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Examining Home Confinement of Offenders in the Mississippi Delta

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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M.Phil. Forensic Psychology, Walden University, 2024

M.S. Social Justice and Criminology, Delta State University, 2017

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Recidivism was identified as a persistent problem in the criminal justice system. Accordingly, prison overcrowding was also an identified problem in the prison system. The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of home confinement for offenders in the Mississippi Delta. This research used rehabilitation theory to conduct a qualitative analysis of home confinement in the Mississippi Delta, as well as identify any unique challenges to the program presented by rural conditions. A purposive sampling technique was used to solicit participation, and a total of 12 participants were included in the study. The participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview format, and their responses were analyzed using the descriptive coding technique, which rendered seven common themes. The results of the study indicated that offenders had a primarily positive perspective of home confinement, and rural conditions had a limited effect on operationalizing the program. The data collected contributes to social change, as it optimizes the criminal justice system, establishing home confinement as a viable alternative to traditional incarceration in rural areas. These results can be used to implement home confinement in rural areas more effectively, which reduces prison overcrowding and strain on the criminal justice system, its practitioners, and offenders. Researchers may expand on the foundation established in this study by examining the perspectives of home confinement from more diverse demographic groups, including criminal justice professionals.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Study

Introduction

Criminal justice is an essential component of society that helps prompt accountability and community safety. Maintaining social order is a complex responsibility that requires the criminal justice system to evolve steadily. The criminal justice system and reform have been important topics of discussion, and that conversation will persist as society progresses. Crime, incarceration, justice, and rehabilitation are entities that affect everyone in the community. Even if not directly involved, we all have a peripheral interest in the administration of justice in our respective communities. The criminal justice system is multi-faceted and the primary governing entity for criminal activity. Criminal justice refers to the systems, policies, and practices put in place by governments to maintain social order, protect the community from crime, and enforce laws. According to the Legal Information Institute (n.d.), the criminal justice system seeks to prescribe the fate of an offender, rehabilitate the offender, compensate victims, and deter future crimes by administering justice through proportionate punishment. The criminal justice system consists of three branches - police, courts, and corrections- which all work together to administer justice (Schmalleger, 2017).

The United States is one of the most developed nations in the world. Likewise, it has one of the most expansive criminal justice systems. Criminal justice in the United States was established to administer justice and ensure public safety. Additionally, criminal justice intends to protect the rights of individuals accused of committing crimes. The criminal justice system is vital to safeguarding the rights of citizens and the accused.

Protecting the rights of individuals accused of committing crimes is important because it is often ignored as a founding principle of the American criminal justice system. Cullen (2024) explained that the founders of the United States wanted to build a system different from the British justice system, which granted omnipotence to the king or queen; thus, they desired to create a system that protected people from government abuse.

Over time, the criminal justice system has evolved to meet the changing needs of society, adapting to new challenges and priorities. It was punitive in the beginning, with methods used to bring justice and deter crime, such as pain compliance, fines, and many other means; however, modern criminal justice is more complex, with several goals - including rehabilitation. The criminal justice system had to introduce more modern modes of justice to meet these goals, one being home confinement. This research explores the effectiveness of home confinement, particularly in rural communities. This study defines home confinement, provides a background for home confinement, theorizes the effects of home confinement, and describes the significance of research surrounding home confinement.

Background

Modern criminal justice is organized and administered with precedent in the United States. Criminal justice has evolved from primitive methods used in the 18th century to a complex infusion of retributive, restorative, and distributive goals that dictate contemporary criminal justice procedures. The Legal Information Institute (n.d.) explains that criminal justice evolves to reflect sociopolitical changes. Understanding the history

of the criminal justice system in the United States is essential in comprehending the current practices utilized in modern criminal justice and adjusting to the rapid evolution.

The concept of organized criminal justice in the United States manifested most notably with the Judiciary Act of 1789. It created the federal judicial system in America, which -amongst other entities- included the United States Attorney and the United States Marshal. According to the Department of Justice (2024), the United States Attorney was established to ensure federal laws are executed and enforced throughout the country. The United States Marshal was established to support the federal judicial system, including law enforcement duties and criminal apprehension.

Although the criminal justice system in the United States is rooted in primitive forms of punishment like physical retribution and banishment, its policies and practices have been reformed by influential events such as the development of the Constitution and the First Step Act, as well as social movements such as the Civil Rights and Black Lives Matter movements. As society and the cultures within society have changed, so have criminal justice procedures and methods of administering justice. For instance, technology has impacted the criminal justice system's ability to have court proceedings and hear testimonies while people are not in the courtroom. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, courts have been forced to adopt new policies and interpretations of Federal Rules that address remote communications during trial (Chalk, 2024).

During the colonial period, the United States developed a more structured system of justice that involved an accusation-trial-conviction method. Chapin (2016) explained that Americans identified areas of improvement deriving from their English experience,

which included reducing and clarifying the law, rationalizing the relationship between crime and punishment, simplifying court procedures, and making the public responsible for public peace and morality rather than private or parochial justice. Imprisonment became popular during this period, as the government used it to detain those accused while they awaited trial or punishment. Rubin (2018) explained that many jurisdictions in America employed jails to aid criminal courts with extracting debts from debtors and retaining defendants for trial or until execution of their sentence; however, jails were in no way considered the primary source of punishment. Eventually, imprisonment became the punishment, acting as the primary source of justice against convicted offenders. According to Rubin, warehouse correctional facilities and supermax prisons became the model for justice in America. The criminal justice system created a network of corrections and expanded the foundation of prison systems; however, it neglected to foresee the problem associated with making prison the primary source of punishment. The prison system evolved, and with it came overcrowding, elevated recidivism rates, and the need for rehabilitative programs designed to help offenders with reentry. For a very long time, offenders were forgotten, and their rights were neglected while incarcerated, causing rehabilitation to go unaddressed and making reentry nearly impossible.

There is a complex relationship between crime rates and criminal justice policies. With the rise in crime and incarceration came a rise in the popularity of imprisonment. Ouimet and Tremblay (1996) conducted a study that identified increased imprisonment with increased crime at three different points between 1972 and 1992. Crime rates have

grown exponentially since the colonial period, and so have incarceration rates; however, there has been a decrease in the recent decade. According to the Bureau of Prison (2024), federal prison populations decreased in 2014 for the first time in more than 35 years. The decrease in incarceration has a negative correlation with the increase in rehabilitation. As rehabilitative methods have been incorporated into the justice system, incarceration has decreased. The United States Department of Justice (2023) outlined recent and ongoing reforms such as identifying the criminogenic needs of inmates, building school districts within the prison system, helping to increase employability, and prioritizing mental health to collectively reduce recidivism, which -in turn- decreases incarceration and crime. The effectiveness of the criminal justice system in addressing incarceration is a topic of ongoing debate, as some argue for reforms to improve efficiency and fairness in the administration of justice.

The future of the criminal justice system in the United States can be better shaped by understanding the history that led it to its current and past practices. Understanding the origins of the criminal justice system, the relationship between crime and justice, and how it dictates the roles of corrections and rehabilitation helps predict the trajectory of future practices. The criminal justice system plays a fundamental role in maintaining order in the United States, and it must continuously evolve to meet current standards. Rehabilitation is central to that evolution, and programs must be implemented to promulgate rehabilitation.

Home Confinement

Administering punishment while reducing an offender's propensity to reoffend is the goal, and the corrections system plays a crucial role in implementing rehabilitation; however, using incarceration as a total solution to crime neglects to address the individual needs of each offender. The criminal justice system developed rehabilitative programs purposed to help offenders address the root causes of their criminal behavior while reducing the likelihood of reoffending; yet, recidivism rates remain a significant challenge for the corrections system. Katisiyannis et al. (2017) reported and detailed a persistent concern surrounding reoffending in the United States. Alternative programs are implemented and must be advanced to address rehabilitation more adequately.

A prominent method used in modern criminal justice is home confinement. Home confinement is described in different terms, each alluding to an offender's confinement in their home during certain times. Home confinement is a general term used to describe the method of detention, but other terms are used to describe the restrictions associated with the program. According to Bouchard and Wong (2018), words such as home confinement, home detention, house arrest, and electronic monitoring are used interchangeably to describe a type of confinement that allows an offender to remain at home instead of confined in a correctional facility. However, it is important to note that home confinement and house arrest are umbrella terms with subcategories describing the program. Home confinement and house arrest identify the type of confinement. Other terms, such as electronic monitoring and home detention, refer to the modalities within that confinement.

Generally, state and local agencies use three programs to enact home confinement. The three home confinement programs typically used in the criminal justice system are home incarceration, home detention, and home curfew. Home incarceration is the most restrictive program, confining an offender to their home at all times. Home incarceration shares the closest resemblance to traditional imprisonment. Offenders under this program are only permitted to leave home for legitimate medical emergencies. Home detention is a program in which offenders submit schedules and request permission to leave home. They are allowed to work, attend religious ceremonies, and -in some cases- attend extracurricular activities if the governing agency or court approves them. Without an approved schedule, the offender is forbidden from leaving home. Home curfew is the least restrictive program. Under home curfew, offenders are not required to submit schedules for permission to leave home. Instead, they have preapproved permission to leave; however, they must return home at a particular time and remain home until that time resets.

While it is possible to monitor home confinement with the simple use of probationary services, electronic monitoring is the most popular modality for home confinement. Home confinement was introduced in the United States in 1984 (Richter et al., 2021). Electronic monitoring equipment refers to the devices and equipment used to track an offender's location. Klein-Saffran (1991) explained that electronic monitoring requires an offender to wear an ankle bracelet that tracks their movements. Monitoring agencies use this tracking information to verify whether a person is at home or attending approved activities (Klein-Saffran, 1991).

New developments and innovative advancements in electronic monitoring equipment have immensely helped effectuate home confinement programs. The National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (1999) explained that electronic monitoring includes several components, such as home monitoring devices, wrist and ankle bracelets, field monitoring devices, voice verification systems, and global positioning systems (GPS). When installing home monitoring devices, wrist bracelets, and ankle bracelets, an officer or monitoring service uses field monitoring devices to monitor an offender's movement through GPS or radio-frequency.

GPS is the most well-known modality of electronic monitoring. GPS devices track offender locations using satellites. The device is attached to an offender's ankle or wrist and sends satellite signals to determine an offender's exact location. A charging port is installed at the offender's home to recharge the device's battery, and it also sends reports if a power loss occurs at the offender's home, preventing them from charging the battery. GPS is a popular option because it reports exact locations and can create inclusion and exclusion zones; however, it is taxing on battery life and requires extensive review from the monitoring agency.

Radio-frequency is another component of electronic monitoring that has become popular. Radio-frequency equipment is installed in an offender's home and works as a base station. A bracelet that works as a beacon is attached to the offender's ankle and communicates with the base station. Monitoring agencies can create a virtual boundary around the base station, and the bracelet sends reports when it is outside of the base station's boundary. The benefits of radio-frequency equipment include longer battery life

for the beacons and fewer reports for monitoring centers. Unfortunately, radio frequency cannot monitor offender location outside the base station boundary.

Voice recognition is an option for low-risk offenders or those with problems rendering a wrist or ankle bracelet unfavorable. Voice recognition requires an offender to have a landline phone in their home. The monitoring agency makes random calls to the offender's landline phone. With voice recognition technology, the offender checks in at home by answering the landline phone and repeating a code, usually a random series of numbers. Benefits include low costs, flexibility, and less intensive monitoring by the governing agency.

Home confinement has evolved into an intricate part of the criminal justice system. Courts use home confinement as a sentencing option, and corrections systems use home confinement as an alternative to imprisonment. According to the United States Sentencing Guidelines (n.d.), home confinement was created as an alternative to imprisonment; however, judges and prisons have operationalized home confinement as a form of imprisonment rather than an alternative. Although it can be used post-conviction, it can also be used before an individual is convicted. The United States Magistrate and District Courts use a system of pretrial services to monitor individuals released from custody pending their trial. At times, the court orders a condition of home confinement as a portion of those pretrial services. Home confinement under pretrial services is no different than post-conviction home confinement. However, the defendant has a presumption of innocence; thus, they are more likely to be approved for certain activities.

Home confinement is used throughout the nation and generally receives positive feedback. Studies have been conducted that show positive results in the criminal justice system. According to Booker (2023), home confinement is more effective and less costly than incarceration when addressing recidivism. However, there is a gap in literature that fails to acknowledge special populations. Studies are only exhaustive and representative of some portions of the country. This study examines the effectiveness of home confinement in rural communities and addresses a gap in the literature that fails to do so. Understanding people's experiences under home confinement in the Mississippi Delta may lead to more efficient operation of the criminal court and corrections system. It can also decrease prison populations and strain experienced by prison personnel, therefore creating a more conducive environment for rehabilitation.

Problem Statement

The American system of courts and corrections has been suffering from failing rehabilitative procedures and high recidivism rates, which cause immense strain on offenders and heavy burdens on practitioners; therefore, researching, identifying, and addressing a more efficient way to operate the system of courts and corrections in the United States is paramount to restoring balance between rehabilitation and reentry, as well as delegating resources more efficiently and reducing strain on those within the system. Time has altered criminal justice policies and goals, though one concept has persisted – recidivism. Recidivism alludes to reoffending following a conviction or criminal sentence (Bird et al., 2022). It is the propensity of offenders to reoffend following their release from incarceration.

Recidivism has been an identified problem in the criminal justice system, and it remains problematic. It is representative of the relationship between social, economic, and political factors that contribute to the perpetual cycle of incarceration and recidivism. Its persistence emphasizes the criminal justice system's failure to effectively implement strategies conducive to rehabilitation and the importance of research that improves the system. Lawmakers and criminal justice professionals continuously develop new tactics, and modern criminal justice includes contemporary methods to address stagnant and rising levels of recidivism within the prison system.

There are several factors involved in the revolving door of recidivism. Poor education, lack of employability, and diminished interpersonal skills are socioeconomic factors that influence recidivism. Additionally, gender and age increase the likelihood of recidivistic offending (Tegeng & Abadi, 2018). Offenders released from prison have a hard time with reentry. The lack of stability associated with these factors makes it even more difficult to reintegrate, typically leading offenders to reoffend.

Substance abuse is another factor that severely affects recidivism. There is a significant amount of people in the criminal justice system that participate in substance abuse. Many of them are driven towards criminal behavior by their substance abuse. Tegeng and Abadi (2018) explained that substance abuse is one of the primary contributing factors to criminal activity, as the need for addicts and alcoholics to support their substance abuse habits drives their urge to commit crimes. Much of their behavior is in some way caused by their drug addictions. Toppling their substance abuse is their lack

of access to treatment, creating a perpetual cycle of offending driven by their desire for inebriation.

Additionally, access to treatment while incarcerated is limited due to their generally short prison sentences (Tegeng & Abadi, 2018). Even when they are released, many of them lack access to substance abuse treatment or lack the discipline to self-seek substance abuse treatment. Recent studies have identified substance abuse as a disorder in some individuals, and it must be addressed as such. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recognizes substance use as a disorder, reporting that 40.3 million people in the United States, at least 12 years of age, suffered from substance use disorder in 2020 (Lange et al., 2024). Likewise, mental health is a disorder. Many incarcerated individuals struggle with managing both diagnosed and undiagnosed mental health issues. Without proper treatment and access to medication, there is a heightened risk of reoffending, and many offenders begin to self-medicate with illicit drug use.

Alongside the socioeconomic, substance abuse, and mental health factors contributing to recidivism, there is the social stigma and discrimination associated with being a convicted offender. Middlemass (2017) explained that public policies reflect society's contempt for convicted felony offenders, effectively undermining the offender's ability to make a successful reentry. Employers and housing authorities often consider criminal history on job and housing applications, and the social stigma could cause discrimination, impeding efforts to secure employment and housing and develop social networks. Some offenders even have restrictions disqualifying them from specific places of employment and residential availability. Felony and domestic violence convictions

disqualify offenders from working in law enforcement and holding some political offices. Convicted sex offenders have restrictions on their ability to live near or work at places where children are expected to dwell with parental supervision (i.e., schools and parks). As a convicted felon, access to public programs or benefits can also be limited. For instance, felony drug offenders can have their rights to federal benefit programs revoked for a period of time or indefinitely. According to Middlemass, the criminal justice system is expanding its ability to socially impair convicted felons, resulting in more cases of reoffending. Marginalizing convicted offenders increases the likelihood of recidivism.

Overall, recidivism is impactful on the community and must be addressed from a multi-faceted approach. Economically, it is a burden to accommodate and fund feeding arrangements for repeat offenders who should be rehabilitated and positively contributing to society rather than perpetuating the loss of productivity. Mentally, a lack of emphasis on rehabilitation during incarceration intensifies the institutionalization process, making reentry more problematic (Haney, 2001). There are also safety concerns deriving from the increased crime rates associated with recidivism. When offenders are not rehabilitated by incarceration, they reoffend and undermine public safety. Incarceration for prolonged periods interrupts familial relationships and creates instability in the offender's life. A perpetual cycle of recidivism can contribute to mental health instability and feelings of hopelessness, both being contributing factors to an increased risk of committing crimes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of home confinement for offenders in the Mississippi Delta. Home confinement is an alternative to traditional

incarceration, but efforts must be made to optimize the program to address recidivism adequately. According to Meuer et al. (2018), it is important to understand how home confinement works in different settings with different demographics to address recidivism. The research found that home confinement intensity must consider and address individual circumstances of each case to reduce the risk of reoffending. Recidivism represents a direct challenge that requires a comprehensive approach to circumvent the problem. Meuer et al. explained that some of the recidivism-reducing effects of home confinement can be attributed to accompanying measures such as early release and counseling; therefore, research must address background and characteristics of the sample to determine the program's effectiveness. By addressing the underlying causes of criminal behavior, providing support and resources for successful reentry, and promoting community engagement and restorative justice practices, we can work towards reducing recidivism rates and building safer, more equitable communities in the United States. Home confinement is a significant contributor to administering justice while rehabilitating offenders, ultimately reducing levels of recidivism. However, there is information contradicting this notion when applied to special populations.

A study conducted by Ariza et al. (2021) highlights a different perspective on home confinement. The researchers indicated that home confinement was viewed as more punitive to female inmates convicted of drug-related offenses. The study indicated that home confinement contributes to female oppression, forcing them to adapt to traditional patriarchal standards. Likewise, Gonzalez et al. (2020) explained that utilizing electronic monitoring devices for women engaged in substance abuse treatment programs resulted

in 3.13 greater odds of re-arrest after accounting for criminogenic risk factors. This information is essential to developing policies that dictate how home confinement is administered. I sought to identify the effectiveness of home confinement as it pertains to another special population – individuals in rural communities.

While studies indicate that home confinement is an efficient alternative to incarceration, which induces a successful reentry, these studies fail to address disparities amongst special populations adequately. Specifically, studies fail to address how home confinement affects recidivism rates in rural communities. This study is significant because it addresses a gap in the literature that fails to test the efficiency of incarceration alternatives in rural communities like the Mississippi Delta. Understanding these experiences may lead to more efficient operation of criminal courts and corrections systems. It can also decrease prison populations and overall strain experienced by prison personnel, creating a more conducive environment for rehabilitation.

Research Questions

This study examines the differences, or lack thereof, in experiences of the home confinement program in rural areas. Prior studies show that the home confinement program is generally successful; however, rural communities face unique challenges that may alter the program's effectiveness. Recidivism is a shared experience across all areas of the United States, and it is crucial to explore the success of home confinement in rural areas, as well. This study has two research questions. They are:

RQ1: What are the experiences of offenders in home confinement in the Mississippi Delta?

RQ2: How is home confinement affected by the rural conditions of the Mississippi Delta?

These questions address home confinement in rural communities. They will examine the unique challenges of home confinement in areas with diminished access to resources. Additionally, these questions will determine if special procedures should be considered to optimize the program when implementing home confinement in rural areas.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework for the Study

A conceptual framework provides a guide for understanding and analyzing a study. It can act as a structured outline, describing the anticipated relationships between variables and how they relate to the study. Conceptual frameworks are often used in qualitative research for social sciences because it requires multiple theories to address the phenomena being studied (Walden University, 2024). Likewise, this qualitative study uses a conceptual framework - the general theory of rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation theory is a concept that has evolved consistently throughout the study of criminal justice. According to Robinson and Crow (2008), rehabilitation theory seeks to reduce the likelihood of reoffending by influencing change within an offender. It suggests that the underlying causes of an offender's criminal behavior must be addressed to reduce the risk of reoffending and prepare the offender for reentry as a law-abiding person. The theory includes concepts of penal sanctions designed specifically for offender rehabilitation Robinson and Crow. Essentially, rehabilitation theory focuses on punishment used for offender reform rather than retaliation or retribution. This study focuses on home confinement of offenders in the Mississippi Delta. Understanding home

confinement of offenders in the Mississippi Delta can address the risk of reoffending for this demographic, and using the rehabilitation theory is appropriate to describe the relationship between home confinement and rehabilitation in the Mississippi Delta.

Nature of the Study

Qualitative research derives from early 20th-century teachings from scholars such as Max Weber. Weber argued that social phenomena should be studied to understand individuals' experiences in their respective environments. Bustamante (2017) explained that Weber's methodological concept of Verstehen focused on deep understanding from the subject's perspective rather than an empirical test of hypotheses. Qualitative research is interpretive, arguing that researchers must interpret the meanings people assign to their experiences to truly understand the world. This study examines the experiences of people under home confinement to better interpret the subjective results found in previous research and unveil methods that may help the administration of justice through the home confinement program.

Several methods of data collection are involved in qualitative research, including interviews, focus groups, participant observation, document analysis, and case studies (Tenny et al., 2022). This study will utilize interviews, an effective method for unveiling complex issues and detailed insights. The data will be coded using existing theories and data collected during the research. The benefit of using interviews is gathering information regarding people's experiences under home confinement to analyze how the program affects individuals in efforts to optimize the program. Interviews are explorative,

and the setting allows the subjects to explain their responses, eliciting the meanings they attach to certain concepts revealed during the data collection process.

Bringing out and exploring the meanings behind a phenomenon is mandatory in qualitative research. Understanding the complexities of social phenomena is the root of this type of research. According to (Tenny et al., 2022), qualitative research can explore opinions and individuality in social sciences. As our understanding of human behavior evolves and the need for new criminal justice procedures persists, qualitative research is essential to providing meaning to the social phenomena that dictate our lives. It is helpful to understand the relationship between home confinement and recidivism in individual cases; thus, using qualitative research design to prioritize depth over digits can contribute valuable knowledge to studying home confinement as a mode of justice in the United States.

Recidivism is straining the criminal justice system and the community alike. It creates a financial burden on society and causes emotional imbalance for the offenders, as well as other community members (Office of Justice Programs, 2019). Studying home confinement can alleviate those problems while simultaneously administering justice. However, as exhibited by mixed results of previous studies, it must be examined in different settings to identify the needs of offenders in the program that may not be apparent in other environments. It is important to document relevant experiences and interpret the meanings of those experiences appropriately to optimize the program in different environments.

I recruited 12 to 15 offenders who completed a state or federal sentence of home confinement in the Mississippi Delta. The goal was to recruit participants sentenced to home confinement in the Mississippi Delta without a preceding term of incarceration attached to the sentence. This includes any term of home detention as an alternative sentence of incarceration or a term of probation with home confinement as a condition of release. Their experiences were documented to identify and explore any socioeconomic stressors that have not been explored in prior data about home confinement.

Inclusion criteria for participants include the following: (a) over the age of 18 when sentenced; (b) sentenced for felony conviction; (c) must have lived in the Mississippi Delta for 5 years prior to sentence; (d) must have completed home confinement within the Mississippi Delta. Exclusion criteria are misdemeanor offenders and pretrial defendants. No offenders sentenced to home confinement following a misdemeanor offense or individuals ordered to submit the home confinement as a bond condition for a forthcoming trial will be included in the study.

Definitions

Defendant: A defendant is a person who has been accused of a crime and arrested for the accusation; however, they have not been convicted.

Home confinement: Britannica (2024) defines home confinement as an alternative sentence in which an offender is confined to their home with specific conditions instead of serving time in jail. Home confinement in this research is defined as an alternative program to incarceration or a condition of release from incarceration restricting an

offender's movements to their home by use of a monitoring service, electronic monitoring, or both.

Mississippi Delta: For purposes of this research, the Mississippi Delta is defined by the counties of Coahoma, Quitman, Bolivar, Tallahatchie, Sunflower, Leflore, Washington, Humphreys, Sharkey, and Issaquena, all within the State of Mississippi.

Offender: Offender refers to a person convicted of a criminal offense.

Supervising officer: A supervising officer is a probation officer or officer of the court given the responsibility of managing an offender's case.

Supervision: Supervision alludes to a term of post-conviction release or probation in which an offender must report to the court or a probation officer.

Assumptions

Prior information depicts that home confinement is generally accepted as an appropriate alternative to incarceration. Booker (2023) recently argued that home confinement is better economically, socially, and in terms of rehabilitation. It counteracts recidivism in the average setting; however, environmental stressors for cases in rural settings may make home confinement more challenging to implement. The State of Mississippi is the titleholder for the worst economy in the nation, and the Mississippi Delta is the overall poorest region within the state; thus, access to rehabilitative measures is limited. Additionally, communities become more antisocial and socially disorganized when people have more access to self-medicating measures but not professional assistance. Like many other states, prisons are overcrowded in the State of Mississippi. It calls for an alternative measure, and home confinement is often utilized. This study

predicts that home confinement is better economically for the government issuing the sentence but has no effect on an offender's propensity to reoffend in the Mississippi Delta; however, this study predicts that offenders are more likely to accept home confinement as an alternative to traditional incarceration. Furthermore, this study examines whether the socioeconomic factors in the Mississippi Delta nullify the rehabilitative benefits of home confinement in a typical setting.

Limitations

Limitations to the study include access to participants, instrumentation, and verification of information provided by the participants. Criminal charges, convictions, and sentences are public information, though some information may be confidential or challenging to obtain, making it hard to recruit efficiently. For instance, identifying cases will be accomplishable; however, obtaining contact information for the offender can be difficult. Once the participants are identified and recruited, the interview must be conducted. The plan is to conduct the interviews in person, but some participants may not have access to adequate transportation, and interviewing at their homes may not be feasible. These same participants may not have access to virtual meeting rooms either. Verifying criminal history and activities under home confinement may be difficult without access to specific databases or other resources. Just as criminal charges are public, completion of a sentence is often verifiable through public information; however, activities while under supervision may be confidential or withheld. The participants may provide information regarding their compliance or verifications under home confinement

but may need documentation to verify the activities. In this case, verification would have to come via contact with their supervising officer or the information database.

Significance

This study is significant because it may address a gap in the literature that fails to test the efficiency of incarceration alternatives in the Mississippi Delta. This study examines the experiences of home confinement participants in rural areas. Understanding these experiences can lead to a more efficiently operated criminal court and corrections system. It can also identify methods to optimize the home confinement program, decreasing prison populations and strain experienced by prison personnel and creating a more conducive environment for rehabilitation.

Summary

The criminal justice system in the United States is continuously evolving, and new procedural policies are abundantly necessary. According to Subramanian et al. (2020), the United States has less than five percent of the world's population; however, the country houses nearly 25% of the world's prisoners. Recidivism is a common theme contributing to the number of prisoners, and criminal justice reform must ensue to address the recurrent theme of elevated incarceration in the United States.

Recidivism has burdened the criminal justice system, and there have been many proposals in response; though, home confinement is one of the most promising ideas. Home confinement is an innovative way to administer justice that presents a cheaper and more efficient alternative for the criminal justice system (Booker, 2023). This study

examines existing data regarding the use of home confinement and adds to it by exploring the use of home confinement in a rural community.

This study deploys a qualitative approach equipped with a grounded theory to collect, investigate, interpret, and present data contributing to studies of home confinement. Expanding the knowledge about home confinement can contribute to new policy introductions addressing recidivism. This contribution can help reduce recidivism, decrease costs, and increase the efficiency of the criminal justice system. Data collected and presented will be invaluable to the criminal justice system and policymakers in the United States government. Chapter 2 will review prior research and highlight the history of home confinement programs, establishing a basis for continued research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of the home confinement program is to relieve prison overcrowding and provide options in place of incarceration (Klein-Saffran, 1991). Bird et al. (2022) assert that reliance on traditional incarceration is declining while support strengthens for noncustodial alternative responses for felony offenders such as home confinement. The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of home confinement for offenders in the Mississippi Delta. Chapter 2 will outline the literature search strategy and describe the theoretical foundation used to conduct the study. It will also review key variables such as traditional incarceration, recidivism, demographics, economics, and home confinement.

Home confinement has helped address the problem of overcrowding in prison by providing an alternative to incarceration and promoting rehabilitation. Although prisons are still overcrowded, the use of home confinement as an alternative provides relief to prisons by offering an option for lower-risk offenders that does not require the prison to house them as traditional inmates.

Additionally, using home confinement as an alternative alleviates strain during the reentry process. Bouchard and Wong (2018) conducted a study that revealed results indicating that home confinement is conducive to successful reentry, thus reducing recidivism. Home confinement revokes an offender's freedom but does not entirely remove the person from their community. Keeping the offender in the community, even with a degree of restriction, makes the offender's transition from custody to release more efficient. Belur et al. (2020) provided evidence that electronic monitoring is cheaper than

prison and is generally successful when used correctly. Using home confinement correctly means utilizing the program on an individual basis. Authorities should consider the characteristics of each case separately when utilizing home confinement. For instance, Belur et al. found the results of their study to indicate the positive effects of electronic monitoring when used to monitor post-conviction sex offenders. Belur et al. also explained that electronic monitoring in conjunction with other conditions makes the program more effective. Sex offenders typically register as lower-risk offenders when calculating criminal history and cognitions, as most are first-time offenders or have a nominal criminal history, and many have good work history or social bonds; however, their propensity to commit a specific type of crime presents a high risk of danger and harm to the community. Additionally, sex offenders are at high risk of harm in general population prisons. Furthermore, they have better access to rehabilitative programs during home confinement that may not be available during traditional incarceration. Therefore, offenders of this kind are good candidates for home confinement because they can access pertinent rehabilitative measures in the community; however, they also require intensive monitoring to prevent a high-risk offense.

Providing an alternative to traditional incarceration expands the criminal justice system, helping it maintain current policies that effectuate justice in an evolving criminal justice system. It also remedies a persistent problem of overcrowding in the American prison system. Noncustodial alternatives to incarceration save money for the government and influence rehabilitation, remedying reentry problems, which saves money for the community. Thus, studying home confinement as an alternative to incarceration is critical

to determining if the program is an appropriate option, and it also provides outlets to optimize the program to meet the needs of an evolving criminal justice system.

Literature Search Strategy

Step 1 in the literature search strategy used in this research was defining the topic and the most important questions to answer. As such, the search revolved around home confinement, the efforts to implement home confinement, the effectiveness of home confinement as an alternative to traditional incarceration, and criminal justice as it pertains to rural communities. Furthermore, the Mississippi Delta was researched to understand information about lifestyles in the Mississippi Delta.

Step 2 involved selecting keywords, exact phrases, and adjacent phrases. Some keywords selected for the search were incarceration, imprisonment, home confinement, house arrest, home detention, home incarceration, and jail. Other keywords used were rehabilitation, reentry, recidivism, criminal procedure, and criminal justice. The search also included home confinement in rural communities, home confinement with special offenders, home confinement in the Mississippi Delta, and the pros and cons of home confinement.

Step 3 included using keywords and phrases to gather literature about the topic. Literature was gathered using several different search engines. The primary search engine used was SAGE Journals, followed by PSYCHinfo, which was accessed through OASIS. SAGE Journals proved to be paramount in locating criminal justice-related, peer-reviewed articles. PSYCHinfo was helpful in locating articles about the psychological effects of home detention, reentry, recidivism, and rehabilitation. Google was used to

locate government and official websites for statistical information and reports. Google Scholar was used to locate peer-reviewed, general articles, including historical information for the Mississippi Delta.

Theoretical Foundation

Rehabilitation theory is a very old concept involved in the criminal justice system, and it has a topic of contention throughout its inception. Penitentiaries first introduced the concept of rehabilitation in the late 19th century when reformers believed that silent contemplation and bible study could serve as a means of redemption for convicted felons (Bosworth, M., 2005). Later, educational programs and vocational training were utilized to rehabilitate offenders and prepare them for release to society. Rehabilitation was the foundation of reformatories in the 19th century prior to the reemergence of retributive justice (Bosworth, M., 2005).

During the 20th century, science was introduced to criminal justice, offering explanations for criminal behavior such as biological and psychological deficiencies (Bosworth, M., 2005). According to Welch (1996), the medical explanations of criminal behavior helped refine prisoner classification and develop treatment for offenders. Eventually, the medical model became heavily scrutinized for concerns of human rights violations and invasive treatment (Bosworth, M., 2005).

Although rehabilitation fell out of favor during the post-martinson era, recent efforts by criminal justice systems indicate that rehabilitation has become a focal point of the penal system again (Bosworth, M., 2005). Renewed efforts to implement education, vocational training, and mental health treatment are all indicators of the rehabilitation

rather than simple punishment. However, there remains a conundrum of the offenders' need to participate in the programs for rehabilitation and their lack of desire to participate (Bosworth, M., 2005).

Overall, the rehabilitation theory prioritizes reform and reintegration over punishment as a singular goal of the criminal justice system, and it continuously evolves within the criminal justice system (Bosworth, M., 2005). The theory suggests that addressing underlying factors of criminal behavior such as lack of education, substance abuse, and socioeconomic challenges is the root of rehabilitation. It focuses on tailored programs for individualized needs and moves to reduce recidivism through reform.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and/or Concepts

Traditional Incarceration

Incarceration has long been society's primary source of punishment for criminal activity. In its traditional sense, incarceration involves sentencing a person to imprisonment, in which they serve the time physically detained in a jail or prison. Cox and Wallace (2016) defined it as the state of confinement or imprisonment in an adult correctional facility. The popularity of incarceration throughout the criminal justice system has led to the concept of mass incarceration. Mass incarceration describes the phenomenon of incarcerating people at an elevated rate.

Imprisonment has become very popular in the United States, leading private companies to get involved in the business of housing and guarding inmates for the government. While governments own some jail and prison facilities, private companies have built facilities and gained contracts with the government to house inmates due to the

number of offenders sentenced to incarceration. According to Ortiz and Jackey (2019), governments in the United States were growing unable to fund mass incarceration and ballooning correctional budgets; thus, privatized prisons increased exponentially. Furthermore, many states believe privatizing prisons is the best solution to budgetary problems while maintaining incarceration as the primary source of punishment for offenders.

The United States leads the world in incarceration, imprisoning more people than any other nation (Cullen, 2018). In 2005, there were 737 offenders incarcerated in a jail, state prison, or federal prison per 100,000 residents in the United States compared to a global average of 166 inmates per 100,000 residents (Raphael, 2009). The United States uses incarceration as the primary source of punishment, even when there is an alternative available.

Between 1925 and 2005, the prison population in the United States grew exponentially. It peaked with 1,613,740 people incarcerated in a prison facility in the United States at yearend 2009 (West et al., 2011). There was a slight decline before increasing once again in 2022. According to Carson and Kluckow (2023), the combined state and federal prisoner population at yearend 2021 was 1,205,100. At yearend 2022, the population was 1,230,100, representing a 2% increase, the first increase in nearly a decade.

The United States uses incarceration as an all-inclusive solution to crime (Cullen, 2018). In America, a person can be incarcerated for some period of time, for any crime, including minor crimes such as trespassing or vandalism. Some statutory guidelines even

require a mandatory minimum sentence of incarceration. Additionally, the War on Drugs movement between 1970 and 2004 contributed to a 400% increase in incarceration. Substance users accounted for approximately 60% of the increase in federal populations and 30% in state inmate populations (Humenik et al., 2020). For a long time, state and federal governments used imprisonment as the primary punishment for most crimes, regardless of the circumstances surrounding the crime. The Brennan Center (2016) conducted research that concluded that 39% of the 1.46 million incarcerated persons in the United States were imprisoned without having a risk to public safety and could have been punished in a less expensive and damaging manner.

Although the prison system grew on the federal and state levels, most offenders are inmates of state facilities (Cullen, 2018). Of all states in the United States, Mississippi is leading the nation in terms of imprisonment rates. According to Carson (2023), the State of Mississippi incarcerated 661 people per 100,000 in the year 2022. The closest state behind Mississippi was the State of Louisiana, which incarcerated people at a rate of 596 per 100,000 people, followed by Arkansas, which incarcerated people at a rate of 574 per 100,000 people. Federal inmates were amongst the lowest at 44 inmates per 100,000 people. Massachusetts was the lowest among states, with a rate of 94 incarcerated persons per 100,000 people. Oregon and Kansas are amongst the median, with the former at 295 and the latter at 292 inmates per 100,000 people.

Recidivism

Recidivism alludes to a previously convicted offender's criminal behavior and propensity to reoffend. It is the act of returning to prison for a criminal offense after a

prior term of incarceration (National Institute of Justice, 2008). Recidivism is a significant problem in the criminal justice system, and professionals evaluate recidivism to monitor the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs, policies and procedures, and other interventions that help reduce repeat offenses.

The concept of recidivism is measured through rearrest for new offenses after being previously found guilty of an offense. Once the individual is found guilty of a new crime or violation of release conditions and reincarcerated, the reincarceration factors into recidivism. Several well-known, influential factors affect recidivism. Yang et al. (2015) argued that men are at higher risk of recidivating. In addition to gender, some personal background factors are age, mental health, substance abuse, and criminal history. Younger offenders and those with more criminal history are more likely to recidivate than older, more mature offenders with fewer prior convictions. Hall et al. (2024) reported that individuals who were younger than 18 during their first arrest recidivated at a higher rate than those who were older than 18 at the age of first arrest. Likewise, they reported that those with prior convictions recidivated more than those without criminal history. Durose and Antanangeli (2021) explained that 43% of released offenders in 2012 with ten or more prior arrests were rearrested, and 31% with 5 to 9 prior arrests were rearrested, compared to 26% with four or fewer prior arrests. The correlation between age and offending is an intricately studied observation known as the age-crime curve, one of the most consistently validated phenomena in developmental criminology (Shulman et al., 2013). It alludes to the finding that criminality is highest during adolescence and begins to decline during adulthood.

Mental health and substance abuse are also major contributing factors to recidivism. Substance abuse often causes a perpetual cycle of incarceration because those who have an addiction typically engage in criminal activity to support that addiction. Humenik et al. (2020) explained that substance users are cycled through the criminal justice system often as a result of drug-related crimes due to untreated addiction. Those with mental health disorders often become addicted to controlled substances to circumvent stressful psychiatric symptoms, which compounds an already elevated risk of recidivism. Steadman et al. (2013) found that 70% to 74% of people with non-substance abuse-related mental health disorders have also been diagnosed with a co-occurring substance use disorder. Humenik et al. explained that people with co-occurring disorders are more likely to experience difficulties in the criminal justice system, and drug-involved offenders are at increased risk of recidivism.

Other factors that influence recidivism are social and systemic. Social factors include familial support, prosocial bonds, education, employment opportunities, and community ties. Poor familial support, lacking prosocial bonds, and access to adequate education increase the risk of recidivism. Furthermore, lacking employment opportunities and low employability make it difficult for individuals to support themselves financially, effectively increasing their propensity to reoffend. Community ties make people more connected and less likely to victimize those around them; however, lacking those community ties removes those restraints. Systemic factors are those provided by the government. They include the quality and availability of community support services,

community supervision, rehabilitation programs, and the criminal justice policies established for that area.

One social factor recently studied is support from the probation officer. Hall et al. (2024) recently argued that offenders who felt supported by their probation officer were more likely to recidivate than those who indicated a lack of support. This phenomenon is a strange statistic as the common assumption is that more support from the probation officer would correlate with an increased likelihood of success, similar to the correlation between familial support and an increased likelihood of successful reentry. One way to explain this statistic is that individuals who are at higher risk of recidivism require more attention from their probation officers, and they interact with different programs supported by the probation officers. Those with lower risks of recidivism require less attention from probation officers, and they are more likely to participate in prosocial activities on their own accord; thus, the circumstances lead to less interaction with their probation officers and a weaker bond (Hall et al., 2024).

Elevated recidivism rates indicate a lack of effectiveness surrounding rehabilitation programs and reintegration efforts. The economic implications are profound as costs associated with recidivism are high when supporting the housing costs of incarceration and the judicial processes. Recidivism also affects public safety as the community loses trust in the criminal justice system's efforts to combat criminal activity.

The criminal justice system must focus on counteracting factors like poor education, vocational training programs, substance abuse addictions, and lack of mental health treatment programs. Adequate housing, employment assistance, and community

outreach programs that aid successful reentry must all be improved to reduce recidivism effectively. New sentencing, community supervision, and incarceration policies must also be implemented. Understanding and addressing recidivism is crucial for creating a more effective and humane criminal justice system. By focusing on rehabilitation and support rather than solely on punishment, society can help reduce repeat offenses, enhance public safety, and support the successful reintegration of former offenders into the community.

Recidivism in the United States

Recidivism in the United States is a significant problem within the criminal justice system that has historically lacked an adequate solution. It exacerbates the strain on prison systems and uses a significant amount of rehabilitative resources, making them less available for incarcerated persons. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (2021) conducted a study and found that more than 6 in 10 (62%) inmates released across 34 states in 2012 recidivated within three years, and 7 in 10 (71%) offenders were rearrested within five years. 81% of offenders aged 24 or younger at the time of their release were rearrested within five years. 74% of offenders aged 25 to 39 were arrested again within 5 years, and 61% aged 40 and older were rearrested within five years.

The United States has one of the highest prison population rates, as well as recidivism rates in the world. At yearend 2022, state and federal prisons in the United States had more than 1,230,100 inmates (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2023). Approximately two-thirds of released prisoners in the United States are rearrested within three years, and more than three-fourths are rearrested within 5 years (Wadkins & Campbell, 2021). The problem has persisted and exaggerated the scrutiny of a criminal

rather than the crime itself. That is, recidivism levels in the United States are so high that those involved in crimes are expected to maintain a lifestyle of criminality rather than rehabilitate while incarcerated. The reoffending rates are high, and various factors contribute to this phenomenon.

Some of the contributing factors to elevated recidivism rates in the United States are socioeconomic conditions, education, vocational skills, mental health, substance abuse, and social support systems. Socioeconomic conditions refer to the financial, housing, employment, and other lifestyle barriers individuals face, leading them to criminality. It contributes to recidivism because many of these conditions are exaggerated when a former inmate is released from prison, increasing their likelihood of reoffending. Porter (2018) suggested that incarceration makes a person's life more difficult in several domains, including economic, social, and health. Former inmates are more likely to experience loss of housing, financial stability, and employment opportunities.

Lacking education and vocational skills is a risk factor for offending, and it places former inmates at a higher risk of reoffending, as well. Education increases employability, and without it, securing adequate employment is more challenging. As responsibilities increase in adulthood, the need for higher levels of employment increases. What may have been appropriate at one point may no longer suffice. It leads people to criminality when they cannot find employment or better employment. Additionally, lacking job training makes people less confident that they will succeed in a job function. Criminality is an easier route to personal gain.

One of the most notable risk factors for recidivism in the United States is mental health. A significant portion of offenders have diagnosed and undiagnosed mental health disorders that are not properly addressed during or after incarceration. Calipari (2018) found that psychopathology in mentally ill persons is compromised by unaddressed cognitive deficits in prison institutions. According to Houser (2019), mental health disorders make an offender's reentry process more complicated.

Furthermore, substance abuse and dependency make the reentry process challenging, as well. Substance abuse, sometimes considered a subsector of mental health, severely affects criminality and recidivism in the United States. Houser (2019) explained that substance abuse is the leading risk factor for criminality. Furthermore, offenders battling drug and alcohol addiction have the greatest likelihood of reoffending. It removes inhibitions and causes people to act irrationally or make inappropriate decisions. Houser showed that drug users were between 2.8% and 3.8% more likely to offend than nondrug users.

Support systems are critical to an offender's success following release from incarceration. It includes assistance with housing, financial support, and any other entity an offender can utilize to establish stability. Offenders are at risk of losing support systems while incarcerated, and they experience difficulties when reestablishing support following release. Oselin et al. (2023) explained that social support influences several inmate outcomes, particularly recidivism. A support system increases an offender's likelihood of success during reentry.

Recidivism is a nationwide problem, which includes the State of Mississippi. Recidivism in Mississippi is a compounded problem for all the reasons that it is a problem in the United States. For instance, people in Mississippi are at a higher risk of experiencing mental health difficulties and substance abuse issues while having lower access to treatment programs. Furthermore, access to adequate treatment is just as important as having access to treatment in general. Peters et al. (2015) found that court-ordered treatment programs may be suited for substance abuse, but they can be inadequate for an individual with co-occurring mental health needs. Consequently, the program will not appropriately address the underlying problem. Victor et al. (2021) described jail recidivism for persons with co-occurring mental health needs as a proxy of available community resources in rural areas, explaining that resources in these areas are limited; thus, continued care after release from incarceration may not be provided.

Mississippi has one of the worst economies in the United States. Consequently, its citizens are at higher risk of poverty, lack of education and vocational skills, as well as elevated instances of unaddressed mental health disorders. Addressing recidivism in Mississippi is essential to reintegrating former inmates into society and reducing the strain experienced by the criminal justice system. The factors that induce recidivism must be evaluated to address recidivism in Mississippi.

The most prominent factors to consider are access to substance abuse treatment, mental health services, and employment opportunities. Pal (2024) reports that Mississippi is ranked 5th in the nation for worst states in mental health care. According to the report, Mississippi has the second-fewest mental health treatment centers in the country (7.52

per 10,000 businesses) and the 11th-highest percentage of adults suffering from mental health illnesses absent of treatment (56.1%). It has the ninth-highest percentage of adults suffering from mental illnesses who cannot afford to see a doctor (28.2%).

Additionally, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024), Mississippi ranks last in the nation for concentration of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) workers. Mississippi is also ranked 49th of 50 states in education for employed persons, with approximately 23% of workers having a bachelor's degree or higher, indicating that many educated persons feel underemployed in Mississippi and contributing to what is referred to as the "brain drain" by Mississippians. The brain drain alludes to losing educated and professional persons to other states (Miller & Collins, 2022). Mississippi's level of education is consistent with national averages. 69.9% of the school-age population is enrolled in kindergarten to 12th grade in Mississippi compared to the national 67.6%. However, 24.8% of the total population in Mississippi is college-educated, compared to the national average of 35.7% (US Census Bureau, 2023). Thus, having such a low percentage of workers with education contributes to economic strain and increased likelihood of recidivism in Mississippi compared to other states.

Mississippi is home to one of the worst prisons in the nation, and the other facilities in Mississippi are sub-par compared to facilities nationwide. The prisons in Mississippi lack educational opportunities, treatment services for substance abuse and mental health, employment assistance, and adequate reentry programs. These problems are exaggerated even further in the Mississippi Delta. According to a report produced by the US Department of Justice (2024), three Mississippi Department of Corrections

facilities were found to be in violation of the 8th and 14th Amendments to the US Constitution due to their conditions of confinement. The report indicates that Mississippi Department of Corrections consistently violates incarcerated individuals' constitutional rights by failing to protect them from widespread physical violence and subjecting them to inadequate living conditions. Furthermore, severe understaffing of the facilities exacerbates the problem, allowing gangs to control and influence prison operations. The report was particular about the Mississippi State Penitentiary (also called Parchman), explaining that the facility not only subjected inmates to violence and housing that poses a risk to serious harm, but the facility also failed to provide proper treatment for inmates with severe mental health concerns and suicidal ideations.

Recidivism in the Mississippi Delta is characterized by elevated poverty levels, limited opportunities for economic growth, and a lack of educational opportunities. The socioeconomic status of the Mississippi Delta exacerbates the difficulties faced by formerly incarcerated persons released in Mississippi, making effective intervention strategies challenging to implement. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2024), the Mississippi Delta is one of the poorest regions in the United States. Residents often endure economic hardships and limited job opportunities at elevated levels. Economic hardship makes it difficult for former inmates to find stable employment, which can contribute to elevated rates of reoffending (Porter, 2018).

In addition to socioeconomic hardships, factors that affect recidivism across the nation are also included in the driving force behind recidivism in Mississippi. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024), educational disparities in the Mississippi Delta

are severe, and access to quality education is limited. Lack of access to education and vocational training hinders reintegration efforts (Porter, 2018). The same is relevant for substance abuse and mental health problems. Effective treatment programs are essential to a successful reentry for many former inmates, and the lack of access to these programs makes reintegration difficult (Houser, 2019).

The Mississippi Delta also lacks access to reentry support and strong community networks. Housing assistance, employment support, and community-based programs to facilitate successful reentry are inadequate in the Mississippi Delta. Most individuals who are released from prison in the Mississippi Delta struggle to find stability, and they lean on community members who have their own socioeconomic issues, limiting the resources they have available to help those released from prison. Addressing recidivism in Mississippi and the Mississippi Delta requires a targeted approach that considers the unique socioeconomic challenges in the region. As outlined by Humenik et al. (2020), focusing on education, employment, substance abuse, mental health treatment, and community support is critical to making successful reentry more likely and decreasing the likelihood of recidivism.

Recidivism rates vary throughout the United States, with rates in Mississippi being amongst the highest in the nation. Several factors contribute to these high rates of recidivism, and reducing recidivism requires a multifaceted approach that addresses these factors contributing to an offender's propensity to reoffend (Porter, 2018). Data collection and analysis are helpful to developing new reform strategies to counter high recidivism rates.

Mississippi Demographics

Mississippi has a distinct population and demographic profile compared to other states. It has an estimated population of 2,939,690, making it one of the least populated states. For comparison, California has approximately 38,965,193 residents. Los Angeles, California, has an estimated population of 3,820,914, which is nearly 1/3 more populous than the entire state of Mississippi. Furthermore, Mississippi has grown in population relatively slowly compared to other states (US Census Bureau, 2022). The slow growth rate is primarily due to a need for more economic opportunities, which causes portions of the population to leave the state. While the state as a whole has seen minimal population growth, some areas have experienced population decline (i.e., the Mississippi Delta). The US Census Bureau (2023) reports a 6.9% decline in the population of the Mississippi Delta's most populous city (Greenville) between April 1, 2010, and July 1, 2023, compared to the state decline of 0.7% between those dates.

The demographics in Mississippi are primarily non-Hispanic white and black or African American. 58% of the state are non-Hispanic white, and 38% are black or African American. 4% of the state is Hispanic or Latino, and less than 1% is Asian. An even smaller group identifies as multi-racial, Native American, or Pacific Islander (US Census Bureau, 2022). The ethnic groups in Mississippi highlight the lack of diversity compared to states such as California and New York. However, it boasts more diversity than states such as Virginia and Rhode Island.

The median age in Mississippi is 38 years old. The state has a relatively youthful population, with a significant portion under 18. 23% of Mississippians are under the age

of 18, compared to 21.7% nationally. Consistent with national aging trends, there is a growing segment of the population aged 65 and above, with 17.5% of residents 65 years and older compared to 17.3% across the nation. Gender distribution in Mississippi is balanced, with a ratio of 94 men to every 100 women. Family households contain married partners, which is prevalent in Mississippi. 66% of the population lives in a family household, and approximately 34% live as individuals or unmarried partners (US Census Bureau, 2022).

Statistically, Mississippi has a lower educational attainment rate than national trends. 24.8% of residents aged 25 and older have bachelor's degrees or higher in Mississippi, compared to 35.7% in national statistics. While there is significant enrollment in kindergarten through 12th grade, more Mississippians stop after high school. The number of people with high school as the highest level of education completed is 30.8% in Mississippi, including graduate equivalency, compared to 26.1% nationally (US Census Bureau, 2022).

Mississippi has a low percentage of foreign-born residents, with about 2% compared to the national average. Most immigrants in Mississippi are from Latin America, with a growing number from Asia. The Latin American population contributes to the growing number of Spanish-speaking and bilingual populations speaking English and Spanish. However, English remains the predominant language in Mississippi (US Census Bureau, 2022).

The urbanization rate in Mississippi is approximately 49%, meaning that only a portion of the population lives in an urban area. The remaining 51% live in a rural area

with the state's historical connection to agriculture and rural character. There is only one major city in the state by the nation's standard of 100,000 people. The state's capital city, Jackson, has approximately 145,995 residents. Gulfport is the closest with approximately 72,236 residents, and Southaven is third with approximately 56,360 residents. The Gulf Coast is the most populous urban area in the state; however, northern Mississippi, near the Tennessee state line, has boasted a stark increase in population over the past decade (US Census Bureau, 2022).

Contrary to national averages, home ownership is high in Mississippi. Approximately 69.9% of residents in Mississippi own their homes compared to 65.2% nationwide. It ranks third in homeownership nationwide. This is partially due to lower housing costs than the national average, but Mississippians still face economic challenges that affect affordability for many residents. Delouya (2024) explained that states with major cities like Los Angeles, California, and New York, New York, attract younger, more transient residents who are drawn more towards rental and multi-family living options. Additionally, major cities attract national and international buyers, which increases the bidding for homes.

Mississippi's culture is characterized by its contributions to music, including blues, gospel, and country. Notable artists like B.B. King, Elvis, and Bobby Rush have contributed to music nationwide. The blues is put on display in concerts such as the Blue's Festival and Juke Joint Festival. A blues trail also comes through Mississippi, showcasing the history of blues and its connection to Mississippi. There is not much religious diversity in Mississippi with the predominant faith revolving around

Christianity, mainly Catholic and Baptist denominations. Smaller communities practice other faiths like Islam, Judaism, and Hinduism.

Mississippi faces social issues that define the demographics. Issues like obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease are prevalent in the state of Mississippi. It ranks within the top 5 throughout the country in obesity, cases of diabetes, and cardiovascular disease (Centers for Disease Control, 2022). Compounding the problems with health and wellness is the challenge faced by lack of access to healthcare. Mississippi has one of the highest rates of uninsured individuals and disparities in health outcomes nationwide (Conway & Mykyta, 2022). It ranks 6th in the nation and requires ongoing public health initiatives.

Mississippi's population and demographics reflect a unique blend of cultural heritage, economic challenges, and social diversity. While the state faces significant income, healthcare, and education issues, it also boasts a rich cultural history and strong community bonds. Addressing these challenges while leveraging the state's strengths is important when considering ways to progress, including within the criminal justice system.

Mississippi Economics

The economy in Mississippi is primarily fueled by farming and produce. Agriculture is essential to Mississippi's workforce and significantly provides financial support to the rural communities in Mississippi. According to the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (2024), agriculture is Mississippi's top industry. It employs 17.4% of the state's labor force and represents an 8.76-billion-dollar industry.

The state is a significant source of produce such as soybeans, corn, rice, and its most notable crop – cotton. Cotton is one of the biggest productions and has a historical connection to Mississippi. It has been a very lucrative product with economic roots originating before the Industrial Revolution. Cotton is the most notable crop; however, chicken farms and other poultry produce are the most profitable crops and essential to the state's economy, as well as a significant industry of catfish and cattle farming (Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, 2024).

Manufacturing is another significant sector of the state's economy, emphasizing food production, automotive manufacturing, and furniture production. It has established companies such as Nissan, Dollar General, Toyota, Milwaukee Tool, Goodyear, FedEx, and Amazon operating manufacturing plants across the state. Additionally, Accelera, Daimler Trucks, and PACCAR selected Marshall County, Mississippi as the site for its joint venture to open an advanced battery manufacturing facility (PACCAR, 2024). Mississippi hosted a groundbreaking event, and the plant, known as Amplify Cell Technologies, is the state's third-largest economic development project (Suriani, 2024). It represents Mississippi's commitment to supporting its economic development in the manufacturing sector, boosting the industrial output and employment across the state.

The State of Mississippi also feeds its economy with the healthcare industry, tourism, and energy production. The healthcare industry provides one of the most prominent employment outlets for citizens in Mississippi, with major institutions like the University of Mississippi Medical Center, although healthcare remains a struggle. It has 722 beds, making it the largest hospital in the state, and with more than 10,000

employees, it is one of the largest employers in the state. It is also Mississippi's only academic medical center (University of Mississippi Medical Center, n.d.) The tourism industry is growing with interest in Mississippi's rich cultural heritage. According to Governor Tate Reeves (2024), Mississippi set a record of 43.7 million visitors, contributing a new high of $17.5 billion to the economy in 2023. Musical history brought tributes and museums for notable people like Elvis Presley and B.B. King. The Mississippi Blues Trail assists tourists with exploring a wide range of historical destinations throughout Mississippi, with museums dedicated to the state's importance in developing one of the most popular genres of music – Blues. Investments in renewable energy like biofuels and solar power, coupled with natural resources like oil and gas, as well as tourism boost the state's economy by supplying employment and accumulating state revenue.

Despite the large agriculture industry and the growing industry in Mississippi, the state faces challenges that make it one of the worst economies in the United States. Several universities and colleges in the state are essential to education, but workforce development is a persistent problem. Educational outcomes and vocational training fail to meet the criteria of many modern industries, making it hard for the state to compete with other economies. The poverty rate in Mississippi is the highest in the United States, which also decreases the state's economic development and overall quality of life. The median household income in Mississippi is $52,719, which is significantly lower than the median household income across the country at $74,755 (US Census Bureau, 2022). It further contributes to the economic disparities in Mississippi. Although the healthcare

industry is one of the state's biggest industries, healthcare services are limited in Mississippi. Many people, particularly in rural areas, cannot access appropriate healthcare services, and this makes them susceptible to elevated rates of chronic diseases.

Mississippi Delta

The Mississippi Delta is a region of the country encompassing parts of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana that meet near the mouth of the Mississippi River. While characterized by fertile agricultural land, rich cultural heritage, and a growing industry, it is also plagued by poverty, elevated unemployment rates, limited medical services, and persistent economic challenges (National Park Service, 2017). As outlined by Porter (2018), economics are factors to consider in recidivism; thus, the economic dynamics in the Mississippi Delta present unique problems to the criminal justice system and implementing innovative programs.

Poverty is rampant in the Mississippi Delta, and income inequality is persistent. Many people live in poverty and face economic hardship with limited opportunities for financial growth. Income inequality highlights the economic disparities in access to education, healthcare, and economic resources between races and genders. For instance, white households, particularly white males, are the top earners in the Mississippi Delta, while black householders consistently represent the lowest sector of earners in the Mississippi Delta (US Census Bureau, 2022). Additionally, 70% of the 200,000 Mississippians who cannot afford health insurance live in the Mississippi Delta (Lynch, 2023).

Agriculture is the most lucrative industry in the Mississippi Delta, as it has been for more than 200 years (National Park Service, 2017). However, even the agriculture industry suffers losses at times. Shifts in agricultural practices and technological advancements changing how farming is conducted led to a decline in small-scale farming in rural areas. For instance, the area experienced a transition from resident-owned farming to large, corporate-owned farming systems during the 20th century (National Park Service, 2017). Consequently, job losses, rural depopulation, and economic dislocation occurred, as residents moved to more urbanized cities. The region heavily relies on successful agricultural production due to the limited diversity of industry in the Mississippi Delta. It renders the area vulnerable to risks like unstable weather and fluctuating commodity pricing, which can hinder production and sustainable economic growth.

As previously noted, one of the problems lies within economic disparities between the ethnicities. The US Commission on Civil Rights (2001) released a report depicting the economic disparities between races in the Mississippi Delta. The report indicated that the majority of the black population ranged from 53% in Yazoo County to 76% in Holmes County. However, black families living below the poverty level ranged from 46.4% in Washington County to 68% in Tunica County. Comparatively, white families in Washington County living below the poverty level were 7.8% and 12.2% in Tunica County. The US Census Bureau (2022) poverty status report indicates that the disparities affecting Mississippi in the late 1990s and early 2000s remain a struggle. While 23.7% of black Mississippi families live below the poverty level, only 8.3% of

white Mississippi families live below the poverty level. In Washington County, black Mississippians living below the poverty level were at 36.4% compared to white Mississippians at 9.8% at yearend 2022. In Tunica County, 35.8% of black Mississippians live below the poverty line compared to 8.4% of white Mississippians (US Census Bureau, 2022).

The economy in Mississippi primarily relies on agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare services; however, the state faces persistent challenges related to poverty, education, workforce development, and economic disparities. Even the developed cities in Mississippi are relatively rural compared to major cities in the United States. The most rural sectors of the state, such as the Mississippi Delta, are amongst the most rural and economically challenged places in the United States. The area's history of slavery, political disenfranchisement of racial groups, and social segregation of races significantly contribute to its status as the poorest section of the United States (US Commission on Civil Rights, 2001). Political ideology and echoes from the Civil War state rights argument make the implementation of federal programs particularly challenging, reinforcing the state's intent to be self-sufficient (Lynch, 2023).

Furthermore, faulty infrastructure systems in the Mississippi Delta make it difficult to compete for economic investments and hinder development efforts. The Delta has inadequate transportation networks and broadband connectivity, and businesses are hesitant to invest in an area with limited access to consumers. The area faces significant economic challenges rooted in historical inequities, structural barriers, and systemic disparities. Just as each of these entities makes it difficult to solicit economic

investments, it makes it difficult to implement innovative programs in the criminal justice system to advance the adequacy and efficiency of criminal justice.

Home Confinement in the Mississippi Delta

Home confinement is a form of community-based supervision that often requires electronic monitoring. It allows an individual to serve their sentences at home instead of in a traditional correctional facility. The program has been utilized in various settings, and it is an effective alternative to traditional incarceration (Booker, 2023). However, implementation in rural areas presents unique challenges. The viability of home confinement is threatened by the inadequacies and lack of resources in the Mississippi Delta. For instance, transportation, broadband connectivity, and housing are all important factors in a home confinement program. As depicted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024), the region continues to struggle with these resources sufficiently.

Transportation presents a challenge when implementing home confinement because of the geographical isolation in the region. The Mississippi Delta has a sparse population density, as do many rural areas, and vast distances separate communities. It presents a problem for transportation if check-ins are required, and probation officers may need help conducting home visits, monitoring compliance, and maintenance checks in remote or hard-to-reach areas. For the same reasons, the areas face difficulties with access to resources. Rural, hard-to-reach areas often lack the necessary infrastructure to support effective home confinement programs. Electronic monitoring technology will not work adequately without updated broadband connectivity. The most advanced electronic monitoring equipment uses GPS, Wi-Fi, and cellular location technology to track

movements. Additionally, the equipment uses satellite signals as a support system in the event of GPS failure or interference (BI Incorporated, 2024). However, many desolate areas in the Mississippi Delta lack access to adequate internet connectivity and cellular services, or they have housing structures (i.e. metal roofing) that may weaken satellite signals and connectivity for electronic monitoring equipment.

Furthermore, rural areas face challenges in accessing mental health, substance abuse, or other programs that may supplement the home confinement program (Victor et al., 2021). The high level of poverty in the Mississippi Delta exacerbates challenges associated with establishing basic requirements for home confinement like stable housing. It also affects peripheral activities like finding employment to maintain prosocial lifestyles and adds to the social stigma that impedes successful reentry, increasing the risk of recidivism.

While there are challenges involved with implementing home confinement in the Mississippi Delta, there lies a set of benefits associated with using the program as an alternative to traditional incarceration. Some of these benefits include preserving community ties, saving money for the government, and inducing rehabilitation rather than simple punishment (Booker, 2023). Home confinement allows individuals to remain at home. Even in rural communities, keeping individuals in their home settings assists with maintaining the community ties that are often lost during traditional incarceration. Connections with family, employment, and social networks are better maintained when offenders remain in their communities. Loss of social support is one of the key factors in recidivism, and maintaining the support is essential to reducing recidivism. This

continuity of social support can facilitate successful reintegration into society post-sentence. Cost saving is another benefit of implementing home confinement. Utilizing home confinement as an alternative to incarceration costs a fraction of what it costs to house an offender in traditional incarceration. In an area that suffers from financial and economic strain, saving money is essential. It frees resources that may be applied to other community necessities. As proven, home confinement is more conducive to rehabilitation than traditional incarceration in many cases by providing offenders with opportunities for employment, education, and mental health/substance abuse treatment services within their communities. Reallocating resources to create these rehabilitative services is invaluable in rural areas.

Implementing programs in rural areas requires overcoming unique socioeconomic challenges (Victor et al., 2021). Home confinement programs in rural areas like the Mississippi Delta can benefit from utilizing innovative solutions and leveraging existing community resources. Investing in advanced electronic monitoring technology or upgraded telecommunication infrastructure can enhance the effectiveness of home confinement programs in rural areas. Virtual check-ins using video conferences can help overcome geographic barriers and transportation issues. Establishing rapport with the community and encouraging offenders to maintain community ties can help the program's success by strengthening resources regarding communication and stability.

While home confinement presents promising opportunities for addressing overcrowding in rural correctional facilities and promoting successful reintegration, implementing programs in rural areas is challenging (Victor et al., 2021). By recognizing

the unique needs and characteristics of rural communities, investing in appropriate resources and infrastructure, and fostering collaborative partnerships, policymakers and stakeholders can enhance the viability and effectiveness of home confinement as a sentencing alternative in rural United States.

Factors to Consider

Home confinement is a popular alternative to traditional incarceration. It is generally accepted by offenders, and prisons depend on it to alleviate overcrowding. It is also accepted as more effective at reducing recidivism than prison. The Bureau of Prisons (BOP) (2023) statistics show that those sentenced to home confinement typically have a more straightforward reentry process. Several factors contribute to this ease of reentry, which must be considered to ensure the effectiveness and safety of both the offender and the community. These factors include legal, logistical, technological, and social considerations.

Legal frameworks are important to consider when evaluating the eligibility criteria of an offender, sentencing guidelines detailing how to sentence an offender, and protocols regarding monitoring offenders (BOP, 2023). The legal framework also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of supervising authorities, law enforcement agencies, and service providers involved in implementing and overseeing home confinement programs. This framework also establishes clear guidelines for addressing violations of home confinement conditions and appropriate sanctions for noncompliance.

The logistical considerations for implementing home confinement include risk assessments and quality assurance. Risk assessments are essential to determine the

suitability of individuals for home confinement. The nature of the offense, criminal history, risk of flight, and potential threat to the public are factors used to determine suitability (BOP, 2023). Risk assessments are also used to develop individualized supervision plans, identify specific conditions, restrictions, and monitoring requirements tailored to each participant's needs and circumstances.

Another logistical consideration is evaluation and quality assurance, which includes establishing procedures for ongoing evaluation and quality assurance to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and outcomes of home confinement programs (BOP, 2023). It also involves collecting and analyzing data on program participation, recidivism rates, cost-effectiveness, and stakeholder feedback to inform program improvements and policy decisions.

Supervision and monitoring must be considered in logistical factors. It includes training probation officers and monitoring personnel to effectively supervise individuals in home confinement, including conducting regular check-ins, verifying compliance with conditions, and responding promptly to alerts and emergencies. It also includes implementing mechanisms for monitoring participant progress, collecting feedback, and addressing concerns or issues that may arise during the home confinement period.

Technological infrastructure includes investing in robust electronic monitoring technology and systems capable of tracking individuals' movements, enforcing curfews, and detecting violations of home confinement conditions. Additionally, it is ensuring compatibility and reliability of monitoring equipment, software, and communication networks to facilitate real-time monitoring, data management, and reporting.

Social considerations are essential in implementing home confinement. Support services are also necessary, such as access to counseling, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, and vocational training programs. Collaborating with community-based organizations, social service agencies, and healthcare providers to address underlying needs is vital to promoting successful reintegration into society.

Community engagement should be considered to educate and engage the community about the purpose and benefits of home confinement programs, dispel misconceptions, and address public safety concerns and community impact (BOP, 2023). It also fosters collaboration and communication between stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, local government officials, community leaders, and residents, to promote transparency, accountability, and support for home confinement initiatives. By carefully considering these factors and implementing evidence-based practices, home confinement programs can be effectively designed, monitored, and evaluated to promote public safety, reduce incarceration rates, and support successful reintegration of individuals into the community.

Social

One factor affecting recidivism rates is family separation. Traditional incarceration limits contact between offenders and their social networks outside of prison. This limitation causes a fracture in relationships between inmates and their families. Folk et al. (2019) explains that offenders who maintain contact and relationships with their families have a higher chance of a successful reentry following their release from incarceration. Trood et al. (2021) explained the importance of mental health during

incarceration. Maintaining healthy relationships with family members helps to keep mental health stability. Traditional incarceration is counterproductive to maintaining healthy social relationships. Offenders sentenced to home confinement more easily maintain those relationships. According to Whitfield (2013), home incarceration, specifically through electronic monitoring, provides an alternative to traditional incarceration that avoids completely separating the offender from their social network.

Another factor is the concept of institutionalization. Institutionalization refers to establishing something as the norm or a convention. As it pertains to criminal justice, being institutionalized refers to the process of accepting incarceration and the culture revolving around incarceration as normal life. Crane (2020) defined institutionalization as a chronic and disabling state of being caused by extended incarceration. Individuals who become institutionalized are more likely to recidivate and accept life under incarceration. These individuals have extreme difficulty during reentry because civilian life is no longer a standard concept for them. They operate better within the confinement of a prison. Home confinement reduces the chances of an individual becoming institutionalized in prison.

Risk-Need-Responsivity Model

The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model is a contemporary concept deriving from evidence-based practices used to help provide rehabilitative services for offenders. Federal prison facilities and probationary services use the RNR model to recommend and implement supervision strategies. The RNR model combines three rehabilitative concepts to reduce recidivism. Viglione (2019) explained that the model's purpose is to provide

effective treatment and reduce recidivism through the use of risk, need, and responsivity principles.

The risk principle identifies a connection between an offender's risk of reoffending, the level of treatment provided to them, and recidivism. Andrews, Bonta, and Hogue (1990) defined the risk principle stating that rehabilitative programs should be applied accordingly to the offender's risk level. Furthermore, applying inappropriate program plans to offenders can be counterproductive to the rehabilitative process. For example, placing high-risk offenders in more intensive programs reduces their risk of reoffending; however, placing low-risk offenders in the same programs may increase their risk of reoffending (Andrews, Bonta, and Hogue 1990).

The needs principle focuses on the factors involved in an offender's criminality that can change with influence. They are the factors that directly affect the offender's behavior. Andrews and Bonta (2010) stated that treatment should be directed at changeable factors that primarily cause criminogenic behavior. For example, substance abuse is directly related to a change in behavior. It may even cause criminality in some, but this factor can be changed; however, the offender may not be able to change it without assistance. It corresponds to a need; thus, substance abuse treatment may be an appropriate program to address a need which could directly affect the offender's behavior.

The responsivity principle outlines the offender's ability to adhere to a particular program. It considers the offender's capacity to learn and the methods in which that offender learns best. Viglione (2019) depicted two components of the responsivity

principle: general and specific responsivity. General responsivity suggests that applying the program plan should be based on the learning ability of the offender. Specific responsivity suggests considering the biological, social, and psychological characteristics of the offender when assigning a program plan (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). For instance, general responsivity would consider an offender's ability to learn the rules of home confinement. Specific responsivity would consider the offender's employment, risk to the community, history of noncompliance, or any other factor particular to that offender.

Financial Differences

Home confinement is also a better option than prison for monetary reasons. Although it is more expensive than probationary services, it is less expensive than prison, even with electronic monitoring equipment (Booker, 2023). Prison is very expensive as it takes a lot to care for the individual. Home confinement can be completed in a multitude of ways. Some are as easy as making phone calls. Probationary services are the least expensive method of sentencing; however, it is sometimes used in conjunction with home confinement.

Comparing the financial differences between incarceration and home confinement involves examining various direct and indirect costs associated with each option (Bales et al., 2010). Direct costs are those that are foreseen and necessary to operate the program, such as housing, feeding, and healthcare in traditional incarceration. There are direct costs associated with building or purchasing the facilities used to house inmates, staff salaries for employees, and other necessities like food, utilities, and healthcare services. Correctional facilities cannot operate without these necessities. Indirect costs are those

that occur as a side-effect or peripheral consequence. For instance, indirect costs associated with traditional incarceration include the economic impact of lost productivity and income for incarcerated individuals and their families, as well as long-term costs of recidivism.

Direct costs associated with home confinement are those revolving around the purchasing or producing electronic monitoring equipment and services, employee salaries, and program management. As these entities do not require the same infrastructure level as traditional incarceration, the costs are much lower (Bales et al., 2010). Contrarily, the indirect costs are higher than those of traditional incarceration; however, these costs are far outweighed by the savings associated with the direct costs to operate the programs. The indirect costs include monitoring expenses, supervision costs, travel costs for probation or supervision officers, and technological maintenance.

While incarceration may provide a sense of security and control, it is often less cost-effective and efficient than community-based alternatives such as home confinement. Incarceration requires significant financial resources to build and maintain correctional facilities, staff them adequately, and provide necessary services to inmates (Bales et al., 2010). Moreover, the long-term impact of incarceration on individuals, families, and communities can be detrimental, leading to cycles of poverty, unemployment, and recidivism. Various factors, including sentencing laws, public safety concerns, political considerations, and societal attitudes toward crime and punishment influence the decision to incarcerate individuals. While incarceration may be necessary for certain offenders, particularly those who pose a significant risk to public safety, it is

essential to consider its long-term consequences and explore alternative sentencing options where appropriate.

Home confinement programs are generally more cost-effective and efficient than incarceration, as they allow individuals to serve their sentences in the community while maintaining employment, housing, and family ties (Booker, 2023). By reducing the need for expensive correctional facilities and providing opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration, home confinement can yield significant cost savings over time. Home confinement offers a flexible and less punitive alternative to incarceration for nonviolent offenders, low-risk individuals, and those nearing the end of their sentences. By allowing individuals to remain in their communities under supervision, home confinement can promote rehabilitation, reduce recidivism, and alleviate overcrowding in correctional facilities.

While both incarceration and home confinement incur costs, home confinement is generally a more cost-effective and efficient option, particularly for low-risk offenders and those nearing the end of their sentences (Bales et al., 2010). By leveraging community-based alternatives to incarceration, policymakers can achieve significant cost savings while promoting public safety, rehabilitation, and successful reintegration into society.

The United States has become the world's leader in incarceration, with an extreme increase in incarceration over the past four decades (Epperson & Pettus-Davis, 2015). Housing inmates and maintaining their welfare has become unbearable for the government's budget. McLaughlin et al. (n.d.) stated that the corrections system has

become unaffordable in many local and state governments. Alexander (2010) described the America's jail procedures as hyper-incarceration and explained that it is counterproductive and unnecessarily expensive.

State and federally funded facilities are already overwhelmed with the high costs of housing inmates. According to Booker (2023), traditional incarceration costs approximately $120.59 daily per inmate as of fiscal year 2020. There is also a burden on those related to the offender. Family members spend money to provide a commissary, attend visitation, and maintain the offender's property or business while they are incarcerated.

Booker (2023) reported that home confinement programs save the federal government millions of dollars when compared to traditional incarceration methods. During fiscal year 2020, daily home confinement costs were determined to be $55.26 per inmate (Booker 2023). That equates to an approximate 54% decrease in incarceration costs. With a price of less than half the cost of incarceration, the home confinement program proves to be a more efficient alternative for governments. Additionally, the home confinement program has the benefit of reducing recidivism and social strain on offenders, making it more effective than incarceration when used with certain offenders.

During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, the United States implemented the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which effectuated home confinement for qualified inmates during the COVID-19 pandemic. Between March 27, 2020, and May 27, 2023, the BOP released 13,204 inmates that met the requirements, and the inmates served a portion or completed the remainder of their sentences under home

confinement. According to the BOP (2023) statistics, 521 inmates returned to prison during that period. 499 were removed from the home confinement program for drugs, alcohol, or technical violations. Only 22 were rearrested for a new offense. This equates to a 96% success rate for the individuals placed on home confinement during that period. Furthermore, it is a 0.17% recidivism rate for new offenses. Booker (2023) described the data results as astonishing, attesting that people placed in the home confinement program can contribute to society and reduce recidivism rates without posing a danger to the community.

These factors contribute to the importance of this study. While the CARES Act considered factors such as medical, nonviolent, and low-security placement, it does not consider the environment in which the inmate would be released. Likewise, probationary home confinement factors include risk level and criminal history, but not the environment. According to Bales et al. (2010), every state has different community characteristics and organizational structures for governing home confinement programs. Thus, studying the effects of the environment, mainly in rural areas, can contribute to the evaluation method when considering a person for home confinement placement, making the process more efficient.

Benefits of Home Confinement

Home confinement as an alternative to traditional incarceration has several benefits for individuals, families, and society. Additionally, it significantly lowers the costs associated with housing, feeding, and providing medical care for inmates in traditional prison settings (Booker, 2023). Home confinement allows individuals to stay

connected with their families and communities, which can provide emotional support and stability, aiding in their rehabilitation. Richter et al. (2021) explained that some offenders operating as caregivers can maintain their role using the flexibility of home confinement. Home confinement also allows individuals to continue working or seek employment, which helps maintain financial stability and reduces the burden on social welfare systems. Furthermore, it grants access to community-based rehabilitation programs, counseling, and educational opportunities which may not be as readily available in prison.

Home confinement allows for tailored supervision, ensuring that individuals adhere to specific conditions without the negative impacts of prison culture. Richter et al. (2021) argued that home confinement can be monitored through electronic monitoring to monitor compliance with rehabilitative measures and attendance at therapeutic programs. Home confinement programs allow offenders to remain in the community while also establishing a standard of accountability. Offenders are not incarcerated; however, they are still being monitored. Home confinement can be a more humane alternative, preventing the physical and psychological harm that can result from incarceration. Being in a familiar, supportive environment can reduce stress and the likelihood of reoffending compared to the often harsh and isolating conditions of prison. As noted by Cluley (2019), several prison conditions influence the likelihood of physical violence among male prisoners aged 18 and above. Individuals under home confinement are not subjected to those conditions, they have better access to personal medical care and a healthier living environment compared to overcrowded prison facilities.

Modern electronic monitoring systems can track movements and ensure compliance with confinement terms, maintaining a high level of public safety. By reducing the number of inmates, home confinement alleviates overcrowding in prisons, which can improve conditions and safety for those who remain incarcerated (BOP, 2024). Judges can tailor home confinement conditions to fit the severity of the offense and the specific needs of the offender, allowing for more personalized and appropriate sentencing. Home confinement can also be used as a step-down transition for inmates nearing the end of their sentences, easing their reintegration into society.

Individuals under home confinement can still contribute to society through employment, volunteering, and participation in community activities. Avoiding prison time can lessen the stigma associated with incarceration, helping individuals reintegrate more smoothly into their communities - particularly as it pertains to employment. The program offers a balanced approach to punishment and rehabilitation, benefiting individuals, families, communities, and the justice system entirely.

Cons of Home Confinement

While home confinement offers several benefits, it also has some drawbacks. Home confinement might be perceived as a less severe punishment than incarceration, potentially reducing its deterrent effect on crime. Ensuring that individuals comply with the terms of home confinement can be difficult, even with electronic monitoring (Bales et al., 2010). There may be instances of tampering with devices or violations of confinement terms. Effective monitoring requires resources such as personnel and technology, which

can be challenging to maintain consistently, especially in an area like the Mississippi Delta, which struggles with resource availability.

Individuals from different socioeconomic backgrounds might experience home confinement differently. Those with stable, supportive home environments fare better than those in unstable or unsafe conditions. Richter et al. (2021) found that offenders living in small quarters with a significant other or other family members experienced relationship problems due to their lack of ability to leave, causing the space to feel overcrowded. Not all individuals may have equal access to the technology required for effective monitoring, potentially leading to disparities in enforcement. Mississippi is desolate in some regions, and access to broadband requirements can be limited.

Public safety presents another drawback for the home confinement program. Individuals under home confinement may pose a risk to public safety, especially if they are not adequately supervised. In October 2022, a man named Marvin Patterson was arrested by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. He was charged with nine felonies, eight of which were sex offenses against minors, the last for kidnapping. He was eventually released on bond with a condition for high-level electronic monitoring. On Monday, December 11, 2023, Patterson shot a woman and three children under the age of 14 before committing suicide at an apartment in Las Vegas, Nevada. The woman and two of the children died, one was taken to the hospital (Murphy, 2023). Home confinement may not be suitable for individuals convicted of serious or violent crimes, as it may not provide the necessary level of separation from potential victims.

Families of individuals under home confinement may bear additional emotional and financial burdens, including the responsibility for ensuring compliance with confinement terms. Many offenders complain that home confinement causes embarrassment and contributes to stigmas they already face regarding their status as a criminal. They also expressed a hinderance in obtaining and maintaining employment due to the electronic tether (Bales et al., 2010). The presence of an offender at home can strain familial relationships and dynamics, particularly in cases of domestic abuse or conflict. While some areas offer robust community-based rehabilitation services, others may lack quality programs, limiting the effectiveness of home confinement in promoting rehabilitation. Rehabilitation under home confinement relies heavily on the individual's initiative to participate in available programs, which may not be consistent.

Electronic monitoring can be intrusive, raising concerns about privacy for both the individual under confinement and their household members. Bulow (2014) argues that electronic monitoring is developing as a promising alternative to imprisonment; thus, evaluating the ethical implications and incorporating moral values into the design is essential. Bulow (2014) also suggested that electronic monitoring risks the privacy rights of offenders and the public when considering the use of data storage devices.

While home confinement is cheaper than incarceration and, therefore, a better option for the charging agency, Richter et al. (2021) identified financial factors as a stressor for the offender. In some cases, all or part of home confinement funding is ordered to be paid by the offender. Some offenders are not financially stable enough to fund the program, especially when ordered after a term of imprisonment. It causes added

strain on offenders and can be considered more severe than incarceration. Even in cases where the offender is not funding the program, it can cause offenders to experience peripheral stressors such as losing employment or the ability to work additional hours (Payne & Gainey, 1998).

Furthermore, stigmatization is a concern when implementing home confinement. Eisenberg (2017) discussed the link between home confinement and punitiveness based on the idea that it is an additional punishment rather than an alternative. For instance, the concept of domestication is a perspective more recently addressed by researchers. It refers to the consequence of restricting female offenders to their homes, thereby forcing them to revert to traditional gender roles. Ariza et al. (2021) explain that home confinement is more severe than prison when applied to female offenders sentenced for drug-related crimes because domestication becomes the primary goal of home confinement in patriarchal societies. The authors theorize that some female offenders in modern society do not uphold the traditional values of patriarchal-led households, and having their movements restricted to a household weaponizes the home confinement program against them. Although home confinement has many benefits, it also presents challenges related to enforcement, public safety, fairness, and resource allocation. These cons need to be carefully managed to ensure that home confinement is an effective and equitable alternative to traditional incarceration.

Implementing Home Confinement in Rural America

Home confinement has been studied, and results generally indicate that the program is a viable alternative to traditional forms of punishment (Bales et al., 2010).

However, implementing home confinement in rural areas presents distinct challenges and advantages. Metropolitan areas are much different from rural areas, and rehabilitation must be approached accordingly for the environment. Access to rehabilitative services for offenders varies significantly between metropolitan and rural areas due to differences in infrastructure, resources, and community support. Metropolitan areas typically have a wider variety of rehabilitative services, including specialized programs for substance abuse, mental health, vocational training, and education. Additionally, offenders under home confinement may take advantage of access to social reintegration programs in urban areas. For instance, metropolitan areas often receive more funding, granting more availability for specialized facilities such as halfway houses, treatment centers, and counseling services. Cities also have diverse community programs that support rehabilitation, including community service opportunities, mentorship programs, and support groups.

In contrast, rural areas often have a limited number and variety of rehabilitative services. These areas can lack specialized programs and professionals, limiting the effectiveness of rehabilitation efforts. Victor et al. (2021) explained that rural areas lack resources that limit access to programs. Additionally, longer distances and lack of public transportation can make it difficult for offenders to access services regularly. Geographic isolation makes it difficult to deliver regular and intensive support. Rural areas are more scarcely populated; thus, they typically receive less funding for rehabilitative services, leading to lower-quality programs. Limited resources can affect the availability and effectiveness of qualified professionals.

Summary and Conclusions

Traditional incarceration has been the primary source of reprimand for criminal activity in the United States for a very long time, and it has led to concepts of mass incarceration as well as rampant recidivism – both of which create a problem for the criminal justice system and community alike. In response, alternatives to incarceration have been studied extensively. Home confinement -although accompanied by problems- has proven to be a viable alternative to incarceration. It provides budgetary benefits to the government and relief to prison facilities experiencing problems with overcrowding (Booker 2023). Additionally, home confinement can adequately address problems with recidivism when used correctly. However, studies are done using data from the entire country. Metropolitan areas are more densely populated which can skew results as they pertain to rural communities.

Rural communities suffer from problems unique to their areas, which elicit the discussion of implementing programs designed for more metropolitan areas. Specifically, implementing these programs without considering the unique challenges of rural communities can be counterproductive. The lack of research pertaining to home confinement in rural areas leaves the criminal justice system unprepared when addressing alternatives to traditional incarceration. While certain aspects of the research surrounding home confinement still apply (i.e. budgetary benefits and relief to prison overcrowding), the issue of effectiveness as it pertains to recidivism remains (Bales et al., 2010). Studying the effects of home confinement on offenders in rural areas is pertinent to

offering a comprehensive perspective of its effectiveness regarding recidivism and rehabilitation.

The information stated in this section brings validity to the study, explaining why it is important to understand this area of research. Chapter 3 will outline the method used to conduct the study. Major topics such as research design, role of the researcher, and methodology will be discussed. Additionally, instrumentation and the data analysis plan will be reviewed.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of home confinement for offenders in the Mississippi Delta. Research methods provide the framework that guides how the researcher conducts a study. It includes the modes and procedures to collect and interpret data for the report. There are generally three preferred research methods: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Qualitative research methods focus on exploration and interactive data collection. It describes a phenomenon with in-depth insight. Quantitative research methods are based on numerical and other measurable data. It is used to identify the relationship between variables. Mixed-methods research integrates both qualitative and quantitative research methods. While it can be more complex, mixed-methods research can address research questions from different angles, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the results (Harvard Catalyst, n.d.). Choosing an appropriate research method depends significantly on the research's objective or purpose.

Research Design and Rationale

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of home confinement for offenders in the Mississippi Delta. Accordingly, this study evaluates the experiences of individuals sentenced to complete a term of home confinement within the Mississippi Delta. The primary objectives of this research are to explore individual perspectives of home confinement from those who have endured the program; identify factors that influence acceptance or resistance to home confinement programs; understand the

privacy concerns and ethical aspects associated with home confinement; compare home confinement to traditional incarceration; and investigate the impact of home confinement on the sense of autonomy felt by the participants. This study focuses on the experiences of participants. It intends to understand why the home confinement program is implemented and how it can be optimized to assist the criminal court in administering consistent justice; therefore, this study uses a qualitative approach.

Qualitative research collects data regarding the participants' experiences and behavior (Tenny et al., 2022). Accordingly, a qualitative research design is used in this study to focus on understanding perceptions, experiences, and attitudes toward home confinement. While quantitative analyses may provide larger data sets to identify intervening data points, the qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the participants' thoughts and feelings, providing rich data not limited to numerical analysis. It often provides a base to investigate further and understand quantitative data (Tenny et al., 2022). Overall, a qualitative research design is used to conduct this research because it explores the reasons behind real-world problems, which aligns with the purpose of this study.

Role of the Researcher

Qualitative research requires intricate data collection, thus giving the researcher a central role in the study. The researcher can use surveys, conduct interviews, and facilitate focus groups in qualitative research (Tenny et al., 2022). I coordinated this study, developed the research plan, and influenced the data collection and analysis. This process included instrumentation, interpretation, facilitation, and following ethical

standards. Contrary to quantitative studies that use surveys or tests for data collection, the researchers in qualitative studies often become the mode of data collection through interviews, observations, and other interactive data collection methods. I asked questions and steered the data collection approach based on emerging data. I also served as the interpreter for the data. Once the data was collected, the researcher identified patterns or themes and analyzed meanings within the data. Serving as the primary source of interpretation requires the researcher to analyze the data deeply to capture any nuances within the participants' responses.

The researcher must be skilled at facilitating interviews to capture nuances and report thorough data. The researcher must also be able to observe closely and thoroughly engage with the participant (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Interviews are interactive, and the researcher must be able to participate with the respondents. Additionally, I sought to empower participants and create an environment conducive to sharing experiences in the participants' own words or expressions.

Furthermore, following ethical standards is paramount in research, and I acted as the monitor to ensure that ethical standards are maintained. This process includes safeguarding confidentiality and gathering informed consent for sensitive information. According to Sutton and Austin (2015), safeguarding data collected is a primary responsibility for the researcher in qualitative research. Given the dynamics of the interactions between the researcher and participants in this study, the researcher is primarily responsible for upholding ethical standards.

Methodology

In qualitative research, methodologies are particularly significant because they offer a structured approach to understanding complex patterns within the data. This study is qualitative, and to address the research question, the specific research design includes a grounded theory study that follows the methodological concepts found in the Birks and Mills (2015) grounded theory guide. The Birks and Mills grounded theory guide is a comprehensive approach to conducting grounded theory research, building on the foundations laid by the original developers of grounded theory, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss. Grounded theory is a qualitative research methodology that focuses on generating theories from data systematically gathered and analyzed. Birks and Mills provided a structured and detailed framework for researchers, ensuring depth and detail in the research process.

Grounded theory gathers information through experimental or observational techniques. It is inductive, allowing researchers to explore a phenomenon from a fundamental perspective without bias. The theory consists of several steps: data collection, coding, memo writing, theoretical sampling, and constant comparison. These steps help the researcher develop hypotheses and theories from conception rather than using preconceived notions. Grounded theory generates a theory based on empirical data and explores the problem experienced by the participants (Tenny et al., 2022).

It is best to use grounded theory when collecting large amounts of data. It is a qualitative approach, and its purpose is to develop a theory instead of testing one that is already established (Patton, 2014). Patton (2014) also explained that grounded theory

uses techniques like casualty, generalizability, reliability, and validity when conducting a qualitative inquiry. Grounded theory is structured but allows enough flexibility to address the main concern effectively. Tie et al. (2019) described grounded theory as structured and flexible. It helps construct an exploratory theory that uncovers essential information relevant to the research area. It is one of the most widely used methodologies for that purpose.

Unlike other research methodologies that start with a hypothesis, Grounded theory is inductive and starts with data collection (Tenny et al., 2022). From there, the researcher can identify patterns and theories that emerge from the data. Grounded theory is a systematic methodology used to construct theories using a methodical approach to gathering and analyzing data. A few components of grounded theory make it an appropriate approach for this research.

The data can be collected through interviews, observations, and documents, and the analysis process is iterative (Tie et al., 2019). Analyzing the data while collecting it and repeating the process even when the necessary data is collected ensures an adequate amount of coding is completed. Repetitively categorizing and conceptualizing the data helps identify patterns throughout the data comprehensively. The theory guides the data collection process; however, theories emerge from the data, and the researcher can seek out new data to fill the gaps and test the emerging theories. Constant comparison of new data with existing codes at categories to refine and elaborate the emerging theory occurs, and with it comes saturation to ensure no new significant insights or categories emerge from the data, indicating the theory is comprehensive.

Participant Selection Logic

This study includes a purposive sampling technique to select participants with relevant experiences for the research study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique commonly used in qualitative research. It involves intentionally selecting participants or data sources most relevant to the research question or objectives. The goal of purposive sampling is not to achieve statistical generalization but to gain an in-depth understanding and insight into the phenomenon being studied. Campbell et al. (2020) explained that purposive sampling strategies are utilized with the assumption that certain people with specific characteristics hold important perspectives about the topic of study; thus, these individuals need to be included in the final sample.

There are several key characteristics of purposive sampling, including deliberate participation (Tie et al., 2019). Participants are chosen based on specific characteristics, experiences, or knowledge directly related to the research topic. The researcher selects individuals or groups most likely to provide relevant information. The focus is on the quality of the information rather than the quantity. Researchers look for participants who can offer detailed and meaningful insights that will contribute to understanding the research problem. The criterion for selecting participants is usually defined in advance based on the research question, objectives, or theoretical framework.

According to Tie et al. (2019), the researcher recruits and purposively selects participants that have knowledge of the research topic and the ability to answer the research question. The desired participants have direct or indirect experience with home confinement and electronic monitoring. The important characteristics of participants

include demographics, experiences, and criminal history. The participant must have reached their 18th birthday to meet the demographic qualifications. They must also live in the Mississippi Delta. Race, gender, occupation, or cultural background will be noted for demographic purposes; however, the data will not be considered during selection. To meet the criteria for experiences and criminal history, the participant must have endured at least three months of home confinement in the Mississippi Delta. Their experience under home confinement must also result from a felonious criminal conviction, including probation and parole violations resulting from an underlying felony conviction.

Instrumentation

This study uses semi-structured interviews to gather information regarding the participants' attitudes toward home confinement. Semi-structured interviews are a widely used method of data collection in qualitative research. They involve a guided conversation between the interviewer and the participant, with predefined open-ended questions; however, semi-structured interviews also allow flexibility for the interviewer to explore new topics that may arise during the discussion. Williamson and Johanson (2018) explained that semi-structured interviews often use prompts. However, they are administered with the flexibility to reveal the participants' perspectives while ensuring they stay focused on the topic or relevant issues in the study.

Semi-structured interviews are guided by a framework. The interviewer uses an interview guide or a list of key questions and topics to structure the conversation. This guide ensures that important themes relevant to the research are covered. Unlike structured interviews, semi-structured interviews provide the interviewer and participant

flexibility (Williamson & Johanson, 2018). If a participant brings up new or unexpected topics, the interviewer can ask follow-up questions to explore these areas more deeply. The semi-structured interview questions are open-ended, allowing participants to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in their own words. This approach encourages detailed responses. Semi-structured interviews are conversational and interactive, creating a comfortable environment for the participant to share their perspectives, and the participant's comfort level is pertinent to gathering more intricate responses. As the participant becomes comfortable, the interviewer actively guides the conversation while listening carefully to the participant's responses.

There are several advantages of semi-structured interviews. They provide deep and more expressive insights into the participants' experiences and belief systems, allowing researchers to understand how and why the participants were affected, as revealed throughout their responses (Williamson & Johanson, 2018). The interviewer can steer the conversation based on the participant's responses, making it possible to explore unanticipated areas of interest. The informal, conversational style of the interview often relaxes the participants and encourages them to speak openly and candidly. Additionally, the flexibility to probe further into specific areas makes semi-structured interviews a powerful tool for gaining the participants' insights. Semi-structured interviews balance structured guidance and open exploration, making them an advantageous approach to qualitative data collection. The consistency in covering key topics and the ability to gather in-depth information from participants during semi-structured interviews are paramount in this study.

The semi-structured interviews in this study have a set of 10 questions. Each of those questions has a follow-up question prepared; however, the follow-up questions were only used when necessary. Additionally, topics that are not included in the original set of interview questions were explored when the participants' responses warranted the impromptu conversation. If available, the interviews were conducted via Zoom or a similar videoconferencing medium. The participants were previously provided with a privacy notice and authorization to release information proffered during the interview. They confirmed that they endorsed the document, and the researcher notified them that the conversation would be recorded. The recording began prior to the first question of the interview. If the interviews were to be conducted in person, they would have been conducted at a mutually convenient place that was comfortable and safe for both the participant and the researcher. Examples are libraries, hotel meeting rooms, and coffee shops. In-person meetings were to be recorded via MP3 or MP4 voice recording devices. No video recording was conducted.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I recruited 12 to 15 people to participate in this study. The researcher used professional networking to contact probation officers and prison caseworkers in search of participants. Probation officers and case workers are intimately familiar with individuals presently and formally involved with the criminal court system. Therefore, each participant was recruited through contact with federal and state probation officers and case workers managing caseloads in the Mississippi Delta. No attempt was made to obtain personal information from the probation officers. The researcher provided the

probation officer with a criterion and asked that the researcher's contact information be forwarded to offenders willing to participate in the study. Contact with the probation officers was used to target specific individuals for the study, following the purposive sampling technique. Participation was voluntary and based solely on the participant's will to contribute to the study.

Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis derived from descriptive coding. Descriptive coding in qualitative research is a method of data analysis that involves labeling or categorizing segments of textual data with a word or short phrase that summarizes the essential content or topic of that segment (Stewart, n.d.). This textual data can come from interview transcripts, field notes, documents, etc. This type of coding creates a baseline and focuses on describing what the data is rather than interpreting deeper meanings or themes within the data. It focuses on summarizing the primary issues discussed by the participants rather than interpreting the reasons behind the issues and what they mean in a broader context.

Descriptive coding concentrates on the direct content or subject matter of the data. Coding sometimes occurs without considering interpretations or underlying meanings (Stewart, n.d.). The codes are typically single words or simple phrases that directly capture the essence of the data. It helps to organize and categorize large volumes of data, making it easier to identify patterns, trends, or topics that may emerge across different data sources. Descriptive coding is often the first step in the qualitative analysis process. It lays the groundwork for more detailed or interpretive coding techniques that may follow, such as thematic analysis or pattern coding.

The coding process should be clarified when the research is reported (Deterding & Waters, 2021). The principal purpose of descriptive coding is to provide a clear picture of what the data is about by breaking it down into easily understandable parts. It is a starting point for deeper analysis, allowing researchers to explore connections, relationships, and patterns among the codes at a later time. It simplifies communication of findings by categorizing information into fundamental concepts that can be readily explained to others.

Interviews were used to collect data; thus, the participants were asked to consent to audio recording before the interviews were conducted. Upon consent, the interviews were recorded, and the researcher transcribed the interviews verbatim and reviewed those transcripts. Subsequently, phrases and passages from the text were coded and assigned to topics or themes. I searched for and noted recurring patterns and categories. Once the data was coded, the researcher developed themes in the research. Codes were grouped into broader themes reflecting participants' attitudes, beliefs, and concerns about location monitoring. The themes were interpreted in the existing literature on location monitoring and privacy issues. Otter.ai or similar qualitative analysis software was used to manage and analyze the data.

Several strategies were used to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, using multiple data sources (interviews and observations) to validate the findings. Participants were also given the opportunity to review and confirm the accuracy of their statements and the researcher's interpretations. I maintained a journal to critically reflect on personal biases and assumptions and how these may influence the data interpretation.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Like any qualitative research, qualitative studies about home detention have specific limitations, including subjectivity. This study uses semi-structured interviews for data collection, and the researcher is the primary source of analysis in qualitative research. Therefore, the researcher's perspectives, biases, and interpretations can influence how data is gathered and interpreted. Since this study is qualitative, it involved a small number of participants compared to quantitative analyses. The participant group was recruited using specific characteristics; thus, the results may reflect their specific experiences and lack generalizability.

Qualitative data obtained through interviews and observations can also be challenging to analyze because the questions are often open-ended and less particular than data collected in surveys or other mediums with specific responses. Otter.ai assisted with analyzing the data and identifying themes; however, some themes and patterns in the data may have still evaded me. As such, qualitative data is inherently complex and more time-consuming to analyze. Conducting the interviews, transcribing the responses, and analyzing the data can be labor-intensive and require more time.

Participation and privacy concerns also present potential limitations. This study heavily depends on the participants' willingness to provide detailed and honest responses. Participants may not have been motivated to participate in the study, and if they did, some may have been reluctant to discuss the topic candidly due to privacy concerns. Home detention is meant to be intrusive, and some participants may still fear legal reprimands if certain information is divulged. The participants may also feel judged,

which can influence the authenticity of their responses. Furthermore, the recruited participants may have a history of opposition to authority, and the interview environment could influence responses. Likewise, my presence and demeanor may influence the participants' responses and lead to biased data.

Qualitative research is designed to understand how or why a phenomenon occurs (Tenny et al., 2022). Consequently, it may not reveal data defining the phenomenon or how often it occurs. This study revolves around the experiences of home confinement, though it may not provide measurable aspects such as the frequency of movements, patterns of activity, or exact number of violations. Because the study relies on non-standardized data collection methods, it may be difficult to replicate the study under the same conditions. Difficulty with replication can make the results harder to validate.

Ethical Procedures

Given the sensitive nature of location monitoring, ethical considerations are paramount in this study. Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Written consent was obtained before participation. All data was anonymized to protect participants' identities. Personal identifiers were removed from transcripts and reports. Audio recordings, transcripts, and analysis files are stored securely, with access limited to the researcher. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, with no pressure or coercion.

Furthermore, the researcher was transparent about the potential risks of the study, including how location data might be linked to other data sets or used in ways that could impact participants. Clear communication helps to build trust and ensures that

participants make an informed decision about their involvement. I assessed and mitigated any risks the participant perceived before starting the study. I respected the participants' autonomy, allowing them to choose how much information to disclose. Participants were not coerced or pressured into providing data that makes them uncomfortable.

If the study results are shared with others or published, it is essential to ensure that the information cannot be traced back to individual participants. I carefully handled how they presented the findings to maintain anonymity. If medical information was disclosed, I complied with relevant data protection laws and regulations, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). These laws govern how personal data, including medical and location data, can be reported. Ethical considerations in this study require a balance between the need to gather valuable data and the obligation to protect participants' rights and well-being. Ethical guidelines were followed to minimize risks and respect the dignity of all individuals involved.

Summary

Qualitative research explores a deeper understanding of the sample's experiences and perspectives (Sutton & Austin, 2015). This study examines the perspectives and attitudes towards home confinement from offenders who live in rural areas. It includes interactive data collection and an iterative interpretation process. Semi-structured interviews were used for data collection, and descriptive coding was used to analyze data. The researcher served as the primary source of data collection and interpretation. Additionally, the researcher was responsible for maintaining ethical standards of professional research. This research approach was instrumental in exploring the

subjective experiences of home confinement and describing the social dynamics of home confinement in the Mississippi Delta.

Chapter 4 includes a comprehensive report of the results. Demographic information for the participants is reviewed, and an analysis of the data is provided. Additionally, Chapter 4 provides evidence of the study's trustworthiness through the results obtained and interpreted.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of home confinement for offenders in rural communities; thus, it was conducted with participants from the Mississippi Delta. The research details the perspectives of home confinement and the challenges faced while participating in the program. Accordingly, the study answers the following questions:

RQ1: What are the experiences of offenders in home confinement in the Mississippi Delta?

RQ2: How is home confinement affected by the rural conditions of the Mississippi Delta?

Furthermore, the study meets the following objectives: (a) explore individual perspectives of home confinement from those who have endured the program; (b) identify factors that influence acceptance or resistance to home confinement programs; (c) understand the privacy concerns and ethical aspects associated with home confinement; (d) compare home confinement to traditional incarceration; and (e) investigate the impact of home confinement on the sense of autonomy felt by the participants. This chapter describes the data collection process, reviews the data analysis strategies, and reports the results of the study. Additionally, this chapter discusses the study's trustworthiness.

Setting

In accordance with standard procedures of qualitative research, this study used semi-structured interviews, each conducted virtually. The interviews were recorded using a voice recorder and transcribed using transcription technology. Zoom was the preferred method for conducting interviews. The software enables voice recording and has a transcribing feature. Two interviews were conducted using Zoom, in which participants agreed to a date and time for the interview. The researcher conducted the interviews virtually while alone at home in a private space. The researcher previously informed each participant of the expectations for confidentiality, and they agreed to a date and time at which they could participate in the study with adequate privacy settings.

Although Zoom was the preferred method for conducting interviews, telephone conferences became the more prevalent setting. All the participants were familiar with Zoom, but many were more comfortable using telephone conferencing – they either lacked access to Zoom or had not used the technology enough to feel comfortable with it. Therefore, a total of 10 interviews were conducted via telephone conference. The researcher used Otter.ai technology to record interviews, with the program producing transcripts of the conversations.

Demographics

Confidentiality is paramount in this study, but the researcher obtained some demographic information to validate the study and verify that the participants met the qualifications to participate. Particularly, the participants' age range and sex were collected. Additionally, their county of residence was collected for verification; however,

it is not recorded for the study. Nine of the 12 participants were between 40 and 49, one participant was between 25 and 29, one participant was between 30 and 39, and one participant was between 60 and 69. Eleven of the participants were male, and one participant was female.

In addition to the aforementioned demographic information, participants provided information on their history of incarceration. Nine of the participants were previously confined to a prison facility for incarceration. Three of the participants have never been incarcerated in a prison facility. See Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant	Age range	Sex	Previously incarcerated
Participant 1	30-39	Male	No
Participant 2	60-69	Male	Yes
Participant 3	40-49	Male	Yes
Participant 4	40-49	Male	Yes
Participant 5	40-49	Male	Yes
Participant 6	40-49	Male	Yes
Participant 7	40-49	Male	No
Participant 8	40-49	Male	Yes
Participant 9	40-49	Male	Yes
Participant 10	25-29	Male	No
Participant 11	40-49	Female	Yes
Participant 12	40-49	Male	Yes

Approximately 92% of the participants were male, 75% were between the ages of 40-49, and 75% experienced incarceration at some point prior to home confinement.

Data Collection

A purposive sampling technique was used to collect data for this study. The researcher solicited participation from a particular demographic with knowledge of the

topic – that is, individuals who have previously participated in a home confinement program were solicited for their particular knowledge of the program and their perspective on the program's impact. The researcher created a flyer explaining the study and included contact information for participants to reach the researcher. The flyer was distributed to the researcher's professional network, including social and criminal justice professionals with public offices. They were asked to post flyers in public spaces at their office buildings, as their offices are usually frequented by individuals who meet the requirements and are affiliated with others who meet the requirements.

When the flyer was distributed to the researcher's professional network, participants called the researcher inquiring about the study. The researcher explained the study and answered any questions the participants had. Subsequently, the researcher provided the participants with consent forms via email and scheduled the interview. Since the interviews were semi-structured, the researcher requested each participant allot one hour to complete the interview. There were 15 questions prepared, but some unanticipated questions were derived from the participants' responses. Each participant completed the interview within the allocated time with no complications.

Data Analysis

Descriptive coding was used to analyze the data collected. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. The researcher listened to the audio recordings and reviewed the transcripts several times to ensure accuracy and identify recurrent themes and patterns. Then, the researcher assigned codes to segments of the transcripts

using single words or short phrases. Examples of the codes assigned are *accountability, communication, probation officer, cooperation, diet,* and *stress*.

Codes were assigned to segments of the data to describe or summarize important topics in the discussion. Subsequently, the researcher identified common themes occurring throughout the discussions with the participants. The themes were established by examining codes sharing significant similarities, reviewing the transcripts for accuracy, and separating the concepts into themes.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Several steps were taken to ensure the credibility of the study. The most important step taken to establish credibility was maintaining ethical standards throughout the research process, beginning with recruitment. I recruited participants by using flyers describing the study. The flyer was distributed to a network of professionals working in fields of social justice and social services. The sampling technique was purposive; thus, the researcher advertised in areas frequented by those potentially meeting the criteria.

I did not offer any incentives for participating in the study. The participants understood that their participation was solely to offer information that may affect social change. Therefore, the participants were not influenced or motivated by incentives to offer particular or inaccurate information.

Results

After conducting interviews with the participants and reviewing the transcripts of those interviews, the researcher identified seven themes. They are as follows: (a) Participants agree that home confinement is better than incarceration; (b) Supervising

officers affect the home confinement experience; (c) Home confinement preceded by incarceration creates a different experience; (d) Home confinement is affected by the participant's ability to respect authoritative figures and comply with the program; (e) Home confinement offers more access to rehabilitative programs; (f) Employment is a significant factor in the home confinement program; and (g) Home confinement guides participants towards more prosocial daily routines.

Participants Agree That Home Confinement is Better Than Incarceration

As revealed during interviews with each participant, incarceration is always considered in discussions about home confinement. Each of the participants, whether previously incarcerated or not, explained that incarceration was evaluated when developing their perspectives of the home confinement program, and 11 of the 12 participants reported that the program was an overall better alternative to incarceration in their specific situations.

The participant with a differing opinion, Participant 11, considered incarceration a better alternative to home confinement and presented a perspective generated by unique circumstances. She stated that home confinement can be generally considered a better alternative; however, in her case, it was not. She believes home confinement creates a confusing situation with restrictive rules in an environment meant to resemble freedom. Consequently, temptation is heightened, as is the risk of noncompliance. Participant 11 stated the following:

> So you know, that's why I say sometimes prison is best for certain people, right? Because you gonna, you know, end up back in prison if you're not ready to do good for yourself, if you ain't already doing good, if that makes sense.

Participant 12, while agreeing that home confinement is a better alternative overall, identified a similar experience with home confinement difficulties as Participant 11. Participant 12 stated:

> Home confinement gonna make it better on you, because that little bit of freedom that you don't have makes a big difference. It has such a major impact. Because when you think about it, you like, if I lose everything, compared to what I'm limited to do now versus if I didn't have this, it makes you want to do the right thing. Because when you at home, you see what's at stake, versus when you incarcerated. Because when you go into incarceration, you basically in a whole nother world, you know, that's a world inside of a world. You know what I'm saying? So it's like when you come out of incarceration to house arrest, especially if you did a long period of time, you be like in the beginning, because I've had this thought like I should just finished my sentence because home confinement, it's harder than prison, and a lot of people don't know that, and a lot of people that hadn't been incarcerated, or people that probably did short prison terms, probably wouldn't agree, but people who did long prison terms, a lot of us would agree, because the rules are very, very strict on house arrest. You get what I'm saying, because a lot of things that people do in prison with no regards, so you know what I'm saying the outcome you cannot do on home confinement.

While Participant 11 disagreed with home confinement overall for their specific situation, all 12 participants agreed that several factors, like family relationships and comfort, are benefits of home confinement versus incarceration. As anticipated, each participant mentioned variations of moving freely throughout their homes as benefits of the program. Participant 4 expressed the following:

> It's really pretty much a blessing though man to be able to do the little things man. It's when you can't do these little things man you know? Go to the bathroom by yourself and close the door, take a bath. I aint know I'll feel like a little kid to get in the tub and take a bath.

Participant 5 stated the following:

> It's more gain than lose with the house arrest, you get what I'm saying? Like, as far as jail, you got somebody standing over you, you got the three meals coming in a day. You gotta wear what they tell you to wear. You gotta go to sleep when they tell you. Get up when they tell you. When you're at home, it's do what you want when you want. Just let them know when you're leaving, when you're coming, where you're going, and this and that, that's about it. But you're able to do everything you want to do.

When asked about the positive aspects of home confinement, Participant 9 explained, "Well, like I said, just being at home, hey, man, hey, you're sleeping in your bed versus sleeping in the state bed. I mean, it's self-explanatory."

Family relationships were also considered during the comparison of home confinement and incarceration. Each of the 12 participants explained that home

confinement allows individuals to maintain family relationships. Family members were able to visit them often, and accordingly, the individuals were more motivated to cooperate with the program and maintain a positive attitude. For many participants, family support was the primary motivation to maintain compliance with the program. When asked about social bonds, Participant 2 explained:

> Oh yes, yes indeed, because that's your, that's your connection to society, my connection to society. And so, yes, those bonds are very important, and that's, that helps you to, that gives you a reason to live. Because one of the problems being incarcerated is, for me, initially, I had some anger, I was depressed, and I was never suicidal, but I can understand why some people might be suicidal. So, when you, when I went to home confinement, it allowed me to rekindle those bonds with my family and friends, and it gave me much more reason to function and to prosper.

Participant 1 stated the following:

> It actually brought us closer. Like I said, I was actually about to have a son at the time. I was going through my legal issues, and he was actually born when I was still, you know, going to court or whatever. But it, it set me down, man, like even now, like I just, I mean, it, it's, it helped me at the time, like I said, I was having a son, I actually ended up getting married man, working a job. I was actually working a job, a salary position. I was, I was a student. I graduated at Mississippi State. I mean, I like, I mean, I ended up with a job that, you know, probably I don't say, I didn't say, I didn't deserve it, but it was a blessing. You know, it put

> me and my family in a good position, and I was able to move on from there and do, and do even better. So, like I say, the mentality just to sit down and allow you to think and understand what's important, and you know, it may help you find your call.

Two participants proffered information that is seemingly overlooked when considering the differences between incarceration and home confinement. That is, they considered nutrition a significant factor, making home confinement a better alternative. One stated that the ability to stock their own refrigerator and access it at any time made their experience at home appreciated. Participant 6 considered health concerns when mentioning a diet. He depicted an experience with incarceration that forced him to eat starch excessively, and his body is not equipped to digest that amount of starch. The home confinement program allowed him to create a diet and maintain nutrition appropriately to manage his health concerns. When asked about the benefits of being on home confinement, Participant 6 stated the following:

> Well, your family, they gonna support you. They're gonna support you 100%, they're gonna do that. It's just that you be, you at home where they can take care of you, and they ain't have to worry about you getting killed in prison. They worry about you, you know, having a lack of nourishment, the right food that you need. They can take you to the doctor and get all of what you need, all the medical treatment you need. You know, I'm gonna say this here, it's a big difference, because the prison system don't feed you right. And what they do is, what they said is, they provide you food. But if they look at the food, if they look

> at the menu, it's starch-high. It's people that I know became diabetic in the system because of the food they was eating. I'm gonna give you an example. Say you got a tray, you got cake, beans, rice, all the starch. Cake, *cornbread*, beans, and rice on the tray, all this starch and you eating it, then you might have another tray. We have potatoes, cake, cornbread, all meals is starch-heavy.

Supervising Officers Affect the Home Confinement Experience

The home confinement program is considered a lifestyle change for all participants while in the program, although the supervising officer also has a role in the home confinement program. The supervising officer is tasked with maintaining contact with offenders in the program, inspecting the equipment, and managing the offenders' schedules. Although the question was not listed in the interview questions, several participants mentioned their probation officers when discussing the program. Each of them explained that their probation officers were major contributors to their success or failure in the program. Three participants explained that their probation officers were easy to communicate with, and they were able to resolve problems easily. Two participants described having adversarial relationships with their probation officers, making their experience in the program unnecessarily difficult. Participant 7 stated that his probation officer challenged him often, and compliance with the program was complicated. He stated:

> And then the guy, the guy [probation officer] that I had, he was, just dirty, so he saw me moving. He was like, I was moving too much, which, I told him, and they saw ahead of time, they knew what I was doing, they know where I was at. And

> so he said I was moving too much, and he cut my time back even more for no reason. So I never got in any trouble anytime – he cut my time.

Participant 7 continued:

> I'm talking about the dude [probation officer] act like he was ready to take me to jail one time. I told him that the box wasn't charging right, because I could see the light was blinking and stuff. And I told him, so when I came up there, I was like, I'm having an issue with this box. It ain't charging right. He was like, "it aint the box, it's you. You trying to charge while you're sleeping, and I told you, don't charge while you're sleeping." I'm like, no, I'm not doing that. He kept going like, "naw, say something else. I'm telling you it ain't the box." So I'm like, I was quiet. So I said could you please just check the box out, make sure it working, right? So he got up with attitude and tried, and saw it wasn't working, and he gave me another one.

Participant 11 had a bad experience with her probation officer, as well. She described knowing her probation officer personally and sharing mutual acquaintances, which led to disruptions in the program. She stated:

> I was talking to this person more than I should, and once I backed back from that, it was like I was, she was taking her authority to the next level, like, I get arrested, like, if, if I spoke my mind, if she asked me something, you know, I'm grown and I, and I wanted to, you know, tell the person how I feel, I get 2 or 3, days in jail. And it became, it became so frequently, you know. So I had to reach over her head, because, you know, people do take their jobs to the to the fullest, I mean,

they use their authority to do things that is really uncalled for, you know. So, you know, it was kind of, at first it was okay, but then it kind of, it kind of got, you know, bad for a while, because I wasn't speaking up about it. I didn't know what to do, so I had to, and then I don't want to feel like I was being harsh to a person, like making them lose a job or anything, but I had to realize that, you know, she was basically being unfair because she felt like she police, and she can win over me because I'm the person that's on house arrest. Basically, I'm the criminal, she's the law abiding citizen or authority figure, whatever the case may be. So, you know, I started feeling some type of way. You know, it's fair, but it's unfair, because a lot of things that goes on. Being on house arrest is not strictly by the book. It's strictly how they feel. They go off feelings. I'm not saying all, but what I experienced, she was going off impulse decisions.

Participant 11 continued:

So I was playing by her little game for a while, because, like I said, I was able to go and do as I please, you know, when I needed to. So basically, everything was okay and then also, they [probation office] had to face my ex, you know, I left my ex alone, which is the reason why I was on house arrest, because my ex was so consistently with calling them [probation office], trying to get them [probation office] in trouble, saying that they [probation office] showed favoritism with me. And, you know, oh, a whole nine yard. So that's the only reason I ended up on house arrest, which I felt like was unfair, because the only thing, I never got in trouble on house arrest. Only thing I did was go out of town and didn't report it.

> So, they gave me the harshest crime, I mean, punishment that they can give me, you know, ISP [intensive supervision program] house arrest for a year. And I didn't do, you know, much, but they say it was because of her [the ex], which, you know, I tried to understand. So, you know, like me being on house arrest, I will face certain things because they [probation office] didn't want [the ex] to feel like I was being shown favoritism. So a lot of my situation was coming based off how I was dealing with the lady [probation agent] and my ex.

Participant 10 stated the following:

> Most definitely your probation officer play a big part, because they play with your life. They got your life in your hands. You have to understand, when we have a probation officer, that probation officer have his life or her life, know what I'm saying, yours, you know, life in your hands. So if you was to tick them off or do anything they could mess with you. You gotta understand your life is literally in their hands. So if you was to tick them off, they want to drug test you or mess with you, they can because you under, really, you know what im saying, you under the law. You don't got your freedom, like you paying to get your freedom back. So if you, if you don't play the ball game with your probation officer, and sometimes you can play the ball with your probation officer, you just, sometimes some people take the power to their head, you know what I'm saying, and then do their authority over too much. It just depends on the probation officer you get. And if you do get somebody like that, try your hardest just to play the role, stay low key and just, know what I'm saying, try your hardest to make sure they don't

> do anything to you to send you back. Because you understand, the probation officer always got the say-so.

Home Confinement Preceded by Incarceration Creates a Different Experience

Stress was a recurrent subject during interviews with the participants; however, the way that stress was managed occurred differently between participants who were previously incarcerated versus those who were not. The participants who were incarcerated prior to enduring the home confinement program, particularly those with extensive sentences, felt relieved when they were in the program because it was less stressful than incarceration. For example, when asked about their initial feelings after placement on home confinement, Participant 2 responded, “Oh, I felt, I felt good. It was a relief because I got to come home. And so it was, I felt great.” Participant 8 stated, “It was better than being incarcerated, like it was better than being, you know, actually locked up. Gave me some, some type of freedom. I was able to open my refrigerator door.”

Like the concept of freedom, safety was one of the most important factors for those previously incarcerated. While incarcerated, they were under immense and constant stress, worrying about their safety. They described prison as a dangerous environment, and the home confinement program relieved stress by placing them in an environment that can simply be considered safe. Participant 4 stated:

> You know, some men, man, keep a lot of things bottled up, man. You know what I’m saying? Within them 7 years, you don’t trust nobody when you go to prison man. You know what I’m saying? You constantly watching everything around

> you, and it's hard to trust people. You know what I'm saying? You might listen to them and listen to whatever they got to say but in the back of your mind, you know what I'm saying, you gone keep em right in front of you. You never know what could happen. You always expecting the worst. You hope for the best but you always expecting the worst because it can happen.

Participant 4 continued by describing sleeping problems they developed while incarcerated. They explained:

> Yeah Man I go see the medical doctor because of the simple fact man I have problems sleeping. I can't sleep. I still couldn't sleep. I be up wondering. I be up all the time. My mind got so used to being up man, just figuring some gone pop off or something like that… It started when you in prison man because you up trying to watch to see what's going on. Trying to make sure you don't become a victim.

When comparing home confinement to incarceration, Participant 6 explained:

> Well, by me being, I've been incarcerated 25 years, so it was, it was a big upgrade, because I was able to handle my own medical situation, able to feed myself to get better food, you know, nourishment through, you know, family help.

Participant 6 continued by describing the conditions they encountered in prison. They used the term "warehousing" to describe the method of incarceration at the facility to which they were designated. They explained that chaos is bound to erupt in those conditions, and safety is compromised for the sake of saving money. Participant 6 stated:

> Just for instance, in a building, you have a maximum amount of people could be in a building at one time, and once it become overpopulated the way it's built from, it become a safety problem. They got buildings in prison that was initially built for it to house 60 people, 55 to 60 people per zone. Now this same building double that amount on that one zone. There supposed to be 60. Now you got 100-120 on that zone. I could lay in my bed and touch the man. It's supposed to be a five. It supposed to be a distance from each bed and see the prison system violating these laws and rules and it's all good, and that's why, and people know this here, that's, you know, that's why there so much chaos going on, because the people, the place is overpopulated, very dangerous. Because, you know, you got a zone that was built for 60 people. You got 120 and then on you got 100 some men on the zone – five toilets. Five toilets, maybe three or four showers.

In contrast to participants who endured a sentence of incarceration prior to home confinement, those who did not felt an initial state of stress rather than relief. Most learned to cope with the stress and appreciate the program as an alternative. For instance, Participant 1 stated:

> To be honest, I kind of felt like it [home confinement] was almost a trap, you know, I felt like it would limit the things I could do. And you know what, being coming from the free world, and being able to do pretty much, you know, anything within law, you know, you kind of, you get, you get used to being able to go and do things. You know, as far as providing, I was actually about to have a son. I didn't know how I was gonna provide for him, and I felt like they will

> restrict me from providing, actually. But, you know, I really feel like it, it, it was far from that. It actually helped me. It set me down, and I was able to, I was actually able to work, you know, I had to report and be in at a certain time, but I was actually able allowed to be able to, you know, to be employed. I went to work, you know, came home, checked in, and did everything as I should, and it paid off, I think, in the long run, even now, it helped me. I hadn't been any more trouble with the law and just, you know, walk, right. You know, work, you know, pretty much, that's it. So it kind of, it helps slow me down, I must say.

Likewise, Participant 7 stated:

> Man, first of all, I honestly didn't even feel like – I felt like it was a little bit much, because it was the first offense of marijuana. And you know I felt like it was a bit much, but it was better than going to have to actually be in one of the state prisons.

Home Confinement is Affected by the Participant's Ability to Respect Authoritative Figures and Comply With the Program

The home confinement program is based on compliance. Offenders must be willing and able to comply with the program's conditions. This theme was recurrent throughout the interview process. Several participants mentioned compliance, explaining that home confinement is beneficial to those who can follow the rules and conform to societal norms. Participant 2 stated:

> I would, I would like to say that in America, I think we have, if we're not number one in terms of incarcerating people or imprisoning people, in the world, we're

> close to number one. I think we are number one, and that's a huge waste of resources. We have too many people incarcerated. For those folks you know, who are violent, who are threats to society, there's probably no other choice but to imprison them. But for people who are not in those categories, it makes little sense in my mind to incarcerate them, because all you're doing is babysitting them, and at a huge cost to society. And they become a burden to society. In contrast, in home confinement, they then become a positive contribution to society, and so home confinement allows individuals to add and become more productive, in contrast to being incarcerated where they are, like, say, being babysat or somebody's monitoring them constantly, at a huge, huge cost. Home confinement, I think, is a very minimal cost in comparison.

Participant 6 explained that some people are not ready to conform, which makes the program difficult for them to complete. Additionally, he attributed youth and the RNR principle to some offenders' lack of ability to comply with the more lenient rules of home confinement. Participant 6 stated:

> Some people, just like with, some people is not made for home confinement, so they're not going abide by the rules and regulations. You do have some that is caught up, you can rehabilitate and that, this shake-up would turn their life around. But when you put kids in the system, they gonna learn more crookedness than when they first went in…they don't do a evaluation on them to put those guys in low risk environment. They put low risk people on the zone with killers, murders, drug dealers and gorillas.

Participant 11 exhibited a high level of self-awareness and proffered a firsthand experience, explaining that she is, by nature, oppositional to authority. Additionally, Participant 11 stated that she considers the risk of breaking the program's rules much less than her desire to engage in certain conduct. Each of these qualities made the home confinement program more punitive than incarceration because incarceration removes all temptation, making it easier to follow the rules. The following is an excerpt from the conversation with Participant 11 regarding her experience:

> I'm really confused, because I feel like I would rather, after experiencing it, I think I would rather take prison over house arrest. Because it's like, being on house arrest, you grown and you're being told what you can't do, and you got this right in front of you, and you can just walk out the door, it's right there. It's so tempting, and you can get in trouble, you know, so many different ways, being on house arrest and different things. So, I really feel like that if I had to come, you know, to that question again, I probably would take being incarcerated because it was a struggle, like it was a real, real struggle being on house arrest. And you know, and I, you know, I just, I say, I felt like that because you say I can't do this, but how you gonna stop me? Besides this thing on my leg. That's how I was feeling, you know? And it was so many times, I mean, it was a few times I did just walk out the door, you know? I took it for granted too, because I knew who I was dealing with. And I was like, she [probation agent] ain't gonna do, you know, she ain't gonna do nothing. And, you know, I was like, you know what, I don't think I'll do this [home confinement], because it was it was okay because I was

> free, but I wasn't free, if that makes sense, I was in prison at home…A person who don't know how to accept authority figures, you know, and that's really not ready to do right, I think the best would be to just take your prison sentence and get it over with, because being on house arrest, you at home, but you at home and you supposed to be in prison. It's hard. You can walk out that door and you can been did all this time on house arrest just for you to get in trouble, and they send you right back off. So, you gotta make up all this time – it's time wasted. So, you know if you're not truly ready or prepared to just sit down -and not saying that your house arrest will be ISP- it can be just GPS, but if you got ISP and you don't know how to accept being told what to do, I feel like it's best for you to just go ahead and do your prison sentence.

Participant 8 depicted the program as more lenient now than during his term. He explained that rules were stricter, and the program was viewed as a grace rather than an alternative to incarceration. Offenders needed to be compliant and have more self-control to be in the program. He explained that he sees offenders leaving home and participating in events during the program now, which was forbidden during his tenure. He suggested the program is more lenient now, making it available to more people. Participant 8 stated:

> It was kind of a little stern on me with it back in, because it was back in the days when they was really kind of enforcing it a little stronger than they are today. It got a little lenient. Now I be seeing guys, I be seeing guys at the Rod Wave [musician] concert with the ankle bracelet on.

Home Confinement Offers More Access to Rehabilitative Programs

According to two participants, home confinement allows access to more rehabilitative programs. One of the two participants, Participant 4, completed a term of incarceration prior to home confinement. He explained that rehabilitative programs vary in prison facilities. That is, some facilities offer programs that others cannot access. However, inmates are not allowed to choose which facility they are assigned to, creating a problem when certain programs are desired. Furthermore, Participant 4 explained that prison programs are not as effective as programs in society. For instance, he described being convinced that educational programs would benefit him when released from prison; however, he found that his educational achievement in prison is insignificant to employers because, from their perspective, a certificate ratified by a prison facility diminishes the accomplishment. While on home confinement, work-release programs and other beneficial programs are available and more validating to his rehabilitation. Participant 4 stated:

> Say for instance, like, the classes that they say that you take up in there. It don't mean nothing to these people out here. Now, if I took that class out there at the college, it'll be a different story. Because I got the college, you know what I'm saying? I got the college certificate. I don't have no prison certificate. All that matter, all that play a part in this age where, you know, what's going on in society right now…I mean, you know, people always tell you that they don't judge you because of your background and that. Now, if I'm looking at you, and I'm a boss speaking from an executive perspective, and I'm looking at applications. And

> everything that you qualify from and your certificate is from when you was in prison. Now, I ain't thinking, you know what I'm saying, like, how is this all, you know what I'm saying, he's not going to take me serious. I'm not going to take this person serious too well. If I got somebody come up here and they got certificates and degrees and stuff that come from the college, I'm going to go with the college person than the dude that's in the prison. I mean, it's crazy to say, man, but you know, everybody got the stereotypes, man, and that's how they're doing this right now. But you got a lot of folks that's felony friendly, but that's only in the city. You know, that's all depending on where you live at.

Participant 1 did not complete a term of incarceration prior to home confinement; however, he discussed access to rehabilitative programs while in the program. Participant 1 stated:

> I know it is some type of programs that you can go to that's similar to, you know, similar to AA, but you know, where you go to classes and things like that that helps you, you know, help reform. You know, I didn't have to use any of it, but I do, you know, I kind of feel like those programs are necessary, you know, or that type of support is necessary for some people. Some people just don't have anyone to reach out to, you know, people like that. I know people like that, you know.

Employment is a Significant Factor in the Home Confinement Program

I sought to explore the topic of employment during the interviews with participants, and as expected, employment was a significant topic for each of the 12 participants. While there were slight differences in whether employment was affected

positively or negatively, each participant concurred that employment was required and available. Seven participants reported home confinement as beneficial to their employment, one of whom reported that the home confinement program created job opportunities through programs funded by the Second Chance Act. Four reported employment difficulties, and one participant reported being disabled during their term of home confinement.

Participant 4 explained that employment benefits home confinement; however, he struggled to secure employment. He mentioned work-release programs that may have helped with his struggle to find employment; though, the programs were more than an hour away in the nearest major city, Memphis, Tennessee. Participant 4 lacked reliable transportation; thus, a drive that far was not feasible. He stated, "And it's like I'm putting 100% into trying to do something right to do something to better myself, man. And it's like, where I go, man. I'm not catching a break nowhere, man." Participant 4 continued:

> You're actually going to these jobs. You actually, you know, putting out applications, and you're actually going through the motions with getting turned down and trying to see which job that you can get. And being that I'm in the area. It's a small town that it's all about really who you know. And now by being that I'm out of prison, I don't have no transportation. Now I got to go up the road [to the nearest major city] to find a job. So now I got to find a way to get up here. Now I got to basically depend on somebody else to go back and forth up here to this job. Now, being mindful that everybody's situation is not the same, and which in my mind, being that I don't have no, you know what I'm saying, I need

> everything that I can get. And that I need to go and show these folks that I'll work. You know what I'm saying, and go ahead and do it. Whereever I'm around, we might not be on that. You know, Again, like, people don't go to work when they're supposed to go to work, and man, that depending on somebody else. And I done lost a lot of jobs like that. I done lost a good job like that. I mean, it's rough, man.

Participant 7 reported being a business owner, and while he agreed that home confinement allowed him to continue operating the business, the program damaged his ability to operate the business effectively. For instance, the program implemented travel restrictions and time constraints that diminished his flexibility with the business. Participant 7 stated:

> Man, I had like I say at the time, which is, I know I had a state contract, I had state contracts, I had my own business. So being in, being in early, I had to stop jobs. I had to stop jobs early to go get home before time. You know, a lot of family events, all kind of stuff, man, I had to, you know, but the main thing was my job. With my work, I had to you know, I work away from Greenville. I work with WWISSCAA, one of my contracts, you know, it's all over the state, so I might be working in Vicksburg, and I know I got to cut it off so I could be back in Greenville on time. So it did impact you financially. It definitely affected me financially.

Conversely, Participant 3 explained that the home confinement program allowed him to work. Additionally, when done correctly, he could work overtime to earn more for his

family. When asked about his ability to schedule overtime, he responded that it was usually as simple as a phone call; however, problems occurred if the employer was too busy to call and make the request to the probation officer. Participant 3 had a good relationship with his employer and informed the employer of his obligation to comply with home confinement; thus, he could sometimes coordinate his schedule and maintain employment sufficiently. Participant 3 stated:

> Well, getting the job, I had a job before I ended up on that, you know what I'm saying, okay, but trying to maintain it, it wasn't, it wasn't too bad of a thing, in a way, in a sense, because it was, it was a way for you to be able to get out, you know, right, rather than just confined to the house all the time. It didn't, I can't say it really affected my ability…Only time it came to be a problem if I had to do overtime or work later out because I would have to either let my employer call the PO [probation officer] or something, you know what I'm saying, they had to be always in contact. They weren't just like, okay, you know, by you being on the monitor, they give you a certain time to be in. You know, if you working, so that was the only hold up. It would kind of inconvenience the employer, because he may be busy. He ain't just got time to be a one, no one worker, you see? Know what I'm saying, so, it was kind of a messed up thing, but, you know, at this time, I had this PO that was real understanding, and she would give me a little time extra, and she once, once she talked to him, and he explained her the time, because this time I was doing seasonal work, farm work, so I couldn't really say

> what time I got out. I couldn't even tell her exactly what date, like, it wasn't no nine to five. It was, it was like a nine to nine, you know what I'm saying.

Participant 12 depicted employment as the primary benefit of home confinement. His experience resembled that of Participant 3. He explained that communication between his probation officer and employer made maintaining employment easier. Additionally, he could use a phone application to submit schedules easily and obtain authorization to leave home. Participant 12 stated:

> So say, for instance, when, if you gotta go to work, that's gonna be programmed into the phone so when you leave the house, it don't go off, or it don't, you know, give a reason like you're not where you're not supposed to be. You understand what I'm saying? If you had to work, I'm gonna say from seven to three, and depending on how long it takes you to get to work, your schedule may be from 5am to 5pm, they give you a two-hour window to get to work. They give you a two-hour window to get from work…You program it through the app of the phone, and who's ever like your counselor, probation officer, whoever's overseeing it, they put it into their system. So, what you got on your phone, they gonna take that, put that in a system. That way, the schedule, and your phone, and the schedule in their computer all aligned that way. When you leave, it won't give you an unauthorized reading…Yeah, they have to approve because they have to have it in their computer. You can't just put it in and then you just go, because if you put it in and if they not aware of it, then when you leave your alarm gonna go out as you being in a unauthorized area.

Participant 11 stated the following:

> You know, it's like they have a second chance law, supposedly, and a lot of companies is, they would rather have people that's on papers or on house arrest working for them because they feel like they gonna work, because they have to, or either, you know what I'm saying they don't, you know, face their consequences, because this is what they supposed to do. So, I had a lot of job opportunities, even coming through her [probation agent] like, she would help me find, you know, jobs and, you know, jobs starting the next day. Like it wasn't hard at all.

Participant 10 explained his experience with soliciting employment while on home confinement. He explained that criminal history and the charge that resulted in home confinement are significant factors in securing employment. Participant 10 stated:

> So it's always like, based on what you did, it just like how they look at you, and then, like everybody make mistakes. Now, if you got a murder charge, now, this is totally different. Like, a lot of them, they're gonna look at you like a certain way, like, why they even come back? Like, why you kill somebody? It just affects you, and it just like the charge you done, you know what I'm saying, Or, what you've been through that, you know what I'm saying. Some don't, you know, look at you like that. A lot of places would look at your criminal background and try to put a picture on you. They don't even know the story about you, know what I'm saying, you gotta have people that's like, have empathy and understand, and willing to listen, give you a chance, because a lot of places, they see stuff like that, they'll you know, profile you, and say, I don't want no man that got this type

> of background check, you know. This is a clean establishment, you know. It's a win or lose.

Home Confinement Guides Participants Towards More Prosocial Daily Routines

Many of the participants introduced the theme of prosocial daily routines. The researcher asked about the effect of home confinement on daily routines, and each participant agreed that home confinement changed their daily routines. Each described prosocial activities such as work or school, and several participants explicitly described how their daily routine benefited their prosocial living.

Participant 12 explained that home confinement forced him to adopt a prosocial routine, such as maintaining a work schedule and forbidding him from associating with anyone involved in criminal activity. Eventually, he conformed to only leaving home for work and other prosocial activities. He lost the desire to participate in old, antisocial habits. Participant 12 stated:

> Basically, it, all it's doing is giving you boundaries, you know what I'm saying, it's setting you up in life where you can balance things out, you know? So, like when you come off of the house arrest, you still kind of keep the same schedule, you know, because it makes you realize that you ain't missing nothing.

According to Participant 8, home confinement could not directly prevent him from participating in antisocial behaviors; however, his social interactions were limited. Therefore, he avoided his previous behavior. Participant 8 stated:

> The biggest challenges I faced when I was on home confinement was the fact that it was sometimes I wanted to go do the norm, the normal, and I couldn't do the

> normal at a certain time, like, you know, sometimes I wanted to go over by my girl's house. Sometimes I couldn't go because I had to be in the house.

When asked about rehabilitating on home confinement, Participant 8 stated, "I mean, you still, to a certain extent, you still can do, do somewhat, of what you was doing before you was even on house arrest." Participant 8 continued by explaining that home confinement kept him focused on employment and finances. He stated:

> Actually, it was good because, yeah, I mean, you knew you had to be, you had to be at work, so it was good…It had impact me financially. It was a, I mean, it impact me financially, meaning the right way to be financed, meaning that you went to work every time, every hour you're supposed to be there. So, you was able to make money. And you knew that, you know, it was a good flow. But you know what I mean.

Summary

The results of this study show that participants had a positive perspective of the home confinement program, particularly in comparison to incarceration. Two participants considered home confinement as more punitive than incarceration, with only one choosing incarceration as a better alternative to home confinement. Interestingly, the participant who considered home confinement more punitive was female, bringing validity to the study conducted by Ariza et al. (2021). As previously mentioned, Ariza et al. found that female offenders convicted of drug offenses viewed home confinement as more punitive. While the participant in this study did not reveal her conviction, there is seemingly a connection between the gender and the perspectives on home confinement.

In addition to gender, this study revealed that several factors affect an offender's experience with home confinement, including prior terms of incarceration, employment, and the supervising officer assigned to each case. Participants who endured a prior term of incarceration felt their stress levels decline when placed in the home confinement program. Conversely, participants who were placed in the home confinement program without a prior term of incarceration felt their stress levels increase at the beginning of their term. All participants (except one who was disabled) explained that their employment status -whether good or bad- was severely affected by their term of home confinement. Some participants considered their supervising officers a significant factor in the program's success, indicating that officers can make the program more difficult or convenient depending on their temperament.

Overall, home confinement is considered a better alternative to traditional incarceration in the Mississippi Delta because it grants rehabilitative opportunities, social liberties, and access to health (mental and physical) benefits that are otherwise unavailable in the prison system. Additionally, home confinement allots a level of safety that is unmatched in traditional incarceration. Furthermore, as confirmed by one participant, home confinement is a cheaper and more humane way to rehabilitate convicted offenders, while simultaneously circumventing prison overcrowding.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The researcher developed this study to explore the experiences of home confinement for offenders in the Mississippi Delta. Participants in the Mississippi Delta, aged 18 and over, with prior convictions for felony offenses, were recruited to participate. The research used qualitative data collection methods to answer the following questions: *What are the experiences of offenders in home confinement in the Mississippi Delta, and how is home confinement affected by the rural conditions of the Mississippi Delta?* The information obtained during the research study answered these questions, expounded on previous research, and established a foundation for future research.

Interpretation of the Findings

The results of this study indicate that home confinement is a feasible criminal justice tool in the Mississippi Delta. Additionally, the program can be used as an alternative to incarceration in many cases. Offenders in the Mississippi Delta reported good experiences with the home confinement program, and 11 of the 12 participants agreed that home confinement is a better alternative to incarceration in their situation. Although the research suggests that home confinement is perceived as a good alternative to incarceration by offenders, several factors dictate each individual's experience.

Individual characteristics are determining factors for success in the home confinement program and should be considered before placement in the program. Home confinement does not stop a person from leaving home or participating in antisocial behavior; rather, it serves as a deterrent to offenders and a monitoring tool for criminal

justice agents. Therefore, risk factors that suggest an offender's propensity to be a danger to the community should be evaluated before implementing the program. Likewise, oppositional defiance impedes rehabilitation and should be considered before implementing the program. Should an offender be a good candidate for the program, their ability to comply with restrictions and communicate with their supervising officer should be evaluated continuously afterwards.

The offender's characteristics are major contributors to their success; however, the characteristics of their supervising officer are also determining factors. In some cases, offenders and supervising officers have conflicting personalities, diminishing their ability to communicate effectively. The program requires offenders to submit schedules, obtain approvals, and report deviations; thus, communication is important to success in the program. The results of the study imply that probation officers are even more significant in rural communities because conflicts of interest may arise more easily. When probation officers are employed near or in the community they live in, it increases the likelihood they will encounter individuals they are familiar with. Rural communities are more sparsely populated, increasing the likelihood of this occurrence and decreasing the availability of probation officers.

Prior terms of incarceration also affect the experience of home confinement for offenders. Participants who endured a prior term of incarceration were relieved to utilize the home confinement program. They described incarceration as a dangerous, mentally draining, and physically taxing circumstance. All but two participants viewed home confinement as less restrictive and liberating compared to the conditions of incarceration.

Those participants experienced better sleep, diet, safety, and overall well-being in the home confinement program.

Conversely, participants who were not previously incarcerated experienced initial stress, depression, and anxiety. They had more trouble adjusting to the restrictions of home confinement and particularly adjusting to the order to report to a probation officer before leaving home. Whereas offenders who were previously incarcerated viewed the program as leniency, those who were not previously incarcerated viewed the program as punitive, even overly punitive in some cases. These feelings of emotional strain from adjusting to the program eventually subsided when the participants accepted the conditions and submitted to the restrictions. Though it required time adjusting, most participants in this category began to appreciate the program as an alternative to incarceration rather than an overly punitive measure.

The study also revealed that rural conditions have a minimal effect on the experience of individuals in the home confinement program. It increases the likelihood of conflicts of interest and decreases access to specific employment programs, but participants reported technological advancements that make the program effective in rural communities. Agencies in the Mississippi Delta have access to several different technologies to implement home confinement, regardless of an offender's access to phone or internet service.

Limitations of the Study

There are a few limitations to the study, which include a lack of diversity in participants. Twelve participants responded and participated in the study. Of those 12,

only one participant was female. The single female perspective conflicted with male perspectives regarding the comparison of home confinement to incarceration.

The researcher did not obtain other demographic information, such as race, educational level, prior work experience, and labor skills, and these entities may affect an offender's ability to secure employment. Employment was a recurrent and significant theme in the research, and obtaining more demographic information could provide a more comprehensive explanation of an offender's ability to secure employment while under home confinement.

Recommendations

The study can be improved by gathering perspectives of a more diverse group of participants in rural regions. For future research, the researcher recommends including stricter race, gender, and age-related qualifications for participants. Additionally, the researcher recommends gathering the perspectives of probation officers or supervising officers in rural communities. The study concluded that probation officers affect the success of a home confinement program; thus, their perspectives on the program can be important to the research. Finally, including a quantitative measure of successfully completed home confinement terms versus revoked or unsuccessful terms can contribute to a comprehensive view of the program in the Mississippi Delta.

Implications

The United States prison system suffers from overcrowding, and recidivism rates stagnate at elevated rates; thus, criminal justice agencies must adapt and explore different techniques for administering justice. Subramanian et al. (2020) explained that prisons in

the United States are more densely populated than prisons in many other countries. Booker (2023) explained that home confinement is better than incarceration. While some offenders present a danger to the community and lack the ability to comply with authority, home confinement is cheaper and more effective in reducing recidivism for lower-risk offenders.

I expanded the study of home confinement to a rural area of the United States and examined the experiences of offenders who participated in the program. As expected, the general perspective of home confinement is that it is preferred over incarceration. Additionally, the program served as a good alternative and affected rehabilitation. However, despite the program's good reviews, it does not come without complications.

As home confinement programs become more utilized in the United States, criminal justice agencies should consider offering mental health treatment where available. The stress and anxiety experienced by first-time offenders are often ignored during criminal justice proceedings. One of the participants in this research divulged that this study constituted their first opportunity to speak extensively about their experience with home confinement. They completed the program and neglected to address their anxiety, which stemmed from the legal process. Mental health treatment can increase the likelihood of success in the program and reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

Conclusion

Home confinement was introduced to expand the criminal justice system, making it more efficient. Researchers have explored the effectiveness of home confinement, and this study expands that research by examining home confinement in a rural community.

Specifically, this study explored the effectiveness of home confinement in the Mississippi Delta, one of the most impoverished regions in the United States. Results of this study are consistent with those preceding it in that offenders generally view home confinement as a sufficient alternative to incarceration. Understanding home confinement of offenders in the Mississippi Delta can address the risk of reoffending for this demographic and optimize the use of home confinement to make the criminal justice system more effective.

There are several ways to implement home confinement, including electronic monitoring and probationary services. As expected, home confinement in this study was primarily implemented through electronic monitoring and probationary services. Most participants had GPS devices, although radio frequency was also utilized. All participants were equipped with an ankle monitor, but two participants used the wristwatch as an alternative at one point during their term of home confinement. Technical problems occurred (though minor) with all equipment; however, it was easily rectified by contacting the supervising officer.

This study predicted that home confinement is better economically for enforcing agencies but does not affect an offender's propensity to reoffend in the Mississippi Delta. This study also predicted that offenders are more likely to accept home confinement as an alternative to traditional incarceration. The results confirm that home confinement is more economically efficient, and participants view the program as more acceptable than traditional incarceration. However, there was a consensus from participants that home confinement affected their propensity to reoffend by serving as an adequate deterrent to

criminality; though, this information is difficult to confirm without measuring their criminal records before and after enduring home confinement.

Furthermore, this study examined whether the socioeconomic factors in the Mississippi Delta nullify the rehabilitative benefits of home confinement in a typical setting. Employment and transportation are impacted the most by socioeconomic factors in rural communities. Participant 4 reported a lack of job opportunities in his region of the Mississippi Delta. Additionally, he reported a lack of access to transportation and a diminished ability to access more employment opportunities in the nearest metropolitan area. Participant 10 expressed that employment opportunities are available but based on social networks or personal connections in his region of the Mississippi Delta.

Conflict of interest is another concept that is seemingly unique to rural areas. The researcher has not located any information in the literature review mentioning conflicts of interest, as there were in this study. Rural areas are scarcely populated, and it is common for people to be personally familiar or acquainted with professionals in their region. Offenders being subjected to supervision by an officer with personal connections can be tumultuous, and as depicted by Participant 11, it can make an already stressful circumstance even more difficult.

In conclusion, using traditional incarceration as a singular response to criminal conduct is an antiquated approach to justice. Home confinement has proven to be a viable option to administer justice; however, individuals must be evaluated closely to determine their risk level before implementing the program. Additionally, the home confinement program should be supported by employment, and mental health treatment should be

considered to increase the likelihood of success following home confinement. Overall, home confinement is an option, giving the criminal justice system more tools to administer justice. It should not be mistaken as a blanket application, nor should it be considered a replacement for traditional incarceration; however, criminal justice entities should evaluate cases individually and utilize the program in a mutually beneficial way for the criminal justice system and communities.

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