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Exploring Resiliency in Adult Blacks Who Were Formerly Children of Incarcerated/Formedly Incarcerated Parents

Jennifer Nowell
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Psychology and Community Services

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Jennifer Nowell

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Kecia Freeman, Committee Chairperson, Human Services Faculty

Dr. Sarah Matthey, Committee Member, Human Services Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2024

Abstract

Exploring Resiliency in Adult Blacks Who Were Formerly Children of

Incarcerated/Formerly Incarcerated Parents

by

Jennifer Nowell

MA, South Carolina State University, 2010

BS, South Carolina State University, 2008

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Human Services with specialization in Family Intervention Strategies

Walden University

February 2024

Abstract

Families of incarcerated individuals are impacted by the incarceration of their loved ones, especially those who had parents incarcerated during their childhood. Black individuals comprise a disproportionate rate of people affected by the circumstance of having incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. As a result, Black children of incarcerated parents often exhibit childhood trauma. Current evidence revealed that there is little data regarding how childhood trauma impacted the individuals' perceptions of resiliency as they transitioned from childhood into adulthood. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of adult Blacks regarding their former childhood experiences with resiliency and their incarcerated/formerly incarcerated parents. Semistructured interviews with 11 adult participants who were children of formerly incarcerated or incarcerated parents were conducted for this qualitative descriptive study. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis based on the theoretical framework of Walsh's family resilience theory. Four themes were elucidated based on the participants' responses. The data interpreted essential implications, including familial factors and interventions that potentially promote the resiliency of Black children of incarcerated parents. The study's findings contribute to positive social change at multiple levels, from individual children to policy development in human services organizations. In addition, the results of this study indicate that the social determinants of health for children of incarcerated parents can have positive outcomes with the appropriate interventions.

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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family and many friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving mother, Eurika Thomas, whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears. My Sorority sisters, Rosalyn Moore and Vanessa DiPasquale, have never left my side and are very special. I also dedicate this dissertation to my many friends and family who have supported me throughout the process. I will always appreciate all they have done, especially Laura Gullion for helping me develop my technology skills, for the many hours of proofreading, and for helping me to master the leader dots. I dedicate this work and give special thanks to my friends Shermanda Whitfield and Kym Brown for being there for me throughout the entire doctorate program. All of you have been my best cheerleaders.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Mass incarceration in the United States is not a new phenomenon. As of 2020, 2.3 million people were incarcerated in the U.S. federal and state correctional systems (Sawyer & Wagner, 2020). According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS, 2020), the rate of children affected by parental incarceration has quadrupled in the United States decades since 2000. Black individuals represent most formerly incarcerated parents and comprise a disproportionate number of incarcerated individuals (G. S. Armstrong et al., 2018). As a result, the critical long-term separation from their parents impacts Black children of incarcerated parents, often resulting in significant childhood trauma (Finkeldey & Dennison, 2019; Gipson, 2019; Wildeman et al., 2018). Despite such trauma, some children show increased levels of resiliency compared to others (E. Armstrong et al., 2018). However, it is unknown how the trauma of parental incarceration affects Black children's perceptions regarding resiliency as they transition throughout their childhood while their parents are in prison. Therefore, there is a gap in the literature regarding the scope of the perceptions of resiliency for these former children of imprisoned parents as they transition through their childhood (Afifi, 2018; Arditti & Kennington, 2017; E. Armstrong et al., 2018). Through this study, I aimed to address a gap in the literature regarding the perceptions of resiliency of Black children who had incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parent(s) amid justice department-mandated separation from their parents. Therefore, in this study, I explored the perceptions of

resiliency from adult Blacks regarding their points of view as former children of imprisoned or formerly imprisoned parents.

In this chapter, I addressed the background of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the theoretical framework chosen for the study. In addition, I introduced the key terms, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations of the research and the significance of this study.

Background

Mass incarceration affecting Black families warrants significant attention. In the United States, parental incarceration among the Black population creates childhood trauma that lasts throughout an individual's childhood and adulthood due to parental absence (Heard-Garris et al., 2018b). For example, researchers have established links between childhood trauma and parental absence, leading to adult criminality (Boch & Ford, 2021). Three family intervention strategies have effectively reduced risk factors and increased protective factors, including behavioral parent training, family therapy, and family skills training or behavioral family therapy (Axelson et al., 2020). Family intervention strategies can positively influence family relationships by providing resources to help individuals cope with stress, engage in healthy behaviors, and enhance self-esteem, leading to higher well-being (Boch & Ford, 2021; Collazzoni et al., 2020). Family interventions can also benefit the children of the incarcerated. Human service professionals can implement family intervention strategies to help children develop relationships with their parents (Tadros et al., 2021). Family intervention specialists can help children develop mechanisms to communicate and adapt to the adverse experience

of an incarcerated parent to allow for success later in adulthood (Axelson et al., 2020; Turney & Goodsell, 2018).

The lack of literature on Black children's resiliency underscores why this study is timely and relevant. Information from this study can contribute to the compilation of comprehensive approaches to prevent and treat the emotional and psychological consequences of parental incarceration for Black children. Additionally, information from this study can be helpful to leverage resources and support the promotion of resiliency as a central measure to overcome challenges associated with parental incarceration among Black children (Kamptner et al., 2017). The separation caused by a parent's incarceration can cause significant trauma and difficulties in a child's emotional adjustment in the short-term and long-term periods of their formative years (Besemer et al., 2018). According to Kautz (2018), childhood trauma can manifest as depression, resulting in lower resiliency levels than children without trauma, particularly involving this traumatic separation from parents. However, few studies focus on any aspect of resiliency among Black children of incarcerated individuals, which highlights an exigent need for research regarding this unique and understudied population (Heard-Garris et al., 2018a; Hyppolite, 2017; Kamptner et al., 2017). Few studies evaluate and detail the perspectives of children of incarcerated parents. Even fewer studies examine the perspectives of Black children of incarcerated parents. Therefore, exploring the perceptions of resiliency of Black children of incarcerated parents seemed relevant.

In my study, I focused on the resiliency perceptions of adult Blacks, as former children of incarcerated parents, because I believe this population may more effectively

recall and communicate their thoughts, opinions, and attitudes regarding this traumatic time in their lives, with potentially less injury now versus in formative years at the height of this traumatic period. The identified gap in the literature is significant for several reasons, but most importantly, because Black Americans are affected by the disproportionate representation in corrections systems. It is essential to understand how adult Blacks, as former children of the incarcerated, recount their perceptions to explore the scope and depth of their possible resiliency levels. Thus, this study contributes to the extant literature and may influence future studies aimed at promoting positive social change in this population during their formative years, a critical time that influences all facets of adult life.

Problem Statement

There is a lack of viable information to promote resiliency in Black children with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parent(s). Black children are prone to numerous adverse psychological, emotional, and behavioral outcomes and respond negatively to parent-child separation (Ergun et al., 2018). Over half of all children with incarcerated parents are Blacks, making them particularly vulnerable to this social problem (Galardi et al., 2017). In the United States, a parent serving time in prison is six times more likely to be the parent of a Black child rather than a White child (Copp et al., 2021; Jackson & Vaughn, 2017). Researchers indicate that children may feel sad when a parent is in prison for at least six years (Adams, 2018; Arditti & Johnson, 2022; Beckett & Goldberg, 2022). However, there is a lack of available knowledge on how children with an incarcerated parent or parents maintain a healthy quality of life throughout their childhood. According

to Runion (2017), on average, 2.7 million individuals are incarcerated in the United States annually, 40% of whom have children. Foster and Hagan (2017) found that 7.5% of Black children are likely to have a parent incarcerated, compared to only 2.3% of Hispanic children and 1% of White children. Therefore, the Black community has higher parental incarceration and prison sentencing rates than any other ethnic group in the United States, representing a significant social and humanitarian problem (Wildeman et al., 2018). Moreover, studies have shown that parental incarceration can be traumatic for many children, indicating that parental incarceration affects not only parents but also children (Ashraf & Farhad, 2022; Copp et al., 2021; Jackson & Vaughn, 2017).

It is presently unknown whether there are factors, such as support services, that can influence levels of resiliency in children of the incarcerated and their quality of life. There is a gap in the literature regarding how resiliency plays a part in the quality of life of Black children of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated parents. Thus, in this study, I aimed to explore the perspectives of these Black adults who can now speak about their former childhood years relative to their perceived levels of resiliency.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this generic qualitative study was to explore the perspectives of Black adults as former children regarding their childhood experiences as children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents as it pertains to resiliency. The study occurred with participants living in the northeastern states of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and northern Virginia, collectively the DMV area. Black children living in this situation are susceptible to numerous socioeconomic disparities due to parental

incarceration. I chose this topic because I wanted to explore the depth of perspectives across these Black adults from this demographic and locale in different ways these individuals, as children, perceived how their parents' incarceration impacted their childhood. The present study also provided information that can inform future interventions to promote resilience in Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated families serving prison time of 5 or more years. The present study may aid in positive social change by improving intervention practices, such as communication therapy, for Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated individuals. The present study attempted to fill a gap in the research to benefit human service practitioners by providing information on maintaining healthy communication between Black children and their incarcerated parents.

Research Question

The central research question for the study was:

What are adult Blacks' perspectives of potential resiliency concerning a healthy quality of life regarding their former childhood experiences with incarcerated or formally incarcerated parents?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that served as the foundation of this study was Walsh's (1996) family resilience theory. Family resilience theory emerged in the 1990s when researchers first considered prolonged trauma's influence on families (Henry & Harrist, 2022; Walsh, 1996). Walsh (1996) outlined the concept of family resilience as the family unit's ability, as one system, to overcome adverse life events together. According to

Walsh (2015), family systems theory focusing on resilience could enable researchers to explain individual resiliency through a network of supportive relationships. The framework was appropriate in this study for understanding how individuals developed healthy coping strategies and recovered from traumatic situations, such as parental incarceration. Resiliency theory is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was a generic qualitative approach. The generic qualitative approach helps researchers explore and understand human experiences (Saldaña, 2016). The qualitative approach was ideal for understanding the perspectives and experiences of participants through textual data, such as semi-structured interviews, which was the main instrument used in this study. A generic qualitative study allows for investigation into the subjective opinions, attitudes, beliefs, or thoughts of the studied population's experiences in the outside world (Barker & Pistrang, 2021; Kostere & Kostere, 2021). Generic qualitative research is an approach that seeks to discover how people interpret their perspectives or situations based on how to best address the research objectives (Kostere & Kostere, 2021). Qualitative research designs that do not demand adherence to a particular methodology are considered generic (Elliott & Timulak, 2021). My population included adult Blacks who were former children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents who served at least 5 years of prison time. My intended sample was at least 10 adult Blacks over 18 years of age living in the northeastern United States, specifically in the DMV area, who experienced parental incarceration in their childhood. I used social media inquiries and colleague recommendations as strategies to

recruit participants. I chose individuals who self-identified with the Black population because Blacks were the largest demographic of parent incarceration in the United States at the time of the study (Beckett & Goldberg, 2022). The generic qualitative approach was appropriate for my research because it offered the flexibility to collect the narrative data needed to answer the research question.

The generic qualitative design has a rich history of methodological debates that resulted in the development of numerous practical tools researchers can draw from and incorporate into their work (Barker & Pistrang, 2021; Kostere & Kostere, 2021). My ability to ask various probing and intriguing questions in thoroughly researched domains allowed me to approach the research problem from novel perspectives by formulating unique interview questions. I intended to conduct individual interviews with the participants selected for this study. The versatility of generic qualitative methodologies helped me in my data collection efforts for this study.

I analyzed my data using established thematic methods as I completed the individual interviews. I listened to my interviews multiple times to begin the data analysis process. After familiarizing myself with the data, I transcribed the interviews using Otter.ai with a line-by-line comparison to the original recordings. Next, I used two open coding phases to create codes and categories that emerged from the data, using my theoretical framework as a guideline for the coding process. The open coding phases of similarity and contiguity analyses allowed me to organize codes and develop categories and themes associated with my data. Next, I used axial coding to revise or delete my analytical categories. I next evaluated the coded data and narratively reviewed the

meaning of patterns I noticed in the data to discuss my thematic development. Thematic analysis is often helpful in analyzing the data in qualitative investigations (Braun & Clarke, 2022). My goal was to review repetitive data, code the data, and create themes based on the categories and codes so I could discuss the themes emergent from the participants' narrative data. The goal of thematic analysis is to find important or interesting themes or patterns in the data and use these themes to address the research question (Humble & Mozelius, 2022). Throughout my analysis phases, I created and analyzed notes to ensure that I could capture and consider any meaningful patterns and themes to support alignment with the study's research problem, purpose, and research question.

Definitions

It is often necessary to define essential terms used in a research study to aid the reader in understanding the study context. Therefore, for this study, the following terms are defined:

Black: The term refers to the ethnicity of the participants' selected identity (Cross, 2018; Hoggard et al., 2017; Miller, 2018). Black is often used to describe African Americans, and these terms will be used interchangeably in this study. Research presented in Chapter 2 about African Americans will be considered congruent with my description of the participants as Black.

Family resiliency: Family resiliency refers to the ability of the family unit to overcome challenges despite barriers present to individuals within the family unit (Walsh, 1996, 2016).

Incarceration: Individuals who are held or remanded to state or federal correctional facilities for an extended period are said to be incarcerated or experience incarceration (Kaeble & Alper, 2020).

Protective factors: The attributes of developing resiliency, which include skills, strength, support, and trust (Ellis et al., 2017), are known as protective factors. This term is used in my study to identify the coping skills of the participants.

Psychological factors: Emotional or mental characteristics of adverse situations or trauma felt through environmental or social interactions are psychological factors. Psychological factors may manifest as intense emotions or social expressions such as anxiety, anger, and sadness (Sciaraffa et al., 2018; Smyke et al., 2017). I use the term psychological factor throughout my study in this context.

Risk factors: A risk factor is an attribute or characteristic that exposes an individual to harm or may increase the possibility of developing health problems (Bae & Wickrama, 2017). Risk factors include physical or psychological influences.

Social problems: During parental incarceration, children often experience hardships in social settings, such as anxiety, anger, isolation, and stress (Emory, 2018). Collectively, I refer to these hardships as social problems.

Trauma: Trauma is defined as the state of violence or victimization that individuals might experience in general and in the context of this study when impacted by parental incarceration (Altintas & Billici, 2018).

Assumptions

In social science research, philosophical assumptions guide the research. The present study has several assumptions. Therefore, it is imperative to explain the four philosophical assumptions that guide this study: (a) axiological assumptions, (b) epistemological assumptions, (c) methodological assumptions, and (d) ontological assumptions.

In this study, I hoped to explore the experiences of Black persons impacted by parental incarceration in childhood. According to Douglas (2019, 2021), the researcher can only come within an inch of reality as subjectivity is inevitable due to ontological or axiological assumptions. Conducting qualitative research requires the researcher to become the instrument during data collection. Therefore, one of my assumptions was that I would remain as objective as possible, although a degree of subjectivity is inevitable. Another ontological assumption of this study is that the incarcerations of their parents influenced Black persons. Moreover, I assumed that I could assess individuals' resiliency strategies through the devised interview questions.

Next, I assumed the participants understood the interview questions and provided detailed and honest answers. I assumed that participants were forthcoming in describing their experiences with parental incarceration, an essential epistemological assumption of the study. The assumption is likely valid based on the detailed experiences the participants recounted, which are discussed in Chapter 4 of this study. Regarding methodological assumptions, I assumed that a well-designed methodology and well-written procedures helped maintain the transferability and confirmability of the study.

Based on the literature review, this methodological assumption is likely valid, as qualitative descriptive research designs are well suited to understanding participants' subjective experiences (Kostere & Kostere, 2021). I present the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria in the next section as part of the scope and delimitations of the study.

I delimited the scope of this study to the thoughts and perceptions of adult Blacks who were the children of the incarcerated regarding how they perceived resiliency throughout their childhood and attempted to establish a healthy quality of life. The participants were from several Northeastern states, particularly the DMV region, which consists of the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland. Participants were at least 18 years of age to participate in the study. I only included adult Blacks who were children of formerly or currently incarcerated parents. Therefore, each participant was an adult Black with at least one parent who was incarcerated in the participant's childhood or adolescence. I chose to delimit the study to adults rather than adolescents because adults could articulate effectively how their childhood and adolescent experiences influenced their transition to adulthood.

I chose not to interview children of another race. I wished to focus on Black children because there is a high probability that Black children are affected by their parent's incarceration. Furthermore, I chose to delimit this study to adult Blacks about their experiences as children whose parents were incarcerated for at least 5 years. The choice to delimit to children whose parents had experienced at least 5 years of incarceration allowed me to assess childhood experiences that spanned at least two developmental stages. Notably, mental health challenges may change over an individual's

lifetime, further strengthening the choice to delimit to individuals whose parents were incarcerated for at least 5 years. The individuals interviewed in this study articulated resiliency strategies and intervention practices.

Walsh's (1996) family resiliency theory guided this study. I considered other theories, including structural-functional theory (SFT) and social learning theory (SLT). The SFT is a macro-level theory that analyzes how all structures or institutions in society work together (Allen & Henderson, 2022; Chuang, 2021). Political scientists Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell are the key founders of the SFT, beginning in the 1970s (Allen & Henderson, 2022; Majumdar, 2021). These theorists stated that it is imperative to understand the institutions and their respective factors, including education, health care, family, the legal system, the economy, and religion (Almond & Powell, 1982). I did not believe the SFT was an appropriate foundation for this study because it focuses on the basic needs, such as food, shelter, money, and clothing, required by an individual to exist in society (Almond & Powell, 1982). In this study, I explored the familial dynamics and other interventive measures that help a child become resilient. Therefore, it was assumed and confirmed that basic needs were provided for by other adults in the participants' lives. The other theory considered for this study was the SLT. SLT postulates that during development, children learn from their surroundings (Jennings & Akers, 2011). Although SLT provides an excellent foundation for exploring why some children of incarcerated parents may develop resiliency, it does not explain resiliency, considering that these adult children of the incarcerated have a better quality of life than their parents. Therefore, resiliency theory within the context of family system theory better guided this study

compared to SFT or SLT. As such, I delimited the theoretical underpinnings of the study to family system theory with a focus on resiliency.

Limitations

Like all research, this study had limitations. One limitation was derived from the COVID-19 pandemic, with all interviews being conducted virtually using Zoom. The virtual interview method limited the study because I could not fully assess the participants' posture, body expressions, and non-verbal communication, which can help a researcher understand the participants. If there was any distress, I could have stopped the interview. However, I did not observe participant distress in this research study. Another limitation was that participants may have had recall bias and remembered their experiences inaccurately (Bell et al., 2019). Follow-up questions were asked during the interview to help the participants where appropriate. Selective memory, exaggeration, and telescoping could also affect the participants' self-reported results (Fusch & Ness, 2017). Reflective interpretations of experiences or texts in the past could contribute to the understanding (Moustakas, 1994). Thus, asking probing questions could elicit more recall of events. Member-checking can also help to mitigate this potential limitation, which is discussed further in Chapter 3.

Using a design modeled after practical guidance for qualitative research helped mitigate these limitations. Recruiting adult Blacks as children of parents currently or formerly incarcerated allowed me to explore their experiences related to family resilience and quality of life. There was a risk of recall bias due to the passage of time since participants were adults recalling their childhood. Furthermore, I designed the order of

the questions to elicit a causal sequence of events, with follow-up questions used to generate more detailed responses about participants' most memorable events (see Farooq & De Villiers, 2017). Another potential limitation is researcher bias (further discussed in Chapter 3). To mitigate potential researcher bias, I used a detailed research journal to help organize my thoughts that could influence data analysis. I describe the other techniques I used in Chapter 3.

Significance

The study was significant as it offers insight into perceptions of Black children of incarcerated parents that are difficult or harmful to explore with children due to the topic's sensitive nature. There is a lack of literature on the voices of people from this specific population, such as Black children of parents who were previously incarcerated or are still incarcerated. Given the notable absence of research on the long-term implications of parental incarceration in Black families and how parental incarceration can interfere with the quality of life, this study may help form the development of effective interventions that can improve the ability to adapt to parental incarceration.

The findings may provide practitioners with a greater understanding of Black children's perspectives on resiliency and their parent's incarceration, perhaps helping practitioners develop critical interventions and treatment. The present study can inform social service policy, allocating social service recourses and best social service practices to support and bolster resiliency among children, including Black children, with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. According to Adams (2018), there is a need for policies and programs with intervention strategies that focus on resiliency to promote

positive parent-child relationships among parents who were formerly or presently incarcerated and their children. The findings provided insight into the struggles and barriers experienced by some Black children of individuals currently or formerly incarcerated. With this knowledge, human service professionals can create and refine implementation procedures for intervention strategies to appropriately treat perceived issues noted by the Black children interviewed in this study. Practitioners could use the information from my study to revise and expand programs for parents and children so that intervention measures can be effective when both parties reunite (see Haskins et al., 2018).

The present study contributes to positive social change by providing a better understanding of the culture of children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents and specific issues regarding the needs of Black children affected by parental incarceration. The findings may provide practitioners with an understanding of how issues relating to children's perceptions occur and how these perceptions of children of incarcerated individuals may present throughout their childhood.

The study has implications for the social determinants of health. The children of incarcerated parents often experience economic instability due to the loss of one or more incomes contributing to the family (Cooper & Pugh, 2020). Thus, studying the experiences of children with incarcerated parents could contribute to social service interventions promoting familial economic stability. Low socioeconomic status necessitates living in poor or violent areas for some children of incarcerated parents (Crouch et al., 2019). Social workers may use the findings and recommendations of this

study to design targeted interventions to support children experiencing parental incarceration. Moreover, the children of incarcerated may experience educational challenges (Kjellstrand et al., 2020). Therefore, understanding the challenges experienced by children with incarcerated parents may provide information regarding effective educational interventions aimed at helping this group of children.

Summary

The disproportionate incarceration rate in the Black population affects Black children's perspectives and quality of life. Like adults, many children of incarcerated parents face adverse socioeconomic and psychological issues, including stress, loss, and material hardships (Foster & Hagan, 2017; Haskins et al., 2018; Wildeman et al., 2018). The purpose of this generic qualitative study was to explore the perspectives of adult Blacks regarding their former childhood experiences as children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents as it related to resiliency. My study used a generic qualitative approach with Walsh's (1996) family resiliency as a theoretical framework to explore potential perceptions of resiliency to understand the experiences and perspectives of these former Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. My vision of the study was to provide insight into how to support Black children who have experienced trauma and hardships due to separations related to their parent's incarceration.

In this chapter, I discussed the research question, purpose of the study, theoretical framework, and justification for using the generic qualitative method with thematic analysis. I presented definitions of terms as they applied to this study and discussed the

study's assumptions, delimitations, scope, and limitations. Finally, I provided the significance of this research study. Chapter 2 includes a comprehensive literature review surrounding the phenomenon of the Black children of incarcerated parents, beginning with the search strategy used to locate contemporary literature. A discussion of the theoretical framework of family resilience theory will follow.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

There was a need to explore how family interventions lead to the resiliency of adult Blacks who formerly were children of incarcerated parents and their quality of life. The purpose of this study was to explore the types of outlook on life former Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parent(s) maintained. The existing literature focused on this population's poor quality of life and maladaptive behavior (Bae & Wickrama, 2017; Besemer et al., 2018; Burns et al., 2018; Miller, 2018). There was a lack of research on parental incarceration and its influence on Black children through the lenses of resiliency and quality of life. Therefore, this literature review helped guide the interpretation of the findings from this study through that theoretical lens.

Chapter 2 includes a presentation of the literature search strategy and the theoretical framework. The review centers on the study population, adult Blacks who discussed their former childhood experiences with parental incarceration. The information provided insight into possible issues related to the self-esteem and psychological and social adjustment of children with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. The following is a discussion of the problems associated with this population transitioning throughout their childhood and the support needs of the family system. The chapter concludes with a summary of the literature relevant to this study.

Literature Search Strategy

Multiple databases were used for this literature review: Criminal Justice, ERIC, Health Sciences, ProQuest Central, PsyArticles, PsycINFO, SAGE Premier, and SocINDEX. Peer-reviewed and empirically reviewed articles and books were used first,

while abstracts and dissertations were considered for supplemental use. The following search terms were used: *adult children, Black, Black families' children health, family system, family reintegration, family resilience theory, family relationships, generic qualitative approach, imprisonment, incarceration, individual functioning, mass incarceration, offenders, offenders' family, parental incarceration, approach, prison, prisoner, prisoner families, protective factors, psychological factors, quality of life, resilience, risk factors, social problems, stress, and trauma.*

Articles reviewed and utilized were within the past 7-year range. However, some articles outside the 7-year scope were used for theoretical and background information when information from seminal research was required. To strengthen the literature review, I contacted a Walden University librarian. There were 234 sources reviewed for this study, with only 203 (92%) published after 2015.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical framework for this study was Walsh's (2012) family resilience theory because it addresses risk and protective factors. These factors may provide an understanding of resiliency among this population. Walsh developed the framework for the family resilience theory in 2012 and refined it in 2016. The theory's central principle presents the family as a functioning system in which parents, extended family, neighbors, school system members, and governmental structures impact the family system.

Background to Family Resilience Theory

Walsh (2021) established a family resilience conceptual framework in the therapeutic area based on a body of family systems research on transactional processes in

healthy families. Family resilience provides an understanding of how healthy families function in situations of adversity. The framework identifies and targets the critical family processes that assist in reducing stress in high-risk situations. These processes encourage healing and growth from the crisis and empower families to overcome prolonged adversity. Family resilience refers to a family's ability to recover from hardship as a cohesive system (Walsh, 2021). The family resilience framework combines ecological and developmental perspectives to view how a family functions concerning the broader sociocultural context and evolution over the life cycle of multiple generations (Walsh, 2003, 2021). From the ecological perspective, scholars view risk from a biopsychosocial systems perspective, whereas scholars consider risk and resilience as deriving from multiple influences involving individuals, families, and larger social systems (Henry & Harrist, 2022; Walsh, 2003). The problems could derive from individual and family interactions; family stress could result from unsuccessful attempts to deal with overwhelming situations. In contrast, the family resilience conceptual framework's developmental perspective highlights the importance of understanding family resilience. The perspective indicates that the impact of a crisis event can vary depending on its timing, and family processes that contribute to risk or resilience can vary over time with emerging challenges (Jacobs, 2017; Walsh, 2003).

Risk Factors and Protective Factors

Risk and protective factors influence resilience. For this study, resiliency is a family's ability to assess risks, provide protection, and adapt to changing environments (Walsh, 2016); these environmental stressors and traumas require coping skills. Coping

skills in the family system are critical to overcoming challenges (Henry & Harrist, 2022; Walsh, 2003). Thus, I aimed to explore these experiences, addressing what types of environmental resources helped families overcome adversity.

Family resilience theory is a way to understand sociocultural and socioeconomic impacts in familial environments (Jacobs, 2017; Walsh, 2003). Researchers have suggested that expressing resilience requires adversity and positive outcomes (Brown & Gibbons, 2018; Kautz, 2018; Leitch, 2017). Understanding the tension between positive adjustment and facing adversity is a logical framework for understanding how family members overcome distress and hardships (Henry & Harrist, 2022; Walsh, 2016). With this knowledge, the current study focused on family relationships and other interventions that may impact resiliency.

The family resilience theory presents nine variables essential for resilience in children and adults. Those variables are as follows: (a) making meaning of adversity, (b) positive outlook, (c) flexibility, (d) connectedness, (e) spirituality, (f) clarity, (g) economic, and (h) social resources, emotional sharing, and collaborative problem-solving (Leitch, 2017; Walsh, 2003). Of course, individuals exhibit these processes differently within the family unit. However, within the system, a child should ideally possess each variable for emotional growth and resilience (Kautz, 2018; Walsh, 2003). Furthermore, resilience variables influence children differently as they transition into adulthood (Henry & Harrist, 2022; Walsh, 2016). As such, the following section addresses the evolution of resiliency theory.

Risk Factors

The family resilience theory indicates that risk factors threaten an individual's resilience (Hadfield & Ungar, 2018; Theiss, 2018). A risk factor is an external or internal factor that correlates with increased risks of problems in life (Farrington et al., 2017). In addition, risks can threaten the stability of an entire family unit or a child's resilience (C. Harris et al., 2017; Logan, 2018; Theiss, 2018). Past research has focused on how factors, such as parental absence, threaten a child's resilience in the transition to adulthood (Black & Lobo, 2008; Bowen et al., 2013). Under this framework, decreased resilience is the inability of an individual to persevere and adapt to adverse situations. Decreased resilience can result in poor mental health and diminished quality of life.

The risk factors associated with childhood trauma, including parental incarceration, can continue well into adulthood (Gipson, 2019; Kautz, 2018), presenting significant challenges to children's development (Freedman et al., 2017; Haskins et al., 2018). Additionally, the children of incarcerated individuals could be at risk of internalizing and externalizing their problems (Poehlmann-Tynan et al., 2019), even facing incarceration themselves (Galardi et al., 2017). Such challenges include difficulties with school, juvenile delinquency, and adult criminal offenses.

Protective Factors

Protective factors in individuals, families, and communities correlate with mitigated risk (Ellis et al., 2017; Hamby et al., 2018). Defensive traits could be a way to increase the health and well-being of children and family members who have experienced hardships (Bloom & Phillips, 2017; Emory, 2018; Ergun et al., 2018). Protective factors

enable individuals to identify resources, support groups, or coping strategies to manage their decisions effectively. Protective factors include positive attitudes, values, or beliefs about a situation, creating conflict resolution techniques for problems. Hamby et al. (2018) noted that protective factors correlate with well-balanced mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional health.

Protective factors include an individual's actions and behaviors to offset the risk to a family unit and children. For example, Theiss (2018) and Walsh (2021) indicated that offsetting factors include warm communities, healthy parental relationships, and the ensured presence of parents. In this same framework, neighbors, doctors, and schoolteachers reinforce protective factors by providing discipline (Collazzoni et al., 2020), developing bonds (Lin, 2020), and serving as role models (Taubner, 2020). Arditti and Johnson (2022) stated that protective factors are a way to balance the risk factors that challenge a family's resilience. However, inadequate protective factors did not enable individuals to offset negative risk factors (Collazzoni et al., 2020; Lin, 2020; Taubner, 2020).

Protective factors contribute to resiliency. Bowen and Masten (2018) found protective factors crucial for childhood development and adulthood resilience. However, scholars have not applied the same academic focus to examining the strength of the Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. More importantly, adult Blacks who formerly were children of the incarcerated may have better access to protective factors, such as counseling, than they did in childhood. It is imperative to note the

resources allotted to individuals with incarcerated parents in childhood and resources unavailable to them.

The impact of incarceration on children and the resources available to them to promote resiliency is worth noting. Research indicates that children can access protective factors, such as counseling, support groups, and interventions, to cope with trauma (Curtis, 2018; Kararmak & Figley, 2017). As a result of trauma and stress, adults can experience health challenges, emotional distress, and poor social adjustment. Cross (2018) and Finkeldey and Dennison (2019) observed that protective factors contribute to resilience and a positive outlook on life. Protective factors provide supporting resources for individuals to become emotionally more robust and flexible and adopt healthy life habits (Lanier et al., 2018). Positive interactions within families include displays of affection, improved communication, and honesty. Positive factors also enable individuals to enhance their self-efficacy and confidence, allowing them to find effective ways of managing problems (Lanier et al., 2018).

Protective factors can differ for Black men and women based on their perceptions of resilience development (Dale & Safren, 2018; Miller, 2018). For example, Tripp (2018) found that Black women coped with healthcare outcomes through internal strength, spirituality, and reliance on family members. Similarly, Howell et al. (2018) noted that Black women with abusive partners were likelier to depend on family members and friends than external intervention sources. In contrast, Black men often exhibit resiliency through self-reliance to support their families; however, they can

experience poor outcomes due to a lack of external aid (Allbaugh et al., 2017; Catabay et al., 2019).

Resiliency and Coping Mechanisms

The concept of resilience contributes to understanding how having positive attitudes about family situations and receiving psychological support, such as mental health support or counseling, can be a positive way of coping (Smith et al., 2013).

Despite multiple definitions of resilience, in this study, resilience is defined as the ability of an individual to move forward or recover from a traumatic event (Kimball, 2016).

Masten (2018) described the family resilience framework as an example of how parental incarceration may correlate to intergenerational maternal and paternal incarceration.

Parental incarceration can impact a child's well-being into adulthood (McCrae et al., 2019; Schekter et al., 2017). However, the literature shows a lack of understanding of the visible influence of parental incarceration and resilience on adult children's lived experiences. For example, Gaydos and Harris (2018) found that not all children with parents in prison faced hardships. In addition, Roisman and Cicchetti (2017) noted that cohesive parenting or caregiving significantly influenced children's adjustment and well-being into adulthood. Conversely, Hunt et al. (2017) argued that most children with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents are in danger of or practice risky behaviors due to their environments and lack of parenting. Parental imprisonment can cause mental health problems that extend into adulthood (Schneider et al., 2017). Therefore, it appears that children deal with parental incarceration in different ways, likely in a manner

consistent with their upbringing. Thus, it is important to add to the body of literature regarding their perceptions and experiences related to resiliency.

Children of Incarcerated Parents

Parental incarceration can impact a child's well-being into adulthood (McCrae et al., 2019; Schekter et al., 2017). However, the literature shows a lack of understanding of the visible influence of parental incarceration and resilience on adult children's lived experiences. For example, Gaydos and Harris (2018) found that not all children with parents in prison faced hardships. In addition, Roisman and Cicchetti (2017) noted that cohesive parenting or caregiving significantly influenced children's adjustment and well-being into adulthood. Conversely, Hunt et al. (2017) argued that most children with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents are in danger of or practice risky behaviors due to their environments and lack of parenting. Parental imprisonment can cause mental health problems that extend into adulthood (Schneider et al., 2017). Therefore, it appears that children deal with parental incarceration in different ways, likely in a manner consistent with their upbringing. Thus, it is essential to add to the body of literature regarding their perceptions and experiences related to resiliency.

Adverse outcomes from parental imprisonment can obstruct a child's growth and development into adulthood. Consequently, there are correlations between parental incarceration and the risk of adverse effects (Turney, 2017). However, it remains unclear how the adult children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents overcome adversities for a better quality of life (Longo et al., 2017). The issues resulting from parental incarceration often coincide with a lack of school achievement, insufficient

economic resources, poor living conditions, and limited caregiver support (Cochran et al., 2018; Heard-Garris et al., 2018b; Hunt et al., 2017). For example, Turney and Lanuza (2017) found that parental incarceration contributed to vulnerabilities in children's well-being, influencing academic failure and social problems in school. In addition, children with incarcerated parents are more likely to live in low-income homes, poor environments, and poverty conditions in which they witness a crime and experience drug abuse (Kamptner et al., 2017; McGinley & Jones, 2018; Smyke et al., 2017; Turney, 2017).

Consequences of Parental Incarceration

The consequences of parental incarceration include poverty, homelessness, and health problems (Wang & Maguire-Jack, 2018). Many incarcerated parents provide the family with financial support, and when that parent becomes incarcerated, it affects the family's financial stability; moreover, financial costs such as legal fees and fines contribute substantially to the economic hardship faced by the family (Turney & Goodsell, 2018). The economic hardships experienced by families with an incarcerated parent increase the risk of the family experiencing homelessness and dependence on public assistance (Wakefield & Wildeman, 2018). Food insecurity is a direct result of the economic hardships experienced by families with an incarcerated parent. The lack of income because of incarceration makes families struggle to access food (Turney & Goodsell, 2018).

Adult criminality is an issue of concern concerning childhood resiliency. Barnert et al. (2017), Cochran et al. (2018), and Henry (2020) suggested that children who

experience parental incarceration are more likely to accelerate their transition into adulthood by taking on adult roles, which presents additional stressors during an already difficult transition. Research indicates that children feel like adults when their parents are absent due to imprisonment, a process called parentification (Dobbie et al., 2018; Foster & Hagan, 2017; Kjellstrand, 2017). In addition, the hardships or obstacles experienced due to parental incarceration can result in poor attachment, poor educational attainment and history, lower economic status, and unhealthy intimate relationships (Afifi, 2018; Hyppolite, 2017; Lanier et al., 2018).

Barriers created by parental incarceration can lead to adverse effects in adulthood. High incarceration rates result from drugs, violence, and increased crime rates (Adams, 2018; Kaeble & Alper, 2020; Turney & Goodsell, 2018). Such issues challenge researchers and clinicians in understanding children who have experienced parental incarceration when they grow into adults. Possibly stemming from the childhood impacts of parental incarceration, some Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents repeat the cycle of their parents' offenses and become confined themselves (Adams, 2018; Bell et al., 2018). In addition, the barriers, consequences, limited resources, and social stature linked to parental incarceration impact children negatively (Bhuller et al., 2018; DeHart et al., 2018; Gipson, 2019).

According to the family resilience theory, individuals can recover from the disruption caused by absent family members who cannot function in their previous roles, such as in parental incarceration, with support systems for resilience factors (Walsh, 2016). Conversely, families with absent family members who lack the necessary

resilience factors, such as financial support, emotional connectedness, and hope, are less likely to develop resilience and recover from the loss (Theiss, 2018). Thus, stability is critical to recovering and overcoming challenging situations (Walsh, 2021).

Resilience also correlates with the ability to thrive socially. Roberts et al. (2017) indicated that stability consists of successfully assimilating into society despite adversity. Roberts et al. (2017) explained that individuals in stressful environments could use various coping strategies to improve their quality of life after adverse events, such as seeking formal support such as counseling). Henry et al. (2015) postulated that researchers could use the resilience framework to evaluate an individual's behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions toward others. Sciaraffa et al. (2018) posited that resilience consists of more than overcoming hardship; it also focuses on having healthy, balanced lifestyles. Resilience theory suggests that cultivating perseverance in overcoming a crisis is a way to bring family members closer together (Walsh, 2003). Finally, Garmezy (1985) recognized that challenges to resiliency include protective and risk factors. The following subsections address each of these constructs.

Evolution of the Family Resiliency Theory

Family resiliency theory is most applicable to this study. Thus, I explore the historical context of this framework. Garmezy (1985) was one of the earliest scholars to develop a theoretical framework of resilience and cognitive adaption to traumatic and challenging events. Garmezy (1985) first discussed stress-resistant children and their relationship with protective factors. Observing thousands of children with complicated home lives, such as alcoholic or absent parents, Garmezy posited that children respond

uniquely to challenging events through different resiliency forms. Practitioners rarely assessed resiliency at the time; however, Garmezy provided foundational work on how children and adults face obstacles and respond to stress.

Resilience within the family systems framework is a dynamic process that encourages and monitors children's coping skills to deal with brutal conflicts (Bethell et al., 2019; Figley & Burnette, 2017; Harrist et al., 2019). Van Breda (2018) noted the necessity of resilience within the family systems theory, as it contributes to the ability to recover during brutal family and life situations. Developing resilience at a young age is a critical component in coping with adversity in adulthood (Lou et al., 2018; Louw, 2018; Masten & Barnes, 2018). The relationships formed at a young age with close family members. Ideally, parents are critical in developing healthy children who can manage life's pressures. Conversely, children who lack family units and guidance for coping skills and resilience are more likely to engage in risky behaviors as adults or experience increased mental health trauma later in life (Sleijpen et al., 2017; Van De Weijer et al., 2018).

According to resilience theory, it is not the form of adversity that matters but how individuals react to it (Ramaswami et al., 2022). Resilience helps a person rebound from adversity, tragedy, or frustration. Resiliency aids the person in surviving, recovering, and even thriving in the face of adversity. The need for multilevel systems research and practice applications that link individual, family, and community risk and resilience is expanding (Duncan et al., 2021).

The impact of adversity on families, the critical relevance of family stability and well-being, and the mediating role families play in positive adaptation for their members and communities are often overlooked in community-based research methods (Copp et al., 2021). The family resilience framework can guide research and practice by assessing family performance against key system variables related to values (Walsh, 2021). Practitioners can use the family's structure, resources, and challenges to target interventions to strengthen family functioning by overcoming adverse difficulties (Duncan et al., 2021; Walsh, 2021). The collaborative approach supports the relational, community, cultural, and spiritual resources based on a deep belief in the positive potential for human recovery and growth forged from adversity (Mateos et al., 2022).

The family resilience theory aligns with this study on adult Blacks as former children of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated parent(s). A resilience attitude is beneficial in thinking about children and parents' processes that could mitigate the dangerous effect of parental incarceration (Arditti & Johnson, 2022). Another reason why family resilience theory was beneficial to this study is because the approach highlights children's competence in the face of adversity and adapting to their family situation.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

This present section presents the major themes uncovered. The themes are as follows: (a) familial relations and resiliency, (b) environmental factors and resiliency, (c) psychological impacts of trauma, and (d) intervention measures and quality of life. The section will conclude with a review of indirect links to resiliency.

Familial Relations and Resiliency

Little is known about how resiliency impacts the family unit of formerly incarcerated parents. Resilience has complex biological, psychological, and social determinants that may contribute to adversities (Sleijpen et al., 2017). Individuals develop resilience when they face and overcome hardships and negative situations. Stability includes building the skills and strengths needed to create a positive outlook on life, regardless of the circumstances (Walsh, 2012). Thus, it is essential to explore other environmental factors contributing to resiliency.

Family relationships are also mitigating factors associated with childhood resilience. Walsh (2016) analyzed how family characteristics, emotional relationships, societal affiliation, and associated challenges affect how individuals respond to life pressures. Walsh (2016) found that individuals overcome interpersonal conflict through communication and negotiation, with resilience affected positively or negatively. For example, nurturing could positively impact the stability of the familial unit, especially children. The assumption is that a positive impact could foster stability. Gloria and Steinhardt (2016) indicated that emotional connections influence stability. Jackson et al. (2021) suggested positive thoughts and behaviors can overcome stress. Therefore, I explore this theme of family relations in this study.

The well-being of a familial unit of an incarcerated person is crucial for understanding how some children become resilient in adulthood. Society's perceptions about parental incarceration may influence how others perceive the family members in their social settings (Hyppolite, 2017; Saltzman et al., 2018). Psychological impacts such

as depression may occur when there are misconceptions about the families of the incarcerated, (Dobbie et al., 2018; Wakefield & Wildeman, 2018). Thus, understanding other factors that may contribute to resiliency guided the thematic process of this study. The themes uncovered in the literature will serve as a guide for data analysis, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

Environmental Factors and Resiliency

Environmental factors must be explored to understand how resiliency impacts the incarcerated family unit. Masten and Barnes (2018) suggested identifying family risk and protective processes at several levels, including individual, family, peer, and environmental settings. In contrast, Bae and Wickrama (2017) found that understanding the context of parental incarceration and its disadvantages for a child's well-being required analyzing the child's experiences of grief, loss, and neglect through adult perspectives. Understanding these factors helps guide understanding of the study's participants' experiences.

Risk factors, such as antisocial behaviors and psychological and social issues, should be addressed in a child's environment. An individual's risk factors could influence resilience in transitioning from childhood to adulthood (Hamby et al., 2018). Risk factors correlate with increased vulnerability to the harmful effects of daily stress. Resilience enables individuals to overcome the challenges of everyday stressors (Hamby et al., 2018). The risk factors of parental incarceration for children include mental health issues and trauma, which, if unresolved, can remain into adulthood (E. Armstrong et al., 2018).

According to Turney and Goodsell (2018), the impact on children is one of many unintended consequences of mass incarceration. Jackson et al. (2021) suggest that health professionals and social workers in communities where incarceration is common should consider screening children for incarcerated parents because of the significantly high risk of health problems and behavior – the risks perceived are higher than those of children who had experienced other types of childhood stress, such as divorce or living with a parent with mental illness. For example, children with incarcerated parents were at a higher risk of developing ADD or ADHD than children who had gone through the divorce or death of their parents (Bomysoad & Francis, 2021). Children who lived with their parents before incarceration were more likely to develop behavioral problems, such as acting out, breaking the rules, or attention difficulties, such as impulsivity or daydreaming, compared with children living elsewhere (Poehlmann-Tynan & Turney, 2021). However, when an abusive parent is jailed, some researchers found no measurable effects on their children's development and behavior (Poehlmann-Tynan & Turney, 2021). Researchers suggest that imprisoning an abusive father can protect his children. Data from Fragile Families also shows that having a recently incarcerated father significantly increases a child's risk of homelessness, even after controlling for socioeconomic and pre-existing housing problems. Furthermore, research suggests that the father's incarceration indirectly contributes to homelessness by limiting the resources available to the mother and the children.

Psychological Impacts and Trauma of Parental Incarceration

A link may exist between developing resilience and overcoming trauma. Brown and Barrio Minton (2017) indicated that any affliction, hardship, or trauma, such as parental incarceration, experienced in families could correlate with an increased risk of health problems. Condry and Smith (2018) noted that the obstacles linked with catastrophic experiences, distress, and struggles could present individuals with the risk of low quality of life. A traumatic event in a family could result in psychological and stress-related issues based on the emotional relationships and strength of interpersonal status (Walsh, 2016).

The family unit can provide positive reinforcement even with traumatic events. Shin et al. (2018) suggested that parental incarceration is an adverse, traumatizing childhood experience that can cause disruptive behavior in children that may remain into adulthood. M. S. Harris and Eddy (2017) stated that children experience stressful situations when their parents are incarcerated. The problems of parental incarceration may cause psychological issues for children (Jackson et al., 2021). Adult Blacks who were children of presently or previously incarcerated parents may experience difficulties due to social and psychological concerns in their current and future circumstances (Hartnett et al., 2018; Martin, 2017; Oldrup, 2018). Consequently, this research contributes to the knowledge already available about enhancing adult life quality.

Children whose parents are incarcerated can face challenges due to the associated financial strain, domestic instability and instability, and the trauma that the separation of parent and child through incarceration often brings (Carroll & Birch, 2022). Children

whose parents are incarcerated are more likely to experience educational, financial, mental, and physical health problems than those not exposed (Turney, 2022). Parental incarceration is classified as a particularly stigmatizing adverse childhood experience (ACE) that disproportionately affects children of color and children living in poverty (McCrae et al., 2019). While ACE checklists often include exposure to parental incarceration, the experience is rarely investigated, despite new research indicating that these children experience up to three times as many additional ACEs as children exposed to parental incarceration (Shin et al., 2018).

Intervention Methods and Quality of Life

The familial unit can provide positive reinforcement in building supportive relationships. The family resilience perspective purports individuals can overcome trauma with a strength-based approach (McCleary & Figley, 2017). The consequences of parental incarceration for children of incarcerated parents can face enormous challenges due to the associated financial strain, domestic instability, and the trauma that separation of parent and child through incarceration often brings (Gifford et al., 2019). Children with incarcerated parents are more likely to experience educational, financial, mental, and physical health problems than those not exposed (Gipson, 2019). Psychologists classify parental incarceration as a particularly stigmatizing ACE that disproportionately affects children of color and children living in poverty (McCrae et al., 2019).

However, parental incarceration's effects vary by child, and the evidence points to potential behavioral, emotional, and attachment challenges to healthy development (Massoglia & Remster, 2019). Because incarceration can drive housing stability, food

security, transportation, and income, parental incarceration or mass incarceration should be considered an essential social determinant of health (Henry, 2020). Connecting these families to mental health and coordinated social services that address home confinement's financial, housing, educational, and emotional/behavioral health impacts would provide much-needed care and stability for affected children (Rubenstein et al., 2019; Sawyer & Wagner, 2020). As a result, many of these children have little stability in their homes and face a fragmented social service system. Clinicians must become aware of national children's and community-based resources for at-risk youth for intensive home care and group therapies (Segeren et al., 2020). School-based programs support at-risk youth in school, home, and community (Massoglia & Remster, 2019). It is also important to note that despite the many unique challenges that children of incarcerated parents face, many children are resilient and overcome many obstacles to achieve great success (Carroll & Birch, 2022).

The strengths-based approach is based on social work and the client's strengths, essentially viewing the client as resourceful and resilient in adverse circumstances (Hamby, 2022). The strength-based approach is unique in being client-centric and results-oriented, capitalizing on a person's future strengths (Milne et al., 2021). The strengths-based approach has been adapted for prison populations and is a critical element of motivational interviewing (Banyard & Hamby, 2022). An interesting aspect of the strengths-based approach is that it forces people to make changes themselves (Banyard & Hamby, 2022; Hamby, 2022). Positivity affects changes that affect how each person goes about their affairs and influences their attitudes about their dignity and skills. The

strengths-based approach allows people to see themselves in the best possible manner (Milne et al., 2021).

There are some examples of the strength-based approach. In the corporate world, many human resources managers conduct performance reviews. These insights are helpful for employees, their managers, and the organization's overall functioning (Milne et al., 2021). Some benefits include improved efficiency, communication skills, and decision-making information (Axelson et al., 2020). All individuals face difficulties at some point in their lives. In a crisis, an individual's strengths are the last thing they might think about or use. However, individuals may need help identifying their strengths when difficult situations arise. Health professionals working with people in crisis must listen and acknowledge strengths and resources (Brookes, 2020). Usually, in a crisis, people may not think about and configure plans to remediate the situation effectively. Therefore, people may need assistance identifying how the situation impacts their quality of life.

Many people may also benefit from assistance in determining the depth of their circumstances, given the nature of the situation and potential options to navigate within a specific set of circumstances while in a crisis. For some clients, seeking support and attending mental health support meetings is arduous and should be recognized as a strength (Banyard & Hamby, 2022). For example, a professional helping someone who does not have secure housing should encourage them to build strong relationships with their family and friends. Another way to empower clients is to remind them to use their resources, flexibility, and strength to tackle potential challenges (Frittgen & Haltaufderheide, 2022). A large part of working through such conversations is facilitating

the emergence of people's strengths. It is natural for clients to share their strengths, and acknowledging and validating those experiences can be helpful (Collazzoni et al., 2020).

Essentially, building positive relationships is all about flexibility. A strengths-based approach allows people to view themselves at their best and with self-worth (Farrell et al., 2023). People can transfer this value and use their strengths instead of focusing on their negative qualities (Hamby, 2022). A strengths-based approach examines the individual and the individual's environment. In addition, this approach identifies any limitations that may hinder an individual's growth. These limitations apply when an individual encounters social, personal, and cultural issues in organizations that cannot be reasonably balanced (Work, 2022).

Positive psychotherapy can include a strengths-based approach in which the therapist focuses on the client's strengths and resourcefulness rather than their weaknesses, deficits, or failures (Hamby, 2022; Milne et al., 2021). The strength-based techniques help the client develop a mindset that focuses on positive skill building and helps them understand that they are resilient, which leads to more acceptable expectations for themselves and others (Frittgen & Haltaufderheide, 2022). Power-based therapy is a form of talk or communication therapy where the client is the narrator (Work, 2022). The story may include trauma, pain, and stressors from the past or present (Cryer-Coupet et al., 2020). The practitioner encourages the client to adopt the mindset of a survivor rather than a victim (Brookes, 2020). In this way, the client can better understand and manage their skills and strengths (Collazzoni et al., 2020). These skills and strengths allow them to survive and thrive no matter how hard life gets.

Coping strategies are essential for children of the incarcerated. Resiliency is crucial for improving individual coping strategies (Curtis, 2018; Kjellstrand, 2017; Young & Smith, 2019). Practitioners find family resilience helpful in considering the child and family processes that can mitigate the harmful effects of parental incarceration (Arditti & Johnson, 2022). Furthermore, resilience in the family structure is a concern when a family member's environment or situation results in increased use of adaptive or maladaptive coping behaviors (Young & Smith, 2019). Zeman and Dallaire (2017) suggested that resilience is a shared experience in which existence should resonate with the individual's motivation, particularly those who have experienced catastrophic events, hardships, or trauma. Coping strategies can improve the resiliency of the family structure, which are important considerations when discussing the ability of Black children to overcome stressors in the family unit. However, it is unknown what coping strategies Black children use to cope with the stresses of parental incarceration.

Parental Incarceration and the Transition From Childhood to Adulthood

Children with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents could experience disadvantages due to a lack of parental presence and support during their critical years of growth and development (Nylander et al., 2018). Children might engage in high-risk behaviors without their primary parents (Heard-Garris et al., 2018b; Hunt et al., 2017). Bhuller et al. (2018) found that maternal incarceration caused more damage to children than paternal incarceration, resulting in increased negative emotions. The effects of parental incarceration include a range of adverse childhood and adolescent trajectories, such as delinquency, depression, and physical abuse (Afifi, 2018). Ergun et al. (2018)

observed the trauma of children who were the products of parental incarceration and the influence of resiliency on their lives. They found that parental incarceration adversely affected children and families (Ergun et al., 2018; Gifford et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2019; Shannon & Klausner, 2018). Separation from an imprisoned parent could cause children trauma and difficulties adjusting as adults (Haskins et al., 2018; Miller, 2018); if unaddressed, such consequences could impact their futures. Poverty disproportionately affects Black children as it obstructs their ability to overcome negative environmental factors (Gifford et al., 2019; C. Harris et al., 2017; Heard-Garris et al., 2018a; Lee et al., 2019).

Caregivers shape children's identities, life perspectives, worldviews, and experiences (Haskins et al., 2018). Children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents often receive placement in environments with caregivers, such as grandparents, relatives, or the foster care system, who raise them during their parents' absence. Court and social service agency professionals typically organize foster care (Vreeland et al., 2020). The foster care system's objective is to reunite children with their birth parents; in some cases, however, adoption is in the child's best interest (Konijn et al., 2020). While foster care is temporary, adoption is permanent (McCrae et al., 2019). According to Western and Smith (2018), caregivers and children build relationships based on bonding and nurturing during a parent's absence. Caregivers can be surrogate parents who provide stable environments for children experiencing parental incarceration. Caregivers help youth develop and learn throughout childhood (Heard-Garris et al., 2018a; Jackson & Vaughn, 2017; Wakefield & Wildeman, 2018; Wildeman et al., 2018).

Children's Transition to Adulthood

Adult criminality concerning childhood trauma of a parent incarcerated guided this study. Henry (2020) stated that parental incarceration correlated with the increased likelihood of criminal tendencies in adulthood. Gipson (2019) explored the influences of parental incarceration and its connection to adult children's well-being. In a study of an incarcerated mother's perceptions of her parenting role in a low-income setting, Cooper-Sadlo et al. (2018) found that this participant perceived herself as disengaged with her children. Due to her lengthy prison sentence, she did not view herself as a presence for their emotional and moral support needs. Due to incarceration, a parent's perspective could impact children's socialization abilities or result in risky behaviors, as young people tend to imitate adults influencing their lives. Black adults who experienced parental incarceration as children could be at higher risk of violence in their communities simply due to their exposure to violence as children (Wang & Maguire-Jack, 2018).

Social factors that can influence resiliency are worth noting. First, several external and internal factors, such as financial and social conditions, may contribute to difficulties in the transition to adulthood (Foster & Hagan, 2017; Michael, 2018). For example, most adolescents can become economically independent and responsible adults (Cohler & Musick, 2018). Secondly, transitioning from adolescence to adulthood and becoming financially stable can be challenging for children with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents (Barnert et al., 2017; Finkeldey & Dennison, 2019; Segeren et al., 2020). Bae and Wickrama (2017) indicated that children with supportive families are likelier to provide financial and emotional support for their dependents when they

become adults. On the other hand, Turney and Lanuza (2017) argued that parental incarceration might impact children's transition to adulthood due to limited financial means for taking care of themselves or their families. As adults, children of parents formerly incarcerated could be unable to obtain steady jobs due to the hardships they experienced while transitioning to adulthood; such obstacles inhibit economic independence and might result in crimes or heavy reliance on family members and friends (Gifford et al., 2019). Additionally, external factors, such as social deficits and social challenges, could contribute to the issues faced by this population (Turney & Lanuza, 2017).

Social challenges are internal or emotional reactions to situations, such as social stigma. Children who feel stigmatized because of parental incarceration might struggle to express themselves in social interactions with caregivers, peers, educators, or community members (Hardy, 2018). There is an assumption that functional adults have long-term relationships (Marttinen et al., 2018). However, transitioning into adulthood could be a complicated process for the Black children of formerly incarcerated parents who might have witnessed their parents' arrest (Heard-Garris et al., 2018b).

As a result, some children of formerly incarcerated individuals as adults could struggle throughout their adult lives (Barr et al., 2018; Raposa et al., 2018). Parental incarceration can result in an accelerated transition to adulthood, providing significant stressors to an already tricky process (Gaydosh & Harris, 2018; Gouin et al., 2017). Griffin (2017) found that adults whose parents had gone to prison differed from adults who were children with non-imprisoned parents. Studies showed that adult Blacks who

experienced parental incarceration as children felt much older in their youth than their years (Browning et al., 2018; Miller, 2018). Children who experienced parental incarceration are more likely to report growing up faster and living independently (Cavanagh et al., 2018).

Parental incarceration occurs disproportionately among Black socioeconomically disadvantaged families; thus, children in this population are more likely to experience adversities impacting their life development than their White counterparts (Gipson, 2019). Additionally, adult Blacks who formerly were children of incarcerated individuals are especially vulnerable. Parental absence can cause health issues, such as emotional distress and poor social skills (Heard-Garris et al., 2018a). According to Young and Smith (2019), the parental incarceration trajectory of parent-child relationships increases early risk factors that could contribute to adults' poor mental and physical health. In addition, individuals who experienced parental incarceration as children could face persistent mental health problems as adults, which further contribute to behavioral or physical health concerns (Bell et al., 2018; Burns et al., 2018; Finkeldey & Dennison, 2019).

Wildeman et al. (2018) agreed that with the trajectory of parental incarceration, the adult health consequences of parental incarceration and the risk of domestic violence and victimization increase. Finkeldey and Dennison (2019) examined the economic and environmental disparities of adult children who had experienced parental incarceration and the impact on lifespan development and quality of life. Wildeman et al. (2019) suggested that adult Blacks who were children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated

parents could experience multiple disadvantages in their education, finances, and health, influencing their quality of life.

Blacks who experienced parental incarceration as children might face negative societal responses to parental imprisonment (Wildeman et al., 2018). For example, studies have shown that children who have experienced parental incarceration internalize and externalize feelings of anger, neglect, stress, and trauma. As a result, issues may remain unresolved in their adult lives due to the risk of social stigmatization (Hardy, 2018; Hartnett et al., 2018; Turney & Goodsell, 2018). Similarly, Assari (2017) found that the adult children of formerly incarcerated parents experienced trauma due to their past; such trauma correlated with increased risks of depression, emotional trauma, and financial hardships. The adult Blacks as children in these situations were at a 25% greater risk of major depressive disorder and decreased life satisfaction (Besemer et al., 2018). Witnessing their parents' arrest further contributed to the children's visual adaptation to the trauma (Besemer et al., 2018).

Little research has shown the effect of parental incarceration on the mental health of children left to manage their families in the parent's absence. The few available studies have presented incongruent conclusions (Turney & Lanuza, 2017). In one example, Merrick et al. (2017) found that parental incarceration did not affect the children's psychological distress after adjusting for other stressful events. Scholars have conducted more research on the mental health effects of parental incarceration on female Black children than on male Black children. Blacks do not have different rates of mental health conditions than the rest of the population; however, the children of individuals formerly

incarcerated are more likely to be victims of violent crimes than White Americans (Gifford et al., 2019; Gipson, 2019; Heard-Garris et al., 2018a). Parental incarceration issues correlate with increased susceptibility to posttraumatic stress disorder, one of the most common mental health concerns (Merrick et al., 2017; Nylander et al., 2018).

Separation

Children separated from their parents are more likely to have emotional, psychological, and social challenges (Schekter et al., 2017). Kamptner et al. (2017) corroborated a link between parental incarceration and separation, finding that children experienced a lack of positive relationships or a sense of belonging when they had limited supportive social networks. Blacks experiencing incarcerated parents who are absent during their formative years also report high levels of anxiety, aggression, depression, and loneliness. Tadros and Finney (2018) concentrated on family reintegration and parental incarceration by exploring how supportive family relationships enable successful connections between the offender and the offender's family, including children. Considering family structure and parental relationships, the following section addresses the psychological and social adjustments due to parental incarceration.

Family Support

Extended family members and structures are critical in the development and growth of Black families. Bell et al. (2018) simulated appropriate approaches to teaching parents and caregivers how to assist individuals in achieving resilience. A traditional Black family consists of a husband, wife, and children (Seaton et al., 2018). Stability in the family structure deteriorated and caused disorganization in the Black family

environment during slavery (Hoggard et al., 2017). The disparities created disadvantages for Black families and children in single-parent homes; the rise of this nontraditional family style remains in modern society (Adams, 2018; Logan, 2018). Extended family and community members are part of the family system that provides nurture and support. Male figures were traditionally the head of Black family systems. Logan (2018) indicated that husbands were the leaders of Black families during the 19th century. The man was the head of the Black nuclear family system, and two-parent homes remained until the 1960s (Hardy, 2018). The lack of two-parent homes can lead to negative relationships.

Withholding information from children about their parent's incarceration causes children to struggle to establish positive relationships with their parents when they return home (Hardy, 2018; McEwen & McEwen, 2017). Promoting healthy relationships when parents spend time in prison could be a way to help children with their self-esteem. Failure to help children cope with the absence of their parents might correlate with increased levels of negative psychological emotions, such as depression, stress, and trauma (Wildeman et al., 2018).

Collateral Effects on Family

Parental incarceration can immediately impact a family and other family members. Some family members act as caregivers for the children when their parents are incarcerated (Hsieh et al., 2017). In addition, societal attitudes about parental incarceration, including shame, stigma, and institutional racism, can impact the family dynamic (Martin, 2017). Due to incarceration, researchers have established a close connection between children and family relationships. Thus, the family members could

encounter stressors beyond their control that contribute to unpredictability and harm the normal functioning of emotional support (Smyke et al., 2017).

The Family and Support Systems

Support programs are one way to reduce the distress of parental incarceration and its impact on the family system (Hyppolite, 2017). Arditti (2016) developed the Family Stress-Proximal Process model as a social support method for helping children experiencing parental incarceration adopt socially acceptable behaviors, such as acknowledging others' emotions. The Family Stress-Proximal Process is a model for assessing the relationship and the lasting impact of parental incarceration in adults. Griffin (2017) corroborated that successful family relationships can reduce adverse outcomes and trauma and increase family member resilience. Roberts et al. (2017) indicated that intimate relationships are essential for maintaining a healthy balance in life and mental health. Family-oriented programs bridge the protective barriers between parents and children as the parties discuss stressful situations due to parental incarceration (DeHart et al., 2018).

Psychological and Social Adjustment and Mental Health

The psychological and social well-being of Black children was essential to the aim of this study. Research indicates that an adult Black child can experience psychological hardships due to parental incarceration (K. M. Miller et al., 2017; R. R. Miller, 2018; Parcel & Hoffmann, 2018; Tripp, 2018). The challenges adults experience in their lives, including the hardships of parental incarceration and its impact on family relationships, affect children's perspectives of their lives (Longo et al., 2017). Parents

who are not part of their children's lives can exacerbate behavioral and social problems well into their children's adult social relations (Kjellstrand et al., 2018).

Incarceration can cause shame and stigma for some Black children who experience deficiencies from caregivers and social services providers (Bell et al., 2018; Miller et al., 2017). The drawbacks could result from a lack of psychological or social adjustment (Bloom & Phillips, 2017). Wakefield and Wildeman (2018) noted that some social support organizations do not support these children or their families. As a result, Black children who have experienced parental incarceration may face loneliness, isolation, stress, and poor health (Massoglia & Remster, 2019).

Mental health is a concern of children with incarcerated parents. Wildeman et al. (2018) reported depression as a prevalent issue among several Black children with parents in prison. However, depression might appear in isolation due to other adverse life problems (Wang & Maguire-Jack, 2018). Many Black children experiencing parental incarceration endure psychological or social effects, such as anxiety or stress (Massoglia & Remster, 2019). Black children face multiple problems linked to parental incarceration (Besemer et al., 2018). A child's reactions to parental incarceration could include anger, fear, anxiety, and other social problems (Shin et al., 2018). Becoming independent and growing up early contributes to the lived experiences of Black children, and these issues may affect their mental health (Barnert et al., 2017).

Psychological issues are more common topics to address than issues related to the life dissatisfaction of Black children. Psychological challenges could cause more complex issues related to overall well-being (Besemer et al., 2018; Chang, 2018; Kautz,

2018). Black children can develop and experience intense life dissatisfaction due to shame and societal stigma associated with parental incarceration (Kautz, 2018; Kjellstrand et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2019). Public views and sentiments about the children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents can contribute to such conditions (McGinley & Jones, 2018; McKay et al., 2018). Children can also experience physical reactions to having parents in prison. For example, Nylander et al. (2018) and Schneider et al. (2017) found that children with imprisoned parents tended to be at higher risk for illness.

Social Adjustments

Psychological and social adjustment issues can present challenges. These issues can cause anxiety, major depressive disorder, and feelings of hopelessness that impact adult children (E. Armstrong et al., 2018; Burns et al., 2018). Various mental health and social problems, coupled with the stigma of parental incarceration, can lead the adult children of individuals experiencing incarceration to face difficulties in their daily lives (Besemer et al., 2018). Psychological stress can present in many ways, with an individual undergoing multiple stressful events over a lifetime (Condry & Smith, 2018; Hunt et al., 2017). Black children are likely to experience challenges with social adjustment issues, such as anxiety, sadness, and worry, preventing them from forming positive relationships (Browning et al., 2018; Miller, 2018; Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2017). These negative encounters, such as exposure to violence and substance abuse, harm adult children with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2017). Many children who have experienced parental incarceration lived with their parents before

arrest. They could suffer from aggressive behavior, depression, and social problems (Assari et al., 2018; Pettit & Gutierrez, 2018). The emotions experienced in childhood can present further complications to the social emotions these Black children feel about parental incarceration as they grow into adulthood.

Other mental health issues may arise. The social adjustment of Black children due to parental absence and incarceration can also result in depression (Mitchell et al., 2018). Bell et al. (2018) found that a lack of parental support correlated with asocial adjustment and avoidance of emotions when interacting with others. The social stigma of parental incarceration also hinders children's psychological and social well-being (Emory, 2018; Smith & Young, 2017). According to Miller et al. (2017) and Nomaguchi and Milkie (2017), the degree to which Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents experience adversities, such as social disadvantages, stereotypes, and maltreatment, could result in worsened social adjustment and adverse impacts on everyday decisions. Therefore, the poor mental health status associated with the parental absence and incarceration experienced by Black children could lead to poor social adjustment and the inability to achieve resilience if left unaddressed (Ergun et al., 2018).

Moras et al. (2018) discussed the topic of societal self-perception and social awareness. Societal descriptions and assessments of Black individuals who are the products of incarceration affect their families, economic status, and environments (Foster & Hagan, 2017). Judgmental opinions can harm Black children's overall psychological and social health, as they may see themselves in negative contexts (Haskins & McCauley, 2018).

Children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents often experience anxiety, depression, and psychological and social problems (Chang, 2018; Finkeldey & Dennison, 2019; Gipson, 2019). According to Logan (2018) and Moras et al. (2018), Black children can use resilience as a coping skill and safeguard against feelings of inferiority to improve their quality of life. However, some adult children of Black parents formerly incarcerated cannot cope with the shame and stigma of incarceration. As a result, additional hardships may worsen, influencing the family and the community (Browning et al., 2018; Miller et al., 2017).

Childhood experiences have an impact on the psychological health of Black youth. Burns et al. (2018) indicated that Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents might experience psychological issues that impact their adulthood. However, some Black adults are less likely than other races to receive treatment or referrals for psychiatric symptoms due to the stigma surrounding mental health treatment (Nylander et al., 2018; Wildeman et al., 2018). Turney and Goodsell (2018) noted that members of the Black population are unlikely to explore or actively receive treatment for mental health issues. Altintas and Billici (2018) and Turney and Goodsell (2018) found that Black children impacted by parental incarceration who experienced mental disorders or trauma did not seek treatment until they achieved resiliency due to other or previous incidents, such as abuse or neglect. Bhuller et al. (2018) stated that the long-term implications of parental incarceration might be why children have psychological and social adjustment problems while transitioning from childhood to adulthood. However, further assessment is needed to understand the long-term impact of parental incarceration

on Black children and adults. The following section addresses the effects of parental imprisonment on self-esteem.

Racism and Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

The historical contexts experienced by Blacks that remain in place today can affect their self-esteem. Institutional racism in employment, housing, health care, political power, and education can create challenges for the Black community (K. M. Miller et al., 2017; R. R. Miller, 2018). Institutional racism can result in acts or problems of discrimination in the criminal justice system and the employment, housing, health care, and educational sectors (Miller, 2018; Moras et al., 2018). Assari (2017) examined race and gender and their influence on adult self-esteem. Additionally, Assari and Chang (2018) suggested that men have higher self-esteem than women, and Blacks have higher self-esteem than Whites, Hispanics, and Asians. Therefore, a logical assumption is that the members of ethnic groups who encounter disadvantages and discrimination would experience lower self-esteem (Seaton et al., 2018). However, this is not always the case. Therefore, exploring the childhood perspectives of adult Blacks can help confirm or discover unknown information regarding the influence of parental incarceration on self-esteem.

General Impacts of Incarceration

Some general characteristics appear prevalent in the children of individuals in prison. In general, all individuals experience adversity, which might relate to abuse, neglect, parental incarceration, or violence (Barnert et al., 2017). Some traumatic events are the gateway to stress or psychological problems (Zeman et al., 2018). For example,

Kautz (2018) found that parental incarceration can cause significant discord regarding health and social issues. Parents and their children often experience a profound absence of psychological well-being and other complexities when parents are incarcerated (E. Armstrong et al., 2018).

Parental incarceration is a significant issue in the Black community. Research has found that parental incarceration impacts children and adults (Adams, 2018). Black children face a one in nine chance of having an incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parent. Therefore, parental incarceration is a national concern that can create difficulties for children, family members, and communities (Gaydosh & Harris, 2018). Children of Black parents in prison may experience adversities before or after sentencing (Miller, 2018; Moras et al., 2018). According to Fortune and Salmon (2019), an incarcerated individual with family support is less likely to return to prison than those without such support.

Parental incarceration can disrupt parental bonds and decrease family unit stability (Haskins et al., 2018). Moreover, children of parents in prison are at greater risk of future unemployment, substance abuse, health concerns, mental health problems, and poor quality of life (Bae & Wickrama, 2017). Children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents are at increased risk of future maladaptive social behavior and criminality due to patterning behaviors (Burns et al., 2018).

Multiple years of parental incarceration can create enhanced difficulties for children. These difficulties include a lack of affection, emotional distress, and the absence of social support and safety (Adams, 2018; Boch & Ford, 2018). In addition,

Black children exposed to adversities due to parental incarceration are likely to experience isolation, fear, and feelings of failure (Heard-Garris et al., 2018b).

Conversely, Stump et al. (2018) noted that children who transition into adulthood build positive relationships with their caregivers and that those positive relationships are the foundations of stable and nurturing environments. However, research on positive relationships in families is needed to reduce the negative impacts of parental incarceration on children and adults.

Parental Incarceration and Quality of Life for Black Children

Parental incarceration can create broken families or disrupt family relationships. Black mothers and fathers leave behind their children, often disrupting the family unit, when parents are imprisoned (Dyer et al., 2018). The higher incarceration rates among Black families cause Black children to experience stigmatization in school due to parental incarceration (Galardi et al., 2017; Metzler et al., 2017). Parental incarceration has adverse effects on adult children's well-being. The adult children of parents in prison often lack access to necessary healthcare services (Bae & Wickrama, 2017; Barnert et al., 2017). Condry and Smith (2018) stated that the relationship between parents experiencing incarceration and their adult children poses risks, including disparities in education, economic disadvantages, poverty, and social problems that obstruct the success of Black children (Balthazar & King, 2018; Cochran et al., 2018). Hartnett et al. (2018) suggested an association between peer rejection and difficulty transitioning into adulthood.

Additionally, younger children are more likely to demonstrate aggressive and antisocial behaviors, problems that may worsen with maturity. These factors can also lead

to financial hardships with adult criminality. According to Western and Smith (2018), the adult children of Black parents in prison may experience financial difficulties. These hardships often impact their quality of life (Besemer et al., 2018; Gifford et al., 2019). Adult children affected by parental incarceration might experience financial constraints, and public assistance may be their only means of survival due to a lack of familial support (Hoggard et al., 2017). Henkhaus (2019) stated that such individuals are often vulnerable because of limited access to parental support, including a lack of financial trust or housing accommodations. Thus, such individuals are likely to engage in criminal activities and drug use with lower income and educational attainment in adulthood to compensate for these difficulties (Goldman & Cornwell, 2018; Swallow, 2017).

Formerly incarcerated mothers tend to experience the most difficulties. Mothers who have experienced incarceration might struggle to regain custody of their children (Young & Smith, 2019). For example, parents convicted of drug offenses are often required to attend family court or access the Department of Child Protective Services to interact with or regain custody of their children (Mitchell et al., 2018). In such cases, the court officials likely consider the individual's ability to parent effectively (McKay et al., 2018). Western and Smith (2018) noted that the adult children of individuals formerly incarcerated live in various circumstances. After a parent's arrest, Black children from two-parent families remained with the nonincarcerated parent, who had the primary child-rearing responsibility (Kjellstrand et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2019; Pettit & Gutierrez, 2018; Trotter et al., 2017). However, children from single-parent homes receive care from grandparents or relatives if they do not undergo placement in the foster care system,

especially when the mother is incarcerated (Brown & Barrio Minton, 2017; Roisman & Cicchetti, 2017; Turanovic & Tasca, 2019).

Family dynamics, in conjunction with the child's well-being, are crucial for understanding resiliency. As scholars have elaborated, factors such as violent family environments and child abuse while considering the cognitive and behavioral dimensions of the parental role are related to the degree of family violence in a child's life (Milojevich et al., 2018). In addition, Milojevich et al. (2018) expanded upon the factors that could complicate the transition to adulthood of children who have experienced parental incarceration. Such obstacles have a pivotal impact on decisions and can result in health and social problems (McCrae et al., 2019).

Summary and Conclusions

Chapter 2 evaluated the literature on mass incarceration and its impact on resilience in Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. The perspectives of Black children in dyadic relationships with their parents in prison can cause feelings of stress, depression, life dissatisfaction, and trauma (Barnert et al., 2017; Farrington et al., 2017; Finkeldey & Dennison, 2019; Foster & Hagan, 2017). Chapter 2 focused on how parental imprisonment can cause children emotional distress or social maladjustment. The literature was the foundation for this study; however, existing research did not answer the research questions or address the problem statement of this study. Specifically, there is a lack of research on how Black children overcome the hardships related to parental incarceration by developing adequate coping skills and resilience.

A child's environment is not only for concern but also for the behaviors they may observe. The negative behaviors of individuals in prison could impact their children's health, mental health, and relationships (Afifi, 2018; Heard-Garris et al., 2018a). Children with low levels of self-esteem often perceive responsibilities as extremely complicated; as a result, they avoid challenging responsibilities (Altintas & Billici, 2018; Chang, 2018). Children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents experience higher rates of distress and lower self-esteem than children with parents who have not experienced incarceration (Gipson, 2019; Hartnett et al., 2018). The literature review provided a foundation for understanding children with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents and how resilience contributes to their quality of life, self-esteem, psychological and social adjustment, employment, and trusting relationships with family members. Finally, this study showed how resilience theory can provide coping strategies for sustaining a healthier quality of life. These gaps in the literature indicated the need for this generic qualitative study to focus on the perspectives of adult Blacks relative to their childhood experiences with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. Chapter 3 discusses the study's research method, data collection procedures, data analysis strategy, and ethical implications for qualitative research.

Chapter 3: Research Method

In this generic qualitative study, I explored the perspectives of resiliency among adult Blacks regarding their former childhood experiences with their incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parent(s). In this chapter, I address the rationale for a generic qualitative study, the role of the researcher, sampling strategy, sample size, instrumentation, recruitment of participants, and data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with the study's trustworthiness, participant protection, and ethical considerations. The discussion is followed by a summary and a transition to the next chapter with the study's results.

Research Design and Rationale

The research method selected for this study was qualitative with a generic research approach. Qualitative researchers strive to understand the perceptions of individuals who have experienced a situation (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Van Manen, 2017). To collect data in a qualitative study, researchers use structured or open-ended interviews, observations, and written document interpretation (Snelson, 2019). In this study, I focused on the participants' feelings, opinions, and thoughts instead of statistics and numbers; thus, a generic qualitative design was most applicable. Therefore, exploring the experiences of the study's participants was more suited to a generic qualitative design. The generic qualitative approach allowed the uncovering of themes within the interviews of the participants.

The goal of a generic qualitative study is to investigate individual's subjective opinions, attitudes, and beliefs, and this purpose aligned with the aim of this current study

(Janusheva et al., 2022; Kostere & Kostere, 2021; Morse, 2020). I adopted this approach for my study because the research question attempted to understand the perspectives of adult Blacks as former children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parent(s) and their resiliency. The narrative data captured in this study provides a more thorough understanding of the selected population's perspectives.

Generic qualitative methodology generates a wealth of descriptive data that can be interpreted within specific theoretical frameworks (Kostere & Kostere, 2021). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative researchers try to maintain objectivity while respecting the opinions, perspectives, and experiences of study participants. Quantitative approaches aim to produce a breadth of knowledge regarding the occurrence of a phenomenon, whereas qualitative methods focus on increasing the depth of understanding of a phenomenon under investigation (Janusheva et al., 2022). A subjective technique was chosen for this study because the aim was to investigate people's encounters and impressions instead of evaluating connections or concentrating on deductive factors. Qualitative research can provide comprehensive descriptions of disadvantaged community members' experiences and capture the stories of those people in a way that yields valuable information. My study was guided by a generic qualitative research method because it emphasized individual perspectives and experiences.

Research Question

My research question guiding this study was:

What are adult Blacks' perceptions of potential resiliency regarding health and quality of life pertaining to their former childhood experiences with incarcerated or formally incarcerated parents?

Role of the Researcher

The researcher brings a profuse meaning to their research projects. Ravitch and Carl (2021) outlined the research's relevance, implications, and goals and how researchers act as the primary authority to provide insight. Zhang and Liu (2018) discussed how researchers are tools in research studies. During data collection, I was an observer and interviewer. As an interviewer, I considered how my beliefs, identity, professional status, commitments, prejudices, ethnicity, gender, age, values, and assumptions influenced my research project's data collection and analysis stages. Such positionality needs to be recognized (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Zhang & Liu, 2018). I knew how my role as a researcher affected my relationship with participants and my capacity to build trust with them. There were no adults in the study who were hesitant or unwilling to share everything due to a lack of trust. However, some adults may have felt relieved when they saw someone who looks like them. As a minority, specifically a Black woman, I believe that adult Blacks, as participants, were comfortable with my presence and involvement because I am affiliated with the same demographic classification as them. Due to our similar demographic affiliation, I believe the selected adult Black participants did not resist responding or hostility to my questions, did not display verbal or non-verbal aggressiveness, and did not express sentiments of intrusion or lack of tolerance because of the questions I asked.

Qualitative research requires human interactions. A researcher in a qualitative study is considered a data collection instrument. Such subjectivity can cause the researcher to share their commonalities and differences consciously or unconsciously with the participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018); subjectivity can lead to researcher bias. Nonetheless, the role of the researcher in this study's design was an instrument (Ward et al., 2018). As a data collection instrument, I asked study-specific questions to elicit responses from the participants about their experiences.

A researcher must remain as objective in the data collection process as possible. The researcher's role includes considering personal bias, judgment, and experience related to the perceptions of the study (Langdridge, 2018). To help mitigate potential bias, I kept a detailed data collection and analysis journal. The journal served as a guide during the interpretation of the findings. Another way that I mitigated potential researcher bias was to ensure my body posture was inviting and the tone of the interviews was comfortable for the participants during the interviews. I considered and was aware of the interview atmosphere and any potential biases.

Additionally, I had personal experience providing support and aid to those living in a disadvantaged community, which helped me establish rapport and trust with participants. My courteous demeanor and respect for the participants' cultural values were essential when working with the participants (see Langdridge, 2018). Further, my experience working in underserved communities as a counselor enhanced my awareness of the dynamics faced by children of incarcerated parents. It helped me to understand their voices and concerns. It was essential to have empathy and build rapport with the

participants when I conducted this study. However, I did not develop personal relationships with the participants or select any participant with whom I had a current or past relationship to prevent potential conflicts of interest. I informed the participants that I was a doctoral student at Walden University conducting dissertation research at the time of the study. As part of my recruitment procedures, I provided the participants with consent forms that outlined the study's purpose, participation requirements, participation risks, confidentiality assurances, and the voluntary nature of participation.

Methodology

I felt that my exploration of adult Blacks' perspectives might highlight connections between how their depictions of their former childhood experiences may align with resiliency theory models seen in youth as they progress through various socioemotional states while growing up with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. The current generic qualitative study used purposeful sampling to recruit participants, semi-structured interviews to collect data, and thematic analysis to analyze the data. In qualitative research, purposeful sampling is often used to select individuals meeting the predefined participation criteria (Ward et al., 2018). Through this technique, researchers often base the selection criteria on similar life experiences (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Vagle, 2018). Qualitative research requires the researcher to collect data from observation, interviews, or a culmination of methods (Kunes, 2022; Morse, 2020; Powe, 2022). I collected the data through semi-structured interviews. I recorded the interviews with a tape recorder or recording options in the Zoom telecommunications application. In this study, the researcher's role was to collect data based on responses to a list of

questions that the researcher created. The data collected was transcribed and analyzed for potential codes, categories, and themes. I uploaded the data into the NVivo qualitative research software to capture the reoccurring categorial codes on the participants' statements in the interview session. As I progressed through my analysis procedures, I revised and grouped my codes into categories to highlight emergent themes in the data. In the following paragraphs, I present the participation selection logic, instrumentation, recruitment and data collection procedures, and data analysis.

Participant Selection Logic

The selected population for this study was Black adults who were formerly children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents during their childhood. The population represents a group of people who can best address the research question by discussing and communicating their thoughts, opinions, and attitudes about the time in their lives when they were children and had a parent who was in prison during their childhood. It is essential to select an appropriate sampling strategy to recruit study participants (Morse, 2020). The most important aspect of the sampling strategy for qualitative research is to enlist participants willing to share their experiences, narratives, and perspectives openly. I used purposeful sampling to recruit participants for this study because the commonality between the participants for this study is having an incarcerated parent during childhood. The inclusion criteria for the study included: (a) individuals who had a parent(s) incarcerated for at least 5 years in prison during childhood, (b) were between the ages of 18 and 55 years old, (c) identified demographically as Black or African American, and (d) live in the northeastern United States in the District of

Columbia, Virginia, or Maryland. I selected this location due to increased incarceration rates based on ethnicity in this region of the United States (Bureau of Justice, 2020).

Criterion sampling, according to Ravitch and Carl (2021), supports quality control. Additionally, criterion sampling allows researchers to compile in-depth data because participants share traits related to a specific perspective (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). I selected individuals with the same or similar demographic background as inclusionary criteria for my sample to reduce my potential to influence their responses. Creating predefined inclusion criteria also limited my study participation to simply asking questions, not adding conjecture. Additionally, the participant selection criteria chosen for subjects in this study included adult Blacks as former children of incarcerated parents. I chose the first 11 people who volunteered as participants as the candidates for this research. Since more than 10 volunteers came forward to participate in this study, I chose them based on their availability to collect data.

I recruited eligible participants in two ways. First, I posted requests for potential participants on social media platforms, including listing the study's inclusion criteria. As the study's researcher, I created community pages asking for volunteers on social media sites, including Facebook and LinkedIn, to find eligible participants. Participants had the opportunity to contact me to learn more about this study and to give me their contact information if they were interested in participating. I collected names and contact details from possible participants once they contacted me through phone or email. Then, based on the participant's availability, I established interviews after providing them with an informed consent form. I also asked colleagues if they had recommendations of names

for adult Blacks that they knew had a childhood history of having incarcerated parents. I asked my colleagues to pass my contact information to potential participants in this case. These two activities allowed me to recruit 73 viable participants for my study.

Qualitative research does not require a specific number of participants for the sample size (Ward et al., 2018). However, some researchers have recommendations for what might be advantageous numbers of participants for a study (Janusheva et al., 2022; Morse, 2020). Janusheva et al. (2022) posited that the sample size for generic qualitative researchers should be between six and 12 participants to reach data saturation. Data saturation is the point in the data collection and analysis process when no new information emerges from the data analysis (Blaikie, 2018). My goal was to recruit at least 10 participants to achieve data saturation. However, data collection would have proceeded if I had not observed saturation after interviewing 10 participants. The interviews from Participants P8, P9, P10, and P11 did not generate any unique codes compared to the other participants' interviews. Therefore, in this study, data saturation was observed after seven participants.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, I provided participants with the option for their interviews through telephone or video call options via Skype, Zoom, or FaceTime. I alerted the potential participants that I wanted to record the audio portion of the interview conversations. I distributed invitation packages containing an invitation letter and a consent form to individuals prior to the scheduling of interviews. Each potential participant signed their consent form and returned it to me via a pre-paid, pre-addressed envelope, in person, or email, depending on their preferences. Upon receipt, I reviewed

the consent forms for accuracy and completeness. My timeline to receive the consent forms included 14 days from a set date so the potential participants had enough time to review the consent form, pose questions, voice concerns, receive responses to their questions and concerns, and return the consent form to me. I created interview questions intending not to pose a risk of trauma or danger to the participants.

Instrumentation

I used an interview protocol with open-ended questions to solicit responses from participants. I developed the interview protocol to include 10 open-ended questions to ask each participant during the interview process. The participants' responses comprised the data I collected for this study. The open-ended interview process supports learning about the participants' experiences, the meanings they attach to these experiences, and their points of view regarding the interview questions, following the guidance of Cox (2019). Throughout the semi-structured interviews, I used follow-up questions to encourage participants to remain focused on the research topic and elaborate on their responses to gather additional information and to ensure that I understood their responses (Zhang & Liu, 2018). Following to Korstjens and Moser (2018), I ensured that the participants comprehended the significance of the study and how their participation may contribute to addressing specific community issues and influencing positive social change.

Viable exploration inquiries are the most critical parts of interview convention improvement (Janusheva et al., 2022; Leeming, 2018). During the conversations and interactions, the semi-structured interview questions helped me focus on the research topic and later code the data to identify emerging themes and patterns during data

analysis (Kostere & Kostere, 2021; Ward et al., 2018). The semi-structured interview questions for this study supported my efforts to obtain data aligned with my goal of gleaning information representing the participants' perspectives (Dhakai, 2022; Powe, 2022). The development of the interview questions supported me in garnering data that aligned with my research question, the purpose of the study, and the research gaps I highlighted in my literature review. I used semi-structured open-ended interview questions to generate robust qualitative data (Leeming, 2018; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Zhang & Liu, 2018).

Wilbanks (2020) provided the following suggestions for creating interview questions. First, the language should be free-form, and respondents should be able to choose their answers. Second, questions should be nonpartisan or pre-scripted. Third, I asked each question separately to allow the participants to address each question independently fully. Fourth, I wrote the questions clearly to increase participant understanding, and fifth, I took time when asking questions about the question why. The care taken included knowing any terms specific to the program or the respondents' culture. Following the above suggestions helped ensure that the content was valid and that the interview questions allowed participants to share their experiences. To obtain as much information as possible, researchers should use a core set of semi-structured and follow-up questions (Janusheva et al., 2022; Kostere & Kostere, 2021). Therefore, I implemented this process to complete all interviews and data collection.

I designed a set of questions for data collection (see Appendix C). I created the interview questions to generate responses addressing the research question. I began the

interview by asking one overarching question to help the participants feel comfortable. Then, I hoped to continue with the remaining interview questions to gather information and potentially provide responses appropriate to the research question presented in this study. I asked follow-up questions to provide further understanding and detail to the points discussed in real-time, allowing the participant to explain their experiences in more detail.

The potential participants decided whether the interviews would be in-person, over the phone, or through Zoom sessions. All participants chose to complete their interviews using the Zoom telecommunication software. I created a neutral environment to conduct the interviews where the subjects could feel comfortable speaking openly. People who expressed an interest in participating in this study but did not attend the researcher's scheduled interviews presented a hurdle to obtaining the desired minimal amount of 10 participants for this study. However, 75 potential participants responded to the call for participation. I invited a new participant to participate in the study when a scheduled interviewee did not attend the interview,

I avoided unethical situations by protecting the subjects' privacy by refraining from sharing one subject's data with another. Additionally, I stored all data on a password-protected, encrypted cloud drive with a password known only to myself. I ensured participant confidentiality by assigning all data derived from each participant to a unique pseudonym.

During the interview with the subjects, I manually took notes on the interview protocols (Appendix C) and recorded the interviews (Zhang & Liu, 2018). I developed an

interview protocol sheet to publish the data recorded during the interviews for later data analysis and interpretation (Cox, 2019; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Snelson, 2019) (see Appendix C). The purpose of the interview protocols was to record responses to interview questions about the participants' experiences being children of incarcerated parents and their experiences with resiliency. The information collected in the interview transcripts helped answer the research questions of this study. During the interviews, I used two methods for capturing the audio from the interviews. First, I used the recording function of the Zoom telecommunications software. Second, I used a digital, portable audio recorder to collect data as a secondary precaution, as this ensures the accuracy of recording and data collection (Morse, 2020). Ravitch and Carl (2021) also recommended using digital audio recorders because they are less harmful, downloading recordings as audio files to the computer and recording sessions without tape. I used the Otter.ai transcription service to transcribe the interviews and compared the transcriptions line-by-line with audio recording to ensure congruence.

Recruitment

To recruit participants, I sent several invitation packages to colleagues who lived in the northeast United States of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and northern Virginia so my colleagues could distribute them to people they thought would be willing to participate. I also sent recruitment flyers using several social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The selected social media platforms were chosen based on their popularity. Participants were required to answer demographic questions related to the inclusion criteria (see Appendix A) to ensure they were qualified for the

study. An invitation letter and a two-page consent form containing the inclusion criteria were emailed securely to each potential participant.

If participants met the inclusion criteria, I contacted them via email or phone to schedule an interview based on their designated preference. Once a signed consent form was received, I contacted the participant and scheduled the interview. I conducted the interviews using the Zoom telecommunications software. All interviews occurred privately in my home office. I advised participants to choose a private location for the interview. Since no other persons were required to be present, I only interviewed participants who indicated they could have a private conversation. I was the only individual who completed the data collection or analysis process. All Zoom interviews occurred at a convenient time agreed upon by the interviewee and myself. I recorded each interview using the Zoom telecommunication software and a digital audio recorder as a secondary precaution. I transcribed the recordings for interviews using Otter.ai, with a line-by-line comparison with the audio recordings for accuracy. The identities of all participants were protected by not attributing transcribed remarks to the interviewees' real names. I used a sequential number matched to the participants' remarks on the recorder and in the transcripts.

Each participant interview occurred using the Zoom telecommunication software and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. Wilbanks (2020) suggested planning an interview for at least one hour to gather enough data. Similarly, Leeming (2018) suggested restricting an interview to between 60 and 90 minutes to gather sufficient participant data. Therefore, I monitored time during the interview and looked for signs of patience and

comfort. Additionally, I informed participants in the consent form that they could withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason (Kunes, 2022; Wilbanks, 2020).

Data Collection

I collected data in the interview process. The interviews were completed using the Zoom platform and served as the method for collecting the perspectives of adult Blacks who were formerly children of the incarcerated. Interviews continued until I observed data saturation. Before the interviews began, I read the participants a confidentiality and privacy statement (see Interview Protocol). I explained to the participants that their participation was voluntary and asked for their consent to record the session. Verbal confirmation and the signed informed consent form were evidence that they understood the levels of activity required for participation. I retained this evidence for 5 years using password-protected, encrypted cloud storage and a password-protected USB drive. The USB drive was secured in a locked safe in my home office under a combination known only to myself.

The interview protocol (see Appendix C) included open-ended and follow-up questions, as needed. I transcribed each participant's audio recordings within 48 hours after I finished each interview. In addition to the questions, the protocol consisted of the interview script greeting, salutation, and debriefing procedures. I transcribed the interviews to ensure that the transcriptions accurately captured the participants' words and expressions. I followed up with participants by emailing them their interview transcripts to ensure the transcripts reflected their statements accurately. After the transcription of interviews, every participant received a copy of their interview transcript

through email to personally audit as a type of member checking. According to Dhakai (2022), this transcript review procedure ensures that the participants' intended communication was accurately recorded in the transcripts.

I wrote notes during the interviews to add information to the data. These notes included my observations of the participants' nonverbal actions or off-the-record information communication (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). The participants' attitudes, comfort levels with the questions, concerns, and any other data that could assist me in adequately contextualizing participants' responses were a part of the notes. I included information about how each participant engaged in the interview environment, the participant's interactions with me, and any technical issues that impacted the interview sessions. I handwrote, scanned, and saved my notes as PDF files on my private computer with a password.

All data, information, and related documentation, including iCloud storage from the audio recording device, were saved on my personal computer, which I specifically used for the study. I stored the files in password-protected folders and files. I kept the notes, forms, and paper-based items in a locked file cabinet that was only accessible to me. I used these measures to protect the study materials. I provided this study's data analysis plan in the next section.

Data Analysis Plan

The present study employed a generic qualitative methodology, as it allowed for the exploration of adult Blacks who were formerly children of the incarcerated.

According to Percy et al. (2015), a generic qualitative study requires close attention to the

interpretation of the data, which in this case was in the form of interview transcripts, and explores the themes that may emerge. The data analysis method of a generic qualitative study is to explore and uncover commonalities and differences between participants' experiences (Kunes, 2022; Powe, 2022). The data analysis process requires the researcher to evaluate the transcripts of the interviews to discover what codes, categories, and themes may emerge (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Saldaña, 2016). The data analysis process included transcribing the interviews and coding words and phrases in the transcripts.

Data analysis for this proposed study used the methods suggested by Saldaña (2016). The first step in the process was to read the transcribed interview data multiple times to become familiar with the data. Once I read the data, descriptive codes were created based on the data. The coding process during the analysis of the transcripts is crucial when evaluating the transcripts (Humble & Mozellius, 2022; Saldaña, 2016). I coded the data from the interviews. I combined these codes to form categories. Once I created the codes' labels, I recorded these data using NVivo to help explore participants' responses for commonalities. Coding with appropriate labels helped in interpreting the data. I created themes and subthemes from the codes and categories related to the research question and the study's purpose. Thematic analysis coding, or using labels to organize the transcripts' commonalities, is crucial to the data analysis process (Dhakai, 2022). According to Elliott and Timulak (2021), a generic qualitative study requires close attention to the interpretation of interview transcripts and explores the themes that may emerge. The data analysis method of a generic qualitative study is to explore and uncover commonalities between participants (Elliott & Timulak, 2021).

The production of visual representations of participants' opinions and perceptions can strengthen the interpretation of the results (Dhakai, 2022). The present study employed thematic coding to represent themes for analysis visually. In other words, themes from the literature served as a guide to categorize and organize the respondent's answers and helped to organize such themes into visual representations for better understanding (Humble & Mozelius, 2022). I created word clouds to help provide the visual context of themes uncovered during the interviews.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is how readers can be confident in the accuracy of a study's results (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Tkachuk et al., 2019). Researchers should measure trustworthiness at each phase of the data analysis process. Several measures explained further in detail throughout this section were employed to ensure the trustworthiness of this study. The credibility of this study is crucial for several reasons. The following section discusses the importance and necessity of credibility in a qualitative study.

Credibility

I protected the credibility of this study by ensuring consistency in questions during the interview. Credibility is a significant concern in qualitative research comparable to internal validity in a quantitative study (Dhakai, 2022; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). According to Moustakas (1994), methods for increasing credibility include aligning with the interview protocol, member checking of data for preciseness, and

mitigating researcher bias. Credibility is the accuracy of a study's findings based on the integrity of the data (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Ward et al., 2018).

Member checking can bolster the credibility of this study. Member checking is a procedure that enables participants to verify the accuracy of the information captured in the transcribed interviews (Morse, 2020). The participants received copies of their interview transcripts to confirm that the transcripts accurately captured their experiences. They had the opportunity to correct their responses to inaccurate findings in the transcripts. Once I received the updated transcript, I made any changes in my copy of the transcripts prior to conducting data analysis.

Credibility in qualitative research focuses on the extent to which the results of the data collected can be trusted or trusted (Kostere & Kostere, 2021). Credibility determines whether study results represent relevant information drawn from participants' original statements (Zhang & Liu, 2018). Verification through member checking, as discussed earlier, was beneficial in ensuring credibility. I contacted my participants to arrange meetings to review the recorded interviews and discuss any errors in the transcript, allowing me to confirm the accuracy of my research data with endorsements from my participants.

Transferability

Transferability is how scholars can apply the findings from a study to other contexts. It is the basis for generalizing results, as seen in quantitative studies (Ward et al., 2018). I recorded my notes during the interview process to help ensure the transferability of this study's analysis. The detailed descriptions in the data collection and

analysis procedures improve the transferability of a study's results (Snelson, 2019). I provided detailed descriptions of the participants' responses to enhance the trustworthiness of this study's results. Researchers should also reveal how they made connections to derive meaning across the various participant responses by utilizing previous literature and a theoretical framework (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Tkachuk et al., 2019). Thus, ensuring detailed records provided the context necessary to improve this study's transferability.

Dependability

Dependability is another aspect of trustworthiness in qualitative research. Dependability, or the stability of the data (Ravitch & Carl, 2021), is an essential component because it reflects the data collection procedures (Langdrige, 2018). A detailed description of the participants' perspectives supports the credibility and dependability of a study. The data collection and analysis processes justify the developed codes, categories, and themes from the transcribed interviews (Tkachuk et al., 2019; Yardley, 2017). Therefore, providing a detailed description of the data collection process can help to ensure the dependability of this study's data analysis procedures and results. Essentially, providing an in-depth description and rationale for the steps in data collection can help strengthen the trustworthiness of this study.

Another technique for increasing the accuracy of the results is to include discrepant cases. Discrepant cases occur when participants present experiences or accounts that differ significantly from others (Janusheva et al., 2022). A researcher must also note if a study has no discrepant cases during data analysis. Reporting the absence of

discrepant instances is a way to enhance dependability by making readers aware of the consideration of discrepant cases (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Ward et al. (2018) suggested that including discrepant cases enables the presentation of a more realistic study. The result chapter presents direct quotations from participants to demonstrate their experiences in alignment with the identified themes and illustrate the richness of the research data.

Confirmability

The confirmability of this study is reflected in the thematic analysis of the interviews. Confirmability shows that a study has findings based on the data collected from the participants (Cox, 2019; Moustakas, 1994). According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), researchers use confirmability to acknowledge the impact of biases and prejudices on data interpretation. Moustakas (1994) noted that researchers must mitigate through methods such as bracketing. Bracketing and reflexivity require self-awareness and disclosing any experience or assumptions that might influence the study (Moustakas, 1994; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Bracketing and reflexivity commenced before the study activities to improve its confirmability.

Researchers can mediate bracketing and reflexivity through journaling. A detailed journal was maintained during the data collection and analysis process to help interpret the thematic analysis. Reflexivity is self-examining assumptions to identify researcher biases (Leeming, 2018). It is part of the ethics code for researchers to be cognizant of their potential bias (APA, 2017). The journal provided and enriched this study's findings by exploring the researcher's experience and the participants.

Ethical Implications

Ethical codes are the foundation for conducting research. I completed CITI training. CITI training prepares researchers for conducting scientific research. The APA Ethics Code of Conduct (2017) provides written guidelines for conducting social science research. The target population for this study was adult Blacks who formerly were children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. I coded and cataloged the data throughout the project to keep the participants' identities confidential. Participants were referred to as an alias throughout the data analysis and reporting processes. Any work samples used did include their names but were replaced with a pseudonym to refer to their interview responses. All information was completely de-identified, and data will be kept locked and secure upon completion for 5 years.

The Walden IRB oversaw this study, and I noted the approval code in the informed consent form provided to the participants. As mentioned previously, I required informed consent before participating in this research study. Once I collected participants' informed consent, I presented clear written and oral instructions for participation. Before the interview began, I explained to each participant the nature of the study. I informed the participants that they were free to discontinue the study at any time without penalty. Because this study discussed the sensitive topic of childhood experiences with incarcerated/formerly incarcerated parents, participants received information to access counseling services during the debriefing before and after the interview.

Summary

The purpose of this study was for the researcher to conduct a generic qualitative study exploring adult Blacks' perspectives of their former childhood experiences as children of incarcerated/formerly incarcerated parent(s) relative to the focus of resiliency. The methodology of a study is the blueprint for the future research project. Chapter 3 presented the rationale and procedures related to a generic qualitative study. Adult Blacks as former children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parent(s) were the selected understudied population. Thus, this study allowed their reflective voices to be heard through individual interviews. I used thematic analysis in this study. The present study is imperative because it gives a deeper understanding of how this specified culture of Black children perceived they were affected by their parent's incarceration or former incarceration. The specific issues revealed from this study can guide how to identify the critical needs of Black children in this unique circumstance of parental incarceration and activity that can lead to progressive social change. The nature of this research study was generic qualitative and used thematic analysis to generate results.

I presented the specific details about the population I investigated, recruited, and participated in through my sampling methods. The data collection process and instrumentation described the future utilization of semi-structured interviews with up to 10 adult Blacks from the northeastern states of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and northern Virginia. The researcher-designed interview protocol consisted of ten questions and two follow-up questions. I designed the interview protocol based on selected

information uncovered in the literature review. I presented ethical considerations along with measures to mitigate potential researcher bias.

I also presented the ethical implications of this study to highlight the necessity for abiding by the ethics code. The principle of beneficence and maleficence is crucial for human participants (APA, 2017). One of my goals as a researcher was to ensure that I did no harm to the potential participants and provided them with counseling resources before the study and during the debriefing. The practice was crucial, considering the study focused on childhood situations that could be difficult or traumatic for some to recount or discuss. Once Walden IRB approved this study, I collected my data and presented the results in the next chapter. Chapter 4 describes my data collection and the study's results.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this generic qualitative study was to explore the perspectives of Black adults regarding their childhood experiences as children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents as it pertains to resiliency. I used a generic qualitative approach to understand the experiences of Black adults whose parents were incarcerated in their youth. To explore the participants' experiences in-depth, I interviewed 11 participants using a semistructured interview methodology. I devised the following research question to address the purpose of this study:

What are adult Blacks' perspectives of potential resiliency in relation to a healthy quality of life regarding their former childhood experiences with incarcerated or formally incarcerated parents?

Chapter 4 presents the data collected from the participants who met the inclusion criteria for this study. The research setting and a description of the methods used for data analysis are provided. Evidence of trustworthiness is also presented and described. Then, I provide context for the study's results by describing the participants' demographics. Next, I present the study's findings, detailing how the collected data addressed the research question.

Research Setting

Following IRB approval awarded on June 8, 2023, I posted my recruitment flier on my personal Facebook page. I also contacted Facebook group administrators and asked permission to post my recruitment flier (Appendix A) on their pages, as described in Chapter 3. Once permission was granted, the recruitment flier was posted to the

following Facebook Groups: Minority Doctoral Network, Inc. and PhiniseD/FinishEdD (Drs/Future Drs) #WhoGotNext.

I received responses from 73 potential participants within 1 week of my initial post. Upon potential participants indicating an interest in the study, I emailed them a demographic questionnaire (Appendix B). The participants returned the demographic information to me within approximately 36 hours. All participants who responded to the initial post returned completed demographic questionnaires.

Participant selection proceeded based on predefined inclusion criteria. There were four inclusion criteria that each participant was required to meet: (a) participants must have had at least one parent incarcerated for at least 5 years in prison during childhood, (b) participants must have been between the ages of 18 and 55 at the time of the interview, (c) participants must have identified as Black or African American, and (d) participants must have lived in the Northeastern United States in the District of Columbia, Virginia, or Maryland.

I verified that each participant met the inclusion criteria by examining their responses to the demographic questionnaire. Some participants were not eligible based on not meeting the inclusion criteria. For example, 11 participants were excluded because they were older than 55, and one participant was excluded because the individual was 17 years old. Twenty participants were excluded because they lived outside the geographical region chosen for the study. Twenty-three individuals could not participate because their parents were incarcerated for less than 5 years or served time in the county jail and not in prison.

The remaining 18 potential participants were deemed eligible for the study. Eligible participants were emailed an informed consent form with instructions to reply that they understood it and consented to participate in the study. Each participant acknowledged that they received and reviewed the informed consent form. Eighteen interviews were scheduled using my Walden University official email account and my personal Zoom account. Seven participants did not attend their scheduled interviews. Thus, 11 participants were interviewed for the study, meeting the desired minimum threshold of 10 participants approved by my dissertation committee and IRB.

Demographics

All participants were required to meet predefined inclusion criteria, as described above, to participate in the study. Participant demographic profiles are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Personal Demographic Profiles of Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Parent incarcerated	Age upon incarceration	Length of parent's incarceration	Reason for incarceration
P1	Female	37	Father	17	7 years	Aggravated assault
P2	Male	30	Father	18	5 years	Drug trafficking
P3	Male	32	Both parents	25	7 years	Drug charges
P4	Male	27	Father	3	9 years	Unknown
P5	Male	31	Father	16	6 years	Assault or battery
P6	Female	34	Father	22	8 years	Gun violence
P7	Female	24	Father	8	12 years	Rape
P8	Male	29	Mother	15	Indefinitely	Murder
P9	Female	26	Both parents	15	7 years	Fraud
P10	Male	30	Father	22	6 years	Theft
P11	Male	NA	Both parents	9	10 years	Unknown

All participants were described by a pseudonym to protect their identity and ensure their confidentiality. Pseudonyms were assigned by the order in which participants completed their scheduled interviews.

All participants identified as Black or African American and lived in the District of Columbia, Maryland, or Virginia at the time of the interview. Four (36.3%) of the participants were female, and seven (63.7%) were male. Seven participants (63.7%) were children of incarcerated fathers, one participant had an incarcerated mother (9.1%), and three participants (27.2%) had both parents incarcerated in their youth. The participants experienced their parents' incarceration at various stages in their childhood. Three participants (27.2%) were youth (ages 3-to 12-years-old), four participants were adolescents (36.4%) (ages 13-to 17-years-old), and four participants (36.4%) were young adults (ages 18-to 25-years-old). Two participants (P4 and P11) could not recall why their parent was incarcerated, and their family members or guardians did not provide this information. Other participants described their parents' incarceration as being due to rape, assault, and murder, among other charges.

Data Collection

Data collection began after I scheduled 1-hour interviews with the selected participants. I conducted all interviews using the Zoom telecommunications software with the 11 selected participants who met the inclusion criteria for the study. Participants were reminded not to reveal personal information beyond what I asked through the interview questions. No information shared in the interviews could be reasonably used to identify the participants. Consequently, there was no need to redact any information from

the interview transcripts. Participants were assigned a participant identification number for data collection and identification purposes to protect their identity and to provide confidentiality throughout the study. The participant identification numbers used in this study were P1, P2, ..., and P11. The identification numbers were assigned based on the order in which the participants completed the interviews. The participants who scheduled an interview for data collection but did not complete interviews were not assigned identification numbers and were excluded from the analysis.

Before starting each interview, I reviewed each participant's informed consent form. I confirmed with each participant that they consented to have their interview audio recorded and their data used in the study, which all the participants acknowledged verbally. Data were audio recorded using the recording function of the Zoom telecommunication software. During the interviews, I followed the interview guide I created (Appendix C) to ensure I asked all participants the same questions in the same order. However, when necessary, I added prompting questions to maintain a fluid and conversational dialogue between myself and the participant. The interviews ranged in length. The shortest interview was 13 minutes, which occurred three times (P1, P3, and P10), and the longest interview was 23 minutes, which occurred once (P5). Notes were taken during the interviews to promote researcher reflexivity. The notes mainly comprised of my impression of the participants' demeanor when speaking about their incarcerated parent or parents. Most participants spoke about their parents with acceptance, indicating their resilience.

I used the transcription capabilities of the online transcription software Otter.ai to transcribe the data. I reviewed the transcriptions line by line, and I compared them to the original audio recordings to ensure the accuracy of the transcriptions. After I completed the transcriptions, I emailed each participant a copy of their transcript to allow them to participate in the interviewee transcript review, following the guidance of Rowlands (2021). I asked the participants to acknowledge receipt of the transcript within 2 days, evaluate the transcript, and return feedback within 1 week. Two participants (P1 and P4) responded to the interviewee transcript review email indicating that no changes to their transcripts were needed. The other nine participants did not respond to the transcript review email.

Data Analysis

I used thematic analysis to analyze my data, following the six-phased approach specified by Braun and Clarke (2022). In Phase 1, I became familiar with the interview data by reading the interviews multiple times. To this end, I read each interview from start to finish to gain a holistic understanding of the data I collected and to gather my general impressions regarding the depth of the participant's answers to the interview questions. Next, I read responses to each interview question across participants. Specifically, I read each participant's response to Interview Question 1, followed by each participant's response to Interview Question 2, until all interview questions had been exhausted. During this phase, I carefully analyzed each participant's responses for any personally identifiable information present in the transcripts that could be used to reasonably identify the participants. However, no participants revealed any such

information. Therefore, it was not necessary to redact any information from the transcripts.

In Phase 2, I categorized the data into meaningful units called codes (Braun & Clarke, 2022). During this phase, I created a codebook to categorize the data. I applied the codes to participants' ideas, perspectives, and opinions regarding their experiences with parental incarceration. In Phase 3, I reviewed the codes and combined them to form axial categories. For example, in Theme 1, environmental factors influencing resiliency were examined, codes were applied according to environmental social groups. Codes like *worship*, *church*, and *pastor* were grouped into a category of *church community*. Codes like *student*, *kids*, *friends*, *teacher*, *principal*, and *counselor* were grouped into a category of *school community*. The codes and categories captured different perspectives regarding environmental influences. For instance, P1 spoke about a lack of support from her school community, saying, "Students at school weren't always nice to me." However, P5 said, "My distraction was the kids at school." Thus, the coding scheme devised for the study captured the variety of the participants' experiences. In another example, the codes *financial*, *rent*, *jobs*, and *electricity* were combined into a category *financial stress*. An example of an indication of financial stress was provided by P3, who said, "My mom was always working two jobs." P6 also indicated financial stress by saying, "Sometimes our electricity went off." P1 also recounted, "I had to care for my siblings." P1's example provides another account of the coding scheme used to capture the varied experiences of the participants.

I then refined the axial categories to extract themes. The categories were grouped together based on their similarity. For example, with Theme 1 different types of environmental influences were grouped, including *communication with parent in prison*, *support from school community*, *support from friends*, and *community support*. Each of these categories represents a different type of environmental influence. Thus, the themes represent patterns and relationships presented in the interview data. Once inductively coded, I grouped the axial categories into themes aligned with the thematic analysis of the academic literature presented in Chapter 2 of this study.

Using this method, four themes were identified. In Theme 1, environmental influences on the participants' resiliency are examined. Theme 2 was created from the categorized codes relating to familial factors influencing resiliency. Categories included *family disruption*, *family stress*, and *family support*. Theme 3 was based on categorizing codes that were related to interventions. The interventions included social activities with peers, sports activities, and mindfulness activities. Theme 4 is based on the participants' personal resiliency by investigating how they overcame psychological and social challenges. The themes provide a comprehensive description of the phenomenon of resiliency among the African American children of incarcerated parents. Figure 1 shows the relationship between codes, categories, and themes.

Figure 1*Thematic Map Used in This Study*

Theme	Category	Code
1. Environmental factors influenced participants' resiliency	C1. Communication with parent in prison	Phone
		Letters
		Visit in prison
2. Familial factors influenced participants' resiliency	C2. Support	Support at school
		Support from friends
		Church
3. Intervention methods influenced participants' resiliency	C3. Community	Lack of support
		Stigma
		Assumed parent role
4. The participants overcame psychological stress	C4. Family description	Disrupt family structure
		C5. Family stress
		Family trauma
5. The participants overcame psychological stress	C6. Family support	Financial stress
		Immediate family
		Extended Family
6. The participants overcame psychological stress	C7. Activities	Art, music
		Sports
		Changed mindset
7. The participants overcame psychological stress	C8. Mindfulness	Therapy
		C9. Mental health
		Anger
8. The participants overcame psychological stress	C10. Social Challenges	Depression
		Stress
		Isolation
		Stigma

In Phase 4 for the data analysis, I created the thematic map shown in Figure 1.

The map helped me organize the data logically and coherently. During Phase 5, I examined the thematic map to evaluate whether new themes emerged or were redundant and needed to be combined. There was one discrepant case present in the data. Participant P6, whose father was incarcerated for gun violence, maintained that their parent was innocent and wrongfully incarcerated. The veracity of this claim did not generally influence Participant P6's experiences compared to the other participants. That is,

Participant P6's experiences after their parent's incarceration were similar to those of the other participants. In the final data analysis phase, I reexamined the data by reviewing each interview transcript to ensure the participants' answers were explicitly related to the appropriate codes, categories, and themes. During this phase, I ensured the themes appropriately corresponded to the research question. After data analysis, I concluded that the participants' data addressed the research question because member checking was performed with the participants and there were no changes to data collected. According to Braun and Clarke (2022), member checking promotes the study's credibility.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Promoting trustworthiness in qualitative research involves ensuring the findings are dependable, reliable, and valid. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the importance of four factors in promoting the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research is the confidence that researchers can place in the truthfulness of the research findings. I implemented several strategies to establish the credibility of the study. First, I used an interviewee transcript review to increase the authenticity of the final transcript (see Rowlands, 2021). I emailed each participant's interview transcript to the correct participant to allow them to correct errors, clarify erroneous information, or provide additional information. Second, I included verbatim quotations from the participants in the final analysis of the data. Third, I used reflexivity protocols during the research process to account for my perceptions and mitigate

potential researcher bias. Specifically, I took notes and memos during the research interviews and while reading and analyzing the data.

Transferability

Transferability is the degree to which qualitative research findings can be transferred to other settings or populations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thick, rich descriptions of data can promote transferability in qualitative studies. To provide context to the participants' experiences, I collected relevant demographic information about the participants regarding their characteristics and the details of their parent's incarceration. The data provide readers with necessary information to draw conclusions about the breadth of the participants' experiences with parental incarceration. As shown in Table 1, some participants' parents were imprisoned for relatively minor felonies, such as drug charges or theft. In contrast, others were convicted of more serious felonies, such as rape or murder. Thus, the participants were the children of parents convicted of various felony charges. The breadth of the participants' experiences has implications for the transferability of the study's findings.

Data saturation also influences transferability in qualitative research studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The sample achieved sufficiency, evidenced by data saturation after seven interviews. In this study, I defined data saturation as the point during data collection and analysis whereby a participant's interview did not generate any new unique codes. The number of unique codes derived from the participants' interviews is shown in Table 2.

Table 2*Data Saturation Was Reached After Interviewing Eight Participants*

Participant	Number of unique codes	Total codes in data set
P1	18	18
P2	6	24
P3	4	28
P4	7	35
P5	1	36
P6	3	39
P7	1	40
P8	0	40
P9	0	40
P10	0	40
P11	0	40

Table 2 shows that no unique codes were generated by the interviews with participants P8, P9, P10, and P11, indicating that data saturation had been reached.

The study's inclusion criteria ensured that the participants were knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation, namely parental incarceration. The participants experienced their parents' incarceration at various stages in their childhood, indicating that their experiences represented multiple developmental stages as mentioned in the demographics. Therefore, the transferability of this study was established by describing the data in a way such that the data could be compared to other Black children and young adults who experienced parental incarceration.

Dependability

Qualitative research is dependable if the same results are generated when a research study is conducted multiple times (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). I promoted dependability in this study in several ways. First, I created an audit trail, documenting

every aspect of the research process. I documented interactions with the participants in my research journal and saved emails with participants for future reference. Second, I used an interview protocol to ensure that all participants were asked the same questions in the same order. The only deviation from the interview protocol was prompting questions to clarify participants' statements when necessary. Third, dependability is promoted by clearly documenting the data collection and analysis procedures and noting any changes to the procedures outlined in Chapter 3 (Johnson et al., 2020). The rigor of the methodology is provided in the data collection and analysis sections of this chapter. Therefore, I promoted dependability using these three mechanisms.

Confirmability

Confirmability in qualitative research involves ensuring that the study's findings are derived from the participants' experiences, not the researcher's experiences or biases (Haven & Van Grootel, 2019). To promote confirmability, I used reflexivity protocols during the research process. I used bracketing procedures, setting aside preconceived notions before conducting interviews (Dörfler & Stierand, 2021). I also took notes during the interviews to preserve my perceptions of the participants' responses. The notes allowed me to bracket my thoughts properly when I conducted data analysis. Finally, I promoted confirmability using verbatim quotations from the participants. The use of verbatim quotations is accomplished in the following sections, which present the research findings.

Results and Findings

Analysis of the participants' interview data resulted in four main themes: (a) environmental factors influencing participants' resiliency, (b) familial factors influencing participants' resiliency, (c) overcoming psychological stress enhanced participants' resiliency, and (d) intervention methods that influenced participants' resiliency. I extracted the themes from a categorical grouping of codes created from the participants' interviews. In this chapter, I will discuss each theme. I provide verbatim quotations from the participants' interviews to allow the reader to draw conclusions from the data and to enhance the trustworthiness of the study's findings.

Theme 1: Environmental Factors Influencing Participants' Resiliency

In this discussion, environmental factors refer to individuals in the participants' environments outside their family setting. For the participants in this study, key environmental influences were their communities, close friends, teachers and school administrators, and their incarcerated parents. I chose to include the participants' incarcerated parent as an environmental influence because the parent was no longer living within the immediate familial environment. The treatment and interpretation are consistent with scholars using ecological systems theory to understand parental incarceration, who describe the incarcerated parent as moving from the child's microsystem, or immediate environment, to the exosystem, which involves indirect or less direct interaction (Siegel et al., 2021). The main environmental influences that affected the participants were communication with the incarcerated parent, support from school, support from close friends, and community influences.

Communication with Parents in Prison

The participants communicated with their incarcerated parents using various means and methods. Nine participants reported interacting with their incarcerated parents by visiting them in prison. The exceptions were Participants P8 and P11. Participant P8's mother killed his father, after which P8 lived with his paternal grandparents, who forbade him from contacting his mother until he reached adulthood. Participant P11's aunt, his caregiver, did not tell him that his parents were incarcerated until many years after their incarceration. Consequently, Participant P11's family did not allow him to interact with his incarcerated parents in any fashion. Three participants (P1, P6, and P7) wrote letters to their incarcerated parents, had phone calls with them, and went to prison visits. For instance, P1 said, "With my dad, he wrote me letters when he was incarcerated to my college dorm. I think sometimes I spoke on the phone with him." All participants, except for Participants P8 and P11, reported visiting their parents in prison. I asked the participants to recall their feelings during visits with their parents. The participants' experiences visiting their parents in prison are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

In Theme 1, The Participants Described Visiting Their Parents In Prison

Participant	Excerpt from participant's interview
P1	"When I would go home on holidays and weekends, my aunt would take me to go see my dad to visit him at the prison. That was tough, but we did it. I would get depressed afterwards for a long time."
P2	"In terms of paying my visits to him, I bring my siblings there to prison to see my father since they keep insisting that they really miss him and that they really wanted to see him. I have to be strong for them."
P3	"Actually, it was something that I needed in my new phase of life and I thought it required a new me to change my perspective towards life. So I just felt like visiting them was something new and I do feel like I did approach it in the right way."
P4	"It was depressing, very depressing. Even at the jail, most of the time, being on the other side of the glass was depressing."
P5	"I visited him twice. When I got there I kind of met a different person. He wasn't the very strict father who I usually knew, and like for the first time, I saw him like happy to see me, it just made me realize he was that fatherly figure with joy in seeing his children."
P6	"It made me feel like somehow that's where almost all the Black dudes belong. Because our people are full there."
P7	"It made me feel at peace even though he was not there all the time. That little moment we shared. Yeah, it was enough and it made me feel good."
P8	No data provided for this theme.
P9	"I felt bad because my parents were being held hostage, kept in one place not really perform daily tasks and daily activities. I felt bad for them all the time."
P10	"It would make me feel bad since after coming back from their prison. I felt like I was just going back to where I was when he left. It was not being made good. Going to pretend to be him. Then just coming back without him with me. So it was hard."
P11	No data for this theme.

Many of the participants who visited their parents in prison recounted overcoming feelings of extreme depression and loneliness. Participants P1, P9, and P10 described themselves as experiencing depression that would have lasting effects after visits. As

shown in Table 3, they expressed a longing to see their parent after they had left the prison, feelings that would permeate their thoughts. Participant P4 felt isolated and lonely when visiting his parent in prison, because they were physically separated by the glass between them. Participant P10 also felt intense loneliness, describing time as stopping when his parents went to prison. Participant P6 felt a cultural sadness, seeing her father incarcerated as one of many Black men. Thus, the participants interviewed in this study experienced depression while visiting their parents in prison. Overcoming this depression through their childhood and adolescence to having the ability to speak about their experience indicates their development of resiliency after their parents' incarcerations.

Some participants overcame their emotions at a young age and showed resilience while visiting their parents in prison. For example, Participant P2 felt the need to be strong for his younger siblings, who missed their parents. Participant P3 visited his parents in prison after carefully weighing the benefits and drawbacks associated with visits, ultimately deciding that maintaining a relationship with his parents was essential for him. Participant P5 had positive memories of visiting his father in prison, recalling finding his father genuinely happy and excited to see him during his visits. P7, like P5, had a positive experience visiting his father in prison. P7 explained, "That little moment we shared, yeah, it was enough, and it made me feel good." P7 was able to view her visits with her incarcerated parent positively. Therefore, not all participants had poor experiences visiting their parents in prison. Some enjoyed their time with their parents and viewed the positive aspects of their visits.

Support at School

School is an essential developmental environment for children and adolescents. Two participants (P6 and P10) found support systems in their school environments. Participant P6 described the influence of multiple stakeholders in the school community. Participant P6 said, “Teachers tried to support me. I had guidance counseling. They tried to find me a therapist I could talk to.” The school community worked with P6 to give her the support she needed to navigate her experience with parental incarceration. Participant P10 also described the support of teachers and school counselors. Participant P10 said,

Yes, my teachers took the time to talk to me. They sent some school counselors to talk to me and just encouraged me. They would tell me that everything would be okay. So, I got some help from my teachers and my counselors.

P6 and P10’s school communities tried to render support after their parents were incarcerated. Such support came in the form of teachers and school counselors. Thus, for some participants, the school community provided a support system that filled some of the void left by the participants’ incarcerated parents.

Not all participants who discussed their school community recounted positive, supportive environments. Participant P4 had a negative experience with his school community after his parents were incarcerated. Unlike Participants P6 and P10, Participant P4 did not find his school community overtly supportive. Participant P4 said, “Most of the time, I was bullied. It was a small community at the time. Everyone knew that my dad was in prison. The kids at school were awful, and the teachers and my principal just looked the other way.” Participant P4 described a school environment in

which the teachers and administrators were dismissive of his needs, recounting that they did not punish students who bullied him. These findings indicated that the support children receive from their school communities may be community dependent. Some school communities, like those of Participants P6 and P10, were supportive, while others, like Participant P4, rendered less support. Thus, some school communities may foster and promote resilience, while others may not.

Support From Friends

Five participants (P2, P4, P7, P8, and P10) described their close friends as being critical support systems after their parents were incarcerated. Participant P2 had limited resources and could not pursue counseling, relying on a close friend for support.

Participant P2 described:

I've never really done counseling sessions since. I've never had anyone to share my problems with apart from my close friend. The only one who I've talked to was my close friend. Using my friend was the only option and we had shared a lot before that. I saw it was over a good thing for me to share my issues with was that friend. I took the initiative to at least talk to my close friend. At least helped change me.

Participant P2 had formed a strong relationship with a close friend who helped him through his parent's incarceration. Participant P2 viewed sharing with his close friend positively, noting that he "took the initiative," indicating a recognition of resiliency.

Participant P10 also expressed gratitude for his close friends who helped him through his parent's incarceration. Participant P10 explained, "My friends supported me through that

hard time. Whenever I felt bad, they would make me just feel good, or we'd plan some things. My actual friends helped me." Participant P10 relied on his friends when he struggled with depression after his parent's incarceration. He recalled that his friends would lift his spirits and distract him when feeling down, providing him with much-needed support. Thus, the participants' friends were essential to their support systems following their parents' incarcerations.

Loss of School Support. Two participants (P4 and P8) felt the conspicuous loss of their support system when they were forced to change residences and neighborhoods after their parents' incarceration. Participant P4, who received emotional support from his neighbor, felt a loss after he moved. Participant P4 said:

I was always emotionally inclined to confide in a close neighbor. He would help with anything I needed. I went straight to him. I would have looked to him to help me through the difficult time, but I had to move because my parents got put in prison. So I lost him as a friend, and I couldn't rely on him anymore.

Participant P4 described the disappearance of his support system upon his parent's incarceration. Not only did he lose a parent to the criminal justice system, he also lost his neighbor, a critical member of his support system. Similarly, Participant P8 lost his close support system when he went to live with his grandparents. Participant P8 said, "I had a friend, though, after relocating to my grandparent's place. It was very hard for me to talk to her and to communicate. I felt like I lost my friends in addition to my parents." Like Participant P4, Participant P8 lost crucial aspects of his support system when his parent

was incarcerated. Thus, for some participants, parental incarceration had effects on the familial structure and the participants' social and community structures.

Community Influences

Like the other aspects of the participants' support systems, some participants found support from their communities, while others did not. Only one participant recalled their community as being supportive. Participant P3 described his church community as positive and supportive. He said, "The church stepped in and mainly advised and told us everything would be okay. They helped with spiritual support. Praying for us, making us feel comfortable." Participant P3 described feeling comforted by the support of his spiritual community, which aided his mental health and resiliency. P7 also received support from her church community. P7 explained, "The church stepped in by mainly giving advice and yeah, bring[ing] spiritual support." Like P3, P7's church community was supportive of the family during her parent's incarceration.

Other participants did not have a positive experience with their communities. Four participants (P4, P6, P7, and P8) noted a negative influence of their communities on their mental well-being. Participant P4 described, "The community kind of played it up and almost put a stigma on you because of my parent. It was almost like I had committed the crime. I didn't feel supported." Participant P4 described his community as associating criminality with him due to his parent's actions. Consequently, he did not experience support from his community. Participant P7 had a similar experience with stigma, saying, "You know, it's harder living around people who know you're the daughter of a rapist." Participant P8, like Participants P4 and P7, found his community as unwelcoming.

Participant P8 said, “They were very judgmental, and they were religious. The community was very judgmental, like when you do a bad thing, you can’t live in that family, and they don’t give you second chances.” Like Participant P4, Participant P8 described his community as associating criminality with him and did not give him a second chance, although he had not committed a crime. Thus, some participants had to develop resiliency to overcome the negative stigma associated with their parent’s incarceration.

Summary of Theme 1

The participants revealed four general environmental conditions that influenced their resiliency after their parents had been incarcerated. The four influences were (a) communication with the incarcerated parent, (b) support from school, (c) support from close friends, and (d) community influences. Across all support systems examined, some participants had positive experiences, and some had negative ones. Some participants visiting their incarcerated parent in prison felt sadness and struggled with depression after the visits. In contrast, other participants were excited to see their parents and viewed their challenging situations positively. The participants also reported mixed influences on their support systems. Some participants’ school communities were supportive and helpful, while others reported being bullied without teachers’ or administrators’ aid. The participants also found their communities largely unsupportive, stigmatizing them with criminality. Amidst these negative experiences, the participants found solace in their close friends, who provided them with support and understanding. However, participants who were removed from their homes felt a significant loss associated with the absence of

their close friends and support systems. Together, the participants experienced support, lack of support, and stigmatization, all influencing their ability to surpass the challenges of their parent's incarceration and develop resiliency.

Theme 2: Familial Factors Influencing Participants' Resiliency

In this theme, I discuss the context of the participants' familial relations. The participants all experienced changes in their familial structure as their parents became incarcerated. For this theme, I discuss the participants' immediate family and new familial environments after their parents' incarcerations. The three main categories familial factors influencing the participants' resiliency were the following: (a) family disruption, (b) family stress, and (c) family support.

Family Disruption

All participants experienced some type of familial disruption when their parents were incarcerated. The family disruptions ranged from mild for some participants to severe for others. The participants' experiences are provided in Table 4.

Table 4*In Theme 2, The Participants Described Family Disruption*

Participant	Excerpt from participant's interview	Interpretation of excerpt
P1	"I lived with my dad and his family. When he went away, it impacted me. I no longer had my own room. I had to go to my aunt's house, which was fine, but I didn't have my own room. I never felt like I had a home there."	Loss of autonomy
P2	"After that, I had to delay college for some years. I started assuming responsibilities to help my parents. My mother had a lot of burdens and we tried to have my siblings grow up without so much compromise. Having one parent in jail, I became like a parent."	Parentification
P3	"I went to my older brother's. He was my caretaker. He steps in for our parents when they were not around."	Parentification
P4	"She always used to tell me that she connected me into my father's incarceration. She used to say things like, 'you just end up like your father if you keep on.'"	Transference of criminality
P5	"Nothing really changed. Before he went away, most of the time he wasn't the father which whom he would like to sit down in the evening and discuss things with."	Minimal changes
P6	"He was the only person I was living with at that time. I was just me and him. With him being incarcerated that I had to look out for myself."	Substantial loss of family
P7	"It impacted me negatively because I didn't have a father figure to grow up with. I was only eight and growing up in my early childhood stage. I was used to having a father figure around and just all of a sudden, that was taken away from me"	Substantial loss of family
P8	"My grandparents didn't allow me to talk to her. I couldn't even access her so I cut ties."	Substantial loss of family
P9	I didn't have that a strong relationship with my parents because they were far away from me sometimes. My parents had been arrested in Cape Town. They were just gone".	Substantial loss of family
P10	The transition was fine. It was smooth. Even though it was hard because, I was used to my dad, and growing up with my dad. But my aunts and uncles made it easy."	Moderate difficulty in transition
P11	"My auntie was saying my mom would be coming back. Two weeks went by, then a month, then a year, and then years and nothing. I kept thinking that my mom was coming back and I kept asking for my mom, because I didn't know the full details."	Substantial loss of family

Moderate Difficulty in Transition. The participants' familial disruption ranged from mild to moderate to severe. Some participants lived with and were supported by their other nonincarcerated parents. Participant P5 experienced minimal changes to his family structure because his father did not engage significantly with the family before his

incarceration. Participant P5 explained, “My father wasn’t really around that much. When he was in the house, he was always angry. He was just there in the house with us all. I would not call us a family.” During Participant P5’s father’s incarceration, he experienced minimal changes to his familial structure because his father was largely absent before he was incarcerated. However, for P5, looking at his father’s incarceration in hindsight, in the beginning it made him feel empty, but as he got older from his teenage years, it made them value and appreciate his presence. According to P5, value was added because “you have someone who can protect you.” P6 also described her relationship with her father as strained prior to his incarceration. P6 said, “Some ups and downs. I mean, it was just survival [f] the fittest and there was no love for anyone grew up in a home.” P6 described her household as “survival of the fittest,” indicating that their existence was challenging prior to the incarceration. Participant P10 experienced a moderate disruption to his family structure, as his aunts and uncles provided a smooth transition upon his father’s incarceration. Thus, some participants experienced mild effects on familial structure (P5), and some experienced moderate ones (P10).

Substantial Loss of Family. Some participants (P3, P6, P7, P8, P9, and P11) experienced significant disruptions to their family structure with lasting effects. During Participant P6’s father’s incarceration, he lost his home because his father was his only family member. His father’s incarceration influenced Participant P6’s mental health, who recalled, “I was broken emotionally.” P6 further explained, “He was the only person I was living with at that time. Yes. That’s me and him being incarcerated that I had to look out for myself.” P6 went to live with an uncle during his father’s incarceration, indicating

a loss of family. Like Participant P6, Participant P8 experienced a loss of family. Participant P8 experienced the sudden loss of his father, and his grandparents forced him to cut ties with his mother. Consequently, Participant P8 lost both parents when his mother was incarcerated. Participant P11's aunt raised him after his mother was incarcerated but never told him about her incarceration. Years passed, with Participant P11 still believing that his mother would return, filling him with sadness. Participant P3 was raised by his brother, who was a support system, but Participant P3 found his other family members to be aloof and dismissive. Participant P3 explained, "My uncles and aunts didn't support us so much. They didn't really step in. It was almost like they blamed us for our parents being in prison." Participant P3, therefore, suffered the loss of both parents through incarceration and was isolated from his extended family because of their unresolved feelings about his parents' incarceration. The above situations collectively indicate that parental incarceration can cause substantial family challenges and disrupt the familial structure.

Other participants lived with family but experienced significant disruptions in their support systems. Participant P1, who lived with her aunt after her father's incarceration, described the impact of not having her own room. While this may seem like a minor disruption, it represented a loss of autonomy and a loss of a welcoming home. Participant P1 spoke about acutely feeling the loss of her incarcerated father. P1 said:

It made me feel isolated somewhat, because as a girl, my dad raised my family.

Like I said, my mom wasn't really present, but she existed. So, I think I started

trying to reach out more to my mom in that process or during that time, and there was like a form of child abandonment that I felt. Oh, it was actually because my dad wasn't physically present anymore. So I felt isolated.

P1 felt abandoned by her father and tried to rely more on her mother for emotional support.

Participant P4 lived with his mother after his father's incarceration. He described his mother associating him with his father's criminality, creating a negative and stigmatizing home environment. Participant P4 further explained, "It got so bad that sometimes I couldn't find the energy for school. I just skipped school." For Participant P4, the transference of his father's criminality onto him created stress that influenced other aspects of his life, including his education.

Some participants (P2 and P3) described having to assume the role of a parent after their parent was incarcerated. Participant P2 delayed pursuing college to help his mother raise his younger siblings after his father was incarcerated. The phenomenon is called parentification, defined as when a child takes on the role of a parent when a parent is missing or incapacitated (Masiran et al., 2022). He described feeling stressed and anxious, saying, "I had to work, and I tried to go to school, but the stress of being a caregiver for my siblings and working was a lot." Participant P2 was forced to assume the role of a parent and help provide financial assistance for his family, both taking a toll on his mental health. Participant P3 also described parentification but on the part of his brother. Participant P3's parents were incarcerated, and Participant P3's brother became

his caretaker. Thus, some participants were required to assume the role of parents, while others were raised by their siblings in their parent's absence.

Family Stress

There were two main types of family stress identified in this study. The participants spoke about family financial stress and conflict within the home. Financial stress stemmed from the loss of an income contributing to the family. Conflict in the home tended to stem about conversations regarding the incarcerated parent.

Financial Stress. Many participants experienced familial stress upon their parents' incarceration. The loss of a parent contributing income to the family created financial stress for six participants (P2, P3, P4, P5, P9, and P10). Participant P2 described, "Our mother wasn't working at that moment. After he was incarcerated, we didn't have money to pay bills. My mother took out a lot of loans. She had a lot of burden left on her." Participant P2's mother was a stay-at-home mother when his father was arrested. She had to learn the skills necessary to find and maintain employment after her husband's incarceration, which caused psychological and financial stress on the family. Participant P3 felt shame about asking others for financial assistance. Participant P3 said:

I can say in terms of finances, which was hard at first, coming from one stage where everything was provided, and you had everything you wanted to another stage where you have to seek these things from a different person. I felt violated.

Participant P3 felt shame and guilt about seeking financial assistance from others, including strangers. The strain of parental incarceration influenced these participants psychologically and financially. Participant P5 had similar experiences, recalling:

A major challenge we had was finance. It was usually a two-person thing. My father had his income, and my mom had hers, but then it was just my mom and it was tough. We could see the strain on her. She was trying to work and keep a family together.

Like other participants, Participant P5 described her family as experiencing financial strain, with his mother working long hours to provide for the family in his father's absence. Based on these participants' experiences, financial strain was a challenge after their parents' incarcerations.

Family Conflict. Some participants described family conflict regarding their parent's incarceration. P6 wanted to discuss her parent's incarceration as part of the healing process, but this notion was met with resistance. P6 said, "They never want to talk about it. They would just kind of like change subjects. You do the time, you do the crime, you pay the price." P6's family took a hard line regarding her parent's criminal activity, believing that they should be incarcerated for their crime. P6's opinion led to conflict, as P6 wanted to discuss her parent's incarceration as a mechanism to heal.

Family Support

Despite the significant family disruptions and familial stress experienced by the participants, many participants described their immediate and extended families as supportive after their parents were incarcerated. Familial support served as a positive experience for the participants, allowing them to navigate the turbulent period after their parents' incarcerations successfully. Family support also allowed the participants to

develop resiliency. The participants' descriptions of their families' support are described in Table 5.

Table 5*In Theme 2, The Participants Described Familial Support*

Participant	Support person	Excerpt from participant's interview
P1	Immediate Family: Grandmother	"All of the family support, not just on my dad's side, but my mom's mom, my granny. She was a huge advocate to the minister in our church. She was able to engage with and having her present was a huge, positive impact for me."
P2	Immediate and Extended Family	"My family gave me the support that I needed."
P3	Immediate Family: Brother	"My brother was always a source of stability."
P4	Extended Family: Uncle	"I was close with one of my uncles, who has supported me all through primary school and high school and in some part of college."
P5	Extended Family	"I had some extended family that tried to step in and help as well. They helped us with some of the lawyer fees."
P6	Extended Family: Uncle	"I was raised by extended family – my uncle. I think an agency was supposed to step in for me, but my uncle had given me a roof over my head and food on the table. So we were good."
P7	Immediate Family	"We had a lot of love in our family, showing up for each other and lifting each other spirits. Even though we had friends, we were each other's first cheerleaders."
P8	Immediate Family: Grandparents	"I went to live with my grandparents, which was hard because they hated my mother. But they were kind to me and loved me."
P9	Extended Family: Aunt	My auntie was always giving us a word of encouragement."
P10	Immediate Family: Mother	"My mom supported me although she was going through a lot at that time. But you know, she's a parent, so she had to step up. She was a great support for me"
P11	Extended Family: Aunt	"I spend most of my childhood time with my aunty. She took care of me and supported me."

The participants had different levels of support from their families, but all described having support systems from their immediate or extended families. These findings indicated that, while family disruptions and stress can negatively influence the children of incarcerated parents, the immediate and extended families of these children can shape their experiences. For the participants in this study, their immediate and extended families provided strength by emulating strength. Seven participants' extended families, mainly consisting of aunts and uncles, provided a home and support. Two participants (P1 and P8) found support in their grandfathers. The participants found strength and developed resiliency through these interactions with their immediate and extended families. Participant P7 described wanting to emulate her mother. Participant P7 said, "Thank God for my mom. She stood up and took up the role, and she did pretty well. I found myself wanting to be as strong as she was." Participant P7 wanted to emulate her mother's strength, which helped her cope with the hardship of her father's incarceration. P7 also indicated that his extended family helped support them. P7 said, "they took up his position in my life in doing what she used to do playing checking me out and things like that." P7's extended family helped fill the absence caused by his parent's incarceration. Thus, an important aspect of the participants' resiliency was derived from their families' love and support.

Open Communication. Some participants' families had open communication about parental incarceration. For instance, P7 said, "She told us not to develop any kind of negative attitude towards him, not to see him as a bad person." P7's family openly communicated about his parent's incarceration, which allowed P7 to process his feelings.

Lack of Family Support

While some participants relied on their families for support, other participants felt the loss of their incarcerated parent acutely and did not have other family members to rely on. I asked what support services the participants could have used as a child. P1 said, “More support from my other parents- my mother. It would have been nice to have to actually had her around. I really didn't have her in my life.” P1 explained that she did not have the support of her mother, which they believed would be useful while her father was incarcerated. P1 further explained, “With my mom, communication was not consistent. So, I don't have much memory of talking to her consistently. When I did speak to my mom, it was over the phone.” P1 only communicated with her mom on the phone, but such communication was inconsistent and not memorable.

Summary of Theme 2

The participants revealed three general familial influences that influenced their resiliency after their parents had been incarcerated. These three influences were (a) familial disruption, (b) familial stress, and (c) family support. The participants experienced different levels of familial disruption. Two participants experienced mild disruptions to their family structure. One participant experienced a moderate disruption, while others experienced significant disruptions to their family support systems. These disruptions influenced the participants financially and psychologically, causing stress and anxiety. Many participants also experienced financial stress after their parents' incarceration. However, despite these negative experiences, the participants developed resiliency based on the support they received from their families. All participants

reported that their extended or immediate families provided them with the necessary love and support to survive the challenges associated with their parent's incarceration. These findings indicated that the participants developed resiliency based on positive interactions with their family members.

Theme 3: Overcoming Psychological Stress Enhanced Participants' Resiliency

The participants experienced psychological stress after their parents were incarcerated. Within this theme, the participants described psychological effects on their mental health and social functioning.

Denial

Some participants expressed denial over their parent's incarceration. For instance, even though her parent was convicted of a crime, P6 indicated that they were wrongfully incarcerated. P6 said, "I knew my father, he was incarcerated, for something that he didn't do." P6 indicated that her father was convicted of gun violence, but ultimately believed they were innocent and wrongfully incarcerated. P7, like P6, expressed feelings of denial regarding her parent's incarceration. P7 explained, "He was accused of rape." It is noteworthy that P7 did not say her father raped someone or that they were convicted of rape. Instead, P7 disassociated her father's culpability by saying they were accused of rape. P7 further explained, "I couldn't believe that he could do that. I still don't believe he did." Like P6, P7 expressed denial over her father's role in rape. In this way, some participants expressed denial over their parent's incarceration.

Depression, Anger, and Other Mental Health Challenges

The participants described the psychological influence of their parent's incarceration. The participants indicated stress, anxiety, depression, and anger. Some participants, such as Participants P2, P7, and P10, found that their mental health suffered. The participants' thoughts regarding the psychological influence of parental incarceration are shown in Table 6.

Table 6*In Theme 3, the Participants' Described Psychological Stress*

Participant	Impact	Excerpt from participant's interview
P1	N/A	No data for this theme.
P2	Mental Health	<p>"I told you my dad's incarceration really affected my mental health and I was really worried. It was really very stressful worrying about tuition."</p> <p>"I started lacking concentration. My activities that I used to do got affected so much. I didn't feel like I enjoyed any of the things I was doing. So, I could not find the time to overthink or become idle, because I would get stressed."</p>
P3	Depression	<p>"At first, I was okay with it. When I got older, things started changing towards my dad. I was angry at him for not being there when I was a kid. I was on the edge. There was too much change at my current level. Even changing my relationships. I was rebellious and too aggressive towards people."</p>
P4	Anger	<p>"Most of the time kind of angry and overreact and stuff like that."</p>
P5	Anger	<p>"It impacted me negatively. Emotionally. I was broken emotionally."</p>
P6	Depression	<p>"It impacted me negatively because I didn't have a father figure to grow up with. I was used to having a father figure around and just all of a sudden, that was taken away from me."</p>
P7	Mental Health	<p>"I even got depressed. It was hard for me. It's very traumatic. From overthinking from that depression."</p>
P8	Depression	<p>"I was emotionally down."</p>
P9	Depression	<p>"It affected my schoolwork and my emotions I was emotionally affected during that time."</p>
P10	Mental Health	<p>"To be very honest, I think that I had depression, because I was really worried. I was thinking that I was very sad. Thinking about my parents, no matter how my body tried to make me not feel it."</p>
P11	Depression	

Some participants expressed their experiences with psychological stress. For instance, P1 said:

When I was maybe a sophomore in college my dad got his sentencing. I remember my aunt called me, the one who pretty much helped my dad raise me. She called to tell me his sentencing time, and it really caused a lot of trauma for me, because I couldn't process it.

P1 experienced psychological trauma when her father was sentenced. Later in the interview, they expressed disbelief about the sentence. P1 said, "How could that be? You know, it was so much time. Right?" For P1, the actual sentencing of her father caused trauma.

Many participants struggled with depression after their parents were incarcerated. For example, Participant P10 said:

I fell into some sort of depression. Let me see, because as a 22-year-old, there were so many challenges at that time, and I was used to my father. I was so much closer to my father. I was close to my father, actually more than I was to my mom. So, I felt like a big part of me was taken away from me. And really, it affected me emotionally because staying all of those years without seeing my parents was hard.

Participant P10 reported feeling emotional and depressed after her father was incarcerated. Her feelings resembled those of grief, as she associated the loss of her father with a loss of herself. Participant P11 described feeling numb, saying he would "think about my parents, no matter how my body tried to make me not feel it." While P11

described dissociation, participant P3 exhibited the symptoms of depression, a hallmark of which is not enjoying one's everyday activities. Another component of depression is the inability to concentrate, which Participant P6 reported. Participant P6 said, "I wasn't concentrating on school. Because mentally, my mind was all over the place." Participant P7 also explained her mental health challenges after her father's incarceration. P7 said, "I was used to having a father figure around and just all of a sudden, that was taken away from me. So it really messed up with me mentally." P7 indicated that not having a father figure impacted her mental health. Thus, the participants experienced depression when her parents were incarcerated.

Some participants expressed anger and sadness at their incarcerated parent.

Participant P4 described becoming intensely angry at his incarcerated parent, leading to depression. Participant P4 said:

It was depressing, very depressing. Even at the jail, most of the time, I was on the other side of the glass because of depression. I was kind of aggressive. I didn't like visiting him that way, and so after we went back home, the thoughts were just very depressing. I was rebellious and too aggressive towards people.

Participant P4 found that visiting his parent in prison was depressing and described this depression as manifesting with anger. Participant P4 also indicated that his anger influenced other aspects of his life, including interactions with friends and teachers.

Participant P5 described becoming emotional, reactionary, and angry, as shown in Table 6. P6 described a sadness that her parent was incarcerated and experienced a deeper sadness when visiting her parent in prison. P6 said, "It made me feel like that almost all

the black dudes belong Because it was full of them.” P6 expressed a sadness that nearly all inmates at her parent’s prison were Black males. Thus, some participants had to overcome anger and depression after their parents were incarcerated.

Social Functioning

Five participants (P1, P4, P6, P8, and P9) experienced challenges with social functioning. Many of them reported feeling isolated after their parent’s incarceration. These feelings of isolation likely contributed to their mental health symptoms and depression, as social and self-isolation can lead to depression, especially in adolescents (Wright & Wachs, 2022). The participants’ experiences with social challenges are shown in Table 7.

Table 7*In Theme 3, The Participants Described Social Challenges*

Participant	Excerpt from participant's interview
P1	"There was like a form of child abandonment that I felt. Oh, it was actually because my dad wasn't physically present anymore. So I felt isolated."
P2	No data for this theme.
P3	No data for this theme.
P4	"I became very antisocial. I didn't associated with friends and or even my teachers. I became totally by myself when I used to go to school. I didn't have even friends from the community or from the neighborhood. And so I became really antisocial."
P6	"I felt lonely. That time when he was incarcerated and I had no one to talk to."
P7	No data for this theme.
P8	"I was an only child. So I didn't have anyone to share the pain with, everyone isn't understanding what I'm going through."
P9	"Each time I go to school, I didn't want to talk to anyone, you know, I just wanted to be alone, you know, I wanted to be accountable for something that I will just maybe self-isolate myself from people because my parents were away from me."
P10	No data for this theme.
P11	No data for this theme.

Two participants reported becoming antisocial due to the circumstances surrounding their parent's incarceration. Participant P4 described himself as "antisocial," not wanting to spend time with friends from school or his community. Participant P9 also described isolated herself, having no desire to keep social company. Participants P4 and P9 also reported being depressed and angry, which may have influenced their social mindset and vice versa. Participants P1 and P8 felt loneliness when their parents were incarcerated, with Participant P8 noting that he did not have any siblings with whom to

share feelings. Thus, the participants experienced social challenges after their parent's incarceration.

P1 spoke about social functioning in terms of her external relationships with other people. P1 said:

Dating men has really had a huge impact on me. My father's relationship are the type of men that I've dated and then I've realizing that my father's relationship had a huge influence and impact on the type of men that I dated and was open to.

P1 explained that her romantic relationships were influenced by her father, indicating a lasting influence of parental incarceration.

Summary of Theme 3

The participants reported experiencing psychological and social challenges after their parents were incarcerated. Some participants indicated they were depressed, angry, or suffered other mental health issues, such as stress and anxiety. During the interviews, the participants spoke with confidence. They did not become visibly troubled or upset, suggesting that the participants had resolved their depression and anger to arrive at a place of understanding. Theme 3's finding indicated that the participants developed resiliency after their parents were incarcerated.

Theme 4: Intervention Methods That Influenced Participants' Resiliency

With the psychological and social stress and challenges experienced by the participants, they needed to identify and develop coping skills. Coping skills are an essential component of resiliency in adolescents, according to Mesman et al. (2021). The participants described three central interventions that helped them cope with the stress of

parental incarceration. The participants described activities and therapy as essential interventions. Several types of activities and the benefits of therapy are discussed.

Activities as an Intervention Method

The participants described their activities as being essential interventions for their mental health. The main activities highlighted by the participants were art, music, and sports. The participants' experiences with activities they used to cope with parental incarceration are described in Table 8.

Table 8*In Theme 4, The Participants Described Intervention Activities*

Participant	Activity	Excerpt from participant interview
P1	N/A	No data for this theme.
P2	N/A	No data for this theme
P3	Sports	“Must do some sports, so that at least involved my mind. Because during free time, I could not just sit without any activity. [Sports] could occupy my mind so that at least I could be involved. So that got me away from thinking about my parents. So once I got involved in sports, it occupied me.”
P4	N/A	No data for this theme.
P5	N/A	No data for this theme.
P6	Art	“Art. I'm pretty good at art. It was somehow therapeutic whenever I could take a paintbrush.”
P7	Sports, Hobbies	“Most of the time, when I'm free, I spend most of my time doing hobbies. I'd go swimming. I didn't have a lot of time to think about him. So doing fun things, my hobbies, like swimming came in handy.
P8	Sports	“We used to play basketball with friends, though not frequently, as it used to distract me.”
P9	Music, Video Games	“I was always engaged in the music. Music allowed me to get through those things because I'm could engage. I also played some video games.”
P10	Sports	“I would love swimming. So, most of the times when I felt down on I felt like depressed, I would go to swim, and it will just make me feel good or bike riding.”
P11	Sports	“Fall time outside. I love sports. I love football very much. [My aunt] knew that each time I stepped out, to play some football, once I came back, I was someone else. Smiling, laughing, forgetting about what I asked her.”

Creative Arts. Art and music were activities highlighted by the participants.

Participant P6 described art as therapeutic, finding she could paint and draw her thoughts. She also found that art helped her build self-confidence. Participant P9 found music relaxing and therapeutic, finding she could often engage with the lyrics.

Video Games. Participant P9 played video games, a social outlet, as video games for her generation were online and multiplayer. P5 also described themselves as using video games as his outlet. P5 said, “I tend to be someone who actually loves video game video game. So for me, it's been like my escape routes and try to escape reality for a bit.” For P5, video games provide a mechanism for them to escape the reality of his situations for a short time. Participant P7 described hobbies as a vital distraction mechanism from intrusive thoughts.

Sports. Some participants (P3, P7, P8, P10, and P11) described sports as essential. Participant P10 reported that swimming “made me feel good,” highlighting the importance of this activity on his mental health. Participant P11 also noted the mental health benefits associated with sports, describing himself returning from football as “someone else” and “smiling and laughing.” P7 was a swimmer in her youth and adolescence, finding that sports allowed them to be distracted from her parent’s incarceration. P7 explained, “I spend most of my time and doing hobbies. I didn't have a lot of time to think about him [with] swimming.” P7 indicated that swimming provided a distraction, a place for them to focus on things other than her parent’s incarceration. Participant P3 found that sports occupied his mind and allowed him to focus on something other than his parents’ incarceration. Participant P8 also found that playing

basketball temporarily diverted his focus from his mother's incarceration. Thus, some participants could cope with their parent's incarceration through sports and physical activities.

Therapy and Counseling

Three participants (P1, P3, and P8) recalled participating in counseling or therapy after their parents were incarcerated. Participant P1 described therapy as essential for her healthy relationship with her father. Participant P1 said:

The relationship is healthy and better. I say that because I'm much older, and I went into therapy. Not because of my father, of course, but because I needed to go into therapy. It helped me learn to interact with him better and communicate what I needed to him.

Participant P1 reported having a healthy relationship with her father, who had been released from prison when I interviewed her for this study. Her therapist helped her learn essential communication skills for a productive and fulfilling relationship with her father. Participant P3 also found therapy to be beneficial. He described, "It really disturbed me. I had to seek therapy, too." Therapy for Participant P8 allowed him to process her feelings, which were convoluted due to her grandparents' animosity toward his mother.

Participant P8 recalled:

Yeah, I went for therapy, even though I didn't want my grandparents to know that. Like they're here telling me how bad my mom is. I was confused. I don't know if I should trust my mom or if I should trust my relatives. I started going to therapy using the little money I had saved.

Participant P8 sought therapy because his feelings regarding her mother conflicted with her grandparents' views and treatment of his mother. His therapist helped resolve his conflicted feelings regarding his grandparents and incarcerated mother. Thus, therapy was an important outlet for some participants.

While Participant P8 was able to save money for therapy, therapy was cost-prohibitive for some participants. Participant P1 said, "Therapy is great, but I didn't always have therapy." She could not afford therapy initially but enjoyed it and found it helpful once he had the requisite financial resources. Participant P2 wished he had access to therapy. Participant P2 said:

If could have been through counseling, maybe it could have been better. I may have searched for a counselor, and since I believe they needed funds, I had no funds at the moment. And if I could get some support, I would have given it to my siblings.

Participant P2 was unaware of free or low-cost counseling available to him.

Consequently, he did not pursue or seek counseling, although he acknowledged that he may have benefited from therapy if it was available. Thus, for some participants, funding for counseling was a barrier to seeking help.

Summary of Theme 4

The participants found several interventions to help cope with their parents' incarcerations. The participants identified art, music, sports, and hobbies as essential activities. These activities provided the participants with distractions that allowed them to put aside their thoughts and feelings about their parents temporarily. Sports and hobbies

also provided the participants with social opportunities. Some participants also identified therapy as an essential mechanism for processing feelings and learning how to communicate with their incarcerated parents. However, some participants described therapy as cost-prohibitive, suggesting the need for free or low-cost counseling services.

Evidence of Participants' Resiliency

The participants were asked to discuss their current relationship with their incarcerated parents. Participants P8 and P9 declined to answer this question. However, the other nine participants all responded positively, indicating their resiliency. The participants' descriptions of their relationship with their incarcerated parents are shown in Table 9.

Table 9*Participants' Descriptions of Their Current Relationships With Their Parent*

Participant	Description	Excerpt from participant interview
P1	Healthy	"I would say, as of now, the relationship is healthy and better."
P2	Healthy	"Yes, we have open communication."
P3	Supportive	"I do feel like they do need communication, especially from us children, and for me, I feel like I have to communicate with them frequently. We have to literally maintain some good communication, because communication is key, because they also lost friends."
P4	Supportive	"They believe it's important. It seems to be important for him as well as for me. As I've grown older, I think I'll be needing much more guidance and his wisdom is obviously wise. He has more years of experience. So I think it's important."
P5	Healthy, Supportive	It's made me like realize his value more. I didn't appreciate that when he was around. It's kind of brought us together a little bit. There was more like a closeness."
P6	Work in Progress	"We communicate with him, I usually call. We're making small steps. We are a work in progress."
P7	Healthy, Supportive	"The communication is nice. Because talking to my dad every day, he's giving me a reason to believe that even they went through all that, it's ok."
P8	N/A	No data for this theme.
P9	N/A	No data for this theme.
P10	Work in Progress	"We still talk once in a while. Basically, it's just updating him about how my life has been, my school progress, just my life generally."
P11	Work in Progress	"I'm just trying to build that relationship I had with my parents, you know when I was having some difficulties in recognizing my dad."

Supportive. Some participants were actively working through forming new relationships with their incarcerated or previously incarcerated parents. Participant P6 described his relationship as “a work in progress.” Participant P6 spoke about the depression she encountered after her father was incarcerated. Taking small steps toward a healthy relationship signified progress for her. Participant P10 also indicated improved communication with her father, speaking with him occasionally about updates in her life. Despite the hurt they suffered, Participants P6 and P10 were able to open essential lines of communication to reform their relationships with their parents.

Healthy. The participants reported that their relationships with their incarcerated parents were generally healthy. Participant P1 described her relationship, adding:

I try to be very intentional and consistent with the communication because he's older now, and his health has changed. We live in different states, very far apart.

So, I try to call at least once a week and do my check-ins, and we chat. I also tried to physically visit so that I see my mom or mother actually, right. But the goal is to be consistent and intentional.

Participant P1 indicated that her relationship with her father was consistent, consisting of weekly calls and check-ins. Participant P3 also described a healthy relationship with his parents, who were both incarcerated in his adolescence. Participant P3 was supportive of his parents. He said, “Maybe some parents would shy away from you. Some of them will break up communication. But then, at this point, we, the children, had to offer them that support so that they feel understood.” Participant P3 explained that he now supports his parents, acknowledging that they also lost friends and encountered unique challenges as

previously incarcerated people. Participant P4 described a supportive two-way relationship. He now relies on his father for wisdom and support; his father relies on him for love and support. Thus, some participants were able to form healthy relationships with their incarcerated parents.

Participant P5's relationship with his father was healthier after his release from prison. Participant P5 described having "a closeness" with his father, that was not present before his incarceration. Participant P5 further explained, "I guess being apart from each other made us realize how much we missed each other. It made us a little bit closer and made us realize how powerful the family bond can be." Participant P5 formed a relationship with his father that surpassed the closeness of their previous relationship. Participant P7 is also working toward healthy communication with her father. Participant P7 described, "Even though he was referred to as a rapist, he's a good person every day. He was giving me a good vibe and the belief to trust that he is the best dad." Participant P7, while still confronting her feelings about her father, is working on healthy communication and rebuilding essential trust. The participants have embodied resiliency to surpass their feelings of hurt and depression to form consistent, healthy relationships with their incarcerated or previously incarcerated parents.

Criminal Justice System. Some participants also spoke about their opinions of the criminal justice system. For instance, P5 said, "They actually incarcerated, actually the families also. So punishment isn't just based on the offender, it's also an essence to the family. So there's just that [to] actually take into consideration." P5 believed that, in

hindsight, the criminal justice system also punished the family, in addition to the offender.

Summary

A presentation and detailed account of this study's data collection and analysis procedures were discussed. These procedures included using semistructured interviews with 11 Black adult participants who were children of previously or currently incarcerated parents. Through the interviews, I explored the challenges experienced by the participants after their parents' incarcerations and examined their resiliency. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis based on the study's theoretical framework, Walsh's (1996) family resilience theory. Next, I evaluated evidence of the study's trustworthiness by assessing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Next, I examined the participants' resiliency after their parents' incarcerations and presented the findings related to the central research question. Four themes were elucidated based on the participants' responses. The themes were explored using evidence from the participants' responses to the interview questions. In Theme 1, the participants revealed four general environmental influences that fostered their resiliency after their parents had been incarcerated. These four influences were the following: (a) communication with the incarcerated parent, (b) support from school, (c) support from close friends, and (d) community influences. Some participants had positive experiences, while others had negative experiences across all support systems studied. Some participants experienced sadness and depression after seeing their detained parents in

prison, but others were pleased to see their parents and could find positivity under challenging circumstances. Additionally, some participants indicated that their school environment was supportive and helpful, while others described being bullied with little assistance from instructors or administrators. Participants also said their communities were primarily hostile, associating and stigmatizing them with criminals. Despite these unfavorable experiences, the individuals found comfort in their close friends, who offered support and understanding. Participants who were removed from their homes experienced loss due to the lack of close friends who had previously provided support systems. The participants collectively encountered support, lack of support, and stigmatization, all influencing their ability to overcome the hardships of their parents' incarceration and develop resiliency.

In Theme 2, the participants revealed three general familial influences that shaped their resiliency after their parents had been incarcerated. These three influences were (a) familial disruption, (b) familial stress, and (c) family support. The participants experienced different levels of familial disruption, which affected the participants financially and psychologically, imparting stress and anxiety. Following their parents' incarceration, several participants endured financial difficulties. Despite these bad experiences, the participants-built resiliency through the support of their families. All participants said that their extended or immediate families provided them with the love and support they needed to cope with the problems of their parents' incarcerations. These findings suggested that participants gained resiliency due to favorable interactions with family members.

In Theme 3, the participants reported experiencing psychological and social challenges after their parents were incarcerated. Some individuals said that they were depressed, angry, or suffering from other mental health conditions, such as stress and worry. All participants spoke confidently during the interviews. They did not appear concerned or agitated, implying that the participants resolved their depression and anger to be understanding. The findings of theme three suggested that the individuals showed resiliency after their parents were imprisoned.

In Theme 4, the participants found several interventions to help them cope with their parents' incarcerations. Specifically, the participants identified art, music, sports, and hobbies as essential activities. These activities offered necessary distractions for the participants, allowing them to set aside their thoughts and sentiments regarding their parents temporarily. Sports and hobbies also provided social chances for participants. Some participants described therapy as an essential tool for processing emotions and learning how to communicate with their incarcerated parents. Some participants, however, viewed treatment as prohibitively expensive, implying the need for free or low-cost counseling programs. In Chapter 5, I will review the study's results in the larger context of the literature, examine the implications of this study for future research, and make recommendations to improve the programs available for children of incarcerated parents.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

In this generic qualitative study, I aimed to explore the perspectives of Black adults who can now speak about their former childhood years relative to their perceived levels of resiliency. The study included participants in the Northeastern states of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Northern Virginia, collectively the DMV area. The present study also provided information that can inform future interventions to promote resilience in Black children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated families serving prison time of 5 or more years. The present study attempted to fill a gap in the research to benefit human service practitioners by providing information on maintaining healthy communication between Black children and their incarcerated parents. In the following section, I will review the findings, discussion of the findings, recommendations for human services practice, and implications for practice.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, I discuss the findings of the study. A discussion of each theme is provided.

Theme 1: Environmental Factors Influencing Resiliency

The theme of environmental factors influencing resiliency aligns with existing literature on the impact of external conditions on children with incarcerated parents. The study's identification of communication with the incarcerated parent, support from school, support from close friends, and community influences resonates with findings in the literature. For instance, Henry and Harrist (2022) highlighted the significance of positive communication with the incarcerated parent, and Walsh (2016; 2021)

emphasized the role of supportive school and community environments. Additionally, Theiss (2018) emphasized the importance of close friendships in mitigating the negative effects of parental incarceration. While the study recognized both positive and negative experiences within these environmental influences, the literature also acknowledged the variability in outcomes for children based on the quality of support systems (Walsh, 2021).

The theme of environmental factors influencing resiliency aligns with Walsh's (2012) family resilience theory, which posits the family as a dynamic system influenced by external conditions. The study's identification of communication with the incarcerated parent, support from school, support from close friends, and community influences resonates with the family resilience framework's comprehensive understanding of the multitude of factors shaping family dynamics during adversity (Walsh, 2012). Furthermore, the variation in positive and negative experiences within these environmental influences aligns with the family resilience theory's recognition that families respond uniquely to external stressors based on their inherent strengths and challenges (Walsh, 2021).

Theme 2: Familial Factors Influencing Resiliency

The theme of familial factors influencing resiliency aligns with existing literature emphasizing the impact of family dynamics on children coping with parental incarceration. The study's identification of familial disruption, familial stress, and family support resonates with the literature's focus on how disruptions to family structures can affect children (Black & Lobo, 2008; Bowen et al., 2013). The acknowledgment of

financial and psychological stress aligns with studies highlighting the multifaceted challenges faced by families dealing with incarceration (Besemer et al., 2018; Miller, 2018).

Theme 2 aligns with Walsh's (2012) family resilience theory, emphasizing the role of family dynamics in influencing resiliency. The findings of familial disruption, familial stress, and family support resonates with the family resilience framework's focus on understanding family processes in situations of adversity (Walsh, 2021). The acknowledgment of different levels of familial disruption and the financial and psychological stress experienced by participants aligns with the family resilience perspective, which recognizes that families face varying degrees of challenges and stress during crises (Walsh, 2012).

Theme 3: Overcoming Psychological Stress Enhancing Resiliency

The theme of overcoming psychological stress aligns with literature highlighting the emotional toll of parental incarceration on children. I observed that participants expressed depression, anger, and other mental health issues corresponds with existing research on the potential emotional challenges faced by these children (Freedman et al., 2017; Gipson, 2019; Haskins et al., 2018). Furthermore, the study's contribution lies in its revelation that, despite initial psychological distress, participants eventually expressed confidence and resolution, suggesting a process of psychological adaptation that aligns with the literature's emphasis on resilience as a dynamic, evolving phenomenon (Brown & Gibbons, 2018; Kautz, 2018).

The theme aligns with the theoretical framework, as it underscored the importance of overcoming psychological challenges for developing resilience. Specifically, overcoming psychological stress aligns with Walsh's (2012) family resilience theory, which provided a comprehensive understanding of how families navigate adversity. I found that participants expressed depression, anger, and other mental health issues resonates with the family resilience framework's acknowledgment of the challenges families face during crises (Walsh, 2021). The participants' eventual expression of confidence and resolution aligns with the family resilience perspective, which emphasized the family's ability to recover and grow cohesively from hardship (Walsh, 2021). The resilience-building process is consistent with Walsh's central principle of viewing the family as a functioning system influenced by various factors, including the individual, family interactions, and broader social systems.

Theme 4: Intervention Methods Impacting Resiliency

The theme of intervention methods aligns with existing literature on coping mechanisms for children with incarcerated parents. The study's identification of art, music, sports, hobbies, and therapy as essential activities corresponds with literature recognizing the role of supportive activities and professional help in helping children cope with trauma (Bloom & Phillips, 2017; Curtis, 2018; Ergun et al., 2018). Moreover, the study's finding of cost-prohibitive barriers to therapy underscores an issue also found within the literature the accessibility of mental health support for this vulnerable population, adding a nuanced layer to the understanding of intervention effectiveness in different socioeconomic contexts (Burns et al., 2018; Karairmak & Figley, 2017).

Theme 4 aligns with the theoretical framework by emphasizing the role of interventions in enhancing resilience. The study's focus on coping mechanisms such as art, music, sports, and hobbies resonate with the family resilience framework's recognition of critical family processes that assist in reducing stress in high-risk situations (Walsh, 2021). Furthermore, the acknowledgment of therapy as a valuable mechanism for processing feelings aligns with the family resilience theory's perspective on empowering families to overcome prolonged adversity through targeted interventions (Walsh, 2021).

Limitations

Several limitations may have an impact on the study's usefulness and generalizability. Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, the emphasis on virtual Zoom sessions decreased nonverbal communication cues, potentially decreasing knowledge. Furthermore, recall bias and selective memory may have influenced participants' self-reported experiences, leading to incorrect descriptions. However, using probing questions and member-checking assisted in mitigating these constraints. Another problem was the possibility of researcher bias, but comprehensive research journaling and other procedures were used to reduce its impact.

The study's inclusion criteria and scope should be evaluated when determining the study's transferability to the broader field of human services practice. While the study focused on Black individuals who were children of jailed parents in the DMV region, the protective variables and coping techniques discovered are likely to apply to other populations experiencing comparable issues. However, contextual considerations, cultural variations, and the individual experiences of different groups may all impact

transferability. Practitioners should use caution and evaluate the requirements and circumstances of each group they engage when extrapolating these findings to other populations.

Recommendations

Based on the current study's strengths and limitations, there are various areas for future research to expand an understanding of resiliency among children of jailed parents. Extending the scope of the research to cover diverse demographics and geographical regions can improve the findings' transferability and generalizability. Comparing the experiences of adolescents to those of adults in similar qualitative investigations may provide insights into the developmental trajectory of resiliency in this demographic. Furthermore, longitudinal studies that follow individuals over time will provide insights into the long-term effects of parental incarceration on numerous life domains, bolstering the study's conclusions.

In the realm of research and policy, the study calls for longitudinal research to examine the long-term impacts of parental incarceration on children's well-being and life domains as they grow into adulthood. Furthermore, human services practitioners can advocate for policies that combat societal stigmatization and promote inclusivity for these children and their families. It is critical to disseminate the findings of this project in order to maximize their impact on human services practice and policy. Academic journals and conferences/workshops are two means of disseminating information. The study's findings should be published in relevant academic publications focused on human services, criminology, psychology, and social work so that academics, researchers, and

policymakers in these domains can access and use the research to inform evidence-based practices and policy formulation. Presenting the study's findings at human services, child welfare, and criminal justice conferences and workshops will reach a larger audience of practitioners, policymakers, and professionals directly assisting children and families. Interactive sessions encourage adopting best practices and treatments by facilitating conversations and knowledge-sharing.

Implications

The present study has numerous implications. The results of this study could provide action steps for human services practitioners interacting with Black children whose parents have been incarcerated. Practitioners should use a trauma-informed approach, considering the psychological issues and coping mechanisms that these children may have. The trauma-informed method produces a safe and supportive environment, which promotes trust and resilience (Haskins et al., 2018). Furthermore, an implication based on the study's findings is that practitioners could develop and execute protective factors and coping mechanisms, such as art, music, sports, hobbies, counseling, and therapy. These interventions can help children manage problems and improve their well-being when implemented in collaboration with schools, families, and communities (Adams, 2018).

At the micro level, implications for practice based on this study's findings can positively impact individual children of incarcerated parents. For example, human services practitioners, such as counselors, therapists, and social workers, can better understand the perspectives and experiences of Black children with incarcerated parents.

Such insight could help them develop interventions and treatment plans that address this population's needs and challenges. By tailoring interventions to the unique circumstances of these children, practitioners can better support their emotional well-being and foster resilience in the face of parental incarceration.

At the mezzo level, implications of the study's findings can lead to positive social change in developing effective interventions and programs to support families affected by parental incarceration. Social service organizations and community-based agencies can use this research to inform their practices and allocate resources to better support and bolster resiliency among children, especially Black children with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents. Therefore, an implication for practice is to focus on resiliency as a strategy, practitioners can work towards promoting positive parent-child relationships and family reunification post-incarceration.

At the macro level, implications for practice based on the study's findings can inform social service policy and drive positive social change on a broader scale. For example, policymakers can use this research to develop policies addressing the needs and challenges children of incarcerated parents face, particularly in Black families. By implementing policies and programs with intervention strategies that consider the perspectives and experiences of this population, policymakers could create a more supportive and inclusive environment for these families.

The results of this study could lead to improving how human service professionals work with families affected by parental incarceration. Practitioners can develop and strengthen intervention ways to address the challenges brought by Black children of

jailed adults by studying their struggles and barriers. Enhancing interventions could result in more effective and culturally responsive interventions to assist families during and after parental incarceration. At the research level, this study contributes to positive social change by shedding light on the experiences of children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents, especially in Black families.

As an advanced practitioner in human services, these findings will significantly impact my manner of practice. For example, I will adopt a trauma-informed perspective, creating a safe and empathetic environment for children who have experienced parental incarceration. Furthermore, I will integrate the identified coping mechanisms into my interventions, such as art and therapy, and I will provide tailored support to meet each child's unique needs. Moreover, I will advocate for developing and implementing supportive programs that promote resiliency and enhance the quality of life for this vulnerable population.

The study has numerous implications for addressing challenges related to social determinants of health. First, the children of incarcerated parents often have poor economic stability due to the loss of one parent's income contributing to the family (Cooper & Pugh, 2020). Designing interventions that help the children of incarcerated parents and their families can provide much-needed support. For instance, counseling the nonincarcerated parent about job opportunities and career development may enhance their abilities to find, secure, and retain employment. Second, children with incarcerated parents experience educational difficulties compared to children living in nuclear

households (Walker et al., 2020). Providing these children with educational support may increase their educational outcomes, enhancing their overall quality of life.

Social and community context is another important social determinant of health. Individuals without social or community support can experience challenges with physical and emotional health (Leavell et al., 2019). The participants in this study indicated that their communities were largely unsupportive of them once their parents were incarcerated. An implication of this study is the recommendation to increase awareness of parental incarceration in communities, which may help mitigate some of the stigma surrounding the phenomenon. Increasing community support may, in turn, influence positive changes in children's physical, emotional, and social well-being.

Summary

The purpose of this generic qualitative study was to explore the perspectives of Black adults as former Black children regarding their childhood experiences as children of incarcerated or /formerly incarcerated parents, as it pertains to resiliency. Black children in dyadic interactions with their parents in prison can experience stress, despair, unhappiness with their lives, and trauma (Barnert et al., 2017; Farrington et al., 2017; Finkeldey & Dennison, 2019; Foster & Hagan, 2017). There is a shortage of studies on how Black children manage the difficulties associated with parental incarceration by developing proper coping skills and resilience. A child's environment, as well as the actions they may observe, is cause for concern. Individuals' poor conduct in prison may influence their children's health, mental health, and relationships (Afifi, 2018; Heard-Garris et al., 2018a). Children with poor self-esteem frequently regard obligations as

difficult, so they avoid challenging responsibilities (Altintas & Billici, 2018; Chang, 2018). Children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents had higher rates of distress and lower self-esteem than children of nonincarcerated parents (Gipson, 2019; Hartnett et al., 2018).

The present study demonstrated how resilience theory can be used to develop coping methods for maintaining a healthy quality of life. These gaps in the literature underlined the necessity for this qualitative study to focus on the experiences of adult Blacks growing up with incarcerated or formerly jailed parents. The study's findings contribute to positive social change at multiple levels, from individual children to policy development. By understanding the unique experiences of Black children with incarcerated parents, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers can work towards creating a more supportive and resilient community for these families. The study's insights have the potential to drive change in practice, research, and policy, ultimately improving the quality of life for this vulnerable population.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Flyer: Letter of Invitation

Month Day, Year

Whom it may concern.

Organization

Address 1

City, State Zip code

Dear Name,

I am writing to request your support for my research study, *Exploring Resilience in Adult Blacks Who Are Children of Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Parents*, to promote volunteer participation by advertising my flyer on your organization's property.

I have received approval to conduct this study from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Walden University's IRB members have reviewed this study to ensure that the researcher complies with the university's ethical standards and will treat the participants ethically.

With kind regards,

[A signature is required]

Jennifer Nowell, Researcher

Doctoral Student at Walden University

Appendix B: Demographic Screening Questionnaire

Exploring Resiliency in Adult Blacks Who Are Children of Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Parents

Interview Identifier/Code: _____ Date: _____

The purpose of this form is to screen potential participants to ensure that they meet the criteria for the study.

This research is designed to minimize the risk to **human subjects**.

My research focuses on individuals who are ideally suited to answer this study's research question without unnecessarily burdening others. Now, I would like for you to answer a few questions to determine if you are the best fit to participate in answering this study's research questions through the interview process.

Where do you live? Please select one.

1. District of Columbia (Washington, DC)
2. Maryland
3. Virginia
4. Neither

How do you identify for race or racial demographics? Please select one.

1. African American/Black
2. Multiracial
3. Other

What availability do you have for an interview or the best schedule to meet? Please select one.

1. Evenings: 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. (window time)
2. Weekend morning/afternoon: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. (window time)
3. Weekend evening: 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. (window time)

How old were you when your parent was incarcerated?

If you are comfortable sharing, please state your gender: _____

What is your relation to the incarcerated parent(s) or formerly incarcerated parent(s)?

Daughter: _____ Son _____ Other _____

How long was your parent(s) incarcerated, or are they still incarcerated?

Part of being read to the participant:

1. English must be the participants' primary language so that they can understand all forms of communication (i.e., speaking, writing, and reading).
2. The participants must be daughters or sons of parent(s) incarcerated or formerly incarcerated.
3. The parent incarcerated or formerly incarcerated could be serving a jail or prison sentence or held awaiting trial or sentencing.

You cannot participate if (exclusion criteria):

You are a student, client, or employee of the researcher.

If you qualify to participate in this study and would like to participate in the study, I intend to schedule our interview at this time, on the day of.

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

I plan to facilitate the notetaking by audio recording our conversations today to make taking notes easier. The release form needs to be signed. For the participants' information, the tapes will be accessible only to me as the researcher working on the project and will be finally destroyed after being transcribed. The participants must also sign a document to satisfy our human subjects' criteria. This agreement states that (1) all information will be kept private, (2) The participants are welcome to withdraw at any point if you find the activity uncomfortable, and (3) I have no malicious intent. I appreciate you deciding to take part.

This interview is expected to last no more than one hour. I want to address several questions during this time. To continue and finish this line of inquiry, I may have to interrupt you if time starts to run out.

1. What do you know about your parent(s) incarceration?
2. Who did you grow up with while your parent(s) were incarcerated?
3. How was your relationship during your childhood with your incarcerated parent (s)?
4. How did your parent's incarceration impact you?
5. How did your family talk about your parent(s) not being there because of the incarceration?
6. What support services could you have used as child while your parent was incarcerated?

7. What do you think helped you get through this time of your parent (s) being incarcerated?
8. Tell me in the absence of your parent (s), how did you communicate with each other?
9. What are your thoughts on keeping in communication with your incarcerated parent(s)?
10. What else helped your family through your parent's incarceration that has not been discussed?

Following the interviews, I plan to provide a debriefing to the participants and invite any questions they may have about the research, the researcher, or the future stages. In my capacity as the researcher, I will ensure that the participants don't suffer injury, distress, or confusion during the interviews. If a participant is concerned, I plan to direct them to a counselor who offers sliding-scale or no-cost services.