher, 2016). The reality inquiry of *sui generis* requires an investigation of reality's social construct (Dreher, 2016). Historically, existing institutions have the character of objectivity and habitualized actions gauged by certain types of conditions (physical infrastructure). Dreher (2016) further supported Berger & Luckmann (1967) that the reciprocal typification is built into the shared history of continued constituting process of human control. These individuals have coercive power over others, demonstrating force, and their assumption of facticity through public policy-controlled mechanisms (Dreher, 2016).

Urban political science has long urged policymakers and stakeholders to solicit new ideology for cities to change and improve the citizen's livelihood, residents, and tourism (Grogan-Meyers & Hatch, 2019). While the federal government is primarily responsible for redistribution, the local government can make sustainable choices over physical and social infrastructure. The fragmented communication in organization structure negatively affects target groups in

policymaking and place setting such as housing policies, special zoning districts, policy design, and multiple segregation tools. The consequences of segregation have been significant in local government politics redistribution in urban planning, demonstrating inequality in the most critical resources for target groups needing housing, security, training, and job stability. The communities have raised concern with urban spatial form and politics developed in U. S. cities. Market-driven planning resources and special interest influenced biases that have disconnected the newly gained cities and suburbs. This kind of discourse has created political polarization and under-provision of public goods and services. Explicit zoning laws have been used to exclude target groups showed intentional exclusionary zoning ratifying new zoning laws in upzoning and downzoning policies.

Policy formulation substantially argued critical significance in public administration, implementation, and design policies. Policy reform can transform the approach to policy analysis (Vesely, 2020). In the 1980s, the policy design approach initially proposed the effect of implementation and evaluation in public policy (Ingram et al., 2007). Policymakers socially constructed target populations in a positive or negative term to distribute benefits and restrictions that reflected and perpetuated those constructions (Ingram et al., 2007). The social construction policy design should create a positive effect, yet it failed deliberately in its nominal purpose that permitted injustice in the outcome of inequality (Ingram et al., 2007). The social construction framework for target populations endured a democratic polity that did not address the proposed social content of the policy adequately. The purpose of an administrative design allowed

policymakers to compare the rational, crisis, incremental, and social construct in relationship to two main dimensions: the values should identify relevant actors and the orientation of solving the problem and the recommendation for change (Jun, 1990). The field of policy analysis had not challenged the major methodological problem to address methods employed by policy analyst that were appropriate in structuring policy problems and prevented solutions to target populations (Dunn, 1988, 2016). The policy analysis failed because of the wrong formulation to the problem (Dunn, 1988, 2016). Analytical policy methods require problem structuring, forecasting, prescription, monitoring, and evaluation (Dunn, 1988, 2016). Vital components to the informal process of policy formulation were critical in four analyses: political, empirical, cost, and system (Reed & Swain, 1997).

Rational policy analysis based on the ideal-type policy process used in local government implementation could significantly disconnect sustainable methods to change traditional town planning (Vesely, 2020). Post-positive analysis critiques the assumption in five ways: First, it allows policymakers to avoid the one way to plan policy—seek the adaption of social realities; Second, effective formulation of policy use multiple methods of stakeholder inclusion developed SWOT analysis tools to formalize procedures for problem-solving. Besides policy formulation, choose mutually inclusive policy alternatives such as intervention strategy over forced traditional regulatory methods. The problem definition seeks problem solution that requires problem analysis aligned with solution analysis and with policy distinction between formulation, adoption, and

implementation of policy design. Policy formulation tools are inseparable from the three pillars of policy viability, environmental protection, and social equity.

In urban planning, reconnaissance discreetly observes the identified social location or geo-spatial proximity (phenomenon) designed to influence the postulate of social construction in problem-solving. Policy designing seeks to survey social locations and target groups such as gender, race, and class to identify grievances, create new opportunities, and raw data that drive the problem solutions to influence environmental justice (Taylor, 2000). For example, the Environmental Justice Movement EJM required collective identities that link collaborative action tactics, creating policy design and planning strategies. Mainstream environmental activists and environmental justice activists operated in different social locations. Their experiences influenced how they perceive environmental issues, construct discourses, and develop strategies for problem-solving. The resources influenced strategies used to build environmental justice movements. Public perception also significantly influenced the type of activity developed as transformative as opposed to reformative campaigns. Collection action framed an emergent action-oriented set of beliefs designed for public support. Emergent policies referred to an ideology of ideas, beliefs, and norms in policy formulation.

### **Young's (1990) Five Faces of Oppression**

Young (1990) argued that policy formulation plays a significant role in public administration. Policy design takes different forms as the policy analysis emphasizes the problem, prescription, and alternatives. Young argued that the Weimer theory advocated that practical policy design is pivotal concerning the development of policy analysis.

Policy design remains disconnected from the practice of policy formulation. The policy analysis revealed the disconnect between rational policy and the actual policy process that failed. The conception theory of justice distribution begins with the concepts of domination and oppression. Positivism of political theory should include institutional conditions to develop and exercise individual capacities, collective communication, and cooperation.

Young's FFO (1990) supported Dunn that policy definition often formulates the wrong problem as presented in Chapter 1. Various groups have been marginalized and excluded from social integration and the public good. For example, postslavery laws adopted the Jim Crow racial caste system, which helped create an ideology of mass incarceration in the United States (Costello, 2011). This mass incarceration epidemic pushed crime, ex-offenders, and disadvantaged communities to a tipping point (Costello, 2011; Gladwell, 2000). The results of mass incarceration created circumstances that spread social epidemics that became engrained collectively throughout the United States (Davis, 2014). The sentencing policies included punitive damages as much as 35 years of mass incarceration and substantially created overcrowded prisons (Davis, 2014). In addition, this ideology forms the basis of social construction used to influence policymakers to choose the wrong solution. Young argued that policy analysis assumes three steps: formulation, adoption, and implementation, whereas the feasibility policy tool, would help avoid the pitfall of policy failure.

In summary, each of the four aspects consist of homelessness, causes, and demographics; historical overview and ground; mass incarceration system; mental illness and substance, and will be discussed in detail as follows:

### **Homelessness, Causes, and Demographics in the United States**

The homeless crisis in the United States has remained unabated. However, the nature and extent of the root of the problem remain unclear. Crane and Takahashi (1998) argued that the homeless status, causes, and consequences are the absence of specific policy initiatives not being adequately met. The growing impact of the socio-economic crisis on subpopulations has moved across geographic locations. The homeless population has increasingly spread to suburban and rural areas besides over crowdedness in the inner cities. The change in geospatial (target populations) and demographic diversification of homelessness showed that public policy had not been flexible enough to include the African American group (Crane & Takahashi, 1998). In modern times, homelessness is still a growing dilemma extending from the metropolitan areas into the suburban communities. Policy initiatives have conspicuously overlooked the need to include public resources for the homeless mixed client (such as the African American male ex-offender) to include traditional suburban neighborhoods group. The homeless crisis remained controversial, causes, and obstruction to solutions to change the continuum of deprivation in housing insecurity. There is a substantial gap between literature and policy on the new emerging scope, characteristics, and knowledge of the homeless extension that overwhelmingly spilled into the suburban areas.

A significant factor in implementing public resource needs to include the voice of the homeless African American male subpopulation. Housing security was the most significant concern, and mental health was the least concern. The de-housing policies created a negative impact on the overrepresented social conditions of the shortage in housing, and income instability had also shaped the African American health communities (Austen & Pauly, 2012).

On any night in the United States, there are an estimated 93,000 chronically homeless individuals. (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that chronic homelessness was substantially linked to severe mental illness, and substance abuse disorder, Byrne et al. (2014) reported. Homeless individuals with physical disabilities frequently visited the emergency shelters, acute healthcare, behavioral healthcare, criminal justice system, and other related services surging the cost of public resources. Chronic homelessness comes at a substantial cost to society. Subsidized housing defined the permanent housing model referred to as the Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program model and the underlying theory of essential residential stability. In contrast, PSH programs have failed to provide critical elements, although support services claimed client choices and emphasized on control housing. The traditional PSH separated mental disorders, substance abuse, and other difficulties creating serious obstacles blocked by permanent housing. PSH policy design should ease the restrictions on providing permanent housing without a time specification for placement in the reentry process and without the label African American male



homeless ex-offender. The African American population had the highest percentage of reported chronic homelessness. Other economic factors revealed tight housing markets were the culprit of high rent, large households, and low rental vacancy rates linked to higher rates of chronic homelessness. Prior research identified poverty and unemployment positively associated with homelessness.

The soaring economic crises and rising foreclosures plagued the homeless population and thrust it to the forefront of the public housing policy. Garland et al. (2010) argued that in 2009, two laws passed to find alternatives to address criminalization and protect the homeless. Second, there was a need to respond to the increasing victimization against the homeless. The trend to criminalize those who perpetrate harm was only the first step. The prevailing policy failed to find an alternative to protect the homeless (Byrne et al., 2014). The criminal justice system penalized individuals for using public streets for essential needs. Subsequently, the laws increased to prohibit camping and loitering in public spaces. Scholars exhausted findings proving that homelessness was related to increased incarceration; African American male ex-offenders received substantially longer terms than other ethnic groups (Garland et al., 2010). In 2005, one in every five homeless individual incarcerated experienced homelessness and severity of charges that affected particular demographics such as the African American community (Garland et al., 2010). Research affirmed that crimes assess on homeless individuals were petty crimes associated with vagrancy or public intoxication (Garland et al., 2010). Lawmakers can no longer afford to ignore that more people are facing the risk of becoming homeless. The newly created jobs by policymakers did not replace the mass

job losses in 2010, forcing homeless families to the streets. Victimization of the ex-offender rates against the homeless, such as forcible rape, were 20 times higher than the general population (Garland et al., 2010). Same-sex rape was also 11 times higher in the ex-offender community than the general population. High-crime areas attracted homeless individuals such as African American male ex-offender at risk of victimization (Garland et al. 2010). When the homeless were unsecured of a temporary night stay, they became vulnerable to victimization.

Collaboration ought to be a commonplace in public administration, policy mandates, and profit to not-for-profit organizations. In 2007, government statistics showed that 647, 258 people were no longer homeless (HUD, as cited in Hafer, 2018). In 2016, the housing capacity to homelessness increased by 42%, decreasing the positive impact on the social problem among homelessness. HUD need an adaptive approach that require the creation of local community collaboration to increase federal funding to homelessness. However, the paradigm called for a continuum of care approach to an inter-organizational network of interdependence, implementing coordination and cooperation in the administrative process. The increasing issues framed by social problems demand the federal government response. In response to the HUD pressure, the federal government adopted the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless help 1987 Act to address the rapid growth of homelessness. This program should have provided an incentive to local communities in developing comprehensive housing security with regional planning coordination. The McKinney 1987 Act was fragmented

and cumbersome to service providers and did not fully support the community. HUD used the term “mandated collaboration” forming an inter-organizational network intended to address the commonly shared problem of boundaries.

The emotionally impaired was the most vulnerable post-incarcerated individuals absent of the homeless target population (HUD) and were likely substance abusers (Backer & Howard, 2007). Cognitive impairments significantly affect their ability to sustain the essential elements of living. The cognitive impaired loss of memory, perception, judgment, planning, and problem-solving negatively affected the ex-offender’s simple social skills to make sound judgments. These emotional behaviors are unintentional actions often undefined in literature. Landlords denied the emotionally impaired housing for fear of their unstableness, and lack of social abilities.

The misunderstood cognitive community was misinterpreted as antisocial or disruptive individuals. They are often evicted by instability to maintain the responsibilities to pay rent, utilities, and other household needs requiring moral judgment within the community (Backer & Howard, 2007). The Black community is primarily at risk. A substantial number of African American male ex-offenders need secondary and tertiary prevention to reduce the adverse impact of becoming homeless and recidivating. Good practices of sustainable intervention are positive initiatives that lead to permanent housing. Limited research and practice literature is available on the homeless, mentally impaired ex-offender target population.

The public and private sector has recognized homelessness as immense public health, social, and economic issue (Fusaro et al., 2018). The Annual Homeless

Assessment Report AHAR identified homelessness as having adverse health consequences. Although the AHAR data showed substantial racial and ethnic disparities of homelessness, however, the AHAR does not control other characteristics prevalent in specific subpopulations. Homelessness has been and continues to associate with physical, mental, and premature death outcomes. The increased rate of homelessness and health issues incurred substantial public costs. The homeless assessment has sparked controversial debates about who should be homeless. African Americans were more than twice as likely to experience homelessness than the more substantial minority Hispanic group. Other disparities predicted the probabilities of high school dropouts, those with some college, and those completing graduate school suggested misleading results of lower risk of homelessness. Health, both physical and mental, contributed prevalence of homelessness; the two mutually reinforced social discrimination and economic inequalities.

Evidence-based empirical analyses revealed that the duration of homelessness linked to arrestees with drug abuse lasted for extended periods (Myrstol & Fitzpatrick, 2011). Research revealed policy intervention was unsuccessful in reducing the approximately 643,000 homeless individuals in 30 counties in the United States. One percent of the adult population experienced homelessness. There is a gap in the understanding of individuals and factors accounting for housing instability levels that led to the focal point of extensive research in the past thirty years. A national conversation sparked sustainable intervention methods to reduce the alarming rate of social demographic

differences between homelessness and the place we call home. The adversely affected community is disproportionate among male, older, and members of racial minority groups. The domicile population was limited to those affected by human and social capital. The domicile history showed individuals with limited formal education, unemployed, and therefore have unstable work histories.

Homelessness and domicile significantly differed when accessing health care resources. Individuals who are homeless revealed sample clusters identifying mental illness, substance abuse, and, subsequently, inpatient mental hospital care showing higher prevalence than the general population (Myrستol & Fitzpatrick, 2011). Persistent homelessness is associated with older, unemployed, and substance abusing men who are substance abuse-linked criminal behavior, social and human capital, demographic characteristics, and the criminal justice system. However, there is a consensus between scholars and practitioners that homelessness is prevalent among the post-incarcerated rates ranging up to 82%. African American men experiencing homelessness are more likely to become incarcerated.

Social integration is an essential goal of recovery for African American male ex-offenders in the United States. Tsai et al. (2012) argued that many of the post-incarcerated returning to the community need mental healthcare and support from the public health system for psychiatric treatment. For example, the ex-offenders in the Black community face returning to an impoverished neighborhood already experiencing unemployment, homelessness, dilapidated buildings, and closed storefronts where businesses once were.

The African American male ex-offender struggles to find social support and access to employment, housing, medical care, and financial help. Ex-offenders who suffer from severe mental illness encounter difficulties coping with emotional and cognitive deficits. A typical task, such as finding housing, means communicating with people. Professionals faced challenges in helping individuals experiencing mental illness regain self-control, social functioning, and social integration. The ex-offender must transition to mainstream community lifestyles to achieve the natural recovery process. Tsai et al. (2012) argued that natural support encompasses emotional or instrumental services and interacting with non-profit organization groups. The ex-offender struggles to deinstitutionalize from the mental hospital environment post-incarceration. Community support emphasized developing social skills and social integration through psychosocial rehabilitation and community mental health services.

### **Racial Oppression of African Americans: Historical Overview and Background**

Many believed that the United States is a country full of hatred, racism, and hostility. Allen-Meares and Paula-Burman (1995) argued that African American neighborhoods are subdued by the oppression of racial violence, fear, and apathy. The African American male population, in particular, continues to experience victimization, cultural imperialism, racial violence, and violent behaviors, and consequently becoming an endangered species in the black community. An increase in gun violence has occurred in African in American neighborhoods. Fifty percent of homicide rates are attributed to Black men, who

are five times more likely to die of homicide than the general population, according to Allen-Meares and Paula-Burman. They added that homicide has been the leading cause of death among African American men ages 15 to 34 1960. Furthermore, suicide has tripled among African American young men ages 15 to 24 (Allen-Meares and Paula-Burman, 1995). Crimes committed by black individuals against other Black individuals were estimated at 84% of the African American population Allen-Meares and Paula-Burman, 1995).

Although crime rates raised awareness, on the federal policy on unemployment insurance, sufficient training did not investigate the alarming statistics targeting the unlettered, unskilled, and unemployed, which led to the unfair distribution in the Black community (Allen-Meares & Paula-Burman, 1995). Some scholars believed that oppression drives mental illness and contributed to emotional distress. The impetus for change should not concentrate only on cognitive behavior and external environments. Policy implications seek historical and current societal conditions identified through a theoretical framework. Models to a guided practice achieve goals from the treatment of skillset, effective control of self, learning how to obtain essential resources, and eliminate external constraints. The practitioner mediates between systems promoting personal and environmental change (Allen-Meares & Paula-Burman, 1995). Brown et al. (2017) argued that the elimination of critical mental health in the African American community would improve self-confidence, reduce oppression, and change their outlook on racial inequality. The social practice of racial inequality led to the internalized negative impact

and racist ideology of self-identity. Anti-self-issues were thought to affect self-efficacy, perceived control, and outcome expectations (Brown et al., 2017).

Racial oppression affected the educational goals and career values of African Americans. Research on racial inequality and oppression theory revealed that the racial-ethnic gap was prevalent in higher education attainment and achievement in the United States. Internal performance among Black women was higher than Black men. Racial oppression affects interpersonal, cultural, and structural levels. It is noteworthy that scholars asserted that racism is the process of a condition, relationship, and victimization physically, socially, and psychologically (Brown et al., 2017). Internalized racism is also seen in other forms of racial discrimination that violates its victims through interpersonal racial oppression (Brown et al., 2017). Racial oppression continues the existence of discrimination and maintains the psychological internalization of racist ideology. Subsequently, racial oppression in African Americans shows devaluation individually and as a group.

Scholars claimed that the criminal justice agencies were to blame for the ineffectiveness to achieve justice. Robinson (2010) argued that the criminal justice system is partially to blame for controlling particular segments of the African American population to influence ideologies of political interest groups. There are inconsistencies between criminal justice practices and social justice. The criminal justice community revealed biases based on the overrepresented legalities affecting race, social class, and equality. Problems in criminal justice threaten the realization of social justice in the Black community. Historically,



social justice has been about advantages and disadvantages to society and the effect of its distribution. Social justice assures equal access to liberties, rights, and opportunities as members of the community. Social justice seeks three primary principles: compatibility, economic equalities, and opportunity. It produces primary goods needed by every member of society.

Human rights are expansive and relevant to criminal justice, but not limited to liberty, security, equality, law, and life's rights (Robinson, 2010). Fair and public forums ought to be independent and impartial tribunals with the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. Social justice seeks freedom and peaceful assembly in association with the right to take part in political decision-making. Social justice should be free from slavery, servitude, torture, cruelty, inhuman treatment or punishment, discrimination, arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile, including arbitrary interference of privacy, among others.

The United States adopted policies for social control that restricted the freedom of African Americans. Rocque (2008) argued that the Black community experienced repression through legal systemic regulations and policies that prohibit economic growth. The African American male population makes up a large percentage of the criminal population. Like slavery, historically, the African American community is strained with physical, emotional, and mental adversity. The criminology theory of pressure affects individuals in various ways, influencing and limiting their options to cope with obstruction in society.

Conventional philosophical ideology yet does not conceive the economic justice distribution paradigm; socioeconomics lies between two problems identified with the

distribution of the social equality paradigm (Young, 1990). First, the distribution of employment, income, and housing security revealed blurred boundaries of political decision-making power. Second, the structural division created racial violence among African American male ex-offender target populations simply because they belong to a particular group. The policy focus tends to ignore the social structure and institutional context that can help determine distributive patterns, particularly in decision-making, design, and culture. In applying the distributive paradigm, the theorists do not recognize the limits of logic. While the distributive theorist of justice might agree that the primary concept of justice is normative for evaluating all aspects of social institutions, but at the same time, the theorist identifies the scope of justice with distribution. As a result, the applied logic of social good produces a misleading conception of issues involving social justice.

The General Strain Theory GST of criminology is applied to the African American experiences of the antebellum south and offers significant insights (Rocque, 2008). It remained vital to the prototypical structure of the plantation. Slavery mentality continues today in colorism, whereas the servants, drivers, and maids worked in the big house, and the other slaves were field hands suffering dehumanization. Slavery became a socialized institution in the 1800s. In the 1980s, Robert Agnew examined the social-psychological theory manifesting feelings, emotions, and frustrations aligned with stress. According to Agnew's General Strain Theory GST, aspirations and expectations defined the new

formulation as specific causes of delinquency. The political strain on the African American subpopulation revealed forms of racial discrimination, negative stimuli, racial violence, and victimization.

### **Racial Oppression of African Americans in the U.S. Mass Incarceration System**

The United States adoption of the Jim Crow Law continued present-day racism. Costello (2011) argued that mass incarceration continued to be closely linked to the caste system in America. The African American male is juxtaposed in today's social change that all are created equal. Michelle Alexander (2010) recanted the night of the victory for President Obama, and she later observed a Black man handcuffed on his knees and surrounded by many police (Costello, 2011).

Post-slavery laws mirroring the Jim Crow racial caste system were adopted in public policy, a constant continuum that sustains the ideology of mass incarceration in the United States. Costello (2011) examined the two United States Supreme Court landmark decisions in Florida of *Bostick* and *Whren v. the United States* and painted a vivid picture of the de facto "drug exception" of the 4th Amendment. The de facto law predominately concentrated in a high crime area and resulted in a disproportionate number of arrests. Jim Crow law represented signs that read White only. Today that same concept is replaced with ex-offender's exclusion of employment, housing, education, and financial security. African American male ex-offenders have lost and continue losing their civil rights to vote and as a result, have lost a voice in the Black community.

This mass incarceration linked the crime epidemic of released ex-offenders back into the disadvantaged communities. Davis (2014) argued that the significance of the

social issue that attaches to mass incarceration had spread collectively throughout the United States. The sentencing policies that adopted laws enforcing up to 35 years of punitive damages were the culprit of mass incarceration and overcrowded prisons). Thousands of prisoners are released back into an already exacerbated and fragile community. The socially disadvantaged Black community lacks the leadership to close the gap between literature and policy. The risk factors are returning to basic needs such as continued rehabilitation, housing, employment, training, and substance abuse treatment. The reentry program is under-resourced to enable successful reintegration back into society. This social phenomenon of mass incarceration affects every facet of every social institution. Distinct social and economic disadvantages of returning to communities with higher crime, no jobs, and limited affordable housing resources, suggest poverty increases the risk of recidivism.

The prison population conveyed race and class dimensions that significantly affected specific subpopulations in the United States. De Giorgi (2016) examined the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and found that the criminal population was at an alarming rate of 1,561,500. Four decades of mass incarceration political strategy restructured the social class domination in the aftermath of the racially motivated movement. In 2014, the male prison population reported 59%. The African American males ages 18 to 19 were overrepresented by 37%, and Latinos represented 22% (De Giorgi, 2016). The incarceration rate for Black men was 1,072/1,000,000, ten times more likely to be

in a state or federal prison than the White American male population 102/100,000. Inarguably African American children with fathers who experienced long-term incarceration are likely to become high school dropouts and are at risk of becoming a prison statistic (De Giorgi, 2016). Despite the decline in the crime rate, prison admissions rose in 18 states. Prison reform requires a closer look at the transcarceration, privatization, and risk associated with life-without-parole sentences and the eligibility replacement for life sentences after 10 to 20 years (De Giorgi, 2016).

Jim Crow laws continue to be the most significant injury of racial control in the criminal justice system. Embrick (2013) argued that African American men are targeted in two ways. African American men are criminals and have the highest incarceration rate in the western world. The United States imprisons a higher percentage of the Black population than in South Africa during the height of apartheid. Three of four African American men have experienced the criminal justice system and or incarceration in their lifetime. The African American male ex-offenders have experienced denial of their human rights through the label, Felon. Racism is hidden in plain sight through discrimination in education, employment, and housing opportunities. Labeling of Jim Crow indirectly maintained a racial caste to control, segregate, and violate the African American. The criminal justice community systematically and distinctively marginalized African American male ex-offenders.

The United States federal and state criminal justice systems have become a primary control mechanism regarding prison reform (Haynes-Smith, 2009). Mass incarceration continued racial disparities sustaining inequality across political, economic,

and social institutions in the wake of the civil rights movement (Haynes-Smith (2009). Research has theoretically examined race relations, law, and crime control, defining residential segregation (Haynes-Smith, 2009). Civil rights laws should remove financial hardships developed through racial disparities, obstructing socioeconomics, housing, healthcare, education, and voice (Haynes-Smith, 2009). A “color-blind” systemic culture would integrate into the Black and White community. Sociologists continued to examine traditional mass incarceration that deliberately segregated poor people of color (Haynes-Smith, 2009). The disproportional distribution revealed that social consequences had weakened the Black community’s voting rights, eliminated employment, and diminished the right to own personal property (Haynes-Smith, 2009). The alarm of social awareness indicated that officials under-measured the need to increase public resources for African American male ex-offenders based on their criminal background (Haynes-Smith, 2009).

### **Mental Illness and Substance Abuse Among African American Male Ex-Offenders**

There are an alarming number of mentally ill in prison. Fifty percent of the male population both incarcerated and post-incarcerated have serious mental health problems (Barrenger, 2013). Deinstitutionalization of individuals with criminal backgrounds is overrepresented. The fragmented mental healthcare system is due to the increase in mass incarceration. The rise of mass incarceration created a decrease in free public treatment options. The mentally ill and post-incarcerated individuals received private funding, yet the ineffectiveness of other

criminal justice resources and public welfare contributed to the development of higher risk in the Black community. While social welfare brought social change, it held contrasting differences on public benefits that changed the safety net to a cash help service. Because of these restrictions, more people would remain incarcerated for more extended periods of time and increased the numbers at an alarming rate. The ex-offenders experiencing psychiatric symptoms were reconvicted as opposed to treating this widespread social disease. The absence of mental health treatment for African American ex-offenders was unexplored. Mental illness has become a criminalized offense (Barrenger, 2013). Two potential factors that exist about these experiences are fundamental causes and induced environmental risk.

African American male ex-offenders from 50 to 65 years old with serious to moderate mental illness experienced a higher proportion of co-occurring substance use disorders that led to socio-economic disadvantages (Bryson et al., 2019). Social disorders among older ex-offenders signaled a need for complex health and social services (Bryson et al., 2019). The older ex-offender population did not receive mental health treatment after post-incarceration (Bryson et al., 2019). Although their characteristics posited symptoms of substance disorders, the older ex-offender population was not associated with violence that led to reconviction and reincarceration (Bryson et al., 2019). The research observed that older ex-offenders struggled more than younger post-prisoners, yet they were not recommended for treatment (Bryson et al., 2019). The oversight of the older ex-offender raised concerns of measures of how mental illness symptoms were diagnosed as opposed to an observation that did not show any signs of severity (Bryson et

al., 2019). Mental illness set the trend in the African American male population post-incarcerated. Further, mental illness was prevalent in the reentry program enrollment to rehabilitate released prisoners (Gines, 2013). The criminal justice system guide to mental impairment as cognitive impaired and psychosocial impaired mental incapacities was not mentioned or specified how to assess (Gines, 2013). The newly established presence of the mentally impaired with criminal history presented a unique competitive landscape of oppression.

The behavioral health field diagnosed mental illness and substance abuse as a co-occurring disorder COD (Huntington, 2016). Social implications that surrounded the implementation of treatment for COD administered to ex-offenders produced poor outcomes, higher recidivism rates, rehospitalization, and a wide range of offenses charged by the criminal justice community (Huntington, 2016). However, a gap between literature and the significance of the integrated treatment for people with COD continued to exist (Huntington, 2016). Historically, individuals who received a single treatment for either mental illness or substance abuse would have significantly reduced the urge to recidivate if the treatment had been a unified therapy method (Huntington, 2016). The co-existing integrated approach used to treat individuals that struggle with physical, psychological, social, and economic problems proved to be a significant change in behavioral science (Huntington, 2016). Increased numbers of prison releases have overwhelmed the criminal justice community (Huntington, 2016). In the year 2000, approximately 600,000 inmates began to transition back into the



community yearly in the United States (Leggett, 2010). The national budget failed to hire more trained professionals in mental health, treatment, counseling, and training to provide remediation and evaluation methods for a successful transition to the community (Leggett, 2010).

Mental illness has risen to 125 million, with approximately 15% of the prison population representing over 200,000 state-incarcerated persons in the United States (Ostertag, 2016). Criminal justice statistics reported prisoners were diagnosed with personal disorders over three times the general population and averaging 75% of the inmates (Ostertag, 2016). The criminal justice community is unsecured and unskilled, with a shortage of professional care to maintain today's prisons (Ostertag, 2016). The criminal justice community's annual spending surged to fifty billion and rising, yet there appears no interest in significant policy changes. Prisoners who have mental illness are twice as vulnerable to be homeless before incarceration and will enter the reentry program with nowhere to go (Ostertag, 2016). African American male ex-offender populations are socially and economically vulnerable. Oppression is unidentified in African American males with the highest rate of underachievement, employment, poverty, and incarceration (Perkins, 2014). Therefore, mental disorders are linked to inequalities and depression. The research revealed that the African American male population lacks medical screening due to distrust of the medical profession (Perkins, 2014). Approximately 30% of African American male ex-offenders ages 20 to 29 experienced incarceration, which increased their risk of depression (Perkins, 2014). The

mentally challenged African American male ex-offender also faced deprivation through the social exclusion of employment opportunities (Perkins, 2014).

Mass incarceration, homelessness, racial oppression, and recidivism are prevalent themes in the literature reviewed in this chapter. Approximately 196,000 were imprisoned in state and federal confinement in the United States; the incarceration rate grew over 650% and reached 1.5 million (Grosholz, 2014). The alarm to the Black community is that these inmates are released in substantial numbers every year, with approximately 76% of the African American male population being rearrested within three years. Over 55% will recidivate within 5 years. The recidivism policies typically focused on the structural barriers to the reentry programs, yet its measurements for success have a weak link to current literature research. The reentry programs' informal rules contradicted the recidivism policy. For example, the reentry programs claimed that ex-offenders reoffended because they are high on certain causes of crime. Post-prisoners were socially excluded from society, creating strain and low self-esteem. Because there is a lack of social inclusion, the ex-offenders re-associated with the criminal community making an unsuccessful reintegration due to treatment, training, and housing absent from rehabilitation policies. Another theory that adversely affected the ex-offender was the three strikes law. Florida law has significantly affected younger individuals with criminal backgrounds.

Despite the struggle of mass incarceration, homelessness, and recidivism, the African American subpopulation has developed in cultural values

incorporating cultural sensitivity and cultural competence (Gilbert et al., 2009). The empowerment theory was instrumental in the Black community; a person-in-environment framework supported the ethnic-centered interventions and emphasized cultural competencies to incorporate beliefs, language, and traditions. The totality approach to the African American existence collectively disenfranchisement and historically traumatized resulted in racial disparities. The Black community required essential needs that support substance treatment, social training, education, and housing. The background of African Americans raises concerns about psychosocial dynamics underscoring their historical trauma, deculturization, and social inequities in the United States. Many African Americans lack high school completion and training skills to compete in the present-day job market. The Black community struggled with mental illness and other conditions persistent in societal oppression.

Housing insecurity and the closing of psychiatric hospitals adversely affected ex-offenders' mental health post-incarceration (Davidson & Rosky, 2015). The increase in mental illness attributed to the deinstitutionalization movement. Unemployment and homelessness increased the chances of criminal involvement. Mental illness rates among the prison population rose from 14% to 64%. Schizophrenia and bipolar disorders were approximately three times higher among the post-incarcerated than the general population. The research identified that individuals with mental illness were likely to serve about five months longer sentences than those who were emotionally stable. Few studies have explored the relationship associating with ex-offenders' mental illness and their criminal outcomes. Public opinion and beliefs surrounding ex-offenders who were

emotionally unstable were coupled with the distorted media insensitivity, creating fear about individuals with mental illness. Two national surveys showed that violence and mental illness stigma should have decreased given the amount of literature defining mental health issues and homelessness. The first public consensus felt that deinstitutionalization for mental health treatment was to blame. The second agreed that the term dangerous to self and others integrated into informal discourse surrounding mental health issues were also to blame for ex-offenders' social exclusion and housing insecurity.

A substantial number of African American male ex-offenders returning from long-term sentences are mentally and physically affected (Balcazar et al., 2012). The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended in 1998, included the inequitable historical treatment of minority groups and those identified as disabled. The Disability Act of 1973 should prohibit the discrimination of those in need of housing, employment, and health services. It is noteworthy that this landmark act supported employment opportunities for individuals with all disabilities, including physically disabled or mentally impaired. The Disability Act encompassed communication, self-direction, interpersonal skill, work tolerance, and self-care. The assessment for eligibility examined the substantial functional limitations of the individual. A substantial number of disabled African American male ex-offenders lacked education and training skills, often rejecting their application for help.

Public resistance remained a recurring obstacle to the successful implementation of sustainable transitioning housing (Garland et al., 2017). In 2011, BJS recorded criminal history state and federal prisons released 688,384 offenders; this large volume of ex-offenders was alarmed at many levels. Some scholars predicted that two-thirds of these released prisoners will recidivate within three years. The disproportionately large number of ex-offenders returned to unsettled communities. The release of prisoners into urban areas, the struggle to revive dilapidated buildings, lack of financial investments, and having employment instability created excessive burdens to accommodate the criminal justice community. Correctional expenditures to manage and house the prison population exceeded 1.5 million inmates and severely strained state and local budgets.

Reentry literature consistently noted that the ex-offender subpopulation failed to establish adequate and sustainable prosocial housing arrangements (Garland et. (2017). Although African American male ex-offenders were underrepresented in the characteristics sampling compared to the homeless population nationally (Garland, 2017). Ex-offenders struggled with temporary housing due to the lack of financial security. Recognizing the risk and implications of safety and instability, policymakers and public officials set forth to identify critical issues in transitional housing intended to facilitate community-based residential demands. Substantial housing was essential to reduce the threat of depression and drug relapse following the post-release period. Public opinion across boundaries raised concerns that job training, drug treatment, and mental health services were critical to successful reintegration—however, public perceptions of crime and neighborhood problems negatively influenced community-based facilities.

Planning Barriers for former prisoners continue in federally subsidized housing that generally fall into two categories: formal and informal regulations restrict tenancy, The scarcity of housing stock (Roman and Travis 2004) created the problem before prison release (Vigne et al., 2008). HUD regulations recommended public housing authorities (PHAs) adopt policies denying housing to those evicted in the past three years from public or federally subsidized housing for criminal drug activity (Vigne et al., 2008). Those released prisoners suffering from substance abuse might be disruptive to the community, according to the (Council of State Governments, 2003); Federal laws supported PHAs to adopt policies denying housing to registered lifetime offenders Vigne et al., 2008).

Under the reentry program transitional housing is another temporary option for the returning prisoner. It provides housing for a fixed length of stay and offers a variety of support services to assist clients in achieving self-sufficiency (Roman & Travis 2004). Transitional housing programs require that individuals must be homeless for a certain period before they can access some of these options (Roman & Travis 2004), prohibiting recently released individuals from these options. The discharge planning policy must identify housing options before leaving the prison to ensure placements for all inmates (Backer & Howard, 2007).

Many former prisoners are able and qualified to work, but simply do not have the proper educational credentials needed to demonstrate employment eligibility, have not been given information on how and where to look for jobs, or must meet parole requirements such as participation in treatment programs,

curfew or other restrictions which include homelessness limiting their ability to find and keep employment (Vigne et al., 2008). Employers often do not hire a former prisoner that lacks basic job readiness and desirable personal qualities such as: trustworthiness and responsibility, and interpersonal skills (Vigne et al., 2008).

### **Summary and Conclusions**

This research may begin to fill a gap in the literature by probing the substantial decrease of adequate housing, mental health hospitals, drug treatment facilities, training programs, and jobs suitable for ex-offenders. Social programs supported by local government and policies intended to aid the African American male ex-offender population at risk of becoming homeless, has negatively impacted African American male ex-offenders. The Bureau of Justice Reentry Database was used to examine the homeless statistics and the reentry process that impedes a successful transition. In 2015, the criminal history data was recollected and sampled at 68% of 401, 288 released in 30 states. At the time of release, 18% were ages 24 or younger, 51% were ages 25-39, and 31% were age 40 and above, had recidivated within three years (BJS, 2018). The FFO and SCTP define injustice in the form of oppression. In the literature review, the theoretical framework consisting of Young's (1990) FFO and Schneider & Ingram's (1993) theory of SCTP was designed to guide the study focus on the path of the research explaining the oppression of social groups included exploitation, marginalization, powerless, cultural imperialism, and racial violence. The social construction theory was used to ground this study of the African American male ex-offender target population in qualitative research to focus on homeless causes, racial oppression, mass incarceration, mental illness, and

substance abuse. It will also examine how racial oppression negatively impacts community housing for male ex-offenders struggling in African American neighborhoods. To explore the relationship between Iris Young's (1990) faces of oppression and homelessness for African American male ex-offenders, I will sample 12 African American male ex-offenders or continue to interview until data saturation is reached.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

Mass incarceration continues to be detrimental to the African American community (Irizarry et al., 2016). Imprisonment in the Black community has always been disproportionately higher than in the White community dating back to the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Irizarry et al., 2016). The literature shows the harmful impact



of mass incarceration on the African American community. In 2011, African American men were incarcerated at a rate 5 to 7 times higher (Irizarry et al., 2016). Nonetheless, researchers have noted that mass incarceration has not been considered a post-imprisonment failure (Irizarry et al., 2016). The criminal justice community has opposed placing convicted felons under probation supervision, yet they have been open to alternative sanctions as a viable solution (Irizarry et al., 2016).

Recent studies have consistently revealed that mass incarceration is a sign systemic failure of the criminal justice (Temin, 2018). Another insight glossed over by policymakers is that mass incarceration reduces human capital, a resource needed to build and redevelop communities (Temin, 2018). Current criminal justice changes have increased public prosecutors' power and established an economic model linking mass incarceration and social justice (Temin, 2018). Imprisonment have raised awareness of the considerable damage for those incarcerated, who struggle with social networks, labor markets, and health care markets postincarceration, for instance, substance abuse and mental illness treatment, housing markets, and trade schools are often unwilling to accept African American ex-offenders because of their criminal background of the (Temin, 2018). Policy changes supporting mass incarceration have targeted particular groups such as African Americans (Temin, 2018). Punitive criminal justice policies have sharply increased the mass incarceration rates (Kirk, 2022). The Black community is disproportionately impacted by these prison-cycling policies restricting African American male ex-offenders from the education system and labor market (Kirk, 2022). Criminal justice policies were inherently structured against specific target populations. These

destabilizing factors have weakened the Black community and contributed to higher crime rates (Kirk, 2022). Mass incarceration-based policies have fostered inequality and marginalization, resulting in disinvestment, deindustrialization, and unstable employment (Kirk, 2022).

I used Young's (1990) FFO and Schneider and Ingram's (1993) SCTP theory in this qualitative study to examine the experiences of homelessness of the African American male ex-offender population in one area of Florida. A key challenge to the social theory of target groups is the mechanism of transitions from one group to another (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Target populations such as the post criminal community without representation through policy design are affected by cultural characterizations of other popular groups (Ingram & Schneider, 1993). The special interest groups who are considered with well behavior and well-being affected public policy construct resulted in ex-offenders becoming homeless in the process of reentering back into the community (Ingram et al., 2007). African American male post-prisoners encountered extensive housing instability, illegal use of drugs, and psychological disorders, according to research (Nyamathi et al. (2016).

This study may make an original contribution to the field of public policy and administration. It may begin to fill a gap in the literature by explaining how FFO and SCTP relate to homelessness for African American male ex-offenders. This chapter include sections on research design and rationale, the researcher's role, methodology, and issues of trustworthiness, and a summary.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

The research question for this study was: How have male African American ex-offenders located in a large urban area of south Florida experienced social constructs of messages, participation, orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison? For the theoretical framework, I drew from Young's (1990) FFO and Schneider and Ingram's (1993) SCTP theory. Young's FFO was useful to exploring homelessness of the African American male ex-offender population in the federal, state, and local government whereas Schneider and Ingram's SCTP theory furthered examination of the implications of policy formulation and implementation. Dominant political discourse describes target group oppression as creating systemic social constraints that form a particular sub-class (Young, 1990). Policy design systemic constraints may not have been the intentions of oppression (Young, 1990). Structural oppression causes are embedded in unquestioned assumptions underlying institutional laws and the collective consequences that follows (Young, 1990). It is the unintended deep injustice suffered by the target group population as a consequence of unconscious assumptions that reinforces stereotypes of structural features of bureaucratic hierarchies and marketed mechanisms (Young, 1990).

The political phenomena were viewed as irrelevant to the proper domain of policy design requiring social construction targeting populations (Ingram & Schneider, 1993). The role of special interest impacted the consequences of such construction influenced political orientation, the lack of distribution of resources, and patterns of strong pressures opposed on a particular group (Ingram & Schneider, 1993). Cultural characterizations

have been misrepresented portraying negative, evaluative, and normative ideologies gauged from metaphors and stories without research (Ingram & Schneider, 1993). Conceptualizing targets and constructing of past and present practices of distribution, problem definition, regulations, tools, rationales, logic, and interpretations are needed in the explanation of how political orientation is policy-driven design (Ingram & Schneider, 1993). The study's research questioned was the following: How have male African American ex-offenders located in a large urban area of South Florida experienced social constructs of messages, participation, orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison? I used Young's (1990) FFO to explain experiences of marginalization, cultural imperialism, and violence among the homeless African American male ex-offender population.

In conducting this qualitative research, I sought to undertake a rigorous, systematic inquiry that had a strong theoretical foundation. Creswell et al. (2007) asserted that research should begin with an investigation on philosophical assumptions including the nature of the phenomenon, what is known, organizational values, methodology, and descriptive expression. The researcher should select an interpretive paradigm to identify hard to reach communities and develop research questions that are useful for sensitive data (Creswell et al., 2007). Post-incarceration intervention policy aims to establish a seamless set of systems that span the boundaries of prison and community and are as close to the community as possible (Hunter et al., 2016).

The rationale for this study called for an instrumental qualitative study. Creswell et al. (2007) continued to assert that qualitative research design, develop and discuss the explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive qualitative approach. It is the guiding principle of criminal justice ethics. Patton (2015) further asserted that the qualitative study approach explicitly collects, organizes, and analyzes data representing comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth information. Also, homogeneous samples identify the maximum variation of a small group representing the subpopulation of the phenomenon (Patton, 2015).

In-depth interviews are useful for homogeneous groups such as the homeless African American male ex-offender subpopulation and were utilized in this study. I conducted individual in-depth-interviews with twelve former African American male prisoners aged eighteen and over who are currently living in a homeless shelter. This qualitative study conducted exclusively in one county in Florida, so it is bounded by one county in Florida. According to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the state of Florida has the third-highest statistics of homelessness. South Florida ranks the third highest level of homelessness in the United States. Much of the state's homelessness is concentrated in South Florida.

The purpose of in-depth evaluation allows discussions at greater length. Denzin (2017) inferred that qualitative research provides public education, encouraging social policymaking, and community transformation. This qualitative vision opens to myriad ways to improve social justice, social servicing, client compassion, graduate student-

research, and places critical attention to the voice of the oppressed (Denzin, 2017). Moreover, qualitative inquiry may reveal a change needed for social policymaking.

### **Role of the Researcher**

I interacted as an observer-participant in the study. I actively participated by conducting individual indepth-interviews and be an observer by observing and documenting the interviewee's responses. Also, reflexive journaling is an ongoing narrative defining the researcher's rationale for the study, assumptions, values, and relationship involving the participant regarding culture and power (Tufford & Newman, 2010). Reflexive journaling revealed the presuppositions of the researcher's relation to the study and his or her relationship with participants (Tufford & Newman, 2010). The researcher utilized reflexive journaling during this study.

Avoiding bias also begins with the introduction. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to probe unidentified issues that might be explored about the participant's responses (Burkholder et al., 2016). Semi-structured questions are used in qualitative studies, particularly to initiate openness in the interview. Another significant part of the one-on-one interview process is location, the place to conduct an appropriate individual indepth-interview, especially with the homeless community who might suffer from mental illness. Other sensitive issues include culture, gender, psychological, and criminal background. It is essential to confirm the individual's age to protect them from

harm per institutional review board (IRB) guidelines. It is also critical to understand the time constraints for vulnerable groups that might create a stressful environment.

A critical ethical issue, especially with vulnerable groups, is having accessibility, visual privacy, freedom from distraction, and using an audio recording. The location needs to be convenient and safe for the researcher and the participants. Also, the researcher exercised caution when asking participants to speak on sensitive issues that stir emotional feelings. The researcher controlled her body posture, body language, voice, tone, and linguistic construction to communicate good judgment. Finally, because the researcher interviewed ex-offender participants who had been marginalized and oppressed, she gave each ex-offender participant who showed up to participate in an in-depth interview a ten-dollar grocery gift card as an incentive.

## **Methodology**

### **Participant Selection Logic**

The population of this qualitative study drew from homeless African American male ex-offenders in change throughout Florida. This study's sample consisted of at least 12 adult African American male ex-offenders currently living in a homeless shelter in South Florida. A flyer will be posted in the shelter (with permission of the manager) to invite participants to call.

I used homogeneous sampling, a form of purposive sampling, to identify the African American male ex-offenders pending completion of the reentry program in the shelter, who temporarily reside at the shelter where the flyer was posted and showed up to participate in an in-depth interview. I requested the organization to allow the African

American male ex-offenders who participated to interview at the shelter. The research focused on participants in a homogenous sampling who shared the same characteristics, such as culture, race, gender, education, background, location, and socio-economics status. Patton (2015) asserted that homogenous sampling describes a particular subgroup in-depth. Homogenous sampling is designed to focus, reduce variation, simplify the analysis, and facilitate group interviewing (Patton, 2015). Thus, my sample included the following criterion adults, age 18 and older, male, African American, and currently living in a homeless shelter in South Florida. I requested permission from the shelter to post recruitment flyers (see request letter in Appendix A) to solicit participants ages 18 and older.

Qualitative studies are the voice of research. This qualitative study conducted in-depth interviews with 12 participants at the shelter. Van Rijinsoever (2017) argued that some scholars gave tentative indication sample sizes between 20 and 30 participants and usually below 50, but this theoretical mechanism on which these estimates are based is unknown. The absolute fundamental of the qualitative paradigm in my research did not assume there is only one correct version of reality and knowledge (Clarke and Braun, 2013). Transparency is a recognized marker in qualitative research; sufficient details included a measured sample size according to the depth of data rather than frequencies (O'Reilly and Parker, 2012). Participants in my research represented the research on housing insecurity and other essential resources for African American male ex-offenders. Saturation in qualitative analysis means no additional data are found. Therefore, the researcher developed properties of that category (Nelson, 2017). Explanations of the



conceptual depth criteria provided and supported with examples how it applied to the research study.

Participants were asked to share their experiences and challenges in reentry transitioning. I reached out to one of the directors of a homeless shelter in South Florida via email and asked if ex-offenders meeting this study's criteria resided in this shelter, the director gave permission to recruit and conduct interviews with them at this homeless shelter. The manager responded via telephone and email (see Appendix B) affirming their willingness to allow a flyer (see Appendix C) to be posted at the shelter to recruit participants who met the qualitative study's criteria. The homeless shelter director also agreed to allow me to conduct individual in-depth interviews with 12 participants in the shelter. I conducted individual interviews in person. The director of the shelter permitted the flyer to be posted (Appendix D) recruiting 12 interview participants who met the study's criteria (Appendix A).

The appropriate sampling size in achieving rich data remains challenging. Sample sizes significantly depend on the characteristics of each study. The initial development of the concept of saturation was developed using a grounded theory approach by Glaser and Strauss (1967), focusing on developing data for conceptual or explanatory models in qualitative research (as cited in Hennink et al., 2017). The purpose of saturation is to center the focal point around the empirical analysis to explore, exhaust, and emerge all relevant conceptual categories. The alignment of data collection signals that the conceptual classification has been saturated and emerged comprehensibly credible; the theoretical sample saturation focuses on sample adequacy (Hennink et al., 2017).

Saturation was reached after interviewing at 12 participants, the researcher did recruit additional participants, the data satisfaction was achieved.

### **Instrumentation**

This qualitative study triangulated data, theories, and studies of experiences of the homeless African American male ex-offender. The triangulation method in qualitative research checks to establish validity in the researcher's study (Gurion, 2014). Three types of triangulations exist: data triangulation involving different sources such as interviews, reports, and programs; theory triangulation data from multiple disciplines such as public policy, public administration, public health reports, and educational resources; methodological triangulation may include sources from qualitative and quantitative methods to study the reentry process.

Establishing validity improves the credibility of research and provides information that can support confidence (Gurion, 2014). I used a data collection instrument to perform the in-depth interviews. For the study. Appendix D contains the interview protocol that I used. Note taking and journaling were used to record my thoughts and observations. Two audio recording devices were used to ensure backup of collected data.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

A flyer in (see Appendix C) was posted at the center to recruit 12 participants near completion of the reentry program. I collected data by conducting in-depth individual interviews of 12 adult homeless participants

representing the African American male ex-offender community. Each participant was interviewed individually. Each interview took approximately one hour, not counting the time needed to review the consent form with each participant and answer any questions. I conducted the interviews with two tape recorders, one as a backup. I also used a journal to take notes during the interviews. I requested permission from the homeless shelter to extend the interview process until 12 participants completed the study.

The participants were alerted that the interview was completed and asked if they had any additional questions. The 12 participants were given a \$10 grocery store gift card. This were provided to those who participated, in the interview. Follow-up interviews were not required.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

In this study, I used preliminary coding, open coding, pattern coding, category coding, categorization, and thematic TA analysis to answer the research questions: How have male African American ex-offenders located in a large urban area of South Florida experienced social constructs of messages, participation, orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison. Gareth et al. (2017) noted a six-phase analytic process. Phase 1 consists of familiarization, the root of TA. Familiarization is the beginning of the analysis when the researcher will start to review the data set. It provides insight into an overwhelming qualitative inquiry. In Phase 2, the researcher generated codes systematically through the creation of meaningful labels attached to specific segments of the relevant data. In Phase 3 a theme development was used to establish a deep understanding of the dataset through

familiarization coding sets. In Phase 4 reviewing ensured that the themes work well in relation to the coded data, dataset, and the research question. In Phase 5 the review process moved to defining and naming themes to determine an interpretative orientation that involved telling a story based on the data. In Phase 6 the researcher produced the report in the qualitative analysis which included the familiarization notes, codes, theme definitions, and a broad range of other writing.

Developing transparency assist the researcher in updating the validity of the qualitative data. According to Saldaña (2016) coding requires the researcher to view through the analytic lens of the FFO and SCTP. Theme development identifies more significant and more meaningful patterns as they emerge from the codes. These categories must be distinctive and hold significant meaning throughout the development and across all candidate themes.

I utilized qualitative data management software in this study. NVivo was programmed with a degree of high flexibility that allowed the researcher to change over time as new underpinnings were discovered about the data. The NVivo software enables the researcher to rewrite, recode, reorder, reconfigure, redefine, revamp, and reframe as necessary (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The tools supported by NVivo provide multiple strategies concurrently in reading, reflecting, coding, annotating, memoing, discussing, linking, and visualizing the results recorded in nodes, memos, journals, and models (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). These strategies are integrated in a learning process from the collected

data. The process of coding prompts writing with annotation and clarifying which codes are appropriate.

In qualitative research, coding represents the phenomenon by identifying themes in the textual content. Codes range from descriptive labels and topics are displayed in a more interpretive or analytical concept (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). NVivo software is useful in recording field notes and verbatim transcripts that reflect the phenomenon's undigested reality (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Coding in qualitative research tags the text with codes and indexing to facilitate later retrieval—the purpose of naming a concept or topic aids in organizing the data for further analytical thinking. Coding can be fractured or sliced into text, resolving data describing the process of applying multiple codes to a single passage (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). NVivo allows the researcher to store nodes to indicate a point of connection. The researcher can store a node for each topic or concept to use as a temporary collection not intended to use as the actual segment data. The references are held in an exact location of the text for further rewriting or redefining.

The automation of coding can change the face of how qualitative data is processed and searching for code verbatim. Automated coding will also be uploaded to transcribe track changes in this study. The researcher's coding will be compared to identify any areas that is oversaturated or might not have saturated the homeless experience and risk of being under-recognized and misinterpreted. Silver & Lewins (2014) identified how the careful immersion of small datasets could be lost or provide a shallow probe in the face of software development. The text search tools will be useful by

checking the validity of analyses shaped by other coded segment strategies in interpretative research, or if search tools are overused in an interpretive approach (Silver & Lewins, 2014). In contrast, the caution of careful data analyses will immensely reduce the risk of undervalued and misunderstood qualitative data (Silver & Lewins, (2014).

The narrative inquiry characterizes and focuses on the sequencing of textual characteristics, whereas data fragmentation is inherent in the thematic code-based approach (Silver & Lewins, 2014). The researcher interrogated data to explore broad connections visible in patterns and relationships that warrant further in-depth examination using the query tools. The researcher must make broad comparisons of codes used in different forms and identify the discrepancies in the data collection that will be treated as outliers (Silver & Lewins, 2014).

Table 1 depicts the preliminary coding framework that was used for data analysis. I based the framework mostly on Schneider and Ingram's (1993) SCTP; I also drew from Young's (1990) FFO. Table show each preliminary code and primary code, along with the corresponding interview question numbers (see the interview protocol in Appendix D for the list of all questions). The primary and secondary concepts or codes overlapped, indicating a relationship between the frameworks.

**Table 1**

*Preliminary Coding Framework*

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Preliminary code	Primary code	Interview question no.
Exploitation	Stability	1, 2, 3, 6
Marginalization	Principles	2, 3
Powerless	Practically	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Cultural Imperialism	Housing	1, 2, 3, 4
Racial Violence	Organization	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Distribution	Assumptions	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Redistribution	Alternatives	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Regulatory	Behavioral	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Constituent	Resource	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Deviant	Equitability	1, 2, 3, 6

Schneider and Ingram (1990) based their theory on policy tools by using instruments through which government seek to influence behavior. Based on social construction used in policy design to conceptualize target populations, the direct intent of the policy is purposeful in achieving goals by changing behavior; Ingram et al. (2007) based theory on institutions, culture, target populations, and policymaking. Lowi (1979) theory argued that policy created politics through distribution of benefits and burdens; these policy effects generated antiparticipating groups in the political activity (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Lowi's typology was based on two dimensions of distribution, low coercion that specifically targets the problem or produce high cost that impinge on the environment of the target group (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

Young's (1990) theory raised concerns of political discourse in the distributive patterns of inequality and the decision-making procedures. Schneider and Ingram's (1993) theory aligned with the same central focus in social construction, emphasizing policy tools, policy rationales, implementation, and structure of target populations (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

Qualitative research ought to adhere to a set of different standards or criteria than quantitative research to assess trustworthiness, given the differences in values between the paradigms. These standards include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Other qualitative measures juxtapose these criteria onto the respective quantitative notions of reliability and objectivity, which may be inadequate to assess rigor (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Qualitative researchers ought to develop and align validity approaches with research questions, goals, and contexts of their study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Credibility is the researcher's accountability of all the complexities presented in a study to deal with patterns easily explained (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). This kind of qualitative notion is akin to internal validity. The researcher draws meaningful inferences from qualitative instruments that measure what it is intended to gauge. To establish credibility requires structuring a study to seek and attend complexity throughout a recursive research design process, including the concept of the inseparability of methods and findings (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).



Credibility is essential to critical research design. The researcher will use strategies of triangulation in order to achieve credibility.

Transferability is also known as external validity. It is the generalizability that makes qualitative research boundless contextually (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Qualitative research develops descriptive, context-relevant statements by using thick description (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Studies are qualitatively transferable in a broader context and still maintain context-specific richness. Qualitative writing poses significant research questions that guide the researcher in understanding the concept of transferability and external validity (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A primacy is placed on the fidelity of the participants' experiences in qualitative research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). It is crucial to understand that qualitative research should not produce findings intentionally that can be directed to other settings. Transferability in qualitative research includes a detailed description of the comparability of different contextual factors (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Dependability refers to stability in qualitative research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Dependability entails a reasonable argument for how the researcher collects data that remains consistent with the researcher's evidence to explain the research questions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The use of appropriate methods requires the researcher to answer the qualitative study's core constructs and concepts (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To achieve dependability, the researcher will utilize strategies such as triangulation.

Confirmability is the qualitative research equivalent to the quantitative concept of objectivity and accounts for the ideology that researchers should remain objective

(Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The researcher will confirm data in a neutral, reasonable manner, free of biases (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Further, the researcher is viewed as a primary instrument in qualitative research. The researcher must challenge herself to remain neutral throughout every stage of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

### **Ethical Procedures**

As the researcher, I obtained all institutional permissions, including IRB approvals needed to perform and complete the study (approval no. 01-31-22-0709887). The Office of Research Ethics and Compliance ensures that every study affiliated with the university meets the institution's ethical standards. I written and sent a letter to a nonprofit homeless shelter and asked to be a research partner in the study and to post the research flyer to recruit participants who met the study's criteria (Appendix A). Each participant signed a consent form (Appendix C) before participating in the study, which ensured that that confidentiality was protected. The consent form highlight ed ethical concerns related to data collection that included informing all participants that participation in the study was voluntary meaning that participants could refuse participation or withdraw early from the study (Appendix A).

I did not collect more data than was necessary to answer the research question. Files, audiotapes, and transcripts have been stored in a locked safe in my home. Only I will have direct access to this data. All raw data such as interview tapes, spreadsheets, and questionnaire results will be destroyed five years after

completing the doctoral study (Walden University, 2011). I maintained neutrality in order to mitigate the possibility of bias in data collection and analysis. Research ethics require quality identifying potential participants, recruiting potential participants, performing data collection, and disseminating results. I acted with integrity and treated all participants with respect (Walden Research Ethics & Compliance, 2020).

### **Summary**

This study on the homeless African American male ex-offender explored the relationship between oppression and homelessness within a target population. The researcher conducted a qualitative study and interviewed 12 adult male African American ex-offenders living in a homeless shelter in one Florida county. In this study, the researcher used thematic analysis for data analysis.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American men who were seeking housing and jobs post incarceration. The research question that this study addressed was, How have male African American ex-offenders located in a

large urban area of South Florida experienced social constructs of messages, participation, orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison? In this chapter, I will discuss the research setting and data analysis process, as well as present the study results.

### **Setting**

The Florida Department of Corrections has established a standard release orientation process for everyone entering the reentry program (*The 2021 Florida Statutes*, Chapter 944.705 Release Orientation Program). The Department of Corrections mandated public assistance to provide employment skills, money management skills, personal development and planning, and instructions and attend to special needs and community reentry concerns to ensure the inmate's successful reentry into the community. The Department also claims to have established a toll-free hotline for released inmates and a comprehensive community resource directory organized by county and including the name, address, and a description of services offered by each reentry provider. The Release Orientation Program has failed to create jobs and develop programs that help African American male ex-offenders secure essential resources such as jobs, training, and housing (*The 2021 Florida Statutes*, Chapter 944.705 Release Orientation Program). Research revealed that the post-released framework created roadblocks and sent mixed messages in redistribution.

### **Demographics**

Participants in this study included 12 adult African American male ex-offenders at least 18 years old and within 1 year of their post release from incarceration. The

participants were required to be in a reentry program and experiencing homelessness post incarceration. They were all in the same reentry program in the southwestern part of Florida. I did not collect any other demographic information.

### **Data Collection**

I conducted 12 individual in-person interviews who were living in a homeless shelter. This qualitative study was conducted exclusively in one county in Florida. The participants were within 1 year of being released from incarceration, had participated in a reentry program, and had experienced homelessness post-incarceration. The in-person interviews lasted about 1 hour in length. No follow-up interviews were needed for this study. I audio recorded the interviews. Each participant orally confirmed their consent before their interview. I triangulated the data with literature to improve its validity. The triangulation method in qualitative research helps to establish validity in a researcher study (Gurion, 2014). I triangulated data from the in-person interviews with research on the reentry process from multiple disciplines such as public policy, public administration, public health reports, and educational resources. I also included sources about qualitative and quantitative and quantitative research methods.

The participants shared their experience in finding permanent housing, jobs, and training, and whether they had any disabilities related to mental illness and/or drug addiction. The research required one in-person interview; a followup was not needed. The interviews took place in a quiet place away from distractions and influence that could create a different outcome of the participant's experience. It was a space that allowed for confidentiality of the interviews. I interviewed four participants in each day for 3

consecutive days. I returned once to clarify some answers that were not clear on the tape. Overall, I interviewed 12 participants who met the criteria for this qualitative research on African American male ex-offenders.

In the interviews, I asked participants to provide a timeline from prison to the present. The sequence of events in these accounts enabled the temporal relationships in their past to emerge. I was also able to check for consistency and that data aligned with my research. The storytelling process helped the participants to share details of family strains, challenges in employment, weaknesses in training, and the importance of remaining drug-free and continuing psychiatric counseling.

I encountered no unusual circumstances in data collection. The participants' experiences were tenuous in the first months of release, and they often recidivated because of housing insecurity. The participants could not live with relatives and friends for various reasons; therefore, they lacked a point of contact and were forced to become at risk of non-delivery and receipts of reintegration services. There was often a disconnect between prison reentry validation and outreach programs. These findings speak to variations in reentry success and the need to expand research on faith-based reentry programs postrelease.

### **Data Analysis**

I used preliminary and open coding and created categories related to the theory and research question. Data were thematically analyzed to study how have the participants experienced social constructs of messages, participation, orientation toward

government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison. I followed (Gareth et al., 2017) six-phase analytic process.

In Phase 1, I sought to familiarize myself with the data by reviewing the data set. In phase 2, I systematically generated codes by attaching meaningful labels to specific segments of the relevant data. In Phase 3, I developed initial themes to establish a deep understanding of the dataset. In Phase 4, I reviewed the themes to ensure that they worked well in relation to the coded data, dataset, and the research question. In Phase 5, I began the review process to define and name themes to determine an interpretative orientation that involved telling a story based on the data. In Phase 6, I produced a report that included the familiarization notes, codes, and theme definitions.

Developing transparency assisted in updating the validity of the qualitative data. Coding created a review through analytic lens of the FFO and SCTP. The theme development identified more significant and more meaningful patterns as they emerge from the codes. These categories distinctively held significant meaning throughout the development and across all candidate themes.

I did not utilize qualitative data management software in this study. I chose to manually transcribe the in-person interviews. I performed manual transcribing to ensure higher flexibility that allowed changes as I developed new underpinnings and discovered this way of recording the data enabled the ability to rewrite, recode, reorder, reconfigure, redefine, revamp, and reframe as necessary (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The Delve software supported multiple strategies concurrently in reading, reflecting, coding, annotating, memoing, discussing, linking, and visualizing the results recorded in journals,

and models (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). These strategies are integrated in a learning process from the collected data. The process of coding prompts writing with annotation and clarifying which codes were appropriate.

### **Coding**

Coding was significant in identifying post release issues that advertently affected the African American male ex-offenders' ability to receive essential resources critical to their survival. The qualitative research coding scores identified a need to create jobs and develop programs that were underserved in securing essential resources such as jobs, training, and housing for the African American male ex-offenders returning to the Black community. Table 2 depicts the aggregate codes across all the participant data. These codes depict the social, behavioral, and economic characteristics, as well as the characteristics of social construction as outlined in Chapter 3. Table 2 also presents emerging data for distribution of resources from policy makers, and regulatory codes depicted the critical culture of policy issues. The post-released framework promoting social change in policy design and goals creating political roadblocks concurred with Schneider and Ingram (1990). The results of the aggregated data are presented from most frequently occurring codes to the least frequent codes.

**Table 2**

*Aggregate Codes*

Codes	Aggregate frequency ( <i>f</i> )
Behavioral	336
Distribution	330
Regulatory	324



Dependent	232
Jobs	215
Training	214
Powerless	202
Housing	186
Redistribution	182
Alternatives	176
Constituent	176
Resources	176
Policy Issues	161
Practically	150
Principles	150
Policy Limitations	144
Advantaged	144
Cultural Imperialism	133
Deviant	131
Stability	131
Racial Violence	128
Organization	127
Equitability	126
Marginalization	126
Exploitation	124
Contender	62
Assumptions	56
Drug Treatment	38

Notes. Aggregate codes are listed from most to least frequent occurrence.

The next step in data analysis consisted of themeing the data in relation to how policy appeared to socially construct the population of ex-offenders and how the ex-offender actually experienced the policy; in other words, contrasting the policy as it was formulated verses how it was experienced by the participants. These data are presented in Tables 3 and 4. Table 3 depicts the social construction elements related to how the policy appeared construct the population. These themes included the messages, participation,

orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison.

**Table 3**

*Themes and Codes Related to Social Construction of Target Population (Policy Formulation)*

	Aggregate frequency ( <i>f</i> )
Themes	Codes
Messages	Redistribution ( <i>f</i> = 182) Alternatives ( <i>f</i> = 176) Resources ( <i>f</i> = 176) Policy Issues ( <i>f</i> = 161) Policy Limitation ( <i>f</i> = 144)
Participation	Constituent ( <i>f</i> = 176) Practically ( <i>f</i> = 150) Principles ( <i>f</i> = 150) Organization ( <i>f</i> = 127) Equitability ( <i>f</i> = 126) Drug Treatment ( <i>f</i> = 38)
Citizen-Agency Interaction	Behavioral ( <i>f</i> = 336) Distribution ( <i>f</i> = 330) Regulatory ( <i>f</i> = 324)
Secure Housing	Jobs ( <i>f</i> = 215) Training ( <i>f</i> = 214) Housing ( <i>f</i> = 186)

The data was also themed for the experiences of the participants (see Table 4).

These themes depict what the participants felt the rehabilitation center gave them and the manner in which they might have been socially constructed.

**Table 4**

*Themes and contributing codes*

<b>Related to social construction of target population</b>	
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Advantaged	Behavioral ( $f = 336$ ) Distribution ( $f = 330$ ) Regulatory ( $f = 324$ ) Redistribution ( $f = 182$ ) Constituent ( $f = 176$ ) Alternatives ( $f = 176$ ) Resources ( $f = 176$ ) Equitable ( $f = 126$ )
Contender	Practically ( $f = 150$ ) Principles ( $f = 150$ ) Organization ( $f = 127$ )
Dependent	Jobs ( $f = 215$ ) Training ( $f = 214$ ) Housing ( $f = 186$ )
Deviant	Policy Issues ( $f = 161$ ) Policy Limitations ( $f = 144$ ) Drug Treatment ( $f = 38$ )

Social construction elements and the messages, participation, orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison applying the code weaving of most critical outcomes of the primary codes, categories, themes and/or concepts (Saldana, 2016).

### **Results**

In this section I will present the themes: messages, advantaged, contender, dependent, and deviant. These themes will then be presented individually with the attributed codes and quotes from the data. This qualitative research represented the coding phenomenon by identifying themes in the textual content. These themes ranged from descriptive codes are displayed in an interpretive or analytical concept (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Table 3 described this target population were adversely impacted from exclusionary zoning ordinances created by local government failure to increase the need to expand housing programs (Pearson-Merkowitz & lang, 2020).

*Messages* received through redistribution targeting those who are powerless have positive constructions, yet punishment-crime policies are mostly never met and characterize a pluralist opposition (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

#### **Redistribution ( $f = 182$ )**

Participant X1 shared his experience; After release I did not receive housing. Went to my mother's (grandmother) house, and I stayed with my cousins for one day. My mother lives in public housing.

Participant X3 shared, "I went to live with my mother, then my sister, off and on but it didn't work out because I couldn't stay there too long."

### **Alternatives (*f* = 176)**

Participant X1 also shared “Moore Haven Prison had a lot to offer. The had Barber class, cosmetology, computers, fork lifting. Your grade point average had to be at least a 9 to get in those type of classes.”

Participant X3 shared “I was homeless for about a year, then I heard about the mission from people on the street who had been in the program here at the mission. I really just learned about it about a year ago. They told me to go to this church to get a referral.”

### **Resources (*f* = 176)**

Participant X2 shared “I came here in 2020. I haven’t back to prison since then.” Participant X3 shared “I went to agencies, but they only had temporary work, it didn’t last. Once you been in prison the jobs don’t last.”

### **Policy Issues (*f* = 161)**

Participant X3 shared “They don’t want to hire people who been in prison, work release is over when your time is finished.” Participant X4 shared, “They sent me from here because what had happened was when covid started, it was rumored that one of men that I was in the room with, I was in the room--with six men--one of the men died from COVID-19. So, that’s how I got lost into the community (streets) again.”

### **Policy limitations (*f* = 144)**

Participant 5 shared, “I didn’t know about housing for ex-offenders until I came to

the mission.” Participant X6 shared, “It was very hard for me to find a job because I was in prison. Finding work was so bad, I went back to doing the same things before I went to first time.” An advantaged group has the resources and capacity to positively shape the deviant constructed group through rehabilitation and reentry (Scneider & Ingram, 1993).

**Behavioral ( $f = 336$ )**

Participant XX10 shared, “Training programs, like you take that class for some months before you get out.” Participant XX11 shared, “I drove tractor trailer. That’s about the only thing you could do with a record.”

**Distribution ( $f = 330$ )**

Participant X2 shared experience, “I went to a friend’s house. I stayed there a while. I went to a couple of other places too. I worked at carnival, that was seasonal work.”

Participant XX10

shared, “I just went to my relatives. I ended up being in the streets because my relatives just kept me throwing me out, throwing me out.”

**Regulatory ( $f = 324$ )**

Participant XX11 shared, “I got laid off again because of identity theft. They had stole my identity.” XX12 shared, “I been on paper for the last nine and half years. I been homeless for the last nine and half years. If I had heard of it, I would have been there instead of here.”

**Redistribution ( $f = 182$ )**

Participant XX11 shared, “That’s why I’m thinking about opening up my Own business. I came here to go through alpha, to get a doctorate in theology, and open up my own outreach program.” Participant XX12, “Even now the nine years that I been out, no one has come to me, and I go and report every month. And how I know that they (CJC) didn’t, I got thirty on thirty for drugs.”

### **Constituent (*f* = 176)**

Participant X2 shared, “No. I went through withdrawals. If you are asking me about treatment. I just went through withdrawals. I didn’t do no medication and drugs (prescription). Because behind those bars if something happened to you, you can’t defend yourself.” Participant XX10 shared, “New Horizon is where all the medical is...all the people (from the shelter and those who have left the shelter) go see their psychiatrist and stuff like to open up your case.”

### **Alternatives (*f* = 176)**

Participant X1 shared, “Yes. Moore Haven prepares you for all of that. By me being on probation...but I didn’t know that I could go to outreach programs (outside of participant’s county limits because I was on probation.” Participant X6 shared, “No. It wasn’t a lot of training to get in involved in. I was in another facility, but it wasn’t quite like this one.”

### **Resources (*f* = 176)**

Participant X3 shared, “They told me to go to this church to get a referral. The pastor told me about the reentry program. He was talking to the teenagers on the street.

When I found out about the program I came here.” Participant X7 shared, “Someone referred this place to my family. They contacted the prison.”

### **Equitable ( $f = 126$ )**

Participant X4 shared, “I am actually on the list for a housing referral now. And I ‘m waiting for disability. I have a hearing in March.” Participant X9 shared, “You get turn around (no help) for not being on drugs. The Salvation Army is the only one that help anybody.” Contenders are citizens who benefit from substantive effects of policy distribution on social problems and embodied their valued preferences (Lowi, 1990).

### **Practically ( $f = 150$ )**

Participant X1 shared, “I been here ever since. I been here like three years now, close to four. Right now, I have graduated the XXXXX Program, so I suppose to speak to the Housing Coordinator today.” Participant X2 shared, “If you have completed the program then you can work. I’m post XXXXX. I haven’t walked across the stage yet. I have graduated out of XXXXX, but I haven’t walked across the stage. Yes, it is. Once you completed all the requirements, your name is put on the waiting list (housing).”

### **Principles ( $f = 150$ )**

Participant X4 shared, “In 2006, I was in the sister facility, I had heard about the XXXXXX. You hear about things in there, but I never actually knew how awesome the program was, until I got involved.”

Participant X5 shared, “I didn’t know about housing for ex-offenders until I came here. I am waiting to get a housing referral now. I already started to



receive SSI (Supplemental Security Income). I have my income now I just need to get my apartment.”

### **Organization ( $f = 127$ )**

Participant X6 shared, “Since I been here, I completed the program, and I am waiting for a housing referral. It’s not ready yet. I just completed the XXXXX and I just graduated out of the XXXX program.” Participant X9 shared, “We all (family) moved to XXXXXXXX. When we (other family members) went looking for a new job, they were racist. So, when we went to the labor pool, they told us they needed to do a background check. We were looking at them like a background check, for Labor Pool. So, we end up back down here.”

Dependents are people who lack political power and have been disabled such as those considered to be weak and are negatively constructed (Lowi, 1990).

### **Jobs ( $f = 215$ )**

Participant X7 shared, “I left the job (last job) because I was coming to rehab. I was getting kicked out of the program because I was coming to rehab.” Participant X9 shared, “It’s hard to get a job when you been convicted. All the jobs you would get, with a conviction, they won’t pay you; they won’t pay no money.”

### **Training ( $f = 214$ )**

Participant X8 shared, “They (prison) gave me a list of various organizations that would help you. Half of them didn’t exist.” Participant X10 shared, “Training programs what’s that? No information man. All I got was a bus ticket and list that’s it.”

### **Housing ( $f = 186$ )**

Participant X7 shared, “The last one (program) that I did, they sent me to another shelter.” Participant X8 shared, “They gave list, but nobody helped me find anything or told me anything. No referrals, just a list.” Table 4 depicted constituents are citizens who benefit or lose from substantive effects of policy distribution on social problems or embodies their valued preferences (Lowi, 1990). Deviants are criminals, drug addicts, who are weak and negatively constructed (Schneider & Ingram 1993).

#### **Policy Issues (*f* = 161)**

Participant X9 shared, “The (prison) sent me to a program (Nonprofit Organization). It is only supplying people with type of stuff who Baker Act at that time. Just to walk through assistance intake. They would leave you for dead.” Participant XX10 shared, “After I got out, I felt like I was too old to go to trade school. When we get out, we lost so many years. At forty, what I’m gonna gain by that, I might last another five years and die. I might tomorrow.”

#### **Policy Limitations (*f* = 144)**

Participant XX11 share, “No. In 2010, they stole my identity. They (Department of Motor Vehicles) pulled me off the road. I had to shut down. I didn’t have a job until 2016.” Participant X5 shared, I got work in a temporary job as a custodian, but I could stand up too long. I couldn’t hold the jobs. I am disable from a gunshot wound.”

#### **Drug Treatment (*f* = 38)**

Participant X5 shared, “No programs. You have to test dirty to get in those programs. The only thing I got was probation. But I received treatment now. By word of mouth, I walked in their front door. I finished out my time on paper. I finished probation since I been here at the mission.” Participant XX12 shared, “No. No drugs. But I received treatment now (mental health). Because I had no clue where to go, because I lived in the city One of male associates was telling me about and I’m like in my mind they can’t do nothing for me.”

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

Qualitative research adheres to a set of standards to assess trustworthiness, given the values in the paradigms. These standards include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Credibility represented accountabilities for all the complexities. Gathering data through the African American male ex-offender’s timeline was helpful in the introduction; transcribing personal experiences and coding their voice presented in the qualitative study were easy to explain. The actions that I took were in agreement with those noted by the authors Ravitch & Carl, 2016. This kind of qualitative notion is akin to internal validity. I drew meaningful inferences from qualitative instruments that measured what I intended to gauge. Establishing credibility required structuring a study to seek and attend to complexity throughout a recursive research design process which included the concept of the inseparability of methods and findings (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Credibility was essential to critical research design. For example, I used strategies of triangulation to achieve credibility.

Transferability is also referred to as external validity. The generalizability created the qualitative research boundless contextually (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Qualitative research developed descriptive, context-relevant statements using thick descriptions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). My study was qualitatively transferable in a broader context and still maintained context-specific richness. My qualitative writing posed a significant research question that guided my research in understanding the concept of transferability and external validity (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The qualitative research placed a primacy on the fidelity of the participants' experiences in qualitative research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). It was crucial to understanding that qualitative research should not produce findings intentionally that can be directed in other settings. Transferability included a detailed description of the comparability of different contextual factors (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Dependability refers to stability in qualitative research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Dependability entailed a reasonable argument for how I collected data that remained consistent with the evidence to explain the research question (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Appropriate methods required my answers to the qualitative study's core constructs and concepts (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To achieve dependability, I utilized triangulation in my research strategies.

Confirmability is the qualitative research concept of objectivity and accounted for the ideology that I remain objective (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I confirmed that the data was neutral, reasonable, and free of biases (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I was the primary

instrument in my qualitative research. I challenged myself to remain neutral throughout every study stage (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Establishing validity helps the researcher's evaluation to be more credible and provides information that can support confidence (Gurion, 2014). The data collection instrument used in this study included one researcher performing the in-person interviews. Appendix D served as the source of interview questions in the interview protocol. A copy of the letter from the shelter confirming the approval for the in-depth interview was included in Appendix B. Note taking and journaling was used to record my thoughts and observations. Two audio recording devices were used to ensure backup. Data was stored for each interview.

I used analytical policy methods in problem structuring, forecasting, prescription, monitoring, and evaluation (Dunn, 1988, 2016). My qualitative research remained a vital component of the informal policy formulation process and was critical in four analyses: political, empirical, cost, and system (Reed & Swain, 1997). Models should forecast the economic conditions, endowment investment decisions, price setting, and market approach while remaining creditworthy (Reed & Swain, 1997). Prediction is prone to errors; the political process builds biases toward safety; the illogical assumption fails to monitor actual values (Reed & Swain, 1997). I examined the participants' employment relationships and found their recidivism declined and significantly predicted success post rehabilitation (Formon et al., 2018).

The themes and contributed codes related to the SCTP indicate that jobs would have changed the outcome and provided financial stability. I undertook a political analysis to understand whether participants could have improved in a stable environment. The participants indicated that stable employment would have given them confidence signaling a smooth transition from prison back to the community (Formon et al., 2018). The empirical analyses substantiated that favorable hiring required vocational training. Community-based programs have become the staple of successful outcomes (Formon et al., 2018). Cost analyses of the housing, drug screening, psychiatric evaluation, life skills training, and mental health history would be critical data needed to get a clearer picture of the individual's employment outcome (Formon et al., 2018). A supporting system would positively impact the reintegration process post-incarceration (Form et al., 2018).

### **Summary**

This on the homeless African American male ex-offender analyzed the relationship between oppression and homelessness within a target population. I conducted a qualitative study and interviewed 12 adult male African American ex-offenders living in a homeless shelter in one Florida county. A thematic analysis was used to examine the data analysis. Major themes such as Behavior, Distribution, Regulatory, Jobs, and Training and other emerging themes supported the findings that the African American male ex-offenders experienced a disconnect in aftercare after release from prison.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how African American male ex-offenders in a large urban area of south Florida experienced social constructs of messages, participation, orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison. I used Schneider and Ingram's (1993) SCTP theory to examine the policy formulation and implementation and how it relates to current policy and theory. The major themes that encompass harm to the participating ex-offender are behavior, distribution, regulatory, jobs, and training.

Other emerging themes supported the findings that the African American male ex-offenders in the study did not receive continuum care post prison release. The ex-

offenders shared experiences of returning to the street and not being referred to residential outreach programs to equip them with essential resources in their communities. This what the policy appears to have omitted from its directive. The finding indicated the African American male ex-offenders might benefit from policy change in the right-to-work laws mandating equal pay. Such changes might reduce recidivism and increase the likelihood that individuals in the target population would receive good-paying jobs, and training critical in sustaining housing security.

Public organizations face challenges in delivering public messaging to target populations. For example, informal practices associated with day labor hiring informal may make it hard to disseminate information to certain groups. Human resources management is often needed to formally advertise for jobs, salaries, and location (Asseburg et al., 2018). Notably, public organizations have failed to create high levels of public service motivation indicators for recruitment messaging for target populations such as African American male ex-offenders (Asseburg et al., 2018). Alternatives recruitment messages are needed for job seekers to understand their duties, obligations, and responsibilities (Asseburg et al., 2018). The job seeker can understand the nature of recruitment messages conveying the organizational intent, mission, and rational job tasks (Asseburg et al., 2018). Policy issues occur when individuals lack motivation because they are not exposed to recruitment messages from the public sector (Asseburg et al., 2018).

Public participation requires those in policy making and governance to ensure direct and broad accountability in public control. Public participation incorporates



knowledge and experiences from the lay experts to improve these resources in hard-to-reach communities (Chekar, 2017). Public participation practically involves media, private actors, and nonprofit organizations and policies that socially construct, manipulate, and create benefits for disadvantaged communities (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). This participatory framework establishes results in diverse role settings for individuals and groups associated with goals, powers, and responsibilities (Chekar, 2017). These principles are grounded in policies that are neither effective nor efficient resulting in policy failure linked to illogical policy design by the advantaged group instead of policy experts (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). For example, some policies are preserved and continued despite failure to achieve policy goals (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Political and institutional campaigns gloss over the significance of facilitating these hard-to-reach communities' representation in policy formulation risks and further heighten social exclusion (Chekar, 2017). The equitability of continuum care for hard-to-reach communities seeks to improve putting policy into practice (Chekar, 20187). Equitability is a powerful segment of society where the disadvantaged benefit from public assistance through messages, orientation, and participation in outreach programs, agencies, and local government (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

Citizen-agency interaction is the formation of policy decisions in an environment with limited resources and a need for trade-offs in public services and the public good. Decisionmakers adhere to political markets for collective intelligence to improve policies such as rehabilitation and reentry (Perterson & Godby, 2020). Political markets are resource integrators designed to assist policymakers and constituents in making

budgetary decisions for public services (Peterson & Godbym 2020). Constituents are citizens who benefit or lose from the substantive effects of policy distribution on social problems that embody their valued preferences (Schneider & Ingram, 1990). The citizen-agency interaction political process includes elected officials, intragovernmental marketing, governmental marketing, political marketers, and consumers/voters imposing policy uniformity and public values such as the distribution of privatization, contracting, and local control (Peterson & Godby, 2020). This behavior represents dominant group-wide dissemination that favors any majority group that subsequently constructs differences in political markets critical in making budgetary decisions.

For example, secured housing requires physical planning by inducing social change with alternative strategies such as policy intervention design to improve housing and social conditions among poor minority groups and target populations. These groups and subgroups are often excluded from local government ordinances to increase the need to expand a broader definition of various housing programs (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Urban policies are designed to bridge gaps between public agencies and communities and remove barriers crucial to creating jobs for those who are powerless and negatively constructed on the wrong track (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). U. S. cities have moved away from federal funding, which is needed to create training and educational programs that are positively oriented toward policy incentives for minorities and target populations to compete in job markets (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Jobs scored higher than some of the other essential resources by identifying the core of the housing problem led to a need

for sustainability. Sensitive job marketing targeting groups such as African American male ex-offenders was substantive before reentering the community.

The policy discourse of formulation and reformulation asserts that the advantaged group consists of powerful business owners. The advantaged group has the financial resources and capacity to positively shape the negatively constructed group through rehabilitation and reentry (Scneider & Ingram, 1993). These alternatives are policies needed to increase the five largest common-pool resources such as food, housing, jobs, education, and health benefits of the target population transitioning into a community constituent (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Behavior from the political environment can pose a risk to target populations. Social construction encourages a positive outcome of the accumulation of threats reducing control and understanding (Frieder et al., 2016). The political environment can challenge private actors' ability to gauge and anticipate the self-serving of others. However, induced controlled behavior encourages understanding and creates an environment of active problem solving necessary to heighten awareness (Frieder et al., 2016). Social change is influenced by the regulatory process of mediating relationships between political perception and commitment, performance, and the actual takeaway of the recommended resources (Frieder et al., 2016). The term enactment behavior characteristically and proactively constructs problem-solving tools extending beyond perception and understanding, demonstrated in the redistribution of resources for the constituent (Frieder et al., 2016).

The contenders are nonprofit, faith-based, and for-profit organizations with sufficient control to change or impose burdens but sometimes not enough power to gain

visible benefits (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). For example, faith-based organizations were instrumental in providing continuum care for the ex-offender target population. The faith-based organizations practically manipulated the emerging themes by creating benefits through policy, serving the negative constructed group at a disadvantage by using effective and efficient principles (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). On the other hand, the for-profit organizations, such as the property owners, did not have the political support from federal funding (Schneider & Ingram, 1993) to create housing incentives and were reluctant to rent to the negative constructed group. As a result, it became difficult in a troubled economy (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Financial resources have consistently been the central focus of the Black community. The advantaged groups' stability would fuse the physical housing planning, which means inducing social change. Policy intervention designed to improve social conditions by offering training programs, GED programs, job assistance, medical and psychological services would improve rehabilitation and reentry services among minority groups and target populations. These groups have been excluded because local government ordinances no longer have the political support from federal funding (Schneider & Ingram, 1993) to increase the need to expand housing programs. Jobs are a crucial part of the effort for the advantaged group to achieve national goals such as economic vitality for those who are powerless and negatively constructed on the wrong track to get hired and receive equal pay (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). The Deviant group are criminals, some with drug addictions, and gangs who are weak and negatively constructed but they are insufficient in power to oppose policies (Schneider & Ingram 1993). These policy issues require rationales that also

provide policies emphasizing justice-oriented legitimations in addition to instrumental ones such as education and training has been justified as equal opportunities (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Policy Limitations are instrumental goals over justice-oriented goals that continue to distribute benefits to those who are powerful and overlooked the disabled group (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

Social determinants of health and social determinants continue to be a gap in socioeconomics and behavior in Black community. Five key initiatives are essential for the African American male ex-offender target group. Health care access and quality is essential to the African American male ex-offender in his economic stability and the built environment in the neighborhood. The community outreach programs in the non-profit sector are overwhelmed with providing social and community context in the Black community. For example, one of the most essential social infrastructure programs is training programs designed for the AAME. Psychological health remains critical in the communication of psychosocial health for the AAME. The physical environment and community services fall into open interpretation of what is need in these social behavior programs under the guidance of public health. Self-motivation is tied to treatment services made accessible, available, and affordable to the AAME.

Public policy is intended to provide a healthy economy with essential resources such as housing, jobs, and healthcare, yet the Black community is plagued with the absence of public private partnerships with a purpose of value found in research and

methodology for practitioners to follow. Social equality is not comprehensive across boundaries through quality education, public health, and lifelong learning.

Behavior was demonstrated in dominant group-wide dissemination which became the norm resulting in constructed differences that oppressed the African American culture in the United States. The social visibility of the African American male ex-offenders is exclusively regarded as dangerous or a threat (Polizzi, 2019). Therefore, this behavior led to social construction that affected housing security, employment, training, and drug treatment, projecting a permanent criminal shadow on this target population (Polizzi, 2019). Criminal justice ethics must confront the psychological challenge that inadvertently imposes a shadow on the target group. As a result, these shadowed projections fuel a negative impact by constructing attitudes that viewed the African American male ex-offender as a deviant to society by experiencing unfair labor practices (lower wages) and lack of training justifying unjustified dominion (Polizzi, 2019).

Distribution identified a disconnect in the redistribution of the African American male ex-offender's population. The distribution chart identified in Lowi's (1972) typology argued that the relationship between public policy and democracy is based on two dimensions of probability coercion of benefits distribution, which produced four types of policy: distributive, regulatory, redistributive, and constituent, of which only one resembles a competitive model of pluralist democracy. Pluralism is policy design with multiple groups sharing political power (Schneider & Ingraham, 1993). The problem arose when distribution did not produce redistribution in resources to support continuum

care such as housing, jobs, training, drug treatment, and mental illness treatment prescribed as essential needs vital to the African American male ex-offender reintegration process. The African American male ex-offenders experienced a lack of communication in where to go to receive housing referrals, General Educational Development, and hands-on skills to attain permanent employment, equal wages, criminal justice support to overcome background rejection, and a list of local drug treatment centers and locations to maintain mental wellness checkups.

Regulatory coding revealed that the reentry support services were not accessible to those without essential resources. The African American male ex-offenders shared experiences of returning to the street and had not been referred to residential outreach programs aiding with essential resources in their communities. They also told stories of a shortage in homeless shelters that provided essential resources for non-drug users. The ex-offenders stated that they were informed by other participants receiving services from the outreach programs to admit to mental illness to get immediate help. The ideology of the assumptions theory unfolds and warrant a yardstick measurement to gauge the five policy initiatives: 1) the law is not clear or mute in direction or authorization in policy; 2) lack initiatives or capacity to take actions; 3) agreement to the explicit values already in place in the means or ends; 4) situations that conclude high levels of uncertainty surrounding the nature of the problem that is not known; and 5) when it is unclear what should be done and the motivation to get it done (Schneider & Ingram, 1990).

Practically and principles coding in the aggregate codes depicted overperformance by outreach programs and revealed blurred boundaries existed. Prison

reentry was a moot point indicating that the regulatory process in policy decision-making affected employment, housing, and substance treatment and revealed an increase in recidivism (Berghuis, 2018). The outreach programs stepped out of their limits and stepped into the regulatory boundaries of the prison reentry process, pointing out a sharp line does not remain. Therefore, the prison reentry services were not comprehensive. There are two methodological assumptions in policymaking. The first identified the exploitation, marginalization, powerless, cultural imperialism, and racial violence explained the homelessness experiences of African American male ex-offenders (Berghuis, 2018). A second assumption in addition to homelessness, African American male ex-offenders did not face challenges in mental illness and substance abuse (Berghuis, 2018). The dominant group behavior raised concerns in the changing of boundaries with the nonprofit and private organizations.

The African American male ex-offenders in-person interviews made several comparisons of connections to programs offered in privately run prisons. Privatization had an advantaged over publicly run prisons depicted in the coding. Inarguably, privately run prisons offered services that were socially inclusive. The growing prison population enacted the policymakers to refocus on rehabilitation and reentry services by privatization correctional facilities (Kim, 2021). The privately run prisons offered in-house programs that also facilitated the enrollment of housing, training, drug treatment, mental treatment, and assistance in finds jobs. Privatization prison conformity would be most cost effective than publicly run prisons in changing the outcome of ex-offender reintegration. A study on Florida prisons were conducted and found that offenders released



from privately run prisons were less likely to recidivate than offenders released from public institutions (Kim, 2012). More research is needed to inform policy decisionmaking on the cost-effectiveness of prison-privatization performance measures on recidivism.

Sustainable intervention must include the implication of research, policy, and practice. To evaluate the desired outcome of successful reentry includes design, target population, intervention, and outcome (Berghuis, 2018). A research design for intervention must include a robust validity removing suspicion of systematic biases (Berghuis, 2018). The criminal justice community need a new approach to the ex-offender target population critical to their preparedness to receive housing, employment, education, and training (Frederickson & O'Leary, 2014). A broader concept in the social construct of the ex-offender target population is critical to public governance focusing on collaboration, innovation, and amelioration of government-controlled boundaries (Frederickson & O'Leary, 2014).

Faith-based programs have become increasingly trustworthy in policymaking when intervening with at-risk target populations. The reintegration ideology supports empirical evidence that practicality and principles in qualitative coding influenced patterns and themes. Research has furthered the theoretical explanation for trusted mechanisms used in faith-based reentry tools that aid the ex-offenders in essential resources such as housing, employment, training, drug, and mental treatment, reducing substance abuse and relapse. Yet, research has not expanded on faith-based programs and their effectiveness in rehabilitating criminal offenders (Roman et al., 2007). The privately

run prisons unconventional programs were also designed to facilitate successful reintegration into the community and (Powers et al., 2017). This qualitative study addresses the need for future research to examine this deficit in the literature assessing, the takeaway of the evident-based outcome of faith-based residential programs and privately run prison programs.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study did not underestimate the true recidivism rate of the African American male ex-offender population in one county in South Florida. Under the epithet, the qualitative inquiry could only investigate personal accounts within the limits of what is known as evidence (Polkinghorne, 2007). Most of the in-person participants avowed that they were not drug users. The qualitative coding depicted no firm evidence of drug addiction. Some participants indicated that they received treatment, and all continued to receive counseling, training, healthcare, housing, balanced meals, and jobs while living in a healthy environment; their mental conditions was undetectable. Mental health refers to mental and emotional wellbeing (Taylor Counseling Group, 2021). The returning citizens did not appear to have thoughts and behaviors indicating mental illness (Taylor Counseling Group, 2021). Someone with mental illness can achieve sound mental health (Taylor Counseling Group, 2021). It was evident that rehabilitation substantially improved their opportunity to get hired.

The knowledge and judgment on the validity of the African American male ex-offenders' drug addiction require the weight of evidence to support the stigma of this target population (Polkinghorne, 2007). However, the African American male ex-

offender faces multiple obstacles in obtaining employment, housing, health care, and remaining drug-free. Drug abuse history stains their past and significantly challenges their reintegration success into the community (Craw & Bense, 2020). These compound and extreme disadvantages of poverty, housing quality, and social isolation were the culprit of drug abuse (Craw & Bense, 2020). (Craw & Bense, 2020). The ex-offenders shared stories of how they sustained the drug addiction with Therapeutic counseling (TC) and no prescriptions. The ex-offenders claim the TC help them stay clean, while the prescription drugs produce side effects of addiction and mental health challenges.

The emerging coding for mental illness treatment was shallow. The participants changed my perception of what is considered mild and controllable compared to a patient that needs a continuum care facility. In the criminal community, mental illness is stigmatized as racial violence (Dobransky (2019). Advocating public policy speaks to changing the assumptions and opinions of dominant behavior about mental illness and the types of stigmas represented. African American male post incarceration is commonly portrayed as dangerous, unpredictable, and violent, adversely impacting social distance from the public. Controlled mental illness receiving psychiatric attention in the workplace must choose selective concealment to protect at-risk individuals from stigmatization (Dobransky (2019). Stigmatization management addresses a broader understanding of normalizing mental health care, and the appropriate use may differ depending on the workplace (Dobransky (2019). Professional stigmatization management protects vulnerable individuals at risk of suffering further harm and protects their rights (Dobransky (2019).

Depression and anxiety are psychological health issues of mental health well-being which is momentary and often normative in response to prison events that occurred in the ex-offender's life (Follmer & Jones, 2018). Mental health has become a primary discussion in the absence of mental illness, yet mental health and mental illness are not mutually exclusive (Follmer & Jones, 2018). One continuum represents the presence or absence of positive mental health, whereas another contrasts the presence or absence of psychiatric disorders (Follmer & Jones, 2018). Social identities, social groups, and categories have been attached to value or significance by categorizing them as visible and readily observable to race, gender, and criminal background (Follmer & Jones, 2018). In contrast, individuals with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) or drug addiction may experience difficulties focusing, remembering, and organizing information (Follmer & Jones, 2018). Symptoms of mental illness impair one's ability to engage or fully meet the requirements of specific jobs (Follmer & Jones, 2018). Notably, impaired job performance is not universal; it is contingent upon the severity and treatment (Follmer & Jones, 2018). Mental illness should not be referred to and attributed to or marked as abnormal, flawed, or deviant within the norms of society resulting in being stereotyped and discriminated against (Follmer & Jones, 2018).

On the other hand, people with controllable mental illness manage their psychiatric symptoms to sustain employment (Bastastini, 2017). However, those with criminal backgrounds and psychiatric history face challenges of mental illness stigma and employee-related outcomes (Bastastini, 2017). Employees have raised concerns about those with criminal characteristics, emotional control, persistence, and resolving conflict

(Bastastini, 2017). Ex-offenders experienced employer biases in hiring decisions compared to those who do not have mental illness history (Bastastini, 2017). The results of this compound problem are layers of racial biases experienced in the comparison of people with intellectual psychiatric disabilities over those with a criminal history (2017). The ex-offender stigma can minimize through education and personal contact (Bastastini, 2017).

African American male ex-offenders' community reintegration from multiple aspects of prosocial functioning from social exclusion of mentally sound created roadblocks affecting employment, education, training, and stability to adapt interpersonal skills to engage in the community. The ex-offenders did not receive behavior therapy that would have influenced social bonding through reintegration (Moore et al., 2018). The mental health factors that affected the ex-offenders were depression, anxiety, mania, paranoia, and schizophrenia that resulted in personal disorders that occurred post release (Moore et al., 2018). Correctional residential treatment was not offered to the ex-offender in a continuum care program. The disconnect in the prison reentry and a referral to an outreach program decreased their chances of finding stable employment to support housing security (moore et al., 2018). The participants experienced deterioration in community integration that significantly increased their anxieties affecting their emotional control (Moore et al., 2018).

### **Recommendations**

The African American male ex-offenders were powerless constituents returning to their neighborhoods without essential resources and were thought to degrade the

neighborhood structure because of their inability to find stable employment (Chamberlain, 2018). Their criminal stigmatization damages their employment prospect. The widespread assumptions disrupting social networks presented a challenge eliminating reincarceration (Chamberlain, 2018). The ex-offenders were thought to create economic hardship on friends and family already struggling in the Black community.

The African American male ex-offender's inability to obtain housing security diminished the possibility of receiving other critical public assistance such as drug treatment, mental treatment, and training to become a substantial constituent of the Black community. The ex-offender was believed to be responsible for indirect and reciprocal effects on the neighborhood structure (Chamberlain, 2018). Post-release stigmatized the African American male ex-offenders for potential high crime rates and the likelihood of increased property insurance premiums and increased mortgage interest rates. The constituents feared that the returning ex-offenders would cause a decrease in property market value and deplete the neighborhood structure. These assumptions influenced flight taking all the neighborhood financial resources and leaving the African American male ex-offenders in a blighted community.

The African American male ex-offender must be targeted for housing, jobs, and training at least one year before released from prison to the reentry program. It would significantly reduce recidivism and positively impact social change by redistributing of essential resources vital to the reintegration process. This process would eliminate being terminated from work release when the prison term is finished. Ex-offender job placement is non-existent (Mose, 2012). No

studies have described a prescription specific for job placement programs to aid ex-offenders in reintegration into the community (Moses, 2012). The absence of job placement programs raised concerns of employment barriers such as race systemic discrimination, inadequate training, and high school incompleteness, insufficient or outdated skills, and a spotty and non-existent work history (Moses, 2012).

The prison ought to employ an in-house Housing Coordinator to submit applications pending completion of a reentry program and followed by enrollment into an outreach continuum care program. The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program eligibility requirement is designed to assist individuals experiencing homelessness and other essential services transitional to permanent housing (Continuum of Care, 2022). Eligible applicants consist of nonprofit organizations, state and local governments, and public housing agencies (Continuum of Care, 2022). The Continuum of Care guidelines were juxtaposed, it also enforced that if a Continuum of Care is designating only one applicant for funding, it must be designated that the applicant to follow a collaborative application (Continuum of Care, 2022).

The prisoner is now ready to be perceived as a returning citizen prepared for housing security and job stability and meeting the qualifications for HUD's 30% of their adjusted income requirement (HUD Public Housing Program, n. d.). The categories are:

- 1) Permanent housing defined as community-based housing without designated stay with an initial term lease for one year and is renewable or terminable only for cause (Continuum of Care, 2022). There are two types of permanent housing: permanent supportive housing for those with physical and mental disabilities, rapid re-housing, and

rental assistance to move homeless persons as rapid as possible into permanent housing (Continuum of care, 2022). Transitional housing is designed to provide homeless individuals with interim stability to support a successful move to and maintain permanent housing (Continuum of Care, 2022).

The prison system must forecast a financial report that supports training and education programs targeting how many prisoners will be release to reentry. Secondly, the prison needs to contract with market-driven literacy training and job programs requiring hands-on skillsets that require sustainable income to meet HUD policies. Thirdly, the prison needs to contract with employment services willing to allow the prisoner the opportunity to obtain gainful employment after prison release. Vital components of policy formulation were critical in behavior, distribution, regulatory, and redistribution in four analyses underlining: political, empirical, cost, and system in policy rationale (Reed & Swain, 1997).

### **Implications**

The implications to the theoretical framework for this study are multiple. The SCTP (Schneider & Ingram, 1990) and FFO (Young, 1990) are important considerations when looking at community planning. Work these into the discussion. Without consideration of social construction and FFO there is a missing element to the planning. Rehabilitation has long been at the forefront of community-based organizations. There existed two novel aspects of the Second Chance Act (SCA) evolving at state-level corrections to create social change in the community: 1) these social services embedded in the state welfare rehabilitation programming and its fiscal austerity were fragmented;



and 2) these programs over-extended into the Black community raising questions social containment, exclusion, and selected social inclusion (Miller, 2014). First, rehabilitative programming is intended to prepare the pre-release prisoner for transitioning back into the community. The reintegration process raised awareness of ex-offenders not receiving post correctional education and training services (Miller, 2014). Positive outcomes are contingent upon readiness and program factors that challenge modality, exposure, and duration. Reentry success requires institutional alignment that targets at-risk ex-offenders and relies on evidence-based practices. The inmate needs social and problem-solving skills beneficial to recidivism prevention. The likelihood of finding employment is stark, resulting in de-socialization and nonconforming behavior prohibited social change for those ex-offenders who do not receive education and training resources critical to their survival are powerless under the structure of transfer of capitalist power (Young, 1990). It was alarming that the reentry policy did not recognize the need to reevaluate essential resources to receive housing, training, and jobs. The African American male ex-offenders repeatedly complained that they were not offered the opportunity to receive educational resources through the rehabilitation programming to attain a GED and learn new training skills. This exclusionary form of punishment rejected the African American male ex-offenders from rehabilitating back into their community (Miller, 2014).

Second, the African American male ex-offenders were denied equal wages using superior and inferior exploitation characteristics to imply an abnormal group. The stigma of hiring ex-offenders falls beneath the radar examining the distinct disadvantage the ex-offenders experience in labor markets (Western & Sirios, 2017). The African American

ex-offenders' wages consistently remained below the median earnings, close to zero throughout the twelve months post-prison release (Wester & Sirios, 2017). The average earnings for African American male ex-offenders were approximately \$500.00 a month, equivalent to about half the federal poverty line for one person (Wester & Sirios, 2017). These ex-offenders averaged \$1300.00 a month, half of the median earnings for Black workers in the United States labor market (Wester & Sirios, 2017). The Hispanic ex-offenders were slightly higher, averaging \$1500.00 monthly, while the White ex-offenders average \$2500.00 a month (Western & Sirios, 2017). In essence, labor market research on ex-offenders has focused on the effects of incarceration rather than variability in employment (Western & Sirios, 2017). African American male ex-offenders were affected by the criminal stigma and social networks facing obstacles more significantly than White male ex-offenders. The African American male ex-offenders were powerless under the structure of capitalist power and were excluded from decision-making that impacted their lives. The African American male ex-offenders feared cultural dominance of harassment, intimidation, degradation, humiliation, and stigmatization of social injustice (Young, 1990).

Third, the African American male ex-offenders' experienced systemic discrimination from day labor informal hiring process. Social economy organizations (SEO) wide-group behavior alternatives modes in advanced capitalist economies have increased attention to the emerging forms of market governance (Visser, 2017). State policies have refashioned labor market issues restructuring the neoliberal process (Visser, 2017). New strategies in reentry organizationing speaks to the ways in which the targets

of these services are understood by policymakers and program planners (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). The state planned regulations to the socioeconomic objectives of greater hiring flexibility have led to the erosion of dismantling employment standards of the labor market (Visser, 2018). The increase in labor market segmentation and socioeconomic led to the rise of inequality. Workers have experienced low pay, substandard working conditions, limited rights, no benefits, and a lack of opportunities in getting permanent employment (Visser, 2017). Labor laws and employment rights raised awareness into the informal sectors of labor markets (Visser, 2017). SEOs produced uncertainty in employment conditions for marginalized workers. These hiring arrangements were unsecured, unregulated, and open-ended consisting of non-binding agreement between the laborer and the employer (Visser, 2017). These violations of employment regulations characterizes the economy as informal day labor (Visser, 2017). The social economy organizations' needs transparency in the redistribution of jobs for ex-offenders and the regulatory hiring process monitoring employment, conditions, and integration into the formal economy (Visser, 2017). Consequential to these labor practices, the ex-offender vulnerable group experienced extreme socioeconomic marginalization because they are members of a particular group (Visser, 2017).

The fourth problem is criminal history is substantial in the hiring process. One study revealed that approximately 90% of organizations surveyed conducted criminal backgrounds on some of the job candidates. Another survey conveyed that 70% reported criminal background checks on all job candidates (Leasure and Kaminski, 2021). In 2019, the United States 5th Circuit Court of appeals ruled that the 2012 Equal

Employment Opportunity Commission guidance prohibiting blanket hiring was not binding on some states. The hiring policy interpretations adversely impacted the ex-offender (Leasure and Kaminski, 2021). The African American male ex-offenders shared stories about the work release program in prison. They worked for one to three years in a work release program with satisfactory performance. Once the prison term was completed their job ended. Although the organizations contracted with the prison, they also hired non-offenders. The African American male ex-offenders also told stories of post release, how one county in South Florida did not use background check for day labor, while another county in South Florida used criminal history to determine who works and who do not. The blanket hiring process raised concerns of fairness, neutrality, and objectivity. It is the act of cultural imperialism dominating vulnerable groups by the division of labor, who works for whom, who does not work, and how work is defined according to institutional behavior (Young, 1990).

Recidivism has increased incarceration post-release exclusion and the absence of rehabilitation intervention emerging inclusionary policies (Chouhy et al., 2020). The perspective of social support raises awareness of the lack of informational and emotional support negatively impacted criminal behavior contributing to onset and persistence (Chouhy, 2020). Securing stable employment creates conformity, structure, identity, and social control. Reentering the labor market post-incarceration determines how the employer sees the individual largely rests on job satisfaction, commitment, and success (Chouhy et al., 2020). A recent study of the Strain Theory revealed that participants were likely to reoffend; the correctional system failed to reduce crime (Cook & Haynes, 2021).

The adverse impact of reentry strain resulted from low community capital, inability to adjust to life in the community, and the frequency and duration of the strain post-prison release had unintended consequences increasing the likelihood of reoffending (Cook & Haynes, 2021).

Second Chance Pell Grants are instrumental in developing academic programs for returning citizens. As these programs become more accessible, many universities will enter prison facilities for the first time (Conway, 2022). The six andragogy tenets analyze and critiques an instructional design (Conway, 2022). Tenet's andragogy guidelines and assumptions encompass philosophy and theoretical orientation (Conway, 2022). The andragogy practice rests on six principles that differ from the typical pedagogies relating to 1) life skills, 2) self-conception, 3) experiences, 4) readiness, 5) learning, and 6) motivation (Conway, 2022). Pell Grants can offer the return citizens a unique opportunity for colleges and universities to respond to the challenges of mass incarceration (Conway, 2022).

### **Conclusion**

The African American male ex-offenders claimed that they had not been made aware of any public organization establishing a toll-free hotline to released inmates. Some ex-offenders contended that they were on a list without explaining where to go. Other participants complained that the list was outdated because it did not allow for the accessibility to cross county lines for public assistance to apply for housing, enroll in training programs, or get hired for fear of violating their probation. Where was the public

aid to inform about this hotline intended to support released inmates who continued to seek help in obtaining post-release referrals for community-based reentry services?

Another issue that raised concerns about the post-inmate release was that the Department of Corrections maintained that they provide an address and phone number of the point of contact. Two of the participants were placed on the housing list but had no contact information to be reached. The African American male ex-offenders further claimed that they had been victimized because they were unaware of a comprehensive community resource directory organized by county, which included the name, address, and descriptions of services by each reentry provider.

The outlook of social justice among the African American male ex-offender reintegration into the Black community remains bleak and unattainable in receiving good-paying jobs. Those ex-offenders who re-enter is more likely to experience housing insecurity, lack of training, and unemployment, (Williams et al., 2019). The reentry process of systemic discrimination assaulted the African American male ex-offenders by impacting harmful and physical injury. Organizational culture is the elephant sitting in the room representing dominant group behavior. These stark disparities also known as racial violence, amidst policy formulation and design (Williams et al., 2019). The reentry policy needs reassessment of the absence of community-specific reintegration services that cause apprehension imminent of harm to the African American male ex-offender target population by dominant widespread behavior dissemination.

The evolution of development and individual differences herald a fundamental process of evolutionary thinking. The Perplexing behavioral genetics

paradigm have significantly influenced the outcome of instinctive behavior, but it is not inherited (Hawley, 2014). The term inherited is defined as potential behavioral forms natural and measured according to a particular environment in which development takes place (Hawley, 2014). Prosocial controllers employ strategies coercive to a high degree of social success, whereas the non-controllers represent a modal life history on a baseline comparison (Hawley, 2014). The physicality behavior of coercion is comprised of the White male dominant group. Behaviors that demonstrated bi-strategic control possess social skills of being an extrovert, socially perceptive, and morally astute (Hawley, 2014). The prosocial controller proved unskilled, showed high measures of aggression, and no emotional intelligence (Hawley, 2014). The dominant group-wide behavior does not understand moral norms; more importantly, they have not internalized emotional sense (Hawley, 2014).

The African American male ex-offenders shared experiences of how the faith-based organizational conditions influenced a positive outlook on receiving housing, jobs, and enrolling in training, and education. They told stories of how the faith-based organization changed their homelessness, victimization, mental state, drug addiction, and eliminated technical violations, the elements that fuels relapse and reincarceration. As a result, the ex-offender knows that he can receive the essential resources critical to his survival. Policymakers need to develop theoretical framework for research and evaluation of the effectiveness of homeless shelters efforts to improve reintegration, reduce recidivism, and identify distinguished characteristics of the nonprofit organizations (Willison et al., 2010). Therefore, the disconnect between policymakers and community

reentry remain largely unanswered on how to improve the ex-offender outcome. The faith-based methods focus on three issues in their programs addressing the reentry process: recent policy development supporting faith-based initiatives, the intersecting of faith-based and the Department of Corrections, and the limitation of critical research on approach, methods, and data collection (Willison, 2010).

The limitation of critical research in urban policy poses systemic discrimination. Where does systemic discrimination live? The urban policy failed to recognize that homelessness among African American males' post incarceration is widespread dissemination in organizational culture. This phenomenon of racial injustice breeds inequality from capital punishment established through the Jim Crow era. The African American male ex-offenders often experience exploitation and discrimination in finding permanent employment. Marketing strategies created loopholes in exclusionary zoning that did not identify the threats of the African American male target population in the Black community. Post incarcerated African American males face isolation in the absence of social inclusion, life skills, and opportunity. The absence of clearly defined rehabilitation policies did not adopt education and training as part of a remediation process critical to their survival. The inherent inferiority of social norms violated the African American male through systemic institutionalized and robust mechanisms that maintain uneven distribution of essential resources denying accessibility, affordability, and availability through control.



Capitalism distributed by privately owned capital production fueled systemic discrimination and created racial inequity. Early intervention in rehabilitation while incarcerated would protect the post-incarcerated populations from homelessness, promote market-driven academic literacy training, and provide job programs to qualify for public housing. African American males post incarceration must be targeted for jobs through the work release program before leaving prison and entering the reentry program.

Widespread dissemination of social disruption expanded hardship on an already struggling Black community. Organizational culture did not target the African American male post incarcerated through public messaging using billboards, labor pools, and public agencies to target relapse through marketing and the criminal justice database. The African American returning citizen experienced the homeless phenomena at different levels of dominant control; the local government observed the social action, the state level was attuned to the structure of hierarchical groups, while the federal level approach focused on institution control in policymaking that would have been implicit through the analytical lens of reflexivity. Dominant group-wide behavior lives in the widespread dissemination of organization culture through internal coercion that fuels systemic racial discrimination.

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Appendix A: Request for Permission to Post Participant Recruitment Flyer

Date: February 20, 2021

Name of Official: redacted

Address: redacted

redacted

redacted

Dear redacted,

My name is Joyce McPhee, and I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am conducting dissertation research on the experiences of homeless African American male

ex-offenders. What makes my study unique is that I am using Iris Young's faces of oppression as a framework to understand these experiences. This research may assist policymakers in developing public policies to reduce homelessness and recidivism among this population.

Your assistance in conducting this much needed research is requested. I would like to post a flyer to recruit twelve adults (age 18 and older) African American male ex-offenders who currently live in your shelter and who are close to ending the reentry program. I would like to meet with them at the shelter to discuss the nature of the study and conduct individual interviews with each of them. The participants are free to choose whether or not to participate and can discontinue participation at any time. Information provided by the participants will be kept strictly confidential. Participants who complete the interview will each be given a \$10 grocery store gift card.

Walden's Office of Research Ethics and Compliance (OREC) determines which forms, partner approvals, and Institutional Review Board (IRB) review steps in my project would require in order to be in compliance with federal regulations and university policies, which include the following: protection of human subjects, ethical partnerships with partner organizations, alignment with the University's social change mission, appropriate usage of scholarly tools.

I would welcome a telephone call from you to discuss any questions you may have concerning this study and your role in identifying interview participants. I can be reached at **redacted** or emailed at **redacted** Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,



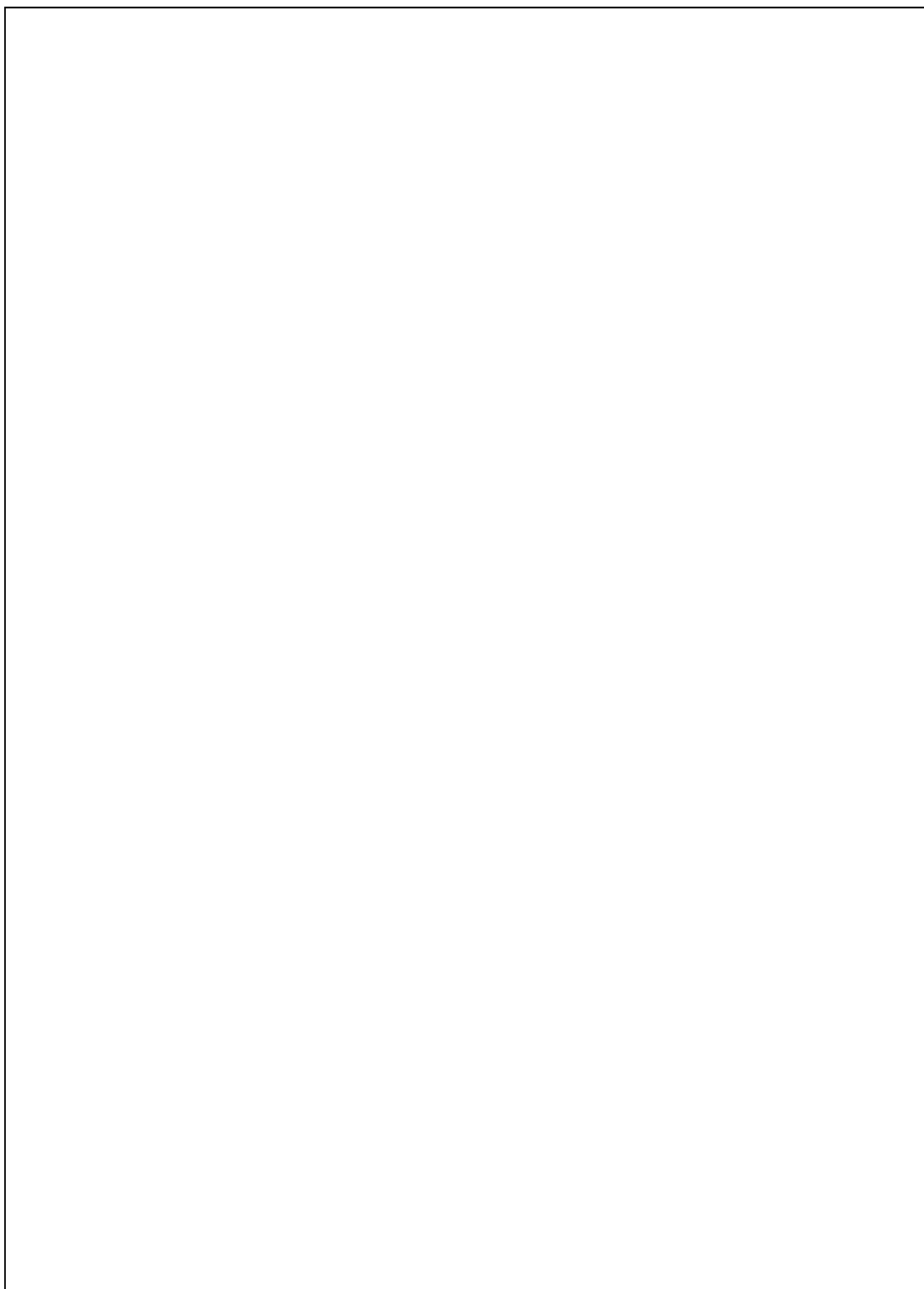
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joyce McPhee". The script is cursive and fluid.

Joyce McPhee

Doctoral Candidate

Walden University

Appendix B: Authorization to Post participant Recruitment Flye



Appendix C: Participant Recruitment Flyer

## Research Study Seeks Adults

18 years old and up!

The purpose of study is to collect information about the transitioning process faced by ex-offenders as they move back into the community. In-person interviews will be conducted at the shelter with at least twelve participants. Each interview will last approximately one hour. Participants will receive a \$10 food certificate for time and effort.

Who IS NEEDED?



1. African American males at least 18 years old.
2. Ex-offenders within one year post release.
3. Participation in a reentry program.
4. Participants experiencing homelessness post incarceration.

If you have questions, you may contact me by email or phone using the information below.

Contact Joyce McPhee

redacted

redacted

Walden University

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Research Question: How have male African American ex-offenders located in a large urban area of South Florida experienced social constructs of messages, participation, orientation toward government, and citizen-agency interaction while attempting to secure housing after release from prison?

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Interviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_

Let us begin with introducing yourself. You will start by sharing your experience about the reentry program by answering the following questions during this interview.

Q1. What are your experiences in finding permanent housing?

Q2. What have been your experience in finding job security?

Q3. What is the availability of the training programs in your area?

Q4. What is your experience with correctional based treatment or other treatment received in the reentry program?

Q5. What are your experiences in finding local mental services that provide critical care in the community?

Q6. What were the messages you received from those who provided you with services?