

2-21-2024

Evidence-Based Leadership Practices of Reentry Program Leaders to Reduce Recidivism Among African American Women

Mabrey Raymond Duff
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Mabrey R. Duff

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Jamie Patterson, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Timothy Lafferty, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University

2024

Abstract

Evidence-Based Leadership Practices of Reentry Program Leaders to Reduce Recidivism Among

African American Women

by

Mabrey R Duff

MA, Tusculum University, 2013

BS, Tusculum College, 2007

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

February 2024

Abstract

The rate of recidivism among African American women is disproportionately higher than among European American or Latino women in a southeastern state. The problem identified was the high prevalence of recidivism among African American women despite undergoing reentry programs. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the practices of reentry program leaders in a southeastern state that reduce recidivism among formerly incarcerated African American women. Evidence-based leadership development provided a conceptual framework for assessing the results of practices in the reentry program. Current reentry program leaders in a southeastern state were asked to describe the leadership practices that have helped African American women avoid recidivism. Through one-on-one semi structured interviews with four program leaders, themes emerged that improve efforts to reduce recidivism. The leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism include (a) risk and needs assessment, (b) gender responsiveness, and (c) educational services. A 3-day professional development that will be disseminated using a PowerPoint presentation was developed. Needs assessments, gender responsiveness, and educational services are all practices for reducing recidivism. By addressing the specific needs of offenders and providing them with the skills they need to succeed in the community, program leaders can use these leadership practices to break the cycle of crime. The implications for positive social change include reducing the number of reincarcerated African American women across the state.

Evidence-Based Leadership Practices of Reentry Program Leaders to Reduce Recidivism Among
African American Women

by

Mabrey R Duff

MA, Tusculum University, 2013

BS, Tusculum College, 2007

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Walden University

February 2024

Dedication

I want to thank my God for His Grace and His Everlasting Mercy, for He carried me through this journey. I want to dedicate this doctoral study to my late mother and father, Margaret and Mabrey Duff. My mother dreamed of going to college, and my father, who had a third-grade education, was denied an education in the Jim Crow South. My late sister, Barbara Dye, was both a big sister and a mentor. My sister Sandra McCaskill for her continuous prayers. My sister Karen Duff and niece Mikea Walls for their moral support and encouragement. This Journey would not have been possible without the faith and guidance of Dr. Regina Clark-Willaims, Dr. Deborah Lashley, Dr. Laurel Walsh, and Tatia Harris. Special thanks to Dr. Jamie Patterson, who told me she would get me through this journey and believed in me when I doubted myself. I would also like to thank Dr. Tim Lafferty for helping me through the final part of my journey. To my granddaughters, Tyshea and India Warner, thank you for your understanding while we walked through some stormy days. I wanted you to see that you can accomplish something that is dear to your heart if you believe in yourself. I also wanted to show you girls that anything is possible if you have faith. Lastly, I would like to include this poem by Edgar Albert Guest. This was one of my favorite poems that I learned in becoming a member of Omega Phi Psi Fraternity, Inc.

Somebody said that it couldn't be done But he, with a chuckle replied That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried. So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin On his face. If he worried he hid it. He started to sing as he tackled the thing. That couldn't be done, and he did it! Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that; At least no one ever has done it;" But he took off his coat and he took off his hat. And the first thing we knew he'd begun it. With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin, Without any doubting or quiddit, He started to sing as he tackled the thing That couldn't be done, and he did it. There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done, There are thousands to prophesy failure, There are thousands to point out to you one by one, The dangers that wait to assail you. But just buckle in with a bit of a grin, just take off your coat and go to it; Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.

Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	iv
List of Figures.....	v
Section 1: The Problem.....	1
The Local Problem	1
Rationale.....	3
Definition of Terms.....	5
Significance of the Study	5
Research Question.....	6
Review of the Literature.....	7
Conceptual Framework.....	7
Review of the Broader Problem.....	10
Implications	27
Risk and Needs Assessment to Decrease Recidivism.....	29
Gender Responsiveness in Mitigating Recidivism.....	30
Educational and Vocational Services for Reducing Recidivism	31
Cultural Competence in Decreasing Recidivism.....	32
Summary	32
Section 2: The Methodology.....	35
Research Design and Approach	35
Basic Qualitative Design.....	35
Justification for Research Design.....	35
Participants.....	36
Access to Participants.....	37
Researcher/Participant Working Relationship	38

Ethical Considerations	38
Data Collection.....	39
Data Collection Instrument and Sufficiency.....	39
Data Collection Process	39
Role of the Researcher.....	40
Data Analysis.....	41
Evidence of Quality.....	42
Discrepant Cases	42
Summary	43
Data Collection.....	43
Data Analysis.....	44
Data Analysis Results	46
Theme 1: Risk and Needs Assessment.....	46
Theme 2: Gender Responsiveness.....	48
Theme 3: Educational Services.....	53
Summary	55
Trustworthiness.....	57
Summary of Outcomes.....	57
Project Deliverable.....	60
Section 3: The Project.....	62
Rationale.....	62
Review of the Literature.....	63
Needs and Benefits for Professional Development.....	63
Professional Development Training for Program Leaders.....	64

Professional Development for Enhancing Re-Entry Program Leaders' Gender Responsiveness	65
Professional Development for Promoting Re-Entry Program Leaders Cultural Sensitivity.....	66
Project Description	67
Components, Implementation, and Timeline.....	67
Design, Barriers, and Solutions to Barriers	71
Project Evaluation Plan.....	71
Project Implications.....	72
Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions.....	74
Project Strengths and Limitations	74
Strengths.....	74
Limitations.....	74
Recommendations for Alternative Approaches.....	75
Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change.....	76
Reflection on the Importance of the Work	77
Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research.....	78
Conclusion.....	78
References	80
Appendix A: The Project.....	106
Appendix B: Interview Protocol	127

List of Tables

Table 1. A 9-Year Recidivism Rates in 30 States.....	1
Table 2. Evidence-Based Leadership Practices and Key Characteristics.....	10
Table 3. Project Implementation Timeline	80

List of Figures

Figure 1. Components of Evidence-Based Leadership Model	9
Figure 2. Codes and Themes.....	52

Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

Recidivism is disproportionately higher for African American than for European American, Latina, and Asian women leaving incarceration (Oser & Link, 2017). The recidivism rates in the state where the project will be conducted are higher (46%) than at the national levels (40%). A 9-year data from 2005 on recidivism among 30 states indicate that African Americans have the highest rates, as shown in Table 1 (Alper et al., 2018). Program leaders of non-profit and for-profit reentry organizations who support women after prison are tasked with empowering adults to avoid recidivism through specific academic and professional skills offerings.

Table 1

A 9-Year Recidivism Rates in 30 States

Race/Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
White	40.2	35.0	32.2	29.9	28.9	26.8	26.2	25.0	22.9
Black	46.0	40.6	36.5	34.1	31.9	29.5	29.1	27.3	25.3
Hispanic/Latino	47.3	37.8	33.6	31.4	29.3	26.8	25.7	24.0	23.4
American Indian	44.1	37.8	38.8	32.3	27.8	31.3	34.7	31.0	26.0

The local county where the study was conducted has reincarcerated 520 African American women within 5 years of being released from jail (County Criminal Records Department, 2019), and in 2020, the recidivism rate for this population was three times higher than Anglo or Latina women (Community Resources for Justice, 2021). Evidence-based leadership practices that best support African American women to avoid recidivism may have emerged during the response to the global pandemic. The study explored practices employed by reentry program leaders to reduce recidivism for African American women. The findings may increase positive social change for this population of adults.

Reentry program leaders are uniquely positioned to describe the best practices for supporting women of color to navigate life after prison. In reentry programs, formerly incarcerated women are expected to (a) gain new social, academic, and workforce readiness skills, (b) access community resources for housing and employment, and (c) understand financial literacy and create a budget for independent living (Assimonye et al., 2022; Taliaferro & Pham, 2018). These goals align with nonprofit organizations' shared mission and vision at the local reentry program. The focus of this project was the gap in reentry program leaders' leadership practices to increase African American women's post incarceration success rate (Salas-Vallina et al., 2020). In 2020, the recidivism rate for this population was three times higher than for Anglo or Latina women (Community Resources for Justice, 2021). By exploring reentry program leadership practices in a non-profit and for-profit reentry organization, enhanced programmatic offerings to African American women in alignment with practices that work to address the unique challenges of this population emerged. Therefore, reentry program leaders in a southeastern state struggle to find and implement leadership practices that successfully reduce recidivism for African American women (Gallagher et al., 2019).

Program leaders are also faced with pervasive media images that portray African American women as criminals; dehumanizing individuals with a drug problem can create preconceived ideas of women of color when released from prison (Mitchell & Davis, 2019; Sneade-Greene & Royster, 2018). These stereotyped ideas can make it more difficult for women of color who have been in prison to integrate back into society, pushing them into reoffending, particularly with drug addiction (Mitchell & Davis, 2019; Snead-Greene & Royster, 2018). Snead-Greene and Royster (2018) examined African American women incarcerated for drug abuse and revealed how these women were victims of internal dynamics of imprisonment while enduring abuse in the prison culture while serving their terms. The Drug Policy Alliance reported

that African American women were more likely to be incarcerated for drug charges than European American women (Snead-Greene & Royster, 2018).

According to Gill and Wilson (2017), leadership is influencing others to share a common vision and achieve a common goal. Program leaders rely on the results of extensive studies on leadership practices to develop goals and visions for their programs (Salas-Vallina et al., 2020). Reentry program resources and support should align with evidence-based practices so that all client demographics have access to support.

Reentry program leaders work diligently to help clients of all backgrounds successfully transition into their communities. The gap in practice is that the evidence-based leadership practices that have been documented do not empower African American women to avoid recidivism at the same rate as other demographic populations (Gallagher et al., 2019). Reentry program leaders are the best source of real-world examples of evidence-based practices shown effective in helping African American women avoid recidivism.

Rationale

By exploring reentry program leader practices for reducing recidivism among African American women post-incarceration, new approaches were revealed to support efforts in the local county where the study was conducted. As social justice policies move farther away from punitive approaches and toward individual and personalized rehabilitation interventions, local reentry programs use their budgets to help clients avoid recidivism. Over the past 3 years, despite efforts to reduce prison reentry, 520 African American women were reincarcerated within 5 years of being released from jail (County Criminal Records Department, 2019).

Reentry program leaders face difficulty developing reentry interventions that benefit all clients equally due to the diverse cognitive and academic levels of individual clients the reentry programs serve (Gill & Wilson, 2017). These clients have complicated personal histories, and

most were underserved in their academic origins. Because of the variety of complexities among clients, reentry program leaders, and program funding, defining a standard set of reentry program leadership practices remains challenging (Long et al., 2018). My study helped address the gap in practice at the local study location.

The literature contains conceptual theories and practices for reentry programs that reduce recidivism for the general population of formerly incarcerated people. However, studies do not provide enough concrete examples of evidence-based practices that target African American women whose recidivism rate continues to exceed the average (Gallagher et al., 2019). To address this gap in the literature, this study explored reentry leadership practices to uncover concrete practices to help African American women avoid recidivism.

Evidence-based leadership practices for community-reentry programs deserve more academic attention. According to Duriez et al. (2017), leaders who strictly adhere to a blueprint of evidence-based interventions tend to create correctional programs that produce better results in reducing recidivism. From this study's compilation of effective practices for African American women, leaders may be able to develop a blueprint of effective practices for this high-risk population with unique obstacles. Adherence to the blueprint of effective practices could reduce recidivism for African American women (Duriez et al., 2017). Reducing recidivism for African American women will benefit families, communities, and the nation.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism. By exploring practices that reduce challenges faced by formerly incarcerated African American women, reentry program leaders with a high population of African American women may have additional guidance in implementing new practices. Additionally, exploring commonalities within the practices may help

leaders seeking to gain an understanding of why these practices are effective when other practices have not worked.

Definition of Terms

Evidence-based leadership: Refers to the alignment of goals, behavior, and process that includes an evaluative component, leadership development, and human capital management in an environment of continuous change (Geerts et al.,2020)

Ex-offenders: Individuals who had been incarcerated in the criminal justice system. Ex-offenders are the clients of the reentry programs and nonprofit organizations that focus on reducing recidivism at the local study site (Nixon, 2020).

Reentry programs: Include all nonprofit and governmental organizations that focus on the success of ex-offenders and support clients to reintegrate into the community following release from prison (Wheeler & Patterson, 2008).

Reentry program leaders: Include administration, officials, and staff of nonprofit or governmental organizations that focus on the success of ex-offenders and support clients to reintegrate into the community following release from prison (Wheeler & Patterson, 2008).

Recidivism: Refers to the continuation of involvement in criminal behavior after release from imprisonment or where an intervention has taken place for previous crimes (Johnson, 2017).

Significance of the Study

Reentry programs are designed to prepare all newly released adults, regardless of their gender, race, or ethnicity, to transition from prison to mainstream society and avoid recidivism. However, the evidence indicates inequities for African American women. In addition to experiencing the same obstacles as other formerly incarcerated women, including societal shame, minimal adequate job training, and substandard housing, African American women face additional reentry and reintegration challenges (Burden, 2019; Fashakin, 2018). Despite

acknowledging the presence of such inequities, there is a gap in the literature examining practices that work for African American women (Burden, 2019; Fashakin, 2018). A literature review confirms Gross's (2015) findings that a gap exists in researching practices specifically for African American women to avoid recidivism.

By examining and compiling a set of evidence-based practices that may be effective in helping African American women avoid recidivism, the results of this study contribute to creating a blueprint for new and current leaders. Sharing the results of this study with the Association of Reentry Professionals (AoRP) may provide an avenue to disseminate the study's findings to reentry program leaders. Additionally, the National Offender Reentry Association (NORA) could consider incorporating the results into professional training for new and current reentry program leaders. Through effective leadership practices in the reentry programs, African American women might benefit by gaining effective training, guidance, and skills to avoid reengaging in crime.

Research Question

Creating a compilation of reentry program leaders' experiences in helping African American women avoid recidivism and the program outcomes provided a guide for current and future reentry program leaders. As the National Institute of Justice's female reentry and the gender-responsive program has documented, numerous studies have shown that despite nonprofit program leader efforts, no statistical evidence exists to reduce recidivism percentages through existing nonprofit programs (Miller, 2021). By interviewing experts who have been in nonprofit program Leader roles, some individual success stories revealed the unique situations that African American women are more likely to encounter when reentering society after being incarcerated.

RQ: What leadership practices do program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism?

Review of the Literature

Conceptual Framework

Since the inception of leadership theories, there have been poor correlations between recognizing leadership as a collaborative process capable of system-level change and the approach of leadership development programs (Viglione et al., 2020). The application of evidence-based leadership practices is used in various disciplines, including education, social, social work, criminal justice, and medicine. The evidence-based leadership practices are used in the current study as a guide on which to build and support the framework involving the problem, purpose, and development of the research questions (Viglione et al., 2020). The study was guided by the conceptual framework of evidence-based leadership development. The evidence-based leadership model entails focusing on evidence from practices rather than merely theoretical information. The model contains three core leadership concepts, aligned goals, behaviors, and processes (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Components of Evidence-Based Leadership Model



(Source: Studer Group, 2022)

There is a linear, logical connection among the three core concepts of the model. For example, setting goals is the first step in initiating a change to guide the whole process and results. Behaviors are attributes that define an individual; thus, it is essential to positively impact them to ensure that they engage in positive behaviors. The last step involves strategizing specific approaches to attain the set goals and monitoring the intervention's progress. The conceptual framework relates to the study approach in that it guided the logical process of the practices that reentry program leaders use to reduce recidivism among the program's participants. Additionally, the framework aligned with the study's qualitative approach and the research question by guiding the qualitative exploration of reentry program leaders on the practices for reducing recidivism. The basis of the concepts involved is that applying a strategy teaches more leaders than simply reading about the process (MacIntyre, 2020). There are eight leadership practices that the program leaders should demonstrate and need to be associated with budgetary support (Table 2).

Table 2

Evidence-Based Leadership Practices and Key Characteristics

Leadership practice	Key characteristics
Organizational visioning	Leaders clearly describe the vision of the organization; the values and beliefs that are the foundations for the vision; actively engage employees in discussions and activities promoting employee commitment to foundational beliefs, values, a sense of purpose, and desired performance; and depict a future that is credible, realistic, attractive, inspiring, and better than the status quo.
Motivational communication	Leaders talk positively about the organization and employees; how employee strengths and assets make essential contributions to organizational goals and practices; and how the expression of positive and encouraging messages about the organization and [makes] statements that build [employee] motivation and confidence.
Modeling desired behavior	Leaders lead by example in a manner where modeling desired behavior serves as exemplars to communicate what they expect from employees to increase that behavior among followers where a leader's behavior and actions are consistent with their belief appraisals
Encouraging employee input and feedback	Leaders solicit employee input and feedback to improve organizational practices and encourage frequent and ongoing employee engagement to strengthen leader-employee and employer-employee actions consistent with organizational visioning and goals

Soliciting creative solutions	Leaders seek creative, alternative, and innovative ways of improving organizational and employee practices that challenge deeply held beliefs and ways of achieving organizational goals.
Shared decision-making	Leaders engage employees in shared leadership characterized by collaboration and participatory decision-making focusing on methods and strategies for achieving organizational goals. Shared decision-making is a type of confidence-building practice that influences employee and team commitment to organizational goals.
Relationship-building practices	Leaders engage in behavior that is sensitive and responsive to employees' values, needs, and individual differences to build trusting relationships and open communication between a leader and employees, where high-quality relationships are considered mature partnerships based on respect, trust, and mutual obligation for one another.
Confidence-building practices	Leaders provide employees opportunities to participate in organizational processes that instill pride and build employee confidence, whereas leader-provided confidence-building experiences are one practice for strengthening employee beliefs and improving job performance.

Most new managers are asked how they created, implemented, measured, and reported interventions to reduce recidivism in their nonprofit environment. Dunst and Hamby (2018) developed practices best used in evidence-based leadership practices defining the key characteristics associated with the eight vital leadership practices (see Table 2) that offer a means for evidence-based practices in leaders' organizational engagement.

Review of the Broader Problem

An extensive literature search was conducted to review the published peer-reviewed articles about recidivism among African American women and evidence-based leadership practices among reentry program leaders. The databases used for reviewing the literature were the African Journals Online (AJOL), Google Scholar, National Criminal Justice Reference Service, PsycINFO, PubPsych, and Scopus. The following keywords and phrases were used: *Barriers to reintegration after incarceration, obstacles for African American women recently released from prison, evidence-based programs that reduce recidivism, financial implications of recidivism, imprisonment, and poor physical and mental health, intersectional effects of race and gender for reincarceration, mitigation of recidivism rates, obstacles for women of color post-incarceration, prevention of recidivism, prevention of recidivism of African American women, prison population reduction, program leadership strategies to help lower recidivism rates, rearrest of African American women, reasons for recidivism, reasons for reentry of individuals post-incarceration, recidivism of African American women, recidivism in the United States, recidivism outcomes, and Second Chance Act.*

The initial search resulted in over 5,000 associated articles. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to narrow the number of articles. The inclusion criteria were (a) all articles published in a peer-reviewed journal or accredited source, (b) more than 85% of the literature selected was published from or between the years of 2018 to 2022, (c) all studies were primary

and original, excluding systematic reviews, (d) all literature was related to the subject discussed in the current study, and (e) all studies were published or translated into English. The exclusion criteria were articles (a) not available in full text, (b) not published within the last 5 years, and (c) not peer reviewed. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the final number of articles reviewed included was 102.

Recidivism in the United States

Recidivism is a convicted criminal's tendency to reoffend (Butts & Schiraldi, 2018; LaCourse et al., 2019). The current methods of rehabilitation and reentry have failed to slow the prevalence of criminal recidivism (Wong et al., 2018). The current prison population in the United States stands at over 1.4 million men and women, with a high likelihood that most of these prisoners will reoffend after being released (Katsiyannis et al., 2018). Many of the previous studies on correctional supervision, including prison sentences and overpopulation, were researched based on an association with retribution, rehabilitation, deterrence, and incapacitation. The main concern for many in the criminal justice field is the documented triggers associated with increased recidivism rates.

From 2008 to 2018, studies showed that a significant number (43%) of state prisoners released across 24 states were rearrested within the first 12 months (Alper et al., 2018). Although recidivism continues to occur at alarming rates, most of the programs created to address recidivism show evidence of effectiveness. However, these same programs are not sustainable in various communities, attributed to a lack of time, funds, and support for continuing such programs (Alper et al., 2018).

Researchers discussed multiple reasons for high recidivism rates, and their finding indicates that failure to incorporate after-release programs is the most common cause of rearrests (Starr, 2021; Weiss-Riley et al., 2018). An increase in recidivism rates can be accounted for by

several other reasons. According to Wong et al. (2018), the released inmates are not given any real opportunities for success within society. The reason for such lack of opportunities for success is the stigmatization of criminal records as a reason for not hiring a person for various jobs (Wong et al., 2018). This stigma makes it difficult for individuals with criminal arrest records to become rehabilitated with all the crucial skills for success in their community. Rejection by society even after undergoing rehabilitation increases the tendency for released offenders to reengage in criminal acts, increasing recidivism rates (Taylor, 2020). The options for rehabilitation are available; however, to produce a higher success rate for rehabilitating ex-offenders, there has to be alternative sentencing with alternate outcomes after the prisoner has completed their time. Results from reentry programs demonstrate that social environments and the absence of basic human needs such as food, shelter, clothing, structure, and safety play a role in recidivism for newly released individuals (Wong et al., 2018). Additionally, barriers such as the inability to acquire employment, financial difficulties, and mental illness are risk factors increasing recidivism rates (LaCourse et al., 2019; Lewis, 2021). Lewis (2021) emphasized that a consistent factor in high recidivism rates is the lack of community support, such as organizations providing employment opportunities.

Using a multilevel survey, Schaefer, and Mazerolle (2018) demonstrated that decisions to commit a crime remain relative to the crime control act of an individual committing an offense and the community environment in which that individual resides. The authors suggested that recidivism rates had three impactors, handlers, guardians, and managers, that act as crime controllers. The three impactors represent the individual's rationality and motivation to commit a crime, the availability of a victim, and the opportunity (Schaefer & Mazerolle, 2018). Additionally, the authors claimed that community and socioeconomic environments contribute to criminal recidivism.

Schafer and Mazerolle (2018) further argued that society could enact several different avenues to control crime, reduce crime opportunities and prevent the development of additional crime. Conceptualizing society as an institution that demonstrates control of the participant through developing an environment organic or constructed can reduce recidivism (Schafer & Mazerolle, 2018). Results of Schafer and Mazerolle's study revealed that individuals felt connected to their society and participated in the activities of that community. Additionally, individuals felt responsible for the wellbeing of their community, implying that current applications of crime reduction ignore the mechanisms of empirical significance to reduce crime through environmental design.

Recidivism rates were lower for individuals who received community sentences than for those reported for released prisoners (Pettus-Davis et al., 2019; Yukhnenko et al., 2019a). Brusman-Lovins and Lovins (2021), and Harrison and Taylor (2019) examined reported recidivism rates in populations given community sentences while offering education, responsibilities, and support through community efforts. The researchers found that recidivism rates in the community sentenced population was lower than in prisoners given typical sentences with no assigned responsibilities or much support. Recidivism rates are also impacted by escalating mental health, behavioral health indicators, and psychological factors (Houser et al., 2019; Kopak et al., 2019). Research has demonstrated the correlation between incarceration and poor physical and mental health, and these health indicators can create barriers to reintegration (Semenza & Link, 2019; Victor et al., 2021; Wallace & Wang, 2020).

Recidivism of African American Women

Much of the literature related to women and recidivism also included discussion of substance and alcohol abuse and mental illness (King et al., 2018; Lehrer, 2021). Lehrer (2021) examined the importance of understanding the significance of trauma-informed care and its effect

on recidivism rates of women. Lehrer explored if rehabilitative services focused on trauma-informed care for women in prison impacted recidivism rates. Trauma-informed care rehabilitation consists of learning coping strategies and mindfulness, teaching women empowerment in reclaiming control of their lives, and emphasizing the emotional safety required for reintegration into society after release (Jewkes et al., 2019; Lehrer, 2021; Tripodi et al., 2019). Jewkes et al. (2019) found that psychological programs that assist women in prison, preparing them for release and focusing on such emotional health, produced positive results in decreasing recidivism rates.

Tripodi et al. (2019) disagreed with Jewkes et al. (2019) that there was no direct relationship between childhood or even adulthood trauma and recidivism rates. However, the authors contended an indirect association between trauma and depression, which sometimes impacts recidivism (Tripodi et al., 2019). Trauma events that were observed included rape, sexual abuse, physical and mental abuse, and high rates of involvement with criminal activities at a young age. While Tripodi et al.'s research findings were not conclusive, the results supported the need to address incarcerated women's trauma triggering depression and indirectly impacting reoffending.

African American women are disadvantaged at the intersectionality of race and gender, particularly within the criminal justice system (Ropes-Berry et al., 2020). Researchers reports that African American women are considered disproportionately represented when related to prison recidivism rates (Ropes-Berry et al., 2020; Garcia-Hallett, 2019). Statistics on African American women continue to be combined with all women or African Americans (Garcia-Hallett, 2019; Ropes-Berry et al., 2020). However, few studies showed that overall recidivism rates were high for African American women because they continually overlooked corrective rehabilitative programs (Garcia-Hallett, 2019). Research indicates that incarcerated African American women

have special needs but were ignored, thereby increasing the propensity for this population to re-offend after release (Garcia-Hallett, 2019; Ropes-Berry et al., 2020).

Most often counted among substance abuse and alcohol crimes, researchers claim African American women successfully reenter society after release from prison if they (a) have their housing, (b) have no involvement with any criminal activities or persons involved in criminal activities, (c) have family members and friends who were supportive and helpful, (d) have a persevering attitude, and e) focus on their rehabilitation whether it be through outside rehabilitation groups or counseling (Gurusami, 2018; Mahaffey et al., 2018). There is a deficit for most African American women engaging in all these factors. Some researchers believed the most difficult for African American women was staying away from the identical acquaintances they were familiar with before arrest and incarceration (Gurusami, 2018).

African American women's probation and parole officers find these women, particularly those who served time for illegal substance or alcohol charges and who had a husband or boyfriend with a criminal record, were more likely to re-offend (Snead-Greene & Royster, 2018). After release, African American women who moved to another community, making new friends and acquaintances, showed a higher success in staying away from any criminal activity (Mitchell & Davis, 2019). Additionally, African American women involved with and supported by religious families were more likely to transition and reenter the community with lower recidivism rates (Snead-Green & Royster, 2018).

Literature related to the risk factors and reoffending statistics for women reports that violent offenders are more likely to be reincarcerated, with 50% of African American women reoffending within the first year after release (De Rooy et al., 2019). Further research also presented information that a large percentage of African American women incarcerated in the

United States who suffered from a mental health issue or illness were more likely to reengage in offense (Gurusami, 2018; Mahaffey et al., 2018).

Incarceration and Addiction Among African American Women

Incarceration of women has increased exponentially over the past 50 years, with 26% of women in prison imprisoned for an alcohol or drug offense. Compared to the 13% of male prisoners, 24% of women have been convicted of a property crime (Victor et al., 2018). The proportion of imprisoned women convicted of a drug offense has increased from 12% in 1986 to 26% in 2018 (Victor et al., 2018). From 1980 to 2019, there was a substantial increase in African American women being incarcerated, with the main reason for arrest being drug related (Mannerfelt & Hakansson, 2018; Victor et al., 2018).

According to De Rooy et al. (2019), African American women are less likely to finish high school or attend college, which is even lower when involved in criminal activity at a young age. Alcohol abuse is an underlying factor that often triggers other destructive behaviors and can be a determinant factor in most premature deaths among African American female teenagers (DeHart, 2018; Kamalu & Onyeozili, 2018). Alcohol use can also be a warning sign for other high-risk behaviors, such as drug use, driving, or riding drunk, contributing to high incarceration rates (DeHart, 2018). Adult African American women affected by substance abuse and have failed in their original treatment plan, whether court-ordered or on a volunteer basis, are highly likely to have a high recidivism rate (de Andrade et al., 2018; Gallagher et al., 2020b).

Substance use and recidivism outcomes were associated but could produce positive outcomes when enlisting a program that encouraged drug offenders to participate in rehabilitation programs (de Andrade et al., 2018; Gallagher et al., 2020b). Studies showed a significant association between crack/cocaine use only and the SAVA (any substance use, being exposed to violence, having HIV/AIDS risk behaviors) and recidivism rates in women who participated in a

therapeutic justice program (Acheampong-Jones et al., 2018). Researchers found the effects of punitive or treatment responses to African American women on probation and parole, examining whether types of technical violations and responses to them, such as treatment programs after release with strict supervision intensity, were more predictive of recidivism in women (Morash et al., 2019). Researchers reported that rehabilitation, including motivational interviewing and contingency management, effectively reduces recidivism rates (Hedrich & Hartnoll, 2021; Taylor et al., 2021). Harm reduction focuses on decreasing the consequences of substance use and recognizing the non-linear process of recovery during substance use treatment yet showed limited success when correlating the outcomes to recidivism rates (Hedrich & Hartnoll, 2021; Taylor et al., 2021).

Obstacles for Women of Color Post-Incarceration

There are several obstacles for women of color post-incarceration that contribute to the high recidivism rate in this population, particularly among African American women (Smoyer et al., 2021). Researchers found that African American women are more likely to face treatment readiness barriers, with personal barriers most identified as concerning but often ignored by program leaders initiating such treatment measures (Redmond et al., 2020; Smoyer et al., 2021). Common obstacles for women of color attempting to reintegrate into society after incarceration included housing, transportation, employment, and education, and all were understood as barriers to mitigating reoffending (Alper et al., 2018; Smoyer et al., 2021). These obstacles are often not addressed by prison officials and leaders before inmate release. Such failure to review the obstacles of prisoners to be released also becomes challenging, as several African American women face multiple biases when reentering society with the stigma of being a convicted criminal (Semenza & Link, 2019).

Most African American women fail to know where to begin to rebuild their lives, and this becomes a significant challenge for ex-offenders who do not have the support systems in place (Zakaria, 2018). While the same was true for all ex-offenders trying to integrate back into society, African American women face unique challenges that differ from other populations as they intersect with gender and race, causing further bigotries. Such negative opinions from the community that these women face in their attempts to find work or a place to live are based on their criminal records. Many employers and landlords do not wish to hire or rent a home to convicted felons for fear they will re-offend (Smoyer et al., 2021).

Studies showed that the unemployment rate among criminal offenders is close to 40% and higher for African American women (Gray, 2021; Smoyer et al., 2021). Common attitudes among many employers regarding hiring convicted criminals were the fear they were likely to commit a crime on the job, believing that a convicted criminal always resorts back to criminal activities at some point (Gray, 2021; Smoyer et al., 2021). Gray (2021) found that such biasedness kept employers from hiring convicts. Awareness of hiring released individuals among communities has negative impacts on the firms' reputation (Gray, 2021). Another consideration business owners claimed for not hiring convicted criminals was for the protection of their company (Gray, 2021; Hetey & Eberhardt, 2018). If they employ a felon who causes problems on the job, it could be viewed as negligent hiring. Studies showed that racial and ethnic factors were considered systemic barriers to implementing treatment after release and impacted successful reintegration (Hetey & Eberhardt, 2018).

Financial Implications of Recidivism

The ability to assess the costs and benefits of prisons assisted in making evidence-based decisions that enabled the government to use its limited budgets to the best effect and ensure that interventions deliver value for money (Yukhnenko et al., 2019b). The financial implications of

recidivism are critical for minimum wage earners. Researchers examined criminal offenders released from prison and the correlation between these newly released individuals, getting a minimum wage job, reoffending, and the recidivism rate (Agan & Makowsky, 2018; Petrich et al., 2021; Ruback et al., 2018). According to Petrich et al. (2021), employment reduced recidivism and increased the financial stability of newly released individuals. Financial situations of African American women were found to worsen after release from prison as they failed to get decent-paying employment (Petrich et al., 2021; Seamster, 2019). Barriers such as background assessment and lack of historical employment block entry into the workforce and make finding employment difficult for ex-offenders (Denver et al., 2017; Seamster, 2019).

Some researchers claim that the correlation between unemployment and recidivism did not suggest a relationship between work and crime (Bunting et al., 2019; Siwach, 2018). Bunting et al. (2019) indicated that there is a need to determine how discrimination against individuals with arrest records impacts employment conditions. Through intersecting recidivism with employment rates, Bunting et al. also introduced the economic effects of society apart from the individual who previously committed a crime. However, Bunting et al. did not report direct corporate socioeconomic responsibilities to reduce criminal recidivism. With 700,000 prisoners released annually, the anticipated criminal recidivism rates of 68% in the first 3 years of release indicated there were significant problems in reentry programs, and the presence of reoffending becomes an ongoing threat to economic cost and public safety (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2022).

Individuals who secure employment are more likely to integrate successfully without reoffending (Schlager, 2018). Yet, the researchers stated that removing 1% of employment barriers such as self-classification as a felon reduced criminal recidivism by 0.67% without any additional actions from participation in such programs. Schlager (2018) indicated that the

justification for criminal history as a risk to organizations outweighs society's benefit. Experts also advised that the practice of employment discrimination based on criminal records is an influencer of recidivism and requires legal remedy where community assistance does not intervene.

Studies regarding criminal recidivism highlighted how society's influencers could address criminal recidivism from an economic and societal need to reduce the cost of crime by restoring active participation in society and the financial wellbeing of individuals released from prison (Baloch & Jennings, 2018; Walker & Davidson, 2018). Mainstream policies dictating the handling of individuals removed from the criminal justice system must change to achieve restoration. Newton et al. (2018) suggested that practitioners view recidivism reduction as a function of restorative justice through stakeholder enablement. Extending the concept of restorative justice to both victims and society, the overarching theme of Newton's (2018) article was the restoration and reconciliation of ex-offenders to societal norms to reduce recidivism.

Researchers further expanded on the relationship between employment and recidivism. A study by Denver et al. (2017) using a four-year longitudinal study of 249 prisoners released from Texas prisons indicated that employment resulted in a 76% success rate when the data were collected for study. Studies show that employment is a catalyst for abstaining from further criminal activity, integrating successfully into society, and establishing economic benefits to individual communities (Denver et al., 2017).

Although some employment programs have proven successful, they only provide short-term solutions to more significant problems (Miller et al., 2019; Morash et al., 2019). Miller et al. (2019) found that employment provided economic independence and abstinence from criminal activity, creating a method that reduced recidivism and lowered crime opportunities. Still,

employers continue to exercise background assessment of criminal reincarnation to deny employment to individuals with a criminal background check (Miller et al., 2019).

Studies have shown that half the states in the United States used various strategies to deny employment based on a criminal record. Such methods for hiring were found counterintuitive to lowering recidivism rates and thereby partially responsible for the increases in crime (Dunst et al., 2018; Harper et al., 2020). Researchers showed that criminal background checks did not benefit society by reducing employment-related crimes but instead demonstrated a negative correlation between the reoccurrence of crime and employment (Dunst et al., 2018; Harper et al., 2020). Empirically, lack of employment shows a stronger correlation to crime than in the previous instance of crime commission.

Supervision and Post Incarceration Success

There is little research evidence indicating whether supervision was a cost-effective practice to reduce recidivism (Drake, 2018; Smith et al., 2019). However, researchers reports that the recidivism rate impacts costs for medical treatment, property loss, unemployment rates, Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and government spending (Martin et al., 2018; Pleggenkuhle, 2018). Social disenfranchisement offers crime a rational choice rather than providing societally beneficial alternatives such as making a living wage (Hermacinski, 1957). Summarily, Negative societal impacts of corporate discrimination behaviors diverge away from the currently accepted concept that corporations further the socioeconomic goals of the communities in which they operate.

According to Raskolnikov (2020), criminal justice scholarship does not address the externalities of impact incurred through the extension of punishment beyond incarceration. In contrast, Corporate Social Responsibility focuses on the condition of its environment as an indication of the company's ability to progress economically. Raskolnikov advised that

corporations preferred community health and education in Corporate Social Responsibility plans but did not view recidivism or prevention of crime as a business initiative.

Zeiler and Puccetti (2018) postulated a similar idea stating that a mismatch existed between the regard for continued punishment and economic impacts on the society. Academic discussions regarding the influence of criminal recidivism on society demonstrate that the lack of opportunity limits the types of decisions ex-offenders make regarding re-offenses (Zeiler & Puccetti, 2018). However, experts noted that the direct costs of recidivism to the United States expand beyond prison and include unemployment, victim care, property loss, medical treatment, housing, food, and childcare at a minimum (Martin et al., 2018; Pleggenkuhle, 2018). When individuals commit crimes and are incarcerated, the whole society is impacted. To counter the impacts, the U.S. government engages in over-criminalization and mass incarceration resulting in high costs of criminal recidivism (Smith et al., 2019).

Prison Population Reduction and the Second Chance Act

The United States has the highest number of incarcerated individuals globally, with the state and federal prison populations increasing nine-fold since 1980 (Weidner & Schultz, 2020). The increase was predominantly due to a rise in drug arrests in which women became twice as more likely to be incarcerated for a drug crime than men (Bukten et al., 2020; Garrett et al., 2019). With the 700% growth in the U.S. prison population, there was a need to develop successful programs to reintegrate convicted criminals into society after their release (Berghuis, 2018; Moore et al., 2020). However, the efforts to decrease the high prison population, including policies, laws, and release program processes, have not been effective (Moore et al., 2020; Petrich et al., 2022).

Incorporation of recidivism prevention measures differed between state agencies and community programs, with negative consequences from such laws and public announcement of

criminals renouncing the actual meaning of rehabilitation. Even those prisoners who are released from prison with a positive attitude and have completed a rehabilitative program may find society is not so readily accepting of their integration back into the community (Petrich et al., 2021). Internal programs such as educational for inmates while incarcerated were thought to prepare them with job knowledge and skills needed to be independent and earn their living. Bozick et al. (2018) examined if the application of education for inmates provided during incarceration improved post-release outcomes. After reviewing research from 21 studies, the authors concluded that education was effective in reducing recidivism (Bozick et al., 2018). The current programs set to help newly released inmates with housing, jobs, and needed programs, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, have not shown regular success. For example, Hasisi et al. (2020) found that a sample of newly released convicts incarcerated for an alcohol or drug crime had been consistent in attending rehabilitation programs such as Alcoholic or Narcotics Anonymous.

Researchers have provided evidence suggesting that prison rehabilitative programs such as education, drug and alcohol programs, and mental health services reduced recidivism (Arbour et al., 2021; Mastrobuoni & Terlizzes, 2019). Arbour et al. (2021) noted that the processes for rehabilitation significantly reduced recidivism in communities that promoted rehabilitation programs to help newly released criminals. Similar to Arbour et al.'s findings, Balafoutas et al. (2020) reported that prison rehabilitation is successful when a rehabilitation program prompts a community to wipe the slate clean, allowing a fresh start for such offenders. With continuing concern for the public and less for preemptive ways to assist in rehabilitating such offenders, those who commit criminal offenses will certainly repeat and may never find a fair chance to become productive members of society (Balafoutas et al., 2020).

Costs for increased and long-term sentences continued to cause a significant financial burden to the United States. This financial burden necessitated a new mechanism for lowering the

prison population, and drug-related crimes were given a second chance through legal policy. The Second Chance Act of 2007 was implemented to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for released inmates who served time in local, state, federal, and juvenile facilities (Berryessa, 2021). This act amended the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, “reauthorize, rewrite, and expand provisions for adult and juvenile offender at state and local reentry demonstration projects to provide expanded services to offenders and their families for reentry into society” (Second Chance Act of 2007, 2007). Senators and House Representatives worked together to enact this bill into legislation.

The Second Chance Act provided authorized grants to community programs that assist individuals released from jail and prison. The creation of the Second Chance Act responds to the growing number of adults in jail who are released from and wish to return to communities (D’Amico & Kim, 2018). This program also provides time reduction on sentences for prisons that meet the criteria for release and can be placed in a community correctional facility or appropriate conditions that will afford the prisoner a reasonable opportunity to adjust and prepare for their reentry into the community, including home detention (Chien, 2020; Hopwood & Cardozo, 2020).

The Second Chance Act supports the development of reentry programs to encourage the reintegration of convicted criminals into communities after being released from prison or jail. Using reintegration programs was emphasized as a vital part of correctional institutions and prompted a belief that the U.S. criminal justice system was a rehabilitation system (Starks, 2018). Various correctional institutions emphasized the rehabilitation of inmates through educational and vocational, substance abuse and other counseling initiatives, and prison industry work programs that prepared inmates for a smooth transition back into the community (McKernan, 2019; Starks, 2018). Amasa-Annang and Scutelnicu (2016) examined if the Second Chance Act reduced

recidivism rates. The authors found that this act significantly reduced recidivism among males in Georgia and Mississippi three years after its implementation. The positive results suggested promising legislation for decreasing criminal recidivism was possible.

Program Leader Evidence-Based Leadership Practices

In efforts to reduce recidivism, initiatives such as reentry programs have been implemented to prepare released adults to transition to community life effectively. In reentry programs, various leadership practices ensure that the initiatives positively impact the newly released adults as they reenter the community to avoid recidivism. Examples of such leadership practices are integrating cognitive behavior therapies and mentorship programs to instill positive relationships, criminal desistance, social navigation, and citizenship (Blonigen et al., 2021). An example of cognitive behavior therapy is Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT). MRT is an evidence-based intervention that reduces the risk of criminal recidivism among adults by modifying criminogenic thinking (Blonigen et al., 2021). Other leadership interventions to reduce recidivism include protocols to eliminate antisocial attitudes, cognition, and behaviors (Blonigen et al., 2021). For example, increasing positive reinforcement and providing the support needed by newly released offenders to reenter the community.

Female reentry and gender-responsive programs are essential in preparing released female offenders as they enter the community to avoid recidivism. The reentry program preparation includes teaching new social, academic, and workforce readiness skills, accessing community resources for housing and employment, and knowledge of finances. As the National Institute of Justice's female reentry and the gender-responsive

program has documented, numerous studies have shown that despite nonprofit program Leader efforts, no statistical evidence exists to reduce recidivism percentages through existing nonprofit programs (Miller, 2021). By interviewing experts who have been in nonprofit program Leader roles in the last five years, some individual success stories may reveal the unique situations that African American women are more likely to encounter when reentering society after being incarcerated. In addition, specific leadership practices that were successful in reducing recidivism might be revealed through this study.

Reentry program leaders struggle to find initiatives that successfully reduce recidivism rates in non-white individuals (Gallagher et al., 2020a). The common programs for mitigation of recidivism rates are drug courts, prison entrepreneurship program (PEP), the community bridges fact team program, the residential drug abuse program (RDAP), and other restorative justice programs (Newton et al., 2018; Walker & Davidson, 2018). While exploring the alternatives to incarceration, any initiatives produced had little effect on the mass release of individuals subsequently incarcerated (Burt, 2014; Hall et al., 2018). Furthermore, these initiatives did not include a sustainable solution for the successful reintegration of those released (Burt, 2014; Hall et al., 2018). Leadership development gaps may contribute to both high recidivism and low success rates for the reintegration of convicted criminals.

However, reentry programs' specific evidence-based and proven methods reduce recidivism (Pearson, 2019). The top four evidence-based and proven methods in reducing recidivism include improving a defendant's motivational factors, assessing early the risks and needs for such elements as prior criminal activity, alcohol or drug dependency, mental health issues, and belonging to an anti-social peer group, incorporating education into incarceration, and improving substance abuse treatment (Pearson, 2019; Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2018).

The leadership that established these successful programs was found to have community support. There were evidence processes within these programs that those in leadership positions applied to prompt a community to be supportive, encouraging convicted criminals to maintain good behavior and not re-offend (Baggio et al., 2020; Gottfredson et al., 2018).

Reductive recidivism programs would fail if the managers forgot to incorporate core elements such as having strong leaders in place, targeting the right people for the inception of these programs, using evidence-based programs, and monitoring the quality of program delivery (Gannon et al., 2019; Olver et al., 2018). Traditionally, policymakers and program administrators have relied on formal evaluations to determine the effectiveness of program investments. Still, this approach is too expensive to conduct in every program and usually does not provide timely results for annual funding decisions. In undertaking their leadership positions, program Leaders should incorporate the practices that impact the success of such programs (Farringer et al., 2021).

Implemented informal examinations of programs dedicated to succeeding should incorporate a formal evaluation with informed future funding decisions to ensure that policymakers invest in programs that are most effective at reducing recidivism (Brusman-Lovins & Lovins, 2021). Nearly half of all jail detainees meet the criteria for co-occurring disorders. From such program participation, the protective effect of receiving psychiatric care or what is termed continuity of care diminished recidivism rates exponentially (Harrison & Taylor, 2019; Taylor, 2020; Victor et al., 2018, 2021).

Implications

The pandemic created an incentive for decreasing the population of inmates across the nation, yet recidivism is still an issue in a southeastern state, where the study will be conducted. Implications for the investigation include expanding our understanding of recent initiatives to reduce the number of incarcerated adults due to pandemic precautions. As communal living

became more dangerous, nonviolent offenders were released, and an investigation into the creative problem solving of reentry program leaders might provide virtual or hybrid reentry interventions that had not been possible under previous policy mandates. In keeping with the mission of Walden University, the study has the potential to promote positive social change. This basic qualitative study may assist current and future reentry program leaders by revealing practices that reduce recidivism for African American women at the study location. With evidence-based leadership practices used as a project, reentry program leaders may be able to develop programs targeting the unique situations of African American women. Developing programs that help African American women avoid recidivism will contribute to positive social change for African American women and change the future of their families and their communities.

Lower recidivism rates could have far-reaching effects beyond the formerly incarcerated African American women themselves. Women who reintegrate into society with their families and communities have the potential to contribute positively. The recidivism price can be measured in dollars, as it burdens taxpayers and communities (James, 2019). Children of prisoners represent another financial expense as various require foster care, medical benefits, and other tax-supported programs. Measured by the health and welfare of citizens, the cost of recidivism takes its toll on the physical and mental health of families, including the children of prisoners (James, 2019). Additionally, communal living in institutions can be a breeding ground for dangerous contagions such as COVID-19 and influenza.

A comprehensive electronic literature search was conducted on four databases: Elsevier, Scopus, Springer, and Google Scholar. The keywords used in the search were leadership, practices, program, leaders, African American, women, and recidivism. Boolean operators AND/OR were applied to combine the keywords into search phrases. The search phrases were

leadership AND practices AND African American AND recidivism, programs OR practices AND leaders AND African American AND recidivism, and African American AND women AND recidivism AND leadership AND practices. Articles were considered eligible for inclusion in the study if they were (a) available in full text, (b) published between 2019 and 2023, (c) written in English, and (d) peer reviewed. Comparably, studies were excluded from the literature review if they were published in a predatory journal and irrelevant to the focus topic. After the literature search, 25 articles were retrieved, which were synthesized into four themes: Risk and needs assessment to decrease recidivism, gender responsiveness in mitigating recidivism, educational and vocational services for reducing, and cultural competence in decreasing recidivism.

Risk and Needs Assessment to Decrease Recidivism

De Rooy et al. (2019) applied the life-course and resistance theory to explore the relationships between age, ethnicity, history of incarceration, and type of offense among 1,035 women released from prison. Assessing the data resulted in identifying that the reoffending rate was 50%, 36%, and 23% within the first 12, six, and three months. Accordingly, the researchers emphasized the need to increase interventions and support for women during the first two years after being released from custody (De Rooy et al., 2019). Beaudry et al. (2021) advanced De Rooy et al.'s (2019) argument by explaining that psychological interventions combined with prison and community-based services effectively decrease recidivism. Notably, the researchers emphasized the importance of risk assessment in identifying the modifiable risk factors for recidivism (Beaudry et al., 2021).

Applegarth et al. (2023) advanced the discussion by supporting the importance of risk assessment in understanding how recidivism can be decreased. Accordingly, risk-need assessment is an essential and practical approach to predicting recidivism, underpinning the application of the

most effective intervention (Ghasemi et al., 2021). Risk and needs assessments help determine the factors that should be mitigated to decrease the risk of recidivism.

Understanding women's gender-specific and gender-neutral needs supports the importance of risk and needs assessment in determining their peril of recidivism (Morash & Kashy, 2022). Miller (2021) added more evidence by supporting the need to apply actuarial screening instruments for assessing factors such as psychiatric disorders, substance use, and criminogenic peril. The risk and needs assessment should be explicitly designed for women to understand the perils and needs.

Gender Responsiveness in Mitigating Recidivism

Shannon et al. (2019) identified that for women, prior misdemeanor alcohol convictions and the number of positive drug tests during drug court are associated with a risk of recidivism. As such, the researchers supported the importance of understanding the gender-specific factors that influence the risk of recidivism (Shannon et al., 2019). Consistent with Shannon et al. (2019), Jones et al. (2020) acknowledge the importance of gender-responsive practices in addressing the complex needs of women in the justice system.

According to Abraham and Priyamvada (2019), compared to male offenders, female prisoners seldomly get acceptance from their families and society, making reintegration challenging. The challenges experienced during re-entry increase the peril of recidivism, which makes it essential for gender-specific approaches to underpin the successful reintegration of female offenders (Abraham & Priyamvada, 2019). George et al. (2022) added more context by positing that the lack of offense-specific programs, especially for females, increases the chances of recidivism and offenders re-entering the criminal justice system.

Gender responsiveness is essential because female participants have enhanced treatment responsiveness when compared to males, meaning that differences exist in how men and women

are affected by interventions (Gaspar et al., 2019). Hong et al. (2020) noted that gender is among the factors that can be used to predict recidivism, which supports the importance of the adopted strategies to be gender specific. African American women are overrepresented in the criminal justice system. Upon their release, they are at increased peril of stressors and depressive symptoms, which creates the need for gender-responsive strategies to address the risk factors that increase recidivism (Malcome et al., 2019).

Educational and Vocational Services for Reducing Recidivism

Educational attainment has been supported as an essential aspect in decreasing recidivism because it empowers former offenders to reintegrate into society with employment (Astrada & Nery, 2021). Most female offenders have a deficit in education or employment skills, which makes it essential to mitigate the issue, consequently helping the women re-enter society (Miller, 2021). As such, leaders need to promote educational attainment among African American women.

Hersch and Meyers (2019) posited that ex-offenders experience numerous employment restrictions that hinder them from earning a living. Women in the criminal justice system are more likely to experience significant income-related burdens than men. For this reason, leaders should implement strategies to help women access vocational programs and employment support. Eliminating the stigma and discrimination experienced by female ex-offenders when seeking employment results in marginalization that should be eliminated (van den Broek et al., 2021).

Offering education is a proactive strategy that can help prevent recidivism among women (Moles-Lopez & Ananos, 2021). Kolbeck et al. (2022) added context to the topic by indicating that race, work history, employment after incarceration, and recidivism are intertwined. Particularly, employment contributes to racial disparities in recidivism, which supports the essence of improving the vocational services and training for ex-offender women.

Tasmat et al. (2023) emphasized that empowering women by helping them gain skills to apply for employment or start their business once released can assist in decreasing recidivism. Empowerment enables women to navigate the stigma and inequality associated with being in the criminal justice system. Similarly, Honawar (2019) acknowledged that educational support and counseling promote skill development and enhance job placement. Thus, leadership practices should promote educational and vocational services, which could help decrease recidivism.

Cultural Competence in Decreasing Recidivism

After imprisonment, African American women experience a lack of freedom, resulting in structural and systemic oppression (Monde, 2021; Rudin et al., 2020). Another study found that race/ethnicity influences recidivism, with marginalized populations at an increased risk of reoffending (Mathers & Lindekugel, 2019). Accordingly, culturally congruent strategies should be adopted to decrease the racial/ethnic factors that increase recidivism.

Among women, factors such as discrimination, inadequate support systems, stigma, and lack of cultural capital to pursue education place them at a disadvantage, increasing recidivism (Korzh, 2022). Garofalo (2020) supported the importance and effectiveness of incorporating family in decreasing recidivism. In addition to support, faith and religion help incarcerated women grow and transform, factors that help them overcome some of the issues that result in recidivism (Garofalo, 2020).

Summary

In efforts to ensure the effective transition of newly released inmates back into society, reentry programs were introduced to prepare them to successfully reenter the community. In reentry programs, formerly incarcerated individuals are expected to (a) gain new social, academic, and workforce readiness skills, (b) access community resources for housing and employment, and (c) understand financial literacy and create a budget for independent living

(Assimonye et al., 2022; Taliaferro & Pham, 2018). Reentry program Leaders are tasked with creating practices to address the unique situation of formerly incarcerated individuals as they transition back into the community.

In the United States, recidivism is disproportionately high among African American women. As indicated by the high recidivism rate among formerly incarcerated African American women, the established programs appear not to be adequately addressing the problem of recidivism among this population. The purpose of the study was to explore leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism. The study was guided by the conceptual framework of evidence-based leadership development. This qualitative study helped identify leadership practices that effectively reduce recidivism among African American women post-incarceration.

During the global pandemic, the disruptions might have introduced improvements to reentry program Leader options through virtual platforms and expanded grant opportunities. Effective programs for ex-offenders should successfully ameliorate the obstacles to successful reentry into communities by helping ex-offenders find housing and jobs to support themselves and their families (Burden, 2019). Based on the synthesized literature, one evidence-based leadership practice that can be applied to decrease recidivism is risk and needs assessment because it supports identifying the issues that should be mitigated. Gender-responsive practices are also essential because female and male ex-offenders experience different challenges, which, if not managed, result in recidivism. Educational and vocational services should be advocated to help empower African American women. Additionally, practices promoting cultural competence are essential in reducing recidivism because they focus on racial/ethnic-related factors. The next section contains the methodological approach that will be used in this project, including

qualitative research design, participants, data collection, and data analysis. Additionally, the next section contains the limitations and results from the data analysis.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

Recidivism is disproportionately higher for African American women than European American, Latina, and Asian women leaving incarceration (Oser & Link, 2017). The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism. This section contains a discussion of the research design and approach, participants, data collection, and data analysis.

Basic Qualitative Design

The research question that guided this research is: What leadership practices do program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism? Considering the research question, a basic qualitative research design was the most appropriate method to explore program leader practices to help African American women avoid recidivism. The gap in practice identified was that evidence-based leadership practices that have been documented do not empower African American women to avoid recidivism at the same rate as other demographic populations (Gallagher et al., 2019). This qualitative study helped identify leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism post-incarceration.

Justification for Research Design

The study used a basic qualitative research design to explore the reentry program leader's practices for reducing recidivism among African American women post-incarceration. Basic qualitative design is an approach in which researchers are interested in solving a problem and identifying relevant themes without focusing on a specific epistemological or ontological paradigm (Mihas, 2019). Therefore, the basic design was appropriate for exploring the leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism.

Other designs, such as grounded theory, ethnographic, case studies, phenomenology, and narrative designs, were inappropriate for the study. Grounded theory is appropriate for generating theory from the data but not individual nuance or experience about an issue (Squires & Dorsen, 2018). The study explored participants' practices and not lived experiences; therefore, phenomenology was inappropriate. Case studies are appropriate for political and regulatory issues (Squires & Dorsen, 2018). Case studies are also suitable for making an analytic generalization or argumentative claims based on theoretical concepts; therefore, they were not appropriate for the study because the focus is on specific leadership practices (Ravitch & Carl, 2019). Finally, narrative and phenomenological designs involve storytelling to capture the lived experience of the participants expressed through stories (Ravitch & Carl, 2019; Squires & Dorsen, 2018). Therefore, narrative and phenomenological designs were not appropriate for the current study because the focus is not on the lived experience of the participants. The rationale for selecting a basic qualitative approach was because it was appropriate for examining practical problems using participants' experiences (Ravitch & Carl, 2019). Therefore, a basic qualitative design was appropriate for the study because it involved exploring leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism.

Participants

The participants for the study were reentry program leaders working in non-profit and for-profit organizations in a southeastern state. I recruited participants by sending an emailed invitation letter to the current leaders of the reentry programs in a southeastern state, asking for their participation along with an informed consent form. Email addresses for these leaders were publicly accessible on their organization's websites. The emails included details of the research, including the purpose of the study and interview confidentiality protocols and procedures (Appendix B). The letter of invitation included my phone number and email address for

participants to contact me. To be considered for this study, participants had to (a) be leaders of a reentry program, (b) have leadership certification in leadership or administration, and (c) have been in a leadership position for at least 2 years. Once the letters were sent, I followed up within a week. In qualitative studies, the required sample size is based on several factors, including philosophical and methodological issues and diversity of the participants (Sim et al., 2018). Sample size depends on the depth and breadth the participants can bring to better understand the topic.

Therefore, for this study, four participants were recruited. The small sample size of four participants was an outcome of purposeful and snowball sampling. Purposeful sampling involved using social media and directly contacting program leaders whose information was publicly available. However, despite the initiatives, only four participants were identified and interviewed. After identifying the four re-entry program leaders, I requested they suggest participants who would be appropriate to participate in the interviews. The four re-entry program leaders suggested an additional five leaders. All five were reached out to. Two of the five participants were unavailable to be interviewed despite consenting to be part of the study. The other three refused to consent to be interviewed; as such, I did not consider them eligible to be part of the study. Despite the limited availability of participants who could provide relevant and adequate information related to the interviews, thick, rich data were collected, and saturation was met.

Access to Participants

There was no permission required from a supervisor or district or state officials. Letters of invitation were used to recruit participants for the study and were sent by email. The participant emails were publicly available as listed on their organization's websites.

Researcher/Participant Working Relationship

The researcher/participant working relationship is the relationship between the participants and myself as the researcher. The researcher/participant working relationship is essential in ensuring collaboration during the research process (Cornell et al., 2019). I ensured professionalism in communication during participant recruitment and the data collection process. The participants were expected to be cooperative in providing honest answers to the interview questions. I was responsible for recruiting participants and conducting the interviews. I ensured confidentiality, protection of the participants' data, and ensured the participants understood how I collected data. Participants did not receive compensation for their time.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are essential in upholding participants' dignity and protecting their rights. Several practices were used in the study to ensure participants' rights and ethical concerns are upheld. I ensured participant confidentiality and informed consent. Confidentiality was guaranteed by securely keeping collected data on my laptop only accessible to me. The laptop was password protected and stored in my home. Transcripts and participants were identified using alphanumeric codes, such as Participant 1, 2, 3, and so forth, to protect the participants' identities. Alphanumeric codes, such as Organization 1, were used to further protect the identities of the participants. The alphanumeric codes for participants and their respective organizations were used in reporting the findings.

Participant consent is essential in social sciences research (Klykken, 2021). As such, informed consent was obtained from the participants to confirm their willingness to participate in the study by signing consent forms sent through email during the recruitment process.

Data Collection

Qualitative data on participants' responses to semistructured interview questions were collected. Qualitative data are explorative and interpretive information based on participants' understanding and response to a given phenomenon (Renjith et al., 2021). The interview protocol developed for this study contains questions related to leadership practices of the reentry program leaders. The participants shared their experiences related to practices that reduce recidivism among formerly incarcerated African American women.

Data Collection Instrument and Sufficiency

The data collection instrument is the interview protocol that contains semi structured interview questions. A researcher-developed interview protocol (see Appendix B) was used to ensure consistency across individual participants. The interview protocol contained 11 open-ended questions that were used to guide data collection from the participants. After presenting each question and the participants had given their response, probing and follow-up questions were used as necessary. The four interviewed participants provided enough data that was used in answering the research questions. Each interview lasted for approximately 45 minutes. After transcribing the interviews, each transcript had approximately 10 single-spaced pages. Hence, the interviews were a total of 40-single spaced pages. An analysis of the content in the 40-single spaced documents facilitated in comprehensively answering the research question.

Data Collection Process

The data collection began after the approval of the project by the Walden University institutional review board (IRB). Upon agreeing to participate, I arranged convenient interview times with each participant. Once I had arranged times and dates for the interviews, I sent a confirmation email with a Zoom link and invited the participants to ask any questions that led up to our scheduled interview time. Once dates and times were arranged, interviews began.

Zoom audio recording in the Zoom application was used to record participants' responses. Zoom is a collaborative cloud-based video conferencing platform offering services such as group messaging, online meetings, and secure recording of sessions (Archibald et al., 2019). The use of Zoom in the project ensured the convenience and security of collected information. The data were generated and gathered by recording interview sessions using audio recording functionalities.

Before asking the interview questions to the participants, I reminded participants about the purpose of the study, provided an estimated interview time (45-60 minutes), and asked whether they had any concerns. I asked for a participant's permission to record the interview session before beginning the interview. Questions were asked one at a time and were repeated if the participants needed clarification. The participants had the opportunity to refuse or skip some questions. I used a reflective journal to keep track of data and record emerging understandings during the interview process. The collected data were stored in my password-protected computer.

Upon completion of the interview, I sent a follow-up email thanking the participants for their time and reminding them they can ask any questions that might occur about the data or the data collection and/or analysis processes. I reminded them that I would send them a summary of the findings to complete member checking.

Role of the Researcher

I had no current or past professional roles in the reentry program setting. Additionally, I had no professional or personal relationships with any participants that might have affected data collection. The rationale for initiating this research was based on my observations of a family member who recidivated despite undergoing a reentry program. This experience could have introduced researcher bias, and I managed any potential researcher bias through reflective journaling and member checking.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using inductive analysis. Thomas (2003) noted that inductive analysis is often used in social science research to allow the findings to emerge from the data. Inductive analysis ensured that raw text data were analyzed in a detailed, organized, and comprehensive manner, and presented in a brief, summary format (Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Thomas, 2003). Researchers have also found there is a more significant outcome using a standardized inductive approach rather than other traditional approaches to qualitative data analysis (Thomas, 2003).

I used MAXQDA computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) to store and organize the coded data. The software was useful in organizing interview data and presenting tables and other data visualization. I transcribed each interview upon completion of each interview with the assistance of Otter.ai. Once I had transcribed each transcript, I reviewed it for accuracy with the recording.

I familiarized myself with the data by reading and re-reading the transcripts to ensure that I adequately understood the responses provided by the participants (Braun & Clarke, 2019). I had a general idea of the message conveyed by the participants by multiple readings of the raw data. I noted any temporary or tentative themes during these readings. Overall, the first phase was crucial in guiding the development of codes, categories, and themes that guided other phases of inductive analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

In the second step, open coding, I searched for repeated words, concepts, or phrases, then I grouped the repetitions by similarities and provided a meaningful label for each group. I reviewed the open codes to feature qualities of the data that answered the research question. At this stage, I reviewed the elements of the framework to help me determine temporary themes. Finally, I searched the open codes and the framework elements to answer the research question

and developed common themes. Themes were identified and named by giving them clear and succinct titles (Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

Evidence of Quality

Evidence of quality was ensured by strictly following the procedures that promote the reliability of research (Johnson et al., 2020). Each participant was asked to participate in member checking. Motulsky (2021) stated that member checking is a form of qualitative validity that encourages participant engagement to correct and confirm accuracy. I asked participants to check the emailed summary of the findings for accuracy of their data and reply by email within 10 days of receipt. No participants requested any change. All confirmed that the findings were accurate.

Additionally, I constantly monitored and was aware of my own personal biases, using a reflective journal to help process any biases that emerged. Reflexivity can be aided by the practice of keeping self-reflective notebooks, which researchers use to explore personal assumptions and aims and define individual belief systems and subjectivities (Ortlipp, 2008). I kept reflective journals. In these journals, I reflected on my experiences, viewpoints, ideas, and feelings to keep my biases in check.

Finally, I provided thick, rich descriptions of the site, the sample, and the situation to help assure transferability. In qualitative research, readers must have enough information (related to location, timeline, participants, etc.) to transfer findings to their own environments (Johnson et al., 2020). Readers could use this information to determine whether the outcomes might be the same in their settings, replicating the same research techniques yet under different conditions.

Discrepant Cases

Data that do not fit with or directly contradict the theme are referred to as discrepant cases (Duden, 2021). No discrepant cases were identified in this study. The study findings identified were consistent with each other.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to explore the practices of reentry program leaders in a southeastern state that reduce recidivism among formerly incarcerated African American women. A basic qualitative research design was used to examine the reentry program leader's practices for reducing recidivism among African American women. The study's participants were four reentry program leaders in a for-profit organization and non-profit from a southern state. The inclusion criteria for recruiting participants were leaders of a reentry program, had leadership certificate in leadership or administration, and must be in a leadership position at the site of this study. The data were generated and gathered by recording interview sessions using audio recording functionalities of Zoom meeting. The reentry program leaders were interviewed using semi structured interview questions with open-ended prompts. The interview sessions lasted for approximately 45 minutes for each participant. The collected data were inductively analyzed.

Data Collection

The study's purpose was to explore the leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism. A recruitment plan fosters trustworthiness and supports research success (Negrin et al., 2022). In this study, once approval from the IRB was received, reentry program leaders were recruited by sending email invitations to professionals working in non-profit and for-profit organizations in a Southeastern state. Only participants who signed the consent form were eligible for the study. After recruiting participants, each was referred to using pseudonyms to protect their identity.

In this study, data were collected via one-on-one semistructured Zoom interviews. Individual Zoom sessions were performed with the four participants, lasting approximately 45 minutes. Before each interview, I reminded participants of the purpose of the study. Also, I informed them about how long each interview would take and reassured them that their privacy

and confidentiality would be protected. An additional introduction component was informing participants that they were free to refuse to answer any interview questions or end the Zoom call at any time, which would not be associated with any repercussions.

During the Zoom sessions, I recorded each participant's audio. Oliffe et al. (2021) found that using Zoom to collect data facilitates retrieving data with rich therapeutic value. Another advantage is that Zoom interviews are cost-effective because they have an extended recruitment reach, which supports inclusivity (Oliffe et al., 2021). Additionally, Zoom is relatively easy to use, cost-effective, secure, and contains data management features (Archibald et al., 2019; Oliffe et al., 2021).

After completing the interviews, I transcribed each audio file into four Microsoft Word documents. Transcription was conducted using Otter.AI. Once Otter.AI was used, I read each transcript while listening to audio to ensure the data was accurate.

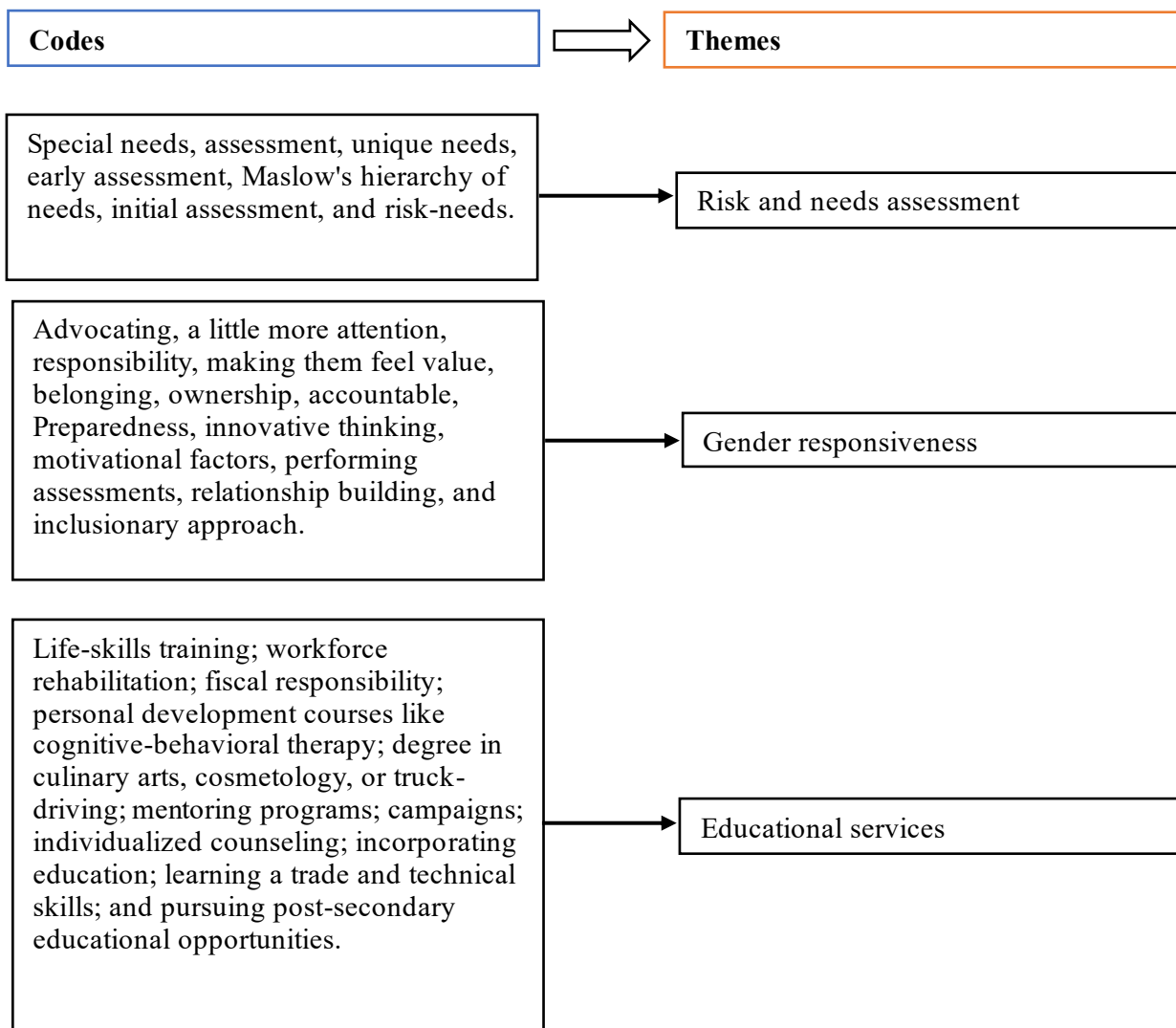
Data Analysis

Data analysis involves the researcher familiarizing themselves with the transcribed data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Familiarizing with the transcribed data for me involved reading and re-reading the four transcripts to gain an in-depth understanding of responses. The repeated reading provided an active approach to searching for meaning and identifying temporary patterns from the retrieved data. When familiarizing myself with the data, I made notes and identified tentative coding ideas. Subsequently, I imported the transcripts into MAXQDA to facilitate data management and storage (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Generating initial codes through open coding involved identifying data components that seemed interesting and contained meaningful relating to the research question. Figure 2 contains the codes identified from participants' responses (see Figure 2). The codes were used to create three themes discussed in the subsequent section. No salient data, specifically those challenging preconceived notions, were identified during the

inductive analysis. Similarly, discrepant cases or data points that deviated from the anticipated patterns were not identified.

Figure 2

Codes and Themes



Data Analysis Results

The research question was: What leadership practices do program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism? The leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism include risk and needs assessment, gender responsiveness, educational services, and cultural competence. In the subsequent section, a discussion of each theme is provided.

Theme 1: Risk and Needs Assessment

It was identified that a leadership practice the program leaders apply to assist African American women in avoiding recidivism is risk and needs assessment. The risk and needs assessment process involved conducting comprehensive assessments to identify African American women's specific perils and needs. The comprehensive assessments help understand the participants' unique attributes, risks, and needs. For instance, Participant 1 explained that "identifying a specific need in this demographic is the priority. After increasing awareness, there should be an assessment of the unique needs of this demographic and then find ways to address them." Accordingly, risk and needs assessment facilitate identifying the areas where African American women need support, which helps determine the required resources. Participant 1 added that;

I believe recidivism can be reduced when resources are provided for justice-involved people. Several governmental, educational, and social systems can be used to help avoid recidivism. We use our three core goals of (a) assisting in overcoming barriers to employment, (b) tracking data, and (c) increasing awareness as the guide for all activity.

Another respondent, Participant 2, added that by supporting the importance of early assessment of needs. The early assessment of needs helps determine the unique needs of African American women, which helps promote planning to mitigate recidivism. Participant 2 said that

“early assessment of needs helps determine the unique needs of participant, volunteers, and members can more effectively develop a reentry plan that helps prepare them for success.” Through early assessment of needs, leaders can gain a comprehensive understanding of the unique challenges experienced by African Americans, underpinning the development of tailored plans that increase individuals’ chances of being successfully reintegrated into society.

The other participant, Participant 4, explained that “we assess to find out their needs.” A commendable approach posited by the participant is the use of Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs and individual goal setting based on the assessments conducted. Specifically, Participant 4 explained that;

We use Maslow’s hierarchy of needs to try to prioritize and then devise a plan to achieve those goals. Every person has a goal set based on the initial assessment. Our case managers analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the individual, and then together collectively, they work on a plan, but it is only based on what the woman wants to do after the initial assessment.

Additionally, Participant 1 provided more context to the discussion by emphasizing the importance of combining risk-needs and strength-based approaches. Risk-needs assessment facilitates identifying areas where participants may be at increased peril of reoffending, which supports tailoring interventions to address specific perils to decrease recidivism effectively.

Participant 1 explained that:

Our rehabilitation strategies include both risk-needs and strength-based approaches. We carefully assess and address risk factors and the participants’ needs, but we also focus on what the participant is doing well and support her, ensuring she devotes her energy. When we define success for our participants, we do not define it as “not relapsing” or “not reoffending.” We define success as the participant making meaningful contributions to

the community and reaching personal goals. Our team assists participants, so they have the best chance for success.

Risk and needs assessment is a leadership practice that program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism. The assessment process involves conducting comprehensive assessments to identify each woman's specific needs. This helps leaders understand the woman's unique attributes, risks, and needs, which in turn helps them determine the required resources and support. Early assessment of needs is also important, as it allows leaders to develop tailored plans that increase the woman's chances of successful reintegration into society. One participant explained that they use Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to prioritize and develop a plan to achieve the woman's goals. They also focus on the woman's strengths and support her in continuing to do well. Another participant emphasized the importance of combining risk-needs and strength-based approaches. This allows them to tailor interventions to address specific perils and decrease recidivism effectively.

Overall, risk and needs assessment, Theme 1, is a critical leadership practice that helps program leaders to support African American women in avoiding recidivism. By carefully assessing and addressing risk factors and participants' needs, leaders can increase the chances of successful reintegration into society.

Theme 2: Gender Responsiveness

Based on participants' responses, it was identified that program leaders also apply gender-responsive and individualized focus to help African American women avoid recidivism. Gender-responsive programming involves leaders recognizing and addressing African American women's unique needs. The practice considers the impact of abuse, trauma, and gender-specific issues on recidivism. One reentry program leader, Participant 3, supported the importance of

gender responsiveness in the context of the discrimination and systemic barriers that affect African American women. Participant 3 explained that:

Unfortunately, women, especially of color, face high discrimination in our region, affecting employment and access to resources. For example, as our partners reenter the workforce, our case management team assists with the process and has expressed that our African American participants have more difficulty finding employment.

Participant 3 emphasized the importance of advocacy and support in helping mitigate the discrimination experienced by African American women. Participant 3 noted that:

While we cannot eradicate racism or sexism, our case management team can help African American women by advocating for the participants and spending more time assisting them in finding employment. Our team has expressed noticeable discrimination once our African American participants are in the workplace and when obtaining mental and physical health services and housing after the women graduate from the program and move to independent living. In addition to helping participants overcome these barriers, we help them build relations with prosocial models through mentorship and community organization involvement.

The other gender-responsive approach explained by Participant 3 was providing women the necessary support for addressing the specific challenges experienced by women in the reentry process. Participant 3's response supports the intersectionality of socio-economic factors and gender by explaining the tools they need to reintegrate into society successfully. Participant 3 said that:

We also work with our participants to help them open a bank account, budget, pay off court fees, obtain their driver's license, save for independent living, and offer saving-match scholarships so ladies can purchase a vehicle. Reliable transportation is a critical

part of remaining on course. Ladies with good jobs and reliable transportation have a much better chance of remaining above the poverty line and out of jail or prison.

Another reentry program leader, Participant 4, explained the different gender responsiveness strategies. One strategy is providing African American women with specialized attention. Participant 4 said:

When it comes to women exclusively, I often give them a little more attention because they need to know that, in many instances, what led them to crime in the first place was the sense of not belonging and the need to belong. So, often, I give them a little more attention. I can guide them when they have difficult decisions to make. We are intentional, not just about seeing and making them feel valued.

The respondent indicated that another gender-responsive strategy is giving the women some responsibility. Participant 4 said that:

Putting them in positions of some responsibility. I give women specific roles and specific duties. So, they can have a sense of belonging and need to be held accountable because, on a smaller scale, that small thing can be built into a larger model. Ownership of their behavior and learning helps them understand they can control their destiny.

Another gender-responsive strategy is promoting participants' self-awareness. Participant 4 elaborated:

We promote self-awareness, where we help them understand their role as a nurturer in the community. It helps them realize they have a broader role in nurturing the broader community. It often gives them a sense of value, and they are not looking to be validated elsewhere. I think the most effective one was building them from where they were. We take the time to get to know them, and once we get to know them better, we can set some

expectations. The expectations are not ours, but the ones that you say. Our job is to hold you accountable for your words.

Gender responsiveness was supported by recognizing those women and men. According to Participant 4:

Once we realized that women's needs differed, we just catered to that and made it fit into the program. A lot of times, the women that we serve do not think, but they react. So, giving them steps to respond to certain situations promotes due diligence and helps them accept responsibility for their decisions.

The other respondent, Participant 2, provided information on gender responsiveness by indicating that the process involves decreasing hopelessness, promoting preparedness, and enhancing innovative thinking. Participant 2 explained that "our focus is improving motivational factors. The process involves assessments and relationship building, which significantly helps reduce hopelessness. The practice encourages them to take an active part in ineffective results. We provided preparedness and innovative *thinking*." Participant 2 added:

We also invite behavior therapists and additional appropriations to assist in reducing recidivism. We encourage African American women participants to share honest suggestions with board members and volunteers in a safe and emotionally vulnerable environment. We provide meals in discrete locations less likely to impact their hesitation to share. Computers are set up in the meeting location, and women anonymously provide their experience via the computer and in the suggestion box. Once all suggestions are placed on the computer and in the suggestion box, we discuss them via round table discussion. After the discussion, newly implemented practices are added to the curriculum and program timelines.

Participant 2 elaborated on the importance of having gender-responsive strategies by explaining that:

Women participants are more likely to be assertive and aggressive to outside help. Our experience has shown that African American women carry a dignity that holds their pride intact. Primarily because society and the circumstances have subconsciously trained them to be in charge of their own emotions and responsibilities. We can understand the initial approach to dominate personalities. A better understanding of how to approach each participant. We have follow-up sessions that prepare African American women to enter their respective communities using positive reinforcement and a reentry-to-society plan. These sessions discuss individualized plans and goal setting. Board members and volunteers provide them with practical solutions to ensure the appropriate curriculum.

The other respondent, Participant 1, explained the importance of an inclusionary approach in decreasing recidivism among African American women. Participant 1 indicated that “I practice an inclusionary approach that informs others of the issue of recidivism.” Applying inclusionary approaches is vital in recognizing and valuing African American women’s diverse experiences and needs because it supports acknowledging the population’s unique challenges in reentering society. Participant 1 added how their inclusionary approach is supported by a data-driven strategy in addressing the unique issues experienced by African American women. Participant 1 stated, “We have an assessment of their services and a reimagining of them. We use federal wage data to confirm that our program participants are employed. As a result, we can effectively say that our participants are not incarcerated.”

Program leaders apply gender-responsive and individualized focus to help African American women avoid recidivism. This involves recognizing and addressing their unique needs, including the impact of abuse, trauma, and gender-specific issues. Leaders also provide women

the necessary support for addressing the specific challenges experienced by women in the reentry process, such as helping them open a bank account, budget, pay off court fees, obtain their driver's license, save for independent living, and purchase a vehicle. Other gender-responsive strategies include providing women with specialized attention, putting them in positions of responsibility, promoting self-awareness, and decreasing hopelessness, promoting preparedness, and enhancing innovative thinking.

Theme 3: Educational Services

The other evidence-based leadership practice identified was educational services. Participants supported educational practices as a leadership practice applied by program leaders to assist African American women in avoiding recidivism. Participant 3 posited that the educational services related to life skills and academic knowledge contribute to lower recidivism. Participant 3 explained that:

Twice each week, participants meet the case manager who assists them in accessing services from third-party providers, obtaining life-skills training, workforce rehabilitation, fiscal responsibility, personal development courses like cognitive-behavioral therapy for criminal and addictive thinking, successful parenting strategies, relapse prevention, healthy relationships, and much more. Educating these women to rebuild their lives and establish healthy connections in their communities reduces the probability of them engaging in substance misuse or criminal behavior, which leads to recidivism.

In addition to life skills, Participant 3 explained the academic-related education offered to African American women. Participant 3 said that:

We help our participants connect with third parties for education and training to support obtaining sustainable-wage jobs. Ladies attending school can earn a culinary arts,

cosmetology, or truck-driving degree. These training programs assist participants to have more opportunities when searching for employment.

Similar to Participant 3, Participant 4 explained how they use educational services to impart women with life skills on how to relate with men, which is among the factors that cause incarceration among African American females. Participant 4 explained that:

One of the things we have done is have our training classes where there are men and women. We do not separate women and men because women do not live in a vacuum, so we decided that it is a better model to have them work together because in the process of being in the same room and setting, women can find out how men think. I found that most women have been to prison or incarcerated because they had a relationship with the man or took charge of them. So, to ensure they are learning how not to be manipulated anymore. I set them in the same room and let them have dialogue.

Participant 4 added that they also provide educational motherhood and mentoring programs to assist them with parenting. Participant 4 explained that:

One of them was motherhood. We had mothers learn how to treat their children with dignity and respect. We educated women not to be so abusive and to be active in the schools and start mentoring programs. We had a junior black program so we could take some of the women's children and allow them to work side by side with their mothers through the summers, and it helped have deeper relationships.

Participant 1 explained that “we have implemented statewide outreach campaigns and hosted annual training for employees. We created an expungement clinic guide, jail brochures, and the ‘it’s OK’ media campaign.” Consistent with other participants, Participant 2 explained that:

Our board members and volunteers have proven that evidence-based rehabilitation strategies such as individualized counseling, social and emotional learning skills, workforce development training, and educational seminars help African American women develop enhanced job skills in entrepreneurship capabilities. The practice that we find the most effective, however, is therapy through education. Incorporating education, learning a trade and technical skills, and pursuing post-secondary educational opportunities increases the overall outcome of reducing recidivism. We have adopted several curriculum guides to improve the caseload and reduce recidivism.

Program leaders provide educational services to help African American women avoid recidivism. This includes life skills training on topics such as financial responsibility, personal development, relapse prevention, and healthy relationships. It also includes academic-related education such as culinary arts, cosmetology, and truck-driving. In addition, program leaders provide educational programs on motherhood and mentoring to help women with parenting. They also implement statewide outreach campaigns and training programs for employees. Program leaders have found that the most effective educational practice is therapy through education, which incorporates education, learning a trade and technical skills, and pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities.

Summary

The research question that guided this study was: what leadership practices do program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism? The findings of this study indicate that program leaders apply three evidence-based leadership practices to help African American women avoid recidivism: risk and needs assessment, gender-responsive and individualized focus, and educational services.

- Program leaders conduct comprehensive assessments to help them understand the women's unique attributes, risks, and needs, which in turn helps them determine the required resources and support.
- Program leaders recognize and address African American women's unique needs, including the impact of abuse, trauma, and gender-specific issues. They also provide the necessary support for addressing the specific challenges experienced by women in the reentry process.
- Program leaders provide educational services to help African American women avoid recidivism. This includes life skills training on topics and academic-related education. In addition, program leaders provide educational programs on motherhood and mentoring to help women with parenting and also implement statewide outreach campaigns and training programs for employees.

Finally, although there was not enough data to support a full theme, cultural competence was also mentioned and worth noting as an important component of these three themes. Participant 1 indicated cultural competence as a leadership practice used to decrease recidivism among African American women. Participant 1 explained that “cultural competence is always valid when serving underserved communities. Hence, understanding the specific needs of this population to address them best is needed.” In the response, Participant 1 recognized the importance of respecting and understanding the cultural experiences, nuances, and challenges encountered by African American women. Cultural competence is related to inclusion, emphasizing the need to acknowledge and respect African American women’s unique cultural values, backgrounds, and traditions.

Trustworthiness

In this project, the trustworthiness of the findings was promoted through credibility, dependability, and confirmability (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The credibility of the results was supported through member checking, where participants were sent the analyzed data to confirm whether the results accurately represented their responses. All four participants confirmed that the discussed leadership practices can help decrease recidivism among African American women. Dependability was achieved by transparently reporting the data analysis process and results. Explaining the data analysis process supports dependability because it illustrates how the results were retrieved from the collected data. Transparently reporting the results where the themes are supported using participants' verbatim responses proves that the findings were based on the collected results and not the researcher's imagination. The results confirmability was promoted by supporting the findings using published literature to explain how the results advance, confirm or contradict existing evidence.

Summary of Outcomes

The provided summary offers insight into the research question sought to be answered in this project. The research question was: What leadership practices do program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism? The identified leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism include (a) risk and needs assessment, (b) gender responsiveness, and (c) educational services.

Based on the reentry program leaders' responses, risk and needs assessment were one of the evidence-based leadership practices used to decrease recidivism among African American women. The leaders posited that risk and needs assessment facilitates identifying the factors that can contribute towards recidivism, promoting in creating interventions and support services. Risk and needs assessment involve understanding each individual's specific perils and needs. In the

published literature, risks, and needs assessment have been supported as a specific evidence-based and proven method for decreasing recidivism (Pearson, 2019; Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2018). Hence, leaders who promote risk and needs assessment ensure that African American women's needs are prioritized and fulfilled accordingly. The findings in this study advance the published literature because the leaders emphasized the importance of considering Maslow's hierarchy of needs and goal setting as part of the risk and need assessment practice. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was supported as crucial in helping prioritize and setting goals. The practice ensures that an individual's fundamental needs are fulfilled before focusing on higher-level goals. Thus, through risk and needs assessment, leaders can create an individual and supportive approach for addressing African American women's needs.

The other evidence-based leadership practice identified was gender responsiveness. Based on the leaders' responses, it was evident that they recognize that women have unique needs and experiences within the criminal justice system. For this reason, program leaders must create an environment sensitive to gender-specific factors. Consistent with this study's findings, gender-responsive programs have been supported as essential in preparing female offenders to transition into the community and avoid recidivism (Miller, 2021). In their studies, Alper et al. (2018), Redmond et al. (2020), and Smoyer et al. (2021) indicated that African American women are more likely to experience housing, transportation, education, and employment-related barriers, which increase their probability of recidivism. Similarly, in this study, the leaders acknowledged that African American women often experience racism and sexism when reintegrating into society. The challenges increase African American women's chances of reoffending, which can result in recidivism. The lack of opportunity hinders ex-offenders' ability to reenter society (Zeiler & Puccetti, 2018).

Accordingly, in this study, gender responsiveness was identified as an essential evidence-based leadership practice for helping decrease the impact of the systemic barriers experienced by African American women. The project findings add to the published literature because the leaders indicated that gender responsiveness facilitates prioritizing African American women's unique needs while accounting for trauma, abuse, and gender-specific issues. The leaders posited practical support to women with tasks such as budgeting, opening bank accounts, obtaining driving licenses, and saving for independent living as essential gender-responsive strategies in helping African American females successfully reintegrate. In essence, it was identified that gender-responsive practices contribute to creating a comprehensive and supportive environment for African American women, helping address the unique needs and issues associated with the reentry process, consequently decreasing the peril of recidivism.

Based on the reentry program leaders' responses, educational services were identified as a practice used by the professionals to decrease the probability of recidivism among African American women. The educational opportunities as a leadership practice empower African American women to make positive changes in their lives by accessing powerful tool for personal growth and empowerment. The leaders supported delivering diverse educational services such as life-skills training, entrepreneurship, workforce rehabilitation, fiscal responsibility, personal development courses like cognitive-behavioral therapy, bachelor's degrees, mentoring, individualized counseling, and seminars. Similar to the findings in this project, researchers have acknowledged the importance of leadership practices that support the adoption of practices such as mentorship programs, entrepreneurship initiatives, and cognitive behavioral therapies in reducing the peril of recidivism (Blonigen et al., 2021; Newton et al., 2018; Walker & Davidson, 2018).

The findings in this study add to the collaboration in the published literature that the evidence-based leadership practices of reentry program leaders to decrease recidivism among African American women should focus on imparting the population with new social, academic, and workforce readiness skills (Miller, 2021). Numerous African American women fail to understand where to start rebuilding their lives, especially if they do not have adequate support (Zakaria, 2018). The study findings advance current literature by supporting that educational services as a leadership practice help African American women improve their skills and self-esteem, promoting their probability of meaningful employment. A notable aspect of educational services is providing women with knowledge to understand relationships. Understanding relationships helps African American women avoid the manipulation that resulted in their involvement in criminal activities. Educational services as a leadership practice supports rehabilitation by focusing on academic knowledge, life skills, relationship dynamics, and parenting education.

Another leadership practice identified was cultural competence. The program leaders emphasized the importance of recognizing and respecting cultural diversity. Accordingly, leaders create culturally sensitive environments where African American women feel valued and understood. An understanding of participants' unique values, experiences, and challenges is important for the population. The findings in this study advance existing literature by supporting that recognizing the unique challenges, experiences, and nuances experienced by African American women is vital in promoting successful reintegration and decreasing recidivism.

Project Deliverable

The project deliverable for this qualitative research will be a professional development/training curriculum and materials. The purpose, goals, learning outcomes, and target audience will be specified in the deliverable. Outline components, timelines, activities, trainer

notes, and module formats will be included and categorized hour-by-hour. The materials on the implementation and evaluation plan will be included. The following section contains a description of the project.

Section 3: The Project

African American women are at an increased disproportionate peril of recidivism after incarceration (Oser & Link, 2017). Reentry programs have been introduced across the United States to decrease the disproportionality in response to the problem. Conversely, despite the precautions, recidivism is a prevailing issue that reentry program leaders are suitably positioned to mitigate. Hence, this study focused on exploring the leadership practices that program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism. Interviewing four purposefully sampled participants resulted in identifying that the leadership practices program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism include risk and needs assessment, gender responsiveness, and educational services. The findings supported selecting professional development as the project. The content in Section 3 is categorized into the rationale, literature review, project description, project evaluation plan, and project implications.

Rationale

Although there were other genres of projects, such as evaluation reports, curriculum plans, and position papers, professional development was selected as the most appropriate. An evaluation report was not selected because it is suitable for analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, results, effectiveness, and quality of a service, product, program, or policy based on specific criteria and standards (Wanzer, 2021). As such, developing an evaluation report was incompatible with this study's purpose. A curriculum plan was also not chosen because it is a document that outlines the goals, aims, content, approaches, assessments, and evaluations for a specific course or study program (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2023). Accordingly, the curriculum plan was not suitable in this study's context. A position paper mainly supports an author's thinking on a topic using facts, statistics, and well-researched content (Springer, 2023). For this reason, a position paper was not suitable for disseminating the findings

of this study. Consequently, professional development/training curricula and materials were selected because they allow the creation of educational resources and programs that assist individuals in improving their knowledge, skills, and ability to improve their careers (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2023). Hence, professional development was selected because it will help inform reentry program leaders of strategies to decrease recidivism among African American women.

Review of the Literature

A detailed literature search focused on professional development for re-entry program leaders to provide a scholarly underpinning to the project. The literature search was performed on EBSCO Host, Sage Online, ProQuest, Elsevier, and Springer. The keywords applied in the search included *professional development, program, leaders, recidivism, and re-entry programs*. Combining the keywords resulted in creating search phrases that included professional development AND leaders, professional development AND leaders AND re-entry programs, and recidivism AND re-entry programs AND professional development. In this literature review, 25 studies were synthesized into four themes, which are (a) needs and benefits for professional development, (b) professional development training for program leaders, (c) professional development for enhancing re-entry program leaders gender responsiveness, and (d) professional development for promoting re-entry program leaders' cultural sensitivity.

Needs and Benefits for Professional Development

Researchers have supported that the needs and benefits for professional development among leaders are that it enables the professionals to improve their competencies, skills, and abilities to perform their roles (Jayaweera & Weligamage, 2021; Kjellstrom et al., 2020; Kunicki et al., 2022; Lund, 2022; Raver et al., 2023; Sahlin, 2023). For instance, Jayaweera and Weligamage (2021) found that among leaders, undergoing professional development is associated

with improved skills and competencies, which result in better outcomes. Consistent with Jayaweera and Weligamage, Kjellstrom et al. (2020) explained that the core of leadership development is enabling individuals to become better in their roles. Accordingly, the researchers emphasized the importance of meeting people where they are and ensuring that professional development is consistent with expectations and beliefs (Kjellstrom et al., 2020). In another study, Kunicki et al. (2022) found that professional development is needed and beneficial because it is associated with improved personal knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Lund (2022) advanced the discussion by explaining that professional development facilitates helping leaders understand the shared scope of an organization's goal and promotes improvement in knowledge. Leadership development enables an improvement in the domains of knowing, doing, and being, which indicates a growth in leadership competencies (Raver et al., 2023). Although Sahlin (2023) focused on school principals, the findings are applicable in this project's context because the researchers explain the need for leaders to have access to systematized and formal professional development at all career stages. Similar to Sahlin, Potter and Chitpin (2021) also conducted their study in a school context. The researchers found that professional development improves leaders' ability to perform data-based decisions to achieve equitable outcomes. Accordingly, professional development can improve the effectiveness of re-entry programs in decreasing recidivism among African American women.

Professional Development Training for Program Leaders

Researchers argue that professional development training for leaders can take different forms, such as training, mentorship, coaching, action learning, leaders teaching leaders, peer networking, and external insights from customers (Channing, 2020; Rasa, 2020; Roupnel et al., 2019). Channing (2020) explained that leadership can be enhanced through formal education, mentorship, and experience. In another study, Roupnel et al. (2019) supported the efficacy of

mentoring, coaching, and action learning in promoting professional development. Consistent with Channing and Roupnel et al., Rasa (2020) supported the importance of applying multiple leadership development approaches such as monitoring, coaching, action learning, leaders teaching leaders, peer networking, and external insights from customers. Lee et al. (2020) provided more context on mentoring by supporting that leadership development promotes psychological capital and generativity.

In another study, Boak and Crabbe (2019) acknowledged that coaching, mentoring, and appraisal feedback can underpin leaders' professional development. Faizuddin et al. (2022) emphasized the need for continuous development in helping leaders promote the programs' outcomes. Based on the literature findings, this project's professional development can be in different forms. As such, professional development will be in the form of a 3-day training presented using a PowerPoint presentation.

Professional Development for Enhancing Re-Entry Program Leaders' Gender Responsiveness

Professional development that enables program leaders to foster gender responsiveness is essential. For example, Smith (2022) emphasized that gender-responsive leadership should be promoted through mentoring, training, assessment frameworks, and online resources to mitigate inequalities. Gender responsiveness among leaders underpins their ability to promote policies that mitigate the inequities experienced by women while enhancing meaningful change (Smith, 2022). In another study, Hochstrasser et al. (2022) explained that gender-focused training improves leadership. A core limitation of the findings is that the researchers only included female participants. Although Moon (2021) conducted in a school setting, the results support the efficacy of gender-responsive training in enabling professionals to apply interactive engagement strategies.

Munive et al. (2023) suggested that leaders who possess gender responsiveness can empower people and foster the development of opportunities for promoting transformative change. Gender-responsive programming has been considered practical, which supports the importance of leaders possessing the competencies to promote such initiatives (Edwards et al., 2022). Also, leaders ought to have adequate knowledge about gender-specific re-entry models and programming to decrease the significance of recidivism among African American women (Miller, 2021).

Professional Development for Promoting Re-Entry Program Leaders Cultural Sensitivity

In the published literature, researchers have supported the criticality of professional development in improving the leaders' cultural competencies (Parkhouse et al., 2019). Parkhouse et al. (2019) supported the importance of professional development being culturally congruent. Culturally congruent professional development can enhance self-efficacy and provide services to diverse individuals. Effective culturally congruent leadership is essential in promoting positive outcomes (Browne et al., 2022). Mentoring as a form of professional development can help increase leaders' skills, attitudes, and behaviors associated with cultural awareness (Black et al., 2022). In a different study, Szelei et al. (2020) acknowledged that professional development for cultural diversity has been supported to promote equity and justice. Although the researchers conducted the study in an educational setting, the findings apply to this project because the researchers support that professional development in the form of workshops improved their cultural diversity competencies (Szelei et al., 2020). Accordingly, in the context of this project, professional development to enhance program leaders' cultural sensitivity could result in positive outcomes.

Culturally responsive leadership enables professionals to consider the varying factors that can affect a population, which promotes the development of an inclusive environment of programs to mitigate gaps in the services delivered (Campos-Moreira et al., 2020). Similar to Campos-Moreira et al. (2020), Gopalkrishnan (2019) added more context to the study by indicating that cultural competence provides opportunities to promote positive change in all aspects of human life. Overall, based on the research findings, it can be interpreted that professional development focused on promoting re-entry program leaders' cultural sensitivity could help decrease recidivism.

Project Description

The project is a 3-day professional development PowerPoint presentation that will be conducted to improve reentry program leaders' understanding of the evidence-based practices they can apply to decrease recidivism among African Americans. The 3-day training session includes content on (a) risk and needs assessment, (b) gender responsiveness, (c) educational services, and (d) cultural competence (see Appendix A). In the subsequent sections, a description of the professional development's components, implementation, timeline, design, barriers, and solutions are discussed.

Components, Implementation, and Timeline

The professional development is a 3-day, 18-hour session, which is anticipated to be adequate time to train the participants and perform the evaluation. Although an in-person training session would have provided an opportunity for comprehensive and detailed discussions, the professional development will be conducted online via Zoom. Holding the professional development via Zoom will promote time efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and convenience, ensuring that reentry program leaders from different locations participate in the project. In their study, Fernandez et al. (2023) identified that leadership training can be delivered in-person or

virtually, significantly increasing skills and knowledge. Accordingly, the virtual professional development training is expected to achieve the intended purpose effectively. During the virtual professional development, the participants will be encouraged to comment or type their questions, which will be addressed at the end of the sessions.

The professional development training comprises 26 slides (see Appendix A). The slides are divided into 3 days. On the first day, the participants will be informed about the project. Specifically, the participants will be informed about the purpose, problem, research question that guided the study, the significance of the research, and how the issue was investigated. After the lunch break, participants will watch a video on the need for female-focused re-entry programs, after which they will discuss and reflect on the training. On the second day, the training participants will be the project goals, and the first two identified leadership practices on risk need assessment and gender responsiveness. Later in the afternoon, after the lunch break, participants will listen to a talk on risk and needs assessment and gender responsiveness. After, they will participate in an evaluation, engage in small group discussions, and reflect on the training. The third day will involve training on educational services and cultural competence as leadership practices that can be applied. In the afternoon session, participants will listen to a talk and complete an evaluation. Images and videos are included in the presentations to ensure that the professional development training sessions are engaging and void of monotony.

The professional development should ideally be conducted when reentry program leaders are not too busy with their day-to-day activities. Preferably, professional development should be conducted over the weekend or holiday season, which will ensure that no interruptions are caused to the reentry program leaders' schedules. I will handle all the communication with the reentry program leaders to select the most convenient days for most participants to be involved in the professional development.

The implementation will begin once the days are set, and reentry program leaders have confirmed their availability and willingness to participate in the professional development. I will contact each program leader the day before the scheduled professional development to remind them about the training sessions. I will also send each participant a Zoom link to test their connectivity and enhance their familiarity with the video conferencing platform. On the days of the professional development, I will send a Zoom link at least 1 hour before the scheduled commencement time of 8 AM. The 3-day training session will begin at 8 AM and conclude at 4 PM each day (see Table 3). The program leaders will be requested to take a one-hour break between 1 PM and 2 PM daily. The afternoon sessions will be more engaging, where participants will watch videos, participate in group discussions, and complete evaluations.

Table 3*Project Implementation Timeline*

Time	Action
The day before the professional development session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind the program leaders about the scheduled professional development session. • Increase the program leaders' familiarity with the Zoom videoconferencing platform.
Day 1 of the professional development session	
7 AM – 8 AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a Zoom link for day one of professional development.
8 AM – 1 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction (Discuss the study's focus problem, research question, and purpose). - Significance of the problem - Problem investigation
1 PM – 2 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch break
2 PM – 3 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch a video titled Women Unshackled: The Need for Female-Focused Reentry Program.
3 PM – 4 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group discussions about the content and final remarks
Day 2 of the professional development session	
7 AM – 8 AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a Zoom link for day two of professional development.
8 AM – 1 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training session on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project goals - Risk and needs assessments - Gender responsiveness
1 PM – 2 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch break
2 PM – 3:30 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to a talk by Marsha Curry-Nixon.
3:20 PM – 4 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation and small group discussions
Day 3 of the professional development session	
7 AM – 8 AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a Zoom link for day three of professional development.
8 AM – 1 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training session on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational services - Cultural competence
1 PM – 2 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch break
2 PM – 3 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to a talk by Andre Bethea.
3 PM – 4 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation

Design, Barriers, and Solutions to Barriers

The professional development content was designed based on the evidence-based leadership practices provided by the program leaders during the interviews. Each of the four practices is discussed to increase the leaders' knowledge. Subsequently, questions in the evaluation section relate to each evidence-based leadership practice. Appendix A contains the designed professional development training session.

Two barriers are anticipated when implementing professional development. The first barrier is related to time. Finding three full days to participate in professional development might be challenging for the reentry program leaders. The program leaders' limited participation could hinder the success of professional development. The barrier will be mitigated by scheduling the professional development training days based on the program leaders' availability.

Additionally, conducting professional development training via Zoom is convenient. The second barrier concerns the preferred approach of delivering professional development via Zoom. There is a possibility that technical issues, such as inconsistent networks and outside noises, could interrupt the Zoom-based professional development session. The possible network issue will be mitigated by requesting participants to find a reliable connection. The barrier to outside noises will be mitigated by requesting the program leaders find a private, soundproof, or quiet place.

Project Evaluation Plan

Project evaluation can be complex and challenging (Rode et al., 2022). Summative assessments will be performed to evaluate the program leaders' learning at the end of the three-day training (Ismail et al., 2022). The assessments will be conducted to analyze the program leaders' perception of the training program and understanding of the content delivered. (see Appendix A). Questions will include:

1. Did you feel more prepared after completing the professional development?

2. Which of the best practices from professional development would consider applying during this training?
3. What improvement if any do you feel from this training would help formerly incarcerated African American women avoid recidivism compared to previous professional development training programs?
4. Do you believe from this professional development training that there could be improvement in your reentry program?
5. Have you connected with other reentry program leaders about this professional development training program?
6. How can the training delivered be improved? (see Appendix A).

The evaluations are expected to help determine whether the professional development training resulted in the anticipated outcome of helping reentry program leaders understand the evidence-based practices that can be applied to reduce recidivism among African American women.

Project Implications

The program development can empower reentry program leaders with the knowledge and skills to apply evidence-based leadership practices. Applying evidence-based practices can result in more impactful reentry programs that better fulfill the needs of formerly incarcerated African American women, decreasing recidivism. The reduction in recidivism as a result of evidence-based leadership practices can reduce the cycle of criminal behavior, promoting equity. Reducing recidivism would promote equity because African Americans will no longer be disproportionately overrepresented in the criminal justice system. The successful reintegration of African American women into society can benefit the communities by enhancing neighborhood stability and positively impacting the economy. Decreasing recidivism will mean more individuals will join

the workforce. A decrease in recidivism because of evidence-based leadership practices can reduce the strain on the criminal justice system, leading to cost savings and redirecting resources toward other critical services.

Professional development can have implications for local stakeholders. For example, reducing recidivism among African American women could demonstrate the commitment to fostering equity and inclusivity, which can promote positive relations between local authorities and marginalized communities. Also, reducing recidivism can result in greater civic participation because the individuals will be eligible to volunteer, vote, and engage in community activities. Overall, the success of the evidence-based leadership practices discussed in the professional development can influence policymakers to implement similar initiatives to enhance the efficacy of reentry programs.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

The project is associated with different strengths. The first strength is that the project development was based on primary data from reentry program leaders. Collecting in-depth primary data from reentry program leaders is a strength because it supports gaining a unique perspective of evidence-based leadership practices. Primary data from the leaders supported providing a unique perspective on the topic, achieving the study purpose, and answering the research question. The collected qualitative primary data were a strength. Unique data are a strength because they provide insights into a concept that is not adequately understood (Taherdoost, 2021).

The second strength was that the program development was based on information from the interviewed reentry program leaders, who were knowledgeable about evidence-based practices that can be applied to reduce recidivism. The leaders' knowledge and experiences supported providing insightful and credible information that is relevant and applicable. Although the focus of the qualitative study was not generalizing the findings, results in this project are applicable in formulating strategies that can meaningfully decrease recidivism for African American women.

Limitations

A limitation of the project was the involvement of a small sample size of four reentry program leaders. Although the sample size is naturally small in qualitative studies, the four participants used in this project were below the recommended in published literature. For instance, Hennink and Kaiser (2022) supported that a suitable sample size would be nine to 17

participants for qualitative studies where data are collected using interviews. As such, a sample of four reentry program leaders is a limitation because it is lower than the recommended figure.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The problem of focus was the increased recidivism of African American women despite the implementation of reentry programs. The problem was addressed by conducting a qualitative study, where data was collected using interviews. Notably, an alternative approach that could support better addressing the problem would be including additional data sources, specifically focus groups and archival data. The use of additional data sources could result in improving the findings' trustworthiness through triangulation. In addition to promoting trustworthiness, having three data sources would collect more content on the evidence-based leadership practices that reentry program leaders can apply to decrease recidivism among African American women.

Another alternative is that a mixed-methods methodology could be applied to address the gap and answer the research question. Applying a mixed-methods methodology could support conducting interviews to identify evidence-based practice. Then, the impact or effectiveness of the identified evidence-based practices could be assessed using the quantitative methodology. The quantitative methodology component of the mixed-methods approach could support quantifying the impact of the identified leadership practices on recidivism. Quantifying the impact of leadership practices on recidivism can help determine the most effective approach.

Recommended alternative approaches for the professional development would include a more extended period, for instance, 2 weeks, 2 hours daily. A longer period would allow the subdivision of the content, ensuring that each reentry program leader must only sacrifice 2 hours in their day. Having the professional development over different days could increase the feasibility of the training sessions. In addition to having the training on different days for fewer

hours, the sessions could be recorded so the reentry program leaders could listen to them independently.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Studying for a doctoral degree has helped me grow as a student, researcher, and project developer. The academic pursuit as a doctoral student has provided me with an invaluable opportunity to gain specialized knowledge and improve my skills. As such, I can confidently say that being a doctoral student has increased my critical, creative, and associative thinking skills. The improvement in skills and nuanced understanding has supported my ability to identify a problem and apply the knowledge gained from experience and existing literature to propose a solution that can be adopted to mitigate the issue.

The doctoral journey has improved my intellectual curiosity and commitment to continuous and lifelong learning. As a researcher, I value selecting the proper methodology to guide a study. I understand that in cases with little to no knowledge, a qualitative methodology offers a suitable approach for increasing an understanding of the problem. Subsequently, framing research questions appropriately and identifying the most suitable individuals to interview is essential. In this study, purposefully sampling participants supported identifying the most suitable reentry program leaders who could respond by answering the research question. The experience increased my understanding of the critical role of collecting the right primary data as a researcher. Through extensive literature reviews, data collection, data analysis, and results interpretation, studying for a doctoral degree has improved my research skills and understanding of the broader academic landscape.

Other than the growth as a student and researcher, creating a professional development training session has improved my competencies as a project leader. I am confident I can now lead projects of significant scope, specifically those focused on resolving practical problems. The

professional development process has supported my ability to think strategically, manage resources effectively, and overcome the intricacies of the process from inception to completion.

Pursuing a doctoral degree has been a cornerstone of my academic and professional journey. The process has empowered me to approach challenges from a multidisciplinary perspective, promoting positive social change. In addition to improving my knowledge, the doctoral degree has enhanced my passion for advancing the boundaries of what is unknown.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

The study is critical because it provides four evidence-based practices that reentry program leaders can apply to decrease the recidivism of African American women. Identifying and highlighting the four evidence-based practices offers a clear roadmap for reentry program leaders to effectively address recidivism, an issue that disproportionately impacts African Americans. The significance of the work is based on the potential of the results to promote positive change for African American women who experience unique challenges re-integrating into society. The strategies were suggested by reentry program leaders, which supports their theoretical and practical applicability.

The proposed practices can help mitigate the intersectionality of gender and race that make African American women's reintegration into society more challenging than other populations. The targeted approach supported suggesting practices sensitive to the population's specific circumstances. Overall, the study's implications hold promise for promoting positive societal change by decreasing recidivism and supporting the successful reintegration of African American women into society. The work contributes to the ongoing initiatives to reform and improve the criminal justice system, specifically emphasizing inclusivity and equity.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The findings in this study have social change implications for reentry program leaders and formally incarcerated African American women. An implication for reentry program leaders is that the findings provide four evidence-based leadership practices that can be applied to mitigate recidivism among African American women. Adopting the strategies can improve the effectiveness of reentry programs, underpinning the leaders' ability to perform their roles. The implication for formally incarcerated African American women is that the findings support their efficient transition into the community because the practices can mitigate the gender and race barriers experienced during the process.

Reentry program leaders can apply the risk and need assessment to guide the development of individualized plans based on factors such as criminal history, social support, mental health, and substance abuse. Gender responsiveness can be applied to design programs that recognize and respond to African American women's unique experiences and challenges. The practice can result in offering trauma-informed care and gender-specific services. Educational services can offer African American women opportunities to attain and improve their educational qualifications. Applying cultural competence can involve hiring staff from diverse backgrounds, offering relevant resources, and celebrating cultural heritage. Future researchers can conduct quantitative studies to assess the impact of the four identified leadership practices on recidivism.

Conclusion

Risk and needs assessment, gender responsiveness, educational services, and cultural competence were identified as leadership strategies used by program leaders interviewed in this study. The study's strengths are that primary data were collected, knowledgeable reentry program leaders were involved, and the participants offered unique insights into the problem. However, the small sample size and 3-day professional development sessions were limitations. The

recommendations for an alternative approach are to ensure data triangulation and apply a mixed-methods methodology. The results of this study have practical implications for reentry program leaders and African American women, which can promote positive social change, mainly supporting successful reintegration into society.

References

- Abraham, A., & Priyamvada, M. (2019). Will society let female offenders to lead a normal life? A study on the perception of police towards the challenges in reintegration of female offenders. *The Indian Police Journal*, 46, 46–59.
<https://bprd.nic.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/file/202001020542373723554IndianPoliceJournal.pdf>
- Acheampong-Jones, A., O'Leary, C. C., Striley, C. W., Gerke, T., Crecelius, R., Sullivan, J., & Cottler, L. B. (2018). Substance use, victimization, HIV/AIDS risk, and recidivism among females in a therapeutic justice program. *Journal of Substance Use*, 23(4), 415–421. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14659891.2018.1436604>
- Agan, A. Y., & Makowsky, M. D. (2018). The minimum wage, EITC, and criminal recidivism. *National Bureau of Economic Research*, 25116, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w25116>
- Alper, M., Durose, M. R., & Markman, J. (2018). *2018 Update on prisoner recidivism: A 9-year follow-up period (2005–2014) (NCJ 250975)*. Bureau of Justice Statistics.
<https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/18upr9yfup0514.pdf>
- Amasa-Annang, J., & Scutelnic, G. (2016). How promising is the second chance act in American ex-offenders. *Journal of Public Management & Social Policy*, 23(2), 22–37.
<http://digitalscholarship.tsu.edu/jpmmsp/vol23/iss2/3>
- Applegarth, D. M., Lewis, R. A., & Rief, R. M. (2023). Imperfect tools: A research note on developing, applying, and increasing understanding of criminal justice risk assessments. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 34(4), 319–336.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/08874034231180505>
- Arbour, W., Lacroix, G., & Marchand, S. (2021). Prison rehabilitation programs: Efficiency and targeting. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 1(1), 1–44. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3761992>

- Archibald, M. M., Ambagtsheer, R. C., Casey, M. G., & Lawless, M. (2019). Using zoom videoconferencing for qualitative data collection: Perceptions and experiences of researchers and participants. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 18*, 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1609406919874596>
- Assimonye, S., Lee, J., Smith, S., Glenn, J., Kennedy, P., & Ramaswamy, M. (2022). Understanding the changing social and health circumstances of women leaving jail: A social support analysis. *Women & Criminal Justice, 1*(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08974454.2022.2105475>
- Astrada, M. L. (2018). Reentry philosophies, approaches, and challenges. *Judicature, 102*, 32–37. <https://judicature.duke.edu/articles/reentry-philosophies-approaches-and-challenges/>
- Astrada, S. B., & Nery, I. X. (2021). The intersection of reducing recidivism and spurring inclusive economic recovery. *Legislation & Policy Brief, 10*, 1–36. https://heinonline.org/hol-cgi-bin/get_pdf.cgi?handle=hein.journals/legpb10§ion=5
- Baggio, S., Weber, M., Rossegger, A., Endrass, J., Heller, P., Schneeberger, A., Graf, M., & Liebrez, M. (2020). Reducing recidivism using the reasoning and rehabilitation program: A pilot multi-site-controlled trial among prisoners in Switzerland. *International Journal of Public Health, 65*, 801–810. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00038-020-01372-9>
- Balafoutas, L., Garcia-Gallego, A., Georgantzis, N., Jaber-Lopez, T., & Mitrokostas, E. (2020). Rehabilitation and social behavior: Experiments in prison. *Games and Economic Behavior, 119*, 148–171. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geb.2019.10.009>
- Baloch, N. A., & Jennings, W. G. (2018). Offender vocational rehabilitation services and post release employment: A case for inmates with disabilities. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 57*(6), 402–414. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10509674.2018.1510865>

- Beaudry, G., Yu, R., Perry, A. E., & Fazel, S. (2021). Effectiveness of psychological interventions in prison to reduce recidivism: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 8(9), 759–773. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366\(21\)00170-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(21)00170-X)
- Berghuis, M. (2018). Reentry programs for adult male offender recidivism and reintegration: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 62(14), 4655–4676. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X18778448>
- Berryessa, C. M. (2021). A tale of “second chances”: An experimental examination of popular support for early release mechanisms that reconsider long-term prison sentences. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 12(1), 1–42. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-021-09466-x>
- Black, S., Byars-Winston, A., Cabrera, I., & Pfund, C. (2022). Enhancing research mentors' cultural awareness in STEM: A mentor training intervention. *UI Journal*, 13(1), Article 36522. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10112533/>
- Blonigen, D. M., Shaffer, P. M., Smith, J. S., Cucciare, M. A., Timko, C., Smelson, D., ... & Rosenthal, J. (2021). Recidivism treatment for justice-involved veterans: evaluating adoption and sustainment of moral reconnection therapy in the US Veterans Health Administration. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 48(6), 992–1005. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-021-01113-x>
- Boak, G., & Crabbe, S. (2019). Experiences that develop leadership capabilities. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 40(1), 97–106. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-07-2018-0254>
- Bozick, R., Steele, J., Davis, L., Turner, S. (2018). Does providing inmates with education improve post release outcomes? A meta-analysis of correctional education programs in

the United States. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 14, 389–428.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-018-9334-6>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). What can "thematic analysis" offer health and wellbeing researchers? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, 9(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v9.26152>

Brown, A., & Danaher, P. A. (2019). CHE principles: Facilitating authentic and dialogical semi-structured interviews in educational research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 42(1), 76–90. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2017.1379987>

Brown, M., Altrichter, H., Shiyan, I., Rodríguez Conde, M. J., McNamara, G., Herzog-Punzenberger, B., & Sánchez, L. (2022). Challenges and opportunities for culturally responsive leadership in schools: Evidence from Four European countries. *Policy Futures in Education*, 20(5), 580–607. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14782103211040909>

Brusman-Lovins, L., & Lovins, B. K. (2021). Rethinking community corrections. *Victims & Offenders*, 16(7), 967–980. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2021.1971127>

Bukten, A., Lund, I.O., Kinner, S.A., Rognli, E. B., Havnes, I. A., Muller, A. E., & Stavseth, M. R. (2020). Factors associated with drug use in prison – results from the Norwegian offender mental health and addiction (NorMA) study. *Health Justice*, 8(10), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40352-020-00112-8>

Bunting, A. M., Staton, M., Winston, E., & Pangburn, K. (2019). Beyond the employment dichotomy: An examination of recidivism and days remaining in the community by post-release employment status. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 63(5), 712–733. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X18808685>

- Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2022). *Recidivism and reentry*. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/topics/recidivism-and-reentry>
- Burt, R. M. (2014). More than a second chance: An alternative employment approach to reduce recidivism among criminal ex-offenders. *Tennessee Journal of Law and Policy*, 6(1), 12–24. <https://trace.tenness.edu.tjlp/vol6/iss1/3>
- Butts, J. A., & Schiraldi, V. (2018). *Recidivism reconsidered: Preserving the community justice mission of community corrections. The executive session on community corrections*. <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/centers/wiener/>
- Campos-Moreira, L. D., Cummings, M. I., Grumbach, G., Participant 1s, H. E., & Hooks, K. (2020). Making a case for culturally humble leadership practices through a culturally responsive leadership framework. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*, 44(5), 407–414. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23303131.2020.1822974>
- Channing, J. (2020). How can leadership be taught? Implications for leadership educators. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 15(1), 134–148. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1254573.pdf>
- Chien, C. (2020). America's paper prisons: The second chance act gap. *Michigan Law Review*, 119(519), 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.36644/mlr.119.3.america>
- Clarke, E., & Visser, J. (2019). Pragmatic research methodology in education: Possibilities and pitfalls. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 42(5), 455–469. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2018.1524866>
- Community Resources for Justice. (2021). *An examination of Florida's prison population trend*. <https://www.crj.org/assets/2017/08/FL-state-report.pdf>

- Cornell, J., Malherbe, N., Suffla, S., & Seedat, M. (2019). Reflecting critically on the researcher-participant encounter in focus groups: Racialized interactions, contestations and (re) presentations of South Africa's "protest culture". *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *19*(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2019.1577519>
- D'Amico, R., & Kim, H. (2018). Evaluation of seven second chance act adult demonstration programs: Impact findings at 30 months. *National Criminal Justice Reference Services*, *251702*, 1–108. <https://doi.org/10.2011/ry.bx-0003>
- de Andrade, D., Ritchie, J., Rowlands, M., Mann, M., & Hides, L. (2018). Substance use and recidivism outcomes for prison-based drug and alcohol interventions. *Epidemiologic Reviews*, *40*(1), 121–133. <https://doi.org/10.1093/epirev/mxy00>
- De Rooy, K., Bennett, S., & Sydes, M. (2019). Women released from custody: Investigating risk factors and reoffending. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, *63*(13), 2239–2263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X19845778>
- DeHart, D. D. (2018). Women's pathways to crime: A heuristic typology of offenders. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, *45*(10), 1461–1482. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854818782568>
- Denver, M., Siwach, G., & Bushway, S. D. (2017). A new look at the employment and recidivism relationship through the lens of a criminal background check: Criminal background checks and recidivism. *Criminology*, *55*(1), 174–204. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9125.12130>
- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2023). *Curriculum matters: Instructional materials and professional development*. DESE. <https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/impd/>

- Drake, E. K. (2018). The monetary benefits and costs of community supervision. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 34(1), 47–68.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1043986217750425>
- Duden, G. S. (2021). Challenges to qualitative evidence synthesis—Aiming for diversity and abstracting without losing meaning. *Methods in Psychology*, 5, Article 100070.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732312466295>
- Duriez, S. A., Sullivan, C., Latessa, E. J., & Lovins, L. B. (2018). The evolution of correctional program assessment in the age of evidence-based practices. *Corrections*, 3(2), 119–136.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/23774657.2017.1343104>
- Edwards, L., Jamieson, S. K., Bowman, J., Chang, S., Newton, J., & Sullivan, E. (2022). A systematic review of post-release programs for women exiting prison with substance-use disorders: assessing current programs and weighing the evidence. *Health & Justice*, 10(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40352-021-00162-6>
- Faizuddin, A., Azizan, N. A., Othman, A., & Ismail, S. N. (2022). Continuous professional development programs for school principals in the 21st century: Lessons learned from educational leadership practices. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, Article 983807.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.983807>
- Farringer, A. J., Duriez, S. A., Manchak, S. M., & Sullivan, C. C. (2021). Adherence to “what works”: Examining trends across 14 years of correctional program assessment. *Corrections*, 6(4), 269–287. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23774657.2019.1659193>
- Gallagher, J. R., Wahler, E. A., & Lefebvre, E. (2020a). Further evidence of racial disparities in drug court outcomes: Enhancing service-delivery to reduce criminal recidivism rates for non-white participants. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 46(3), 406–415.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01488376.2019.1575325>

- Gallagher, J. R., Wahler, E. A., & Nordberg, A. (2020b). Predictors of graduation and criminal recidivism: Findings from a drug court that primarily serves African Americans. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 2020*, 1–12.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2020.1799472>
- Gannon, T. A., Olver, M. E., Mallion, J. S., & James, M. (2019). Does specialized psychological treatment for offending reduce recidivism? A meta-analysis examining staff and program variables as predictors of treatment effectiveness. *Clinical Psychology Review, 73*(101752), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2019.101752>
- Garcia-Hallett, J. (2019). We're being released to a jungle: The state of prisoner reentry and the resilience of women of color. *The Prison Journal, 99*(4), 459–483.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0032885519852089>
- Garcia-Hallett, J., & Christian, J. (2021). Gender and (fictive) family in a women's post-incarceration mentoring program. *The British Journal of Criminology, 120*, 1–15.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azab120>
- Garofalo, M. (2020). Family therapy in corrections: Implications for re-entry into the community. *Journal of Correctional Health Care, 26*(3), 240–248.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/107834582093835>
- Garrett, B. L., Jakubow, A., & Monahan, J. (2019). Judicial reliance on risk assessment in sentencing drug and property offenders: A test of the treatment resource hypothesis. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 46*(6), 799–810.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854819842589>
- Gaspar, M., Brown, L., Ramler, T., Scanlon, F., Gigax, G., Ridley, K., & Morgan, R. D. (2019). Therapeutic outcomes of changing lives and changing outcomes for male and female

- justice-involved persons with mental illness. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 46(12), 1678–1699. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854819879743>
- Geerts, J. M., Goodall, A. H., & Agius, S. (2020). Evidence-based leadership development for physicians: a systematic literature review. *Social Science & Medicine*, 246, Article112709. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.112709>
- George, K., Sibanyoni, E., & Mofokeng, J. (2022). Fetching water with a leaking container: Female offenders' rehabilitation program limitation, South Africa. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, 11(2), 433–446. <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v11i2.1691>
- Ghasemi, M., Anvari, D., Atapour, M., Stephen Wormith, J., Stockdale, K. C., & Spiteri, R. J. (2021). The application of machine learning to a general risk–need assessment instrument in the prediction of criminal recidivism. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 48(4), 518–538. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854820969753>
- Gill, C., & Wilson, D. B. (2017). Improving the success of reentry programs: Identifying the impact of service–need fit on recidivism. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 44(3), 336–359. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854816682048>
- Gopalkrishnan, N. (2019). Cultural competence and beyond: Working across cultures in culturally dynamic partnerships. *The International Journal of Community and Social Development*, 1(1), 28–41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2516602619826712>
- Gottfredson, D.C., Kearley, B., Thornberry, T.P. Slothower, M., Devlin, D., & Fader, J. J. (2018). Scaling-up evidence-based programs using a public funding stream: A randomized trial of functional family therapy for court-involved youth. *Prevention Science*, 19, 939–953. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-018-0936-z>

- Gurusami, S. (2018). Motherwork Under the State: The maternal labor of formerly incarcerated black women. *Social Problems*, 66(1), 128–143. <https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spx045>
- Hall, J. C., Harger, K., & Stansel, D. (2018). Economic freedom and recidivism: Evidence from US states. *International Advances in Economic Research*, 21(2), 155–165. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11294-015-9520-5>
- Harper, A., Ginapp, C., Bardelli, T., Grimshaw, M., Mohamedali, A., Thomas, I., & Puglisi, L. (2020). Debt, incarceration, and re-entry: A scoping review. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 11(1), 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-020-09559-9>
- Harrison, J. E., & Taylor, H. (2019). Ten years of implementation: Assertive community treatment and integrated dual disorder treatment in a statewide system. *Archives of Psychology*, 3(2), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.31296/aop.v3i2.92>
- has it and how much? *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 46(1), 154–172.
- Hasisi, B., Carmel, T., Weisburd, D., & Wolfowicz, M. (2020). Crime and terror: Examining criminal risk factors for terrorist recidivism. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 36, 449–472. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10940-019-09415-y>
- Hedrich, D., & Hartnoll, R. L. (2021). Harm-reduction interventions. In el-Guebaly N., Carrà G., Galanter M., & Baldacchino A.M. (Eds.). *Textbook of Addiction Treatment*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36391-8_52
- Hennink, M., & Kaiser, B. N. (2022). Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests. *Social Science & Medicine*, 292, Article 114523. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114523>
- Hersch, J., & Meyers, E. E. (2019). The gendered burdens of conviction and collateral consequences on employment. *Journal of Legislation*, 45, 171-179.

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Delivery.cfm/SSRN_ID3397309_code48950.pdf?abstractid=3397309&mirid=1&type=2

Hetey, R. C., & Eberhardt, J. L. (2018). The numbers don't speak for themselves: Racial disparities and the persistence of inequality in the criminal justice system. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 27(3), 183–187.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721418763931>

Hochstrasser, S. R., Amacher, S. A., Tschan, F., Semmer, N. K., Becker, C., Metzger, K., & Marsch, S. (2022). Gender-focused training improves leadership of female medical students: A randomized trial. *Medical Education*, 56(3), 321–330.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.14658>

Honawar, M. (2019). Social work intervention with women offenders: A pathway to prevent recidivism. *Asian Social Work Journal*, 4(4), 35-46.

<https://msocialwork.com/index.php/aswj/article/view/112>

Hong, J. H., Hein, S., Slaughter, A. M., Foley Geib, C., Gopalakrishnan, A., & Grigorenko, E. L. (2020). The roles of race, ethnicity, gender, and mental health in predicting truancy recidivism. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 47(6), 649-667.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854820910185>

Hopwood, S., & Cardozo, L. (2020). Second looks & second chances. *HeinOnline*, 41, 83-90.

<https://heinonline.org/HOL/418390>

Houser, K. A., Saum, C. A., & Hiller, M. L. (2019). Mental health, substance abuse, co-occurring disorders, and 3-year recidivism of felony parolees. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 46(9), 1237–1254. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854819856924>

Ismail, S. M., Rahul, D. R., Patra, I., & Rezvani, E. (2022). Formative vs. summative assessment: impacts on academic motivation, attitude toward learning, test anxiety, and self-

regulation skill. *Language Testing in Asia*, 12(1), 40-48. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-022-00191-4>

- Jayaweera, J. S., & Weligamage, S. (2021). Significance of professional development of education leaders: Evidence from literature review. *International Journal of Higher Education Management*, 7(02), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.24052/IJHEM/V07N02/ART-2>
- Jewkes, Y., Jordan, M., Wright, S., & Bendelow, G. (2019). Designing ‘healthy’ prisons for women: Incorporating trauma-informed care and practice (TICP) into prison planning and design. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(3818), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16203818>
- Johnson, J. E., Schonbrun, Y. C., Peabody, M. E., Shefner, R. T., Fernandes, K. M., Rosen, R. K., & Zlotnick, C. (2018). Provider experiences with prison care and aftercare for women with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders: Treatment, resource, and systems integration challenges. *The Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research*, 42(4), 417–436. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11414-014-9397-8>
- Johnson, J. L. (2017). Comparison of Recidivism Studies: AOUSC, USSC, and BJS. *Federal Probation*, 81(1), 52–54. <https://www.uscourts.gov/federal-probation-journal/2017/06/comparison-recidivism-studies-aousc-ussc-and-bjs>
- Johnson, J.L., Adkins, D., Chauvin, S. (2020). A review of the quality indicators of rigor in qualitative research. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 84(1), 7120–7132. <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe7120>
- Jones, A., Wallis, D., & Seibers, A. (2020). Gender-responsive practice and pregnant girls: A scoping review of America’s girls courts. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 118, Article 105426. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105426>

- Kamalu, N. C., & Onyeozili, E. C. (2018). A critical analysis of the 'broken windows' policing in New York City and its impact: Implications for the criminal justice system and the African American community. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, *11*, 71–94. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2046674016>
- Katsiyannis, A., Whitford, D., & Gage, N., & Zang, D. (2018). Adult recidivism in United States: A meta-analysis 1994–2015. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *27*(3), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-017-0945-8>
- Kiger, M. E., & Varpio, L. (2020). Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131. *Medical Teacher*, *42*(8), 846–854. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2020.1755030>
- King, E. A., Tripodi, S. J., & Veeh, C. A. (2018). The relationship between severe mental disorders and recidivism in a sample of women released from prison. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, *89*, 717–731. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11126-018-9572-9>
- Kjellstrom, S., Stalne, K., & Tornblom, O. (2020). Six ways of understanding leadership development: An exploration of increasing complexity. *Leadership*, *16*(4), 434–460. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715020926731>
- Klykken, F. H. (2021). Implementing continuous consent in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, *1*(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687941211014366>
- Kolbeck, S. G., Bellair, P. E., & Lopez, S. (2022). Race, work history, and the employment recidivism relationship. *Criminology*, *60*(4), 637–666. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9125.12317>
- Kopak, A. M., Guston, K., Maness, L., & Hoffmann, N. G. (2019). A prospective study of behavioral health indicators and repeat jail admissions among rural inmates. *Health & Justice*, *7*(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40352-019-0087-8>

- Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *The European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1), 120–124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092>
- Korz, A. (2022). ‘You have been punished in prison. And then when you are released, you are punished for life’: Post-incarceration barriers for women in Ukraine. *International Sociology*, 37(3), 373–390. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02685809221084447>
- Kunicki, M., Staffen, M., Cushman, J., Lyons, R. E., Phelps, L., & Sullivan, K. (2022). A Self-assessment approach to understanding 4-h professional development needs in the Northeast. *Journal of Youth Development*, 17(3), 9–14. <https://doi.org/10.5195/jyd.2022.1201>
- LaCourse, A., Listwan, S. J., Reid, S., & Hartman, J. L. (2019). Recidivism and reentry: The role of individual coping styles. *Crime & Delinquency*, 65(1), 46–68. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128718790497>
- Lee, J., Sunerman, H., & Hastings, L. (2020). The influence of being a mentor on leadership development: Recommendations for curricular and co-curricular experiences. *Journal of Leadership Education*, 19(3), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.12806/V19/I3/R4>
- Lehrer, D. (2021). Trauma-informed care: The importance of understanding the incarcerated women. *Correctional Health Care*, 27(2), 121–126. <https://doi.org/10.1089/jchc.20.07.0060>
- Lewis, C. (2021). The paradox of recidivism. *Emory Law Journal*, 70(6), 1210–1271. <https://scholarlycommons.law.emory.edu/elj/vol70.iss6/1>
- Lund, C. S. (2022). Professional development leadership in public organizations: A refined conceptualization. *Public Personnel Management*, 51(4), 516–537. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00910260221118576>

- Malcome, M. L., Fedock, G., Garthe, R. C., Golder, S., Higgins, G., & Logan, T. K. (2019). Weathering probation and parole: The protective role of social support on Black women's recent stressful events and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Black Psychology, 45*(8), 661–688. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095798419889755>
- Mannerfelt, C., & Hakansson, A. (2018). Substance use, criminal recidivism, and mortality in criminal justice clients: A comparison between men and women. *Journal of Addiction, 2018*(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2018/1689637>
- Martin, K. D., Sykes, B. L., Shannon, S., Edwards, F., & Harris, A. (2018). Monetary sanctions: Legal financial obligations in the US systems of justice. *Annual Review of Criminology, 1*(1), 471–495. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-criminol-032317-091915>
- Mastrobuoni, G., & Terlizese, D. (2019). Leave the door open? Prison conditions and recidivism. *EconPapers, 6*(580), 1–63. <https://EconPapers.repec.org/RePEc:cca:wpaper:580>
- Mathers, S. A., & Lindekugel, D. M. (2019). Gender and prison recidivism: The influence of protective and risk factors. *Journal of Penal Law and Criminology, 7*(2), 185–211. <https://doi.org/10.26650/JPLC2019-0001>
- McKernan, P. (2019). Wanted on warrants: The impact of legal financial obligations on prisoner reentry and recommendations for reform. *Journal of Community Corrections, 28*(3), 11–18. <https://www.civicresearchinstitute.com>
- Mihas, P. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis*. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.1195>
- Miller, H. V. (2021). Female re-entry and gender-responsive programming. *Corrections Today, 1*(1), 12–19. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/300931.pdf>

- Miller, H. V. (2021). Female re-entry and gender-responsive programming. *Corrections Today*, 13, 12–19. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/300931.pdf>
- Miller, J., & Maloney, C. (2019). Operationalizing risk, need, and responsivity principles in local policy: Lessons from five county juvenile probation departments. *The Prison Journal*, 100(1), 49-73. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0032885519882312>
- Mitchell, M. B., & Davis, J. B. (2019). Formerly incarcerated black mothers matter too: Resisting social constructions of Motherhood. *The Prison Journal*, 99(4), 420–436. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032885519852079>
- Moles-Lopez, E., & Ananos, F. T. (2021). Factors of prison recidivism in women: A socio-educational and sustainable development analysis. *Sustainability*, 13(11), Article 5822. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13115822>
- Monde, G. C. (2021). “Trying to get free”: A theoretical centering of Black Women’s post-carcer narratives of systemic unfreedom. *CrimRxiv*, 1(1), 1-10. <https://www.crimrxiv.com/pub/2yddb5cx/release/1>
- Moon, B. (2021). *The effects of professional development in gender responsive practices on teachers’ instruction* [Doctoral dissertation, Johns Hopkins University]. <http://jhir.library.jhu.edu/handle/1774.2/66841>
- Morash, M., & Kashy, D. A. (2022). The relevance of women’s economic marginalization to recidivism. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 49(3), 330–349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00938548211039545>
- Morash, M., Kashy, D. A., Smith, S. W., & Cobbina, J. E. (2019). Technical violations, treatment and punishment responses, and recidivism of women on probation and parole. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 30(5), 788–810. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887403417723425>

- Moser, A., & Korstjens, I. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 3: Sampling, data collection, and analysis. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1), 9–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375091>
- Motulsky, S.L. (2021). Is member checking the gold standard of quality in qualitative research? *Qualitative Psychology*, 8(3), 389-406. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000215>
- Munive, A., Donville, J., & Darmstadt, G. L. (2023). Public leadership for gender equality: A framework and capacity development approach for gender transformative policy change. *Eclinicalmedicine*, 56, Article 101798. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2022.101798>
- Negrin, K. A., Slaughter, S. E., Dahlke, S., & Olson, J. (2022). Successful recruitment to qualitative research: A critical reflection. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 21, Article 16094069221119576. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069221119576>
- Newton, D., Day, A., Giles, M., Wodak, J., Graffam, J., & Baldry, E. (2018). The impact of vocational education and training programs on recidivism. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 62(1), 187–207. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X16645083>
- Nixon, S. (2020). ‘Giving back and getting on with my life’: Peer mentoring, desistance and recovery of ex-offenders. *Probation Journal*, 67(1), 47–64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0264550519900249>
- Oliffe, J. L., Kelly, M. T., Gonzalez Montaner, G., & Yu, W. F. (2021). Zoom interviews: Benefits and concessions. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20, Article 16094069211053522. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211053522>
- Olver, M. E., Marshall, L. E., Marshall, W. L., & Nicholaichuk, T. P. (2018). A long-term outcome assessment of the effects on subsequent re-offense rates of a strengths based

- RNR treatment program for sex offenders. *Sexual Abuse*, 32(2), 127–153.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1079063218807486>
- Ortlipp, M. (2008). Keeping and using reflective journals in the qualitative research process. *The Qualitative Report*, 13, 695–705.
<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol13/iss4/8/>
- Parkhouse, H., Lu, C. Y., & Massaro, V. R. (2019). Multicultural education professional development: A review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 89(3), 416–458. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654319840359>
- Pearson, D. A. S. (2019). *The Routledge companion to rehabilitative work in criminal justice*. Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/The-Routledge-Companion-to-Rehabilitative-Work-in-Criminal-Justice/Ugwudike-Graham-McNeill-Raynor-Taxman-Trotter/p/book/9781138103320>
- Petrich, D. M., Cullen, F. T., Lee, H., & Burton, A. L. (2022). *Prisoner reentry programs*. In: E. Jeglic, & C. Calkins (Eds.). *Handbook of Issues in Criminal Justice Reform in the United States*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77565-0_18
- Petrich, D. M., Pratt, T. C., Jonson, C. L., & Cullen, F. T. (2021). Custodial sanctions and reoffending. *Crime and Justice*, 50, 1–72. <https://doi.org/10.1086/715100>
- Pettus-Davis, C., Renn, T., Veeh, C. A., & Eikenberry, J. (2019). Intervention development study of the five-key model for reentry: An evidence-driven prisoner reentry intervention. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 58(7), 614–643.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10509674.2019.1635242>
- Pleggenkuhle, B. (2018). The financial cost of a criminal conviction: Context and consequences. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 45(1), 121–145.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854817734278>

- Potter, I., & Chitpin, S. (2021). Professional development for school leaders in England: Decision-making for social justice. *Professional Development in Education*, 47(1), 63–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2020.1787197>
- Rasa, J. (2020). Developing effective health leaders: the critical elements for success. *Journal of Hospital Management and Health Policy*, 4, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.21037/jhmhp.2019.11.02>
- Raskolnikov. (2020). Criminal deterrence: A review of the missing literature. *Supreme Court Economic Review*, 28(2020), 1–59. <https://doi.org/10.1086/710158>
- Raver, C. K., Ledford, A. K., & Norton, M. (2023). A strategic organizational approach to developing leadership developers. *Journal of Character and Leadership Development*, 10(1), 15–28. <https://doi.org/10.58315/jcld.v10.253>
- Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2019). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological*. Sage Publications. https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/110532_book_item_110532.pdf
- Redmond, M. L., Smith, S., & Collins, T. C. (2020). Exploring African American Women's experiences with substance use treatment: A review of the literature. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 48(2), 337–350. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22241>
- Renjith, V., Yesodharan, R., Noronha, J. A., Ladd, E., & George, A. (2021). Qualitative methods in health care research. *International Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 12, 20–26. https://dx.doi.org/10.4103%2Fijpvm.IJPVM_321_19
- Ropes-Berry, K., Kennedy, S. C., Lloyd, M., Veeh, C. A., & Tripodi, S. J. (2020). The intersectional effects of race and gender on time to reincarceration. *Justice Quarterly*, 37(1), 132–160. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2018.1524508>

- Roupnel, S., Rinfre, N., & Grenier, J. (2019). Leadership development: Three programs that maximize learning over time. *Journal of Leadership Education*, *18*(2), 1–10.
<https://doi.org/10.12806/V18/I2/T1>
- Ruback, R. B., Knoth, L. K., Gladfelter, A. S., & Lantz, B. (2018). Restitution payment and recidivism. *Criminology & Public Policy*, *17*(4), 789–813. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12401>
- Rudin, C., Wang, C., & Coker, B. (2020). The age of secrecy and unfairness in recidivism prediction. *Harvard Data Science Review*, *2*(1), 1–10.
<https://doi.org/10.1162/99608f92.6ed64b30>
- Sahlin, S. (2023). Professional development of school principals—how do experienced school leaders make sense of their professional learning? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *1*(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143223116823>
- Salas-Vallina, A., Simone, C., & Fernández-Guerrero, R. (2020). The human side of leadership: Inspirational leadership effects on follower characteristics and happiness at work (HAW). *Journal of Business Research*, *107*, 162–171
<https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/jbrese/v107y2020icp162-171.html>
- Schlager, M. D. Through the looking glass: taking stock of offender reentry. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, *34*(1), 69-80.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1043986217750443>
- Seamster, L. (2019). Black debt, white debt. *Contexts*, *18*(1), 30–35.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1536504219830674>
- Semenza, D. C., & Link, N. W. (2019). How does reentry get under the skin? Cumulative reintegration barriers and health in a sample of recently incarcerated men. *Social Science & Medicine*, *243*(112618), 21–49. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.112618>

- Shannon, L. M., Jones, A. J., & Newell, J. (2019). Examining gender and factors associated with post-program recidivism in a statewide drug court program. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 58(7), 592–613. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10509674.2019.1635241>
- Siwach, G. (2018). Unemployment shocks for individuals on the margin: Exploring recidivism effects. *Labour Economics*, 52(2018), 231–244. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2018.02.001>
- Skinner-Osei, P., & Stepteanu-Watson, D. (2018). A qualitative analysis of African American fathers' struggle with reentry, recidivism, and reunification after participation in re-entry programs. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 28(2), 240–255. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2017.1402724>
- Smith, S. (2022). *Gender-Responsive Leadership in UN Peace Operations: The path to a transformative approach*. International Peace Institute. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2202_Gender-Responsive-Leadership.pdf
- Smith, T., Panisch, L. S., & Prost, S. G. (2019). Financial well-being and physical health related quality of life among persons incarcerated in jail. *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 42(4), 444–461. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0735648X.2018.1559077>
- Smoyer, A. B., Keene, D. E., Oyola, M., & Hampton, A. C. (2021). Ping-pong housing: Women's post-incarceration trajectories. *Affilia*, 36(3), 336–356. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109920954416>
- Snead-Greene, C. D., & Royster, M. D. (2018). *Popular media portrayal of imprisoned black women*. Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315099309-8/popular-media-portrayal-imprisoned-black-women-cheryle-snead-greene-michael-royster>

- Springer. (2023). *Position paper*. <https://diser.springeropen.com/submission-guidelines/preparing-your-manuscript/position-paper>
- Squires, A., & Dorsen, C. (2018). Qualitative research in nursing and health professions regulation. *Journal of Nursing Regulation*, 9(3), 15–26. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2155-8256\(18\)30150-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2155-8256(18)30150-9)
- Starks, T. E. (2018). *Successful reentry of African American women* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Kennesaw State University. https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=msc_j_e_t_d
- Starr, V. L. (2021). *Evidence-based programming during post-conviction supervision and recidivism outcomes* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Walden University. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=11881&context=dissertations>
- Studer Group. (2022). *Evidence-based leadership: Building a culture of quality and execution*. <https://www.studergroup.com/evidence-based-leadership>
- Szelei, N., Tinoca, L., & Pinho, A. S. (2020). Professional development for cultural diversity: the challenges of teacher learning in context. *Professional Development in Education*, 46(5), 780–796. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2019.1642233>
- Taherdoost, H. (2021). Data collection methods and tools for research. A step-by-step guide to choose data collection technique for academic and business research projects. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management*, 10(1), 10–38. <https://hal.science/hal-03741847/document>

- Taliaferro, W., & Pham, D. (2018). *Incarceration to reentry: Education & training pathways in Ohio. Reconnecting justice in the states*. Center for Law and Social Policy, Inc. (CLASP). <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED586093.pdf>
- Tasmat, D., Arifin, M. Z., & Septiawati, O. (2023). Empowerment of women inmates category IIB correctional institution Jambi through CSR program of PT Pertamina EP Jambi Field. *Influence: International Journal of Science Review*, 5(3), 99–107. <https://influence-journal.com/index.php/influence/article/download/186/176>
- Taylor, C. J. (2020). Beyond recidivism: An outcome evaluation of a federal reentry court and a critical discussion of outcomes that matter. *Justice Evaluation Journal*, 3(2), 134–154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24751979.2020.1721311>
- Taylor, J. L., Johnson, S., Cruz, R., Gray, J., Schiff, D., & Bagley, S. M. (2021). Integrating harm reduction into outpatient opioid use disorder treatment settings. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 36, 3810–3819. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-021-06904-4>
- The National Reentry Resource Center. (2018). *Program quality and performance measures*. <https://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/topics/program-quality-performance-measurement>
- Thomas, D.R. (2003). *A general inductive approach for qualitative analysis*. <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.462.5445&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Tripodi, S., Pettus-Davis, C., Bender, K., Fitzgerald, M., Renn, T., & Kennedy, S. (2019). Pathways to recidivism for women released from prison: A mediated model of abuse, mental health issues, and substance use. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 46(9), 1219–1236. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854819867119>

- United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2023). *Curriculum planning*. UNESCO. <https://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/glossary-curriculum-terminology/c/curriculum-planning>
- van den Broek, D., Black, P., & Nicki, A. (2021). Doing double-time: Women, incarceration and employment discrimination. *Work, Employment and Society*, 35(5), 968-978. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017021995662>
- Victor, G. A., Comartin, E., Willis, T., & Kubiak, S. (2021). Factors of recidivism among individuals with co-occurring conditions in rural mental health jail interventions. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 6, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X211013521>
- Victor, G. A., Kheibari, A., Staton, M., & Oser, C. (2018). Appalachian women’s use of substance abuse treatment: Examining the behavioral model for vulnerable populations. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 18(2), 192–213. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1533256X.2018.1450264>
- Viglione, J., Alward, L. M., & Sheppard, D. L. (2020). Staff training aimed at reducing rearrest: Probation officer attitudes and experiences. *European Journal of Probation*, 12(3), 238–264. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2066220320976101>
- Walker, L., & Davidson, J. (2018). *Restorative justice re-entry planning for the imprisoned: An evidence-based approach to recidivism reduction*. Routledge. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3291843
- Wallace, D., & Wang, X. (2020). Does in-prison physical and mental health impact recidivism? *SSM – Population Health*, 11(2020), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2020.100569>

- Wanzer, D. L. (2021). What Is evaluation? Perspectives of how evaluation differs (or not) from research. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 42(1), 28–46.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214020920710>
- Weidner, R. R., & Schultz, J. (2020). Examining the relationship between U.S. incarceration rates and population health at the county level. *SSM: Population Health*, 9(100466), 1-8.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2019.100466>
- Weiss-Riley, R., Kang-Brown, J., Mulligan, C., Valsalam, V., Chakraborty, S., & Henrichson, C. (2018). Exploring the urban–rural incarceration divide: Drivers of local jail incarceration rates in the United States. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 36(1), 76–88.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15228835.2017.1417955>
- Wong, J. S., Bouchard, J., Gushue, K., & Lee, C. (2018). Halfway out: An examination of the effects of halfway houses on criminal recidivism. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 30(6), 62-81.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X18811964>
- Yukhnenko, D., Blackwood, N., & Fazel, S. (2019a). Risk factors for recidivism in individuals receiving community sentences: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *CNS Spectrums*, 25(2), 252-263. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1092852919001056>
- Yukhnenko, D., Wolf, A., Blackwood, N., & Fazel, S. (2019b). Recidivism rates in individuals receiving community sentences: A systematic review. *PLoS ONE* 14(9), 1-15.
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0222495>
- Zakaria, S. M. (2018). Employment issues among ex-offenders: Difficulties in securing employment and barriers of employment. *International Journal for Studies on Children, Women, Elderly and Disabled*, 5(2018), 8-12.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326681863_EMPLOYMENT_ISSUES_AMON

G EX-OFFENDERS DIFFICULTIES IN SECURING EMPLOYMENT AND BARRIERS
OF EMPLOYMENT

- Zeiler, K., & Puccetti, E. (2018). *Crime, punishment, and legal error: A review of the experimental literature*. Law and Economics Research Paper, 18-27. School of Law, Boston University. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3250393#
- Zoom Video Communication Incorporation. (2022). *Getting started with recording*. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360059781332-Getting-started-with-recording>

Appendix A: The Project

Purpose

Increase reentry program leaders' knowledge about the leadership practices that can be used to reduce recidivism among African American women.

Goals of The Project

Goal 1

- Increase the leaders' understanding of the importance of conducting risk and needs assessments on African American women in reentry programs to identify their perils. An increased understanding of African American women's needs and risks could help to identify the resources that should be provided to the population, helping overcome the unique challenges experienced.

Goal 2

- Enhance reentry program leaders' understanding of the essence of gender responsiveness and individualized focus to help African American women avoid recidivism. Gender-responsive programming involves leaders recognizing and addressing African American women's unique needs. The practice consists of helping reentry program leaders consider the impact of abuse, trauma, and gender-specific issues on recidivism.

Goal 3

- Promote reentry program leaders' understanding of the vitality of offering educational services to African American women. The educational services include life-skills training, entrepreneurship, workforce rehabilitation, fiscal responsibility, personal development courses like cognitive-behavioral therapy, bachelor's degrees, mentoring, individualized counseling, and seminars.

Goal 4

- Increase reentry program leaders' understanding of the essence of cultural competence as a practice for reducing recidivism among African American women. The professional development will help the leaders understand the importance of respecting and understanding African American women's cultural experiences, nuances, and challenges. Cultural competence is related to inclusion, emphasizing the need to acknowledge and respect African American women's unique cultural values, backgrounds, and traditions.

Learning Outcomes

Increase reentry program leaders understanding of:

1. Risk and needs assessments,
2. gender responsiveness and individualized focus,
3. Educational services,
4. Cultural competence as leadership practices.

Target Audience

Reentry program leaders in the United States.

Professional Development:
Evidence-based Leadership
Practices of Reentry Program
Leaders to Reduce Recidivism
Among African-American
women

by
Name

Three Day Training

In this PowerPoint presentation, a discussion on the evidence-based leadership practices of reentry program leaders to reduce recidivism among African-American women is provided.

Day

Introduction

Morning session: 8:30 AM -9:00 AM

Purpose: Increase reentry program leaders' knowledge about the leadership practices that can be used to reduce recidivism among African-American women.

Learning outcomes: Increase program leaders understanding of: Risk and needs assessments, gender responsiveness and individualized focus, educational services, and of cultural competence as leadership practices.

Target audience: Reentry program leaders

- **Purpose:** Increase reentry program leaders' knowledge about the leadership practices that can be used to reduce recidivism among African-American women
- **Learning outcomes:** Increase program leaders understanding of: Risk and needs assessments, gender responsiveness and individualized focus, educational services, and of cultural competence as leadership practices.
- **Target audience:** Reentry program leaders

Project Goals

Morning session: 9:00 AM – 10: 00 AM

Increase the leaders' understanding of the importance of conducting risk and needs assessments on African American women in reentry programs to identify their perils.

Enhance reentry program leaders' understanding of the essence of gender responsiveness and individualized focus to help African-American women avoid recidivism.

Promote reentry program leaders' understanding of the vitality of offering educational services to African-American women.

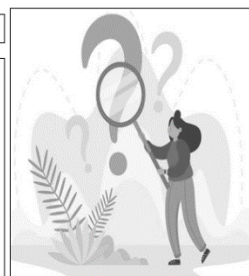
Increase reentry program leaders' understanding of the essence of cultural competence as a practice for reducing recidivism among African-American women.

- Goal 1: Increase the leaders' understanding of the importance of conducting risk and needs assessments on African American women in reentry programs to identify their perils.
- Goal 2: Enhance reentry program leaders' understanding of the essence of gender responsiveness and individualized focus to help African-American women avoid recidivism.
- Goal 3: Promote reentry program leaders' understanding of the vitality of offering educational services to African-American women.
- Goal 4: Increase reentry program leaders' understanding of the essence of cultural competence as a practice for reducing recidivism among African-American women.

Problem Investigation

Morning session: 10:00 AM – 10: 30 AM

- Solutions to the problem were identified by performing interviews with four re-entry program leaders.
- The data were collected using interviews, that were performed via Zoom.
- The collected data were thematically analyzed using MAXQDA, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software.
- The analysis facilitated identifying the themes to answer the research question.



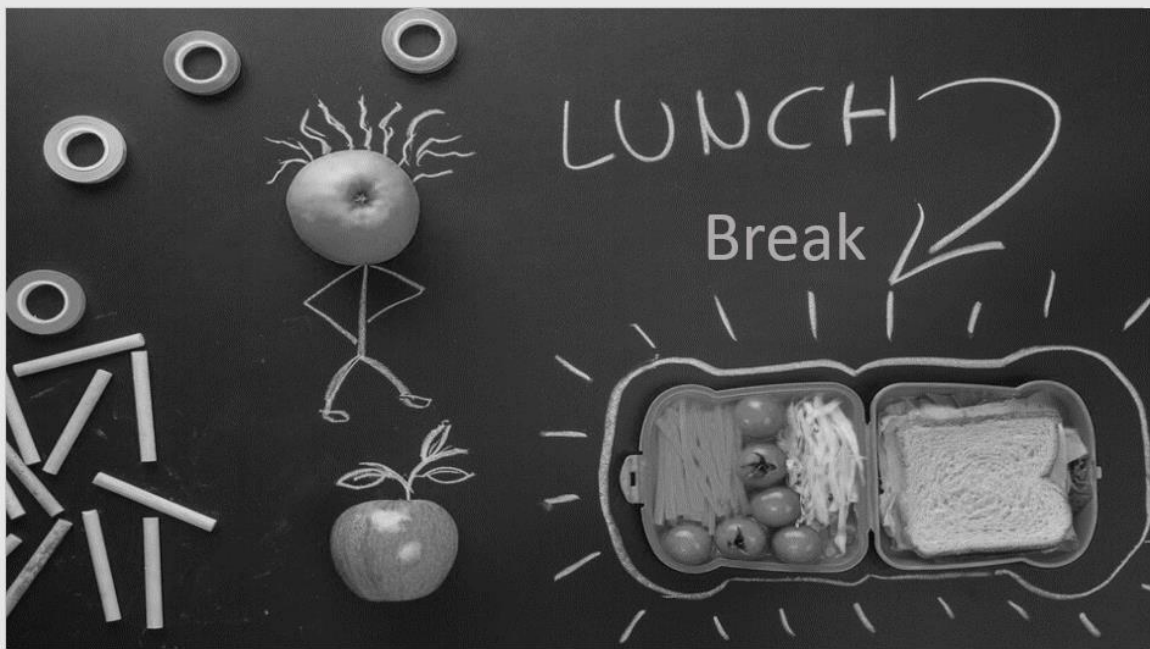
Significance of the Project

Morning session: 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

- African-American women experience reentry and reintegration challenges such:
 - Societal shame,
 - Minimal adequate job training,
 - Substandard housing (Burden, 2019; Fashakin, 2018).
- Despite the presence of the inequities, there is a gap in the literature examining practices that work for African American women (Burden, 2019; Fashakin, 2018).
- By examining and compiling a set of evidence-based practices that may be effective in helping African American women avoid recidivism, the results of this study contribute to creating a blueprint for new and current leaders.



- African-American women experience reentry and reintegration challenges such as societal shame, minimal adequate job training, and substandard housing (Burden, 2019; Fashakin, 2018).
- Despite the presence of the inequities, there is a gap in the literature examining practices that work for African American women (Burden, 2019; Fashakin, 2018).
- By examining and compiling a set of evidence-based practices that may be effective in helping African American women avoid recidivism, the results of this study contribute to creating a blueprint for new and current leaders.
- The study findings could provide information on how African American women might benefit by gaining effective training, guidance, and skills to avoid reengaging in crime.
- 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM – The facilitator will engage in personal discussions with the reentry program leaders to understand their expectations of the training. The focus will also be on the challenges that the program leaders experience in their prevailing programs.



Educational Video on the Problem

Afternoon session: 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

- **Women Unshackled: The Need for Female-Focused Reentry Programs**
- In the video, four panelists discuss the issues experienced by women in the system and propose solutions for enhancing the outcomes.
- The panelists, who are lawmakers and policy experts, discuss the need for female-focused re-entry programs.
- The video's content is anticipated to improve the re-entry program leaders' understanding of the need for female-focused interventions.




<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzAdu6dKJoY>

In the video, four panelists discuss the issues experienced by women in the system and propose solutions for enhancing the outcomes. The panelists, who are lawmakers and policy experts, discuss the need for female-focused re-entry programs. The video's content is anticipated to improve the re-entry program leaders' understanding of the need for female-focused interventions.

Conclusion


Afternoon session: 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

- Small group discussions, which will allow the leaders to reflect on the training.
- I will provide the final remarks and end of Day 1 training



-Prevailing problems with the current reentry programs.
 -The importance of making changes to their leadership practices.

Day



Click to add notes

Introduction

Morning session: 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

- Based on the thematic analysis performed, it was identified that the leadership practices that program leaders use to help African-American women avoid recidivism include:
 - Risk and needs assessment,
 - Gender responsiveness,
 - Educational services.
 - Cultural competence
- In today's professional development, we will focus on:
 - Risk and needs assessment
 - Gender responsiveness.

• Based on the thematic analysis performed, it was identified that the leadership practices that program leaders use to help African-American women avoid recidivism include risk and needs assessment, gender responsiveness, educational services, and cultural competence.
 • In today's professional development, we will focus on risk and needs assessment and gender responsiveness.

Leadership Practice 1: Risk and Needs Assessment

Morning session: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM



It involves conducting comprehensive assessments to identify African-American women's specific perils and needs.



The comprehensive assessments help understand African-American women's unique:

- Attributes,
- Risks,
- Needs.

- It involves conducting comprehensive assessments to identify African-American women's specific perils and needs.
- The early assessment of needs helps determine the unique needs of African American women, which helps promote planning to mitigate recidivism.
- Through early assessment of needs, leaders can gain a comprehensive understanding of the unique challenges experienced by African Americans, underpinning the development of tailored plans that increase individuals' chances of being successfully reintegrated into society.
- A commendable approach is the use of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs and individual goal setting based on the assessments conducted.
- Risk-needs assessment facilitates identifying areas where participants may be at increased peril of reoffending, which supports tailoring interventions to address specific perils to decrease recidivism effectively.
- The comprehensive assessments help understand African-American women's unique attributes, risks, and needs.

Leadership Practice 2: Gender Responsiveness

Morning session: 11:30 AM – 1: PM

Gender-responsive:

- Involves leaders recognizing and addressing African-American women's unique needs.
- Considers the impact of abuse, trauma, and gender-specific issues on recidivism.
- Can help mitigate the discrimination and systemic barriers related to employment and access to resources that affect African-American women.

- Gender-responsive programming involves leaders recognizing and addressing African-American women's unique needs.
- Gender responsiveness considers the impact of abuse, trauma, and gender-specific issues on recidivism.
- Gender responsiveness can help mitigate the discrimination and systemic barriers related to employment and access to resources that affect African-American women.
- African American women experience discrimination in the workplace and when obtaining mental and physical health services and housing after the women graduate from the program and move to independent living, which supports the need for gender responsive strategies.
- Gender responsive strategies include help African American women open a bank account, budget, pay off court fees, obtain their driver's license, save for independent living, and offer saving-match scholarships so ladies can purchase a vehicle.




Click to add notes

Talk

Afternoon session: 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

- TED Talk on risk and needs assessment and gender responsiveness by Marsha Curry-Nixon, Founder and Executive Director, of Amiracl4sure, Inc.



- Talk on risk and needs assessment and gender responsiveness by Marsha Curry-Nixon, Founder and Executive Director, of Amiracl4sure, Inc.

Evaluation

Afternoon session: 3:20 PM – 3:45 PM


Question	Response
Why is risk and needs assessment critical in decreasing recidivism among African-American women?	
What is gender responsiveness as a leadership practice?	

- Why is risk and needs assessment critical in decreasing recidivism among African-American women?
- What is gender responsiveness as a leadership practice?


Conclusion

Afternoon session: 3:45 PM – 4:00 PM

- Small group discussions among participants to allow reflecting on the training
- End of Day 2 training



- Click to add notes

Day 

Click to add notes

Introduction

Morning session: 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM

- Reflection on the past-two days training sessions
- During today's professional development, our focus is the remaining two leadership practices on:
 - Educational services
 - Cultural competence

- During today's professional development, our focus is the remaining two leadership practices on educational services and cultural competence.

Leadership Practice 3: Educational Services

Morning session: 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM

- Educational services related to life skills and academic knowledge can help African Americans avoid recidivism.
- The educational services include:
 - ✦ Obtaining life-skills training
 - ✦ Workforce rehabilitation
 - ✦ Fiscal responsibility
 - ✦ Personal development courses like cognitive-behavioral therapy for criminal and addictive thinking
 - ✦ Successful parenting strategies
 - ✦ Relapse prevention
 - ✦ Healthy relationships
 - ✦ Culinary arts, cosmetology, or truck-driving degree
 - ✦ Counseling
 - ✦ Social and emotional learning skills

- Educational services related to life skills and academic knowledge can help African Americans avoid recidivism.
- The educational services include obtaining life-skills training; workforce rehabilitation; fiscal responsibility; personal development courses like cognitive-behavioral therapy for criminal and addictive thinking; successful parenting strategies; relapse prevention; healthy relationships; culinary arts, cosmetology, or truck-driving degree; counseling; and social and emotional learning skills.
- Educating African American women to rebuild their lives and establish healthy connections in their communities reduces the probability of them engaging in substance misuse or criminal behavior, which leads to recidivism.

Leadership Practice 4: Cultural Competence

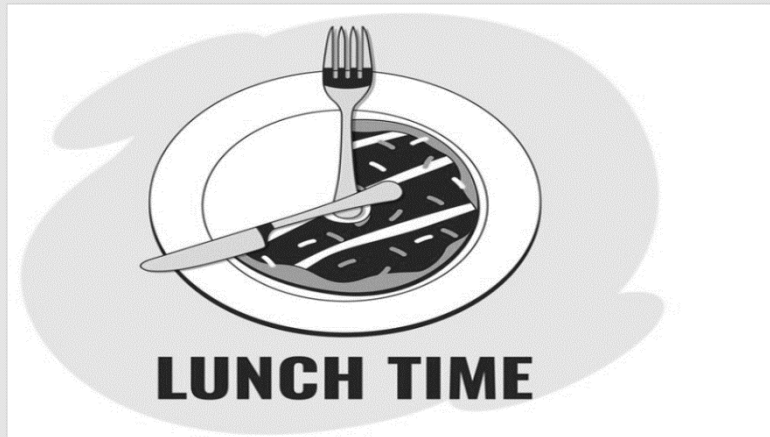
Morning session: 10:30 AM – 12:30 AM



Cultural competence:

- Requires understanding the specific needs of African-American women.
- Supports respecting and understanding the experiences, nuances, and challenges African-American women encounter.
- Is related to inclusion, emphasizing the need to acknowledge and respect African-American women's unique cultural values, backgrounds, and traditions.

- Cultural competence requires understanding the specific needs of African-American women.
- Cultural competence supports respecting and understanding the experiences, nuances, and challenges African-American women encounter.
- Cultural competence is related to inclusion, emphasizing the need to acknowledge and respect African-American women's unique cultural values, backgrounds, and traditions.



Click to add notes

Talk

Afternoon session: 2 PM – 3:30 PM

- **Speaker:** discusses educational services and cultural competencies by Andre Bethea, Senior Policy Advisor, Corrections, Reentry, and Justice Reform, Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice



- Talk on educational services and cultural competencies by Andre Bethea, Senior Policy Advisor, Corrections, Reentry, and Justice Reform, Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice

Evaluation

Afternoon session: 3:30 PM – 3:40 PM

Did you feel more prepared after completing the professional development?	A. Yes B. No
Which of the best practices from professional development would consider applying during this training? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> Building Relationships <input type="checkbox"/> Strengths and Challenges <input type="checkbox"/> Connecting to Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Learner Prior Experience and Motivation <input type="checkbox"/> Adapting Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Giving Feedback
What improvement if any do you feel from this training would help formerly incarcerated African American women avoid recidivism compared to previous professional development training programs?	A. Significant improvement B. Some improvement C. No improvement D. N/A – This is my first term
Do you believe from this professional development training that there could be improvement in your reentry program?	A. Significant improvement B. Some improvement C. No improvement D. N/A – This is my first term
Have you connected with other reentry program leaders about this professional development training program?	A. Yes B. No C. Plan to D. Haven't had time
How can the training delivered be improved?	

Did you feel more prepared after completing the professional development?

Yes

No

Which of the best practices from professional development would consider applying during this training? Check all that apply.

Building Relationships

Strengths and Challenges


Connecting to Resources

Learner Prior Experience and Motivation

Adapting Instruction

Afternoon session: 3:40 PM – 4:00 PM

- End of Day 3 training



Thank you for your attention. Any questions?

Professional Development

Slide 1 (2:00): Title

In this PowerPoint presentation, a discussion on the evidence-based leadership practices of reentry program leaders to reduce recidivism among African American women is provided.

Slide 2 (2:30): Day 1

(3:52) 3: Introduction

Problem: The problem of focus was the increased recidivism of African American women despite the implementation of reentry programs.

Learning outcomes: Increase program leaders understanding of: Risk and needs assessments, gender responsiveness and individualized focus, educational services, and of cultural competence as leadership practices.

Target **Slide** audience: Reentry program leaders.

Slide (2:46) 4: Project Goals

Goal 1: Increase the leaders' understanding of the importance of conducting risk and needs assessments on African American women in reentry programs to identify their perils.

Goal 2: Enhance reentry program leaders' understanding of the essence of gender responsiveness and individualized focus to help African-American women avoid recidivism.

Goal 3: Promote reentry program leaders' understanding of the vitality of offering educational services to African American women.

Goal 4: Increase reentry program leaders' understanding of the essence of cultural competence as a practice for reducing recidivism among African American women.

Slide (3:00) 5: Problem Investigation

Solutions to the problem were identified by performing interviews with four re-entry program leaders.

The data were collected using interviews that were performed via Zoom.

The collected data were thematically analyzed using MAXQDA, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software.

The analysis facilitated identifying the themes to answer the research question.

Slide (4:20) 6: Significance of the Project

African American women experience reentry and reintegration challenges such as societal shame, minimal adequate job training, and substandard housing (Burden, 2019; Fashakin, 2018).

Despite the inequities, there is a gap in the literature examining practices that work for African American women (Burden, 2019; Fashakin, 2018).

By examining and compiling a set of evidence-based practices that may be effective in helping African American women avoid recidivism, the results of this study contribute to creating a blueprint for new and current leaders.

The study findings could provide information on how African American women might benefit by gaining effective training, guidance, and skills to avoid re-engaging in crime.

Slide (0:02) 7: Lunch Break

Slide (1:31) 8: Educational Video on the Problem

In the video, four panelists discuss the issues experienced by women in the system and propose solutions for enhancing the outcomes. The panelists, who are lawmakers and policy experts, discuss the need for female-focused re-entry programs. The video's content is anticipated to improve the re-entry program leaders' understanding of the need for female-focused interventions.

Slide (2:54) 9: Conclusion

Small group discussions, which will allow the leaders to reflect on the training.

I will provide the final remarks and end of Day 1 training summary..

Slide (0:03) 10: Day 2

Slide (3:01) 11: Introduction

Based on the thematic analysis performed, it was identified that the leadership practices that program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism include risk and needs assessment, gender responsiveness, educational services, and cultural competence.

In today's professional development, we will focus on risk, needs assessment, and gender responsiveness.

Slide (4:02) 12: Leadership Practice 1: Risk and Needs Assessment

It involves conducting comprehensive assessments to identify African American women's specific perils and needs.

The early assessment of needs helps determine the unique needs of African American women, which helps promote planning to mitigate recidivism.

Through early assessment of needs, leaders can gain a comprehensive understanding of the unique challenges experienced by African Americans women, underpinning the development of tailored plans that increase individuals' chances of being successfully reintegrated into society. A commendable approach is the use of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs and individual goal setting based on the assessments conducted.

Risk-needs assessment facilitates identifying areas where participants may be at increased peril of reoffending, which supports tailoring interventions to address specific perils to decrease recidivism effectively.

The comprehensive assessments help understand African American women's unique attributes, risks, and needs.

Slide (5:22) 13: Leadership Practice 2: Gender Responsiveness

Gender-responsive programming involves leaders recognizing and addressing formerly incarcerated African American women's unique needs.

Gender responsiveness considers the impact of abuse, trauma, and gender-specific issues on recidivism.

Gender responsiveness can help mitigate the discrimination and systemic barriers related to employment and access to resources that affect formerly justice involved African American women.

African American women experience discrimination in the workplace and when obtaining mental and physical health services and housing after the women graduate from the program and move to independent living, which supports the need for gender responsive strategies.

Gender responsive strategies includes helping formerly incarcerated African American women open bank accounts, budget, pay off court fees, obtain their driver's license, save for independent living, and offer saving-match scholarships so ladies can purchase a vehicle.

Gender responsiveness involves decreasing hopelessness, promoting preparedness, and enhancing innovative thinking, which is achieved by having behavior therapists to assist in reducing recidivism.

Slide (0:02) 14: Lunch Break

Slide (2:20) 15: Talk

TED Talk on risk and needs assessment and gender responsiveness by Marsha Curry-Nixon, Founder and Executive Director, of Amiraacle4sure, Inc.

Slide (2:30) 16: Evaluation

Why is risk and needs assessment critical in decreasing recidivism among African American women?

What is gender responsiveness as a leadership practice?

Slide (2:30) 17: Conclusion

Small group discussions

Reflecting on the training

End of Day 2 training

Slide (0:02) 18: Day 3**Slide (3:41) 19: Introduction**

During today's professional development, our focus is the remaining two leadership practices on educational services and cultural competence.

Slide (3:24) 20: Leadership Practice 3: Educational Services

Educational services related to life skills and academic knowledge can help African Americans avoid recidivism.

The educational services include obtaining life-skills training; workforce rehabilitation; fiscal responsibility; personal development courses like cognitive-behavioral therapy for criminal and addictive thinking; successful parenting strategies; relapse prevention; healthy relationships; culinary arts, cosmetology, or truck-driving degree; counseling; and social and emotional learning skills.

Slide (5:20) 21: Leadership Practice 4: Cultural Competence

Cultural competence requires understanding the specific needs of African American women.

Cultural competence supports respecting and understanding the experiences, nuances, and challenges African American women encounter.

Cultural competence is related to inclusion, emphasizing the need to acknowledge and respect African American women's unique cultural values, backgrounds, and traditions.

Slide (0:02) 22: Lunch Break**Slide (2:00) 23: Speaker**

Talk on educational services and cultural competencies by Andre Bethea, Senior Policy Advisor, Corrections, Reentry, and Justice Reform, Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice

Slide (2:30) 24: Evaluation

Did you feel more prepared after completing the professional development?

Yes

No

Which of the best practices from professional development would consider applying during this training? Check all that apply.

Building Relationships

Strengths and Challenges

Connecting to Resources

Learner Prior Experience and Motivation

Adapting Instruction

Critical Thinking

Giving Feedback

What improvement if any do you feel from this training would help formerly incarcerated African American women avoid recidivism compared to previous professional development training programs?

Significant improvement

Some improvement

No improvement

N/A – This is my first development training program session

Do you believe from this professional development training that there could be improvement in your reentry program?

A. Significant improvement

B. Some improvement

C. No improvement

D. N/A – This is my first development training program session

Have you connected with other reentry program leaders about this professional development training program?

Yes

No

Plan to

Haven't had time

Slide 25: Thank you for your attention! Any Questions?

Time	Session	Slide	Note	Goals
Day One of the Professional Development Session				
7 AM – 8 AM	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a Zoom link for day one of professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare participants for the Zoom session.
8 AM – 8:30 AM	Welcome and introductions	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each participant will share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who they are ○ Where they're from ○ Two details about their program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create community networking opportunities with leaders.
8:30 AM - 1:00 PM	Introduction	3-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the project's purpose, significance, project goals and problem investigation process to participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve participants' understanding of the study. • Enhance participants' understanding of the project goals related to the project
1 PM – 2 PM	Lunch break	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch break 	-
2 PM – 3 PM	Educational video	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch a video titled Women Unshackled: The Need for Female-Focused Reentry Program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve participants' understanding of the importance of re-entry programs for healthcare providers.

3 PM – 4 PM	Conclusion	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group discussions about the content and final remarks -Prevailing problems with the current reentry programs. -The importance of making changes to their leadership practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize the session
Day Two of the Professional Development Session				
7 AM – 8 AM	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a Zoom link for day two of professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare participants for the Zoom session.
8 AM – 9 AM	Review	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-cap on the previous session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind participants of yesterday's session activities.
9 AM – 10 AM	Introduction	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the content to be covered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide participants with an understanding of what to expect
10:00 – 1 PM	Leadership practice 1 & 2	12-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the first two identified leadership practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate participants about the leadership practices
1 PM – 2 PM	Lunch	14	-	-
2 PM – 3:30 PM	TED Talk	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain risk and needs assessment and gender responsiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve participants' understanding of risk and needs assessment and gender responsiveness
3:20 PM – 3:45 PM	Evaluation	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess participants' knowledge about the first two leadership practices
3:45 PM – 4:00 PM	Conclusion	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group discussions, reflecting on the training, and end of Day 2 training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize the session
Day Three of the Professional Development Session				
7 AM – 8 AM	• -	• -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a Zoom link for day two of professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare participants for the Zoom session.
8 AM – 8:30	Introduction	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the leadership practices to be discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participants' awareness of the leadership practices

8:30 AM – 1 PM	Leadership practice 3 & 4	20-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the remaining two leadership practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training session on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational services - Cultural competence
1 PM – 2 PM	Lunch	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -
2 PM – 3:30 PM	Speaker	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend a discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve participants' understanding of educational services and cultural competence
3:30 PM – 3:40 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation 	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess participants' knowledge about the training and remaining leadership practices.
3:40 PM – 4 PM	Thank participants, respond to questions, and end-session	26	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize

Summative Evaluation

1. Did you feel more prepared after completing the professional development?	A. Yes B. No
2. Which of the best practices from professional development would consider applying during this training? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> Building Relationships <input type="checkbox"/> Strengths and Challenges <input type="checkbox"/> Connecting to Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Learner Prior Experience and Motivation <input type="checkbox"/> Adapting Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Giving Feedback
3. What improvement if any do you feel from this training would help formerly incarcerated African American women avoid recidivism compared to previous professional development training programs?	A. Significant improvement B. Some improvement C. No improvement D. N/A – This is my first term
4. Do you believe from this professional development training that there could be improvement in your reentry program?	A. Significant improvement B. Some improvement C. No improvement D. N/A – This is my first term
5. Have you connected with other reentry program leaders about this professional development training program?	A. Yes B. No C. Plan to D. Haven't had time

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

1. Introductions
2. Clarify the purpose of my study
3. Ask if participants have questions about the consent form
4. Ask permission to record the interview
5. Record the time, place, and date of the interview
6. Conduct the interview
7. Identify the participant with a code while conducting the interview
8. Turn off recording at the end of the interview
9. Thank the participant for being part of my study

Interview Questions

The interview questions I will ask are about your leadership practices to help African American women avoid recidivism. I am interested in how you organize, model, and use your leadership practices to help African American women.

What leadership practices do program leaders use to help African American women avoid recidivism?

1. What are your values and beliefs about recidivism that guide your leadership practices for African American women to avoid recidivism? Based on your values and beliefs, what practices do you use?
 - a. How were these practices used to reduce recidivism for African American women?
 - b. Are there any practices that may need to be changed to help African American women? If so, what are they and how might they be changed? Please give me an example.
 - c. Which leadership practices prepared African American women to enter their respective communities? Which leadership practices helped African American women avoid recidivism? What initiatives did you introduce?
2. Have you shared values and beliefs about recidivism with your employees? If so, how has this guided or shaped your leadership practices?
 - a. Did you revise your leadership practices? If so, what revisions did you make? (If no revisions were made to the leadership practices, skip to question 3.)
 - b. How did your revised leadership practices prepare African American women to enter their respective communities? How did your revised leadership practices

- help African American women avoid recidivism? What initiatives did you introduce?
3. What do you have your employees do to help African American women avoid recidivism?
 - a. Do you set goals and/or have your employees set goals to achieve this outcome? Did you use their goals to change your leadership practices? What new leadership practices do you use based on goal setting? Which practices were used to prepare African American women to enter their communities?
 - b. Do you encourage your employees and/or African American women to share suggestions with you to avoid recidivism? If so, what happened? Did you employ their suggestions in your leadership practices? Please give me an example. How did their suggestions prepare African American women to enter their communities? How did their suggestions help African American women avoid recidivism?
 4. Do you have interactions with African American women in your re-entry program? If so, tell me about your interactions.
 - a. Do your employees observe your interactions? How have these observations influenced your leadership practices? How have these observations helped or challenged both African American women and your employees?
 - b. How did these observations prepare African American women to enter their respective communities? How did these observations help African American women avoid recidivism?
 - c. Have you conducted follow-up sessions with your employees to explain the importance of modeling appropriate interactions? Please tell me about this.
 - d. How did the follow-up sessions prepare African American women to enter their respective communities? How did the follow-up sessions help African American women avoid recidivism?
 5. In what ways have you used existing resources to improve your leadership practices to help African American women avoid recidivism? What initiatives have you introduced?
 6. Is there anything else you would like to add about your leadership practices?