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The Impact of Treatment Programs in Reducing the Incarceration Rate for Children with Incarcerated Parents

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2016

Abstract

The Impact of Treatment Programs in Reducing the Incarceration Rate for Children with

Incarcerated Parents

by

Chandra V. Thornton

BS, Clayton State University, 2005

MPA, Troy State University, 2006

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Administration, Law and Public Policy

Walden University

January, 2016

Abstract

Research has found that children who experience the incarceration of a parent may experience behavioral, psychological, and emotional problems. Studies have identified treatment programs and interventions designed to alleviate the long-term effects of parental incarceration on children. Limited research exists on the impact of treatment programs and interventions on these children. The purpose of this research was to determine if treatment programs are successful in reducing future incarceration rates for adults that experienced the incarceration of a parent during childhood. Research questions examined how treatment programs and interventions impacted the sample population. A phenomenological approach guided the study methods and purposeful sampling strategy guided selection of 20 participants 18 years or older, who experienced an incarcerated parent and experienced subsequent treatment programs or interventions. Face-to Face interviews were conducted using a modified version of The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Investigative Interview Protocol. Open coding was used to identify and analyze common themes that emerged from the interviews. The findings revealed that treatment and intervention significantly impacted participants. Participants believed exposure to resources that are not available in their environment assisted them with living productive lives without any incidents of being incarcerated. Treatment programs create positive social change by providing support that aids in reducing the potential incarceration rate for children in this category, equips them with the tools for living productive lives, and informs development of innovative programs.

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Dedication

This research is dedicated to my late grandmother, Ozella Huling, an avid community servant and a pillar in her community that worked diligently to assist and support children from all walks of life.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my family and dear friends for all their encouraging words and support. I would also like to thank Dr. Clarence Williamson and Dr. Michael Klemp-North for their continuous guidance and assistance throughout this process of my academic career.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

Introduction

There are many programs that have been developed for children with incarcerated parents. However, research shows that these programs lack resources to provide adequate treatment for children with incarcerated parents, and the number of children with incarcerated parents is constantly growing (Newell, 2012). This study investigated the effectiveness of treatment programs that are geared toward children with incarcerated parents

Exploring this topic is critical to determine programs' effectiveness. Studying these programs is essential to determining their strengths and weaknesses, and to promote the importance of their sustainability considering the various mental, emotional, and psychological problems experienced by children with incarcerated parents. For example, children with incarcerated parents have been known to encounter feelings of fear, shock, and bewilderment even before the incarceration, which may be caused by witnessing the arrest of a parent (Murray, Farrington, &Sekol, 2012). Research has shown that children with incarcerated parents are also likely to model the behavior of their incarcerated parents and also be incarcerated(Murray, Farrington, &Sekol, 2012).

Gabel (1992) found that children with incarcerated parents have a higher risk of developing problems such as emotional and behavioral disturbance, negative self-image, withdrawal, eating and sleeping disorders, anxiety, developmental regression, and antisocial behavior than children of non-incarcerated parents, (as cited in Brookes

&Baille, 2011). Other problems associated with having incarcerated parents are attachment insecurity, high anxiety and depression levels, and poor performance in school (Dallaire & Wilson, 2010). Murray et al. (2012) found associations between parental incarceration and children create antisocial behavior and problems with mental health among the children. Murray et al. (2012) also stated that children with incarcerated parents are at a higher risk for antisocial behavior than children separated from their parents for any other reason.

Based on the previous research, there is a need for policy change and more policies relating to children with incarcerated parents. This study explored the quality of treatment programs created to serve children with incarcerated parents and developed ways to enhance and/or improve those programs, as well as provided information to promote the creation of more effective policy. In the past, there have been several policy initiatives focused on reducing the stigmas experienced by children with incarcerated parents, which include prohibiting publicly identifying offenders before and after conviction, diversion programs, and increasing community service programs that focused on ex-offenders making positive contributions to the community. However, "little or no research has been conducted on how such policies might actually change outcomes for children" (Murray et al., 2012).

The United States Congress has supported mentoring programs for children with incarcerated parents, but has not evaluated the programs (Zwiebach, Rhodes, & Rappaport, 2010). Because of the lack of policy attention, caregivers that step in to

support children with incarcerated parents experience social and emotional issues where they are stressed, lack both formal and informal support, and struggles financially (Nesmith and Ruhland, 2011).

There are many questions that need to be addressed by research in this area. What happens to children after the parents become incarcerated? What resources are available for the children during the incarceration of the parents? Does the majority of children with incarcerated parents grow up and live productive lives or become incarcerated themselves? This study focused on the effectiveness of treatment programs that are geared toward children with incarcerated parents. Bouchet (2008) performed a study for the Annie E. Casey Foundation and found that up to the year 2005, the percentage of women being incarcerated increased by 57% and 34% for men, with 75% of those incarcerated women being mothers (as cited in Merestein, Tyson, Tilles, Keays, &Rufffollo, 2011). Some studies have shown that within the last 20 years, the rate of incarceration has doubled for mothers that have entered the U.S. prisons, and the rate is over 77% for fathers (Raeder, 2012).

According to Raeder (2012), when comparing incarcerated mothers to incarcerated fathers the risk of children growing up and becoming incarcerated themselves is 2.5 times more with incarcerated mothers' children than with incarcerated fathers' children, and the risk of poor outcome is greater in maternal incarceration. With the rapid growth of incarcerated parents many of children end up in foster care. The Fragile Families Study found that children with incarcerated fathers are four times likely

to face placement into a foster care system and five times likely if the mother is incarcerated (Raeder, 2012).

Raeder (2012) conducted research that found the number of children that have experienced parental incarceration has rapidly increased from 1.7 million to 2.7 million, making 4% of American children living with an incarcerated parent. Over a third of children with incarcerated parents are expected to reach the age of 18 while their parents are incarcerated (Murray, Farrington, &Sekol, 2012). In this study, research was performed with those that are 18 years of age and older that have or had incarcerated parents and have participated in a treatment program.

Problem Statement

Programs such as Big Brother Big Sister (BBBS) and Families in Crisis provide services for children with incarcerated parents. BBBS provides mentoring services, while Families in Crisis provides support systems to youth with incarcerated parents and their families (Merestein, et al., 2011). Although these programs were developed to assist children with incarcerated parents, they have been known to lack resources. Little is known about the long term effects of these programs, so it is unclear how effective these programs are in reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents and assisting them with living productive lives as adults.

What is clear about programs designed to assist children with incarcerated parents is the programs are needed. Merestein et al. (2011) conducted a study at the Institute for Municipal & Regional Policy (IMRP) where 10,90minute interviews with

10children and 10, 60minute interviews with the children's parents or caregivers were conducted. Half of the children were enrolled in BBBS and the other half were enrolled in Families in Crisis. The children's interviews were audio recorded and two of the principal investigators of the IMRP recorded, managed, and analyzed the data. The parents' and caregivers' results were recorded, along with the results of questionnaires. The content was categorized by key themes that emerged from the data (Merestein et al., 2011).

Researchers found that mentoring programs empower children with incarcerated parents to take control of their lives by assisting them with dealing with self-esteem and emotional problems, as well as resolving communication issues (Merestein et al., 2011). They recommended developing more programs to improve and maintain communication among the children and those that are involved in their lives, such as parents, caregivers, and teachers. The researchers also recommended creating more programs that cater to the caregivers. Some suggestions on how this could be achieved were: recognizing when the children perform good work and motivate them; identify more activities to do with the children; and keep communication open with the caregivers (Merestein, 2011, p. 174).

The information taken from this research is very informative. However, a weakness of this research is data could possess some biases considering that the interviews were performed with the mentors that work for BBBS. What is not addressed here is what happens to the children after leaving the program, how many of them

remain in contact with their mentors, or is there a certain time limit that the children spend with the mentor? These are the questions that the research sought to address, along with the long-term effect of treatment programs directed towards children with incarcerated parents.

Purpose of Study

The topic of this study is valuable to understanding the perspectives and experiences of those that were children with incarcerated parents. It holds several purposes. For example, a) it warrants a great deal of research in order to determine how to decrease the harmful effects of incarceration on children with incarcerated parents; b) to bring awareness to a less explored category of children; c) to understand the effectiveness of treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate for children with incarcerated parents; and d) to help alleviate social ills that these children may face.

The research was conducted to determine if there is a linkage between the treatment programs and children with incarcerated parents avoiding incarceration as adults. The results yielded that there is a relationship between the two. The next step is to create more policies and necessary resources for children with incarcerated parents. It will also assist program designers, developers, policymakers, and others that are concerned with children with incarcerated parents with knowing how effective their programs are by displaying their strengths and weaknesses from the perspectives of the participants. The goals of the research are to empower this class of children; to reduce the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents that grow up and become

incarcerated; and to bring awareness to policy makers about a less explored category of children subject by developing more resources.

The methodological approach for this research is phenomenological research, which allowed the researcher to explore the participants' experiences and perspectives of the phenomenon (Ofonedu, Percy, Harris-Britt, & Belcher, 2013)**.** It allowed the researcher to develop a deep understanding of the lived experiences of the research participants by engaging with the participants in order to create patterns and relationships (Creswell, 2009).

Research Questions and Conceptual Framework

The research sought to answer the questions:

1. What have been the experiences of the participants with the current resources that are available for children with incarcerated parents?

2. How could other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents?

Conceptual frameworks, as noted by Maxwell (2013), describe the central concepts the study seeks to address. The conceptual framework points to the problem under study and how the research sees or visualizes connections between the central concepts of the framework and the lived, real world experiences, of the research participants. It builds upon the experiences of those that were children with incarcerated parents and have participated in some form of treatment program. Critical Theory supports the conceptual framework was used for this study.

Critical Theory involves seeking to confront the social injustices in society, as well as understand economic and political societal structures' relationship with ideologies that constrain people, resulting in changing unjust social systems (Clark, 2010). Research has shown that the issue of children having incarcerated parents is most problematic among African Americans communities. Critical Theory is appropriate considering that this perspective have been known to address those that have been constrained by their race. Critical Theory was an overall guide that directed the research.

Nature of Study

With this study being a qualitative study, data derived from face to face interviews with participants that were 18 years or older that are, or were children with incarcerated parents. The goal was to gather their experiences with treatment programs for children of incarcerated parents**.** Participants in this age category were the best people to give detailed information pertaining to their experiences and their opinions on how the treatment programs were a positive or negative impact on their lives. Younger participants were considered. However, a younger population would not have been able to give the appropriate data pertaining to living productive lives after a treatment program because they are still growing and developing. They are also a vulnerable population, and the interview questions may be too difficult for them to understand. Data received from the participants on their perception of the recognized treatment programs was compared to the outcomes that the programs are mandated to generate.

Data were analyzed by using initial (open) coding strategy, which can be used concurrently with gathering, interpreting, and reporting the data (Creswell, 2009). Open coding involves analyzing significant statements, creating themes, and developing descriptions until all data are saturated (McVea, Miller, Creswell, McEntarrfer, & Coleman, 2009).

Assumptions

There are many assumptions that children with incarcerated parents face. One assumption is that children with incarcerated parents carry the same characteristics as their incarcerated parent. This assumption derived from the social learning theory, which generally states that violence is a learned behavior, and when a child is exposed to violence within their family, the likelihood of that child having the same or similar experiences is high (Tyler, Brownridge, & Melander, 2011).

Because of the many emotional and behavioral problems experienced by children with incarcerated parents, another assumption is there is a low developmental level among this population. Further, there is an assumption that the child having contact with the incarcerated parent will have an adverse effect on the child's life (Tyler, Brownridge, & Melander, 2011). A child seeing their parent incarcerated can be a traumatic experience that promotes fear and negativity in their lives. Acknowledging these assumptions is necessary in order to address and potentially dispel preconceived notions about this category of children.

Scope and Delimitations

The inquiry paradigm for this research was an advocacy participatory type of qualitative research. Advocacy participatory relates to finding ways to change the lives of people (Creswell, 2009). It aims to humanize the research and influence policymakers in an effort to create programs, create and/or change policy, and support democracy. Creswell (2009) stated that advocacy participatory begins with taking a stance on an important problem in society that constrains people and help them become free of those constraints such as irrational and unjust structures. The points of focus in the advocacy/participatory category are: social issues and the marginalization and disenfranchising of a certain class of people. The issues that are addressed are: suppression, alienation, oppression, and how to empower (Creswell, 2009).

Children with incarcerated parents encounter all of the issues addressed by advocacy participatory worldview. One of these aspects is the ability to deal with their issues and protect themselves through their own resiliency. Resilience has been found to assist children with incarcerated parents eliminating stress, along with coping and good adjustment to their situations. Resilience can be categorized in one of the three protective factors: positive individual attributes; supportive family environment; and people outside of family, which includes school systems and faith communities that support the coping effort of children and peer groups (Newel, 2012). Exploring how resilience plays a part in the children with incarcerated parents lives will provide a better

understanding on whether or not the participants were able to transition into productive adults and how this was achieved.

Limitations

Due to the particulars involved, such as participants reliving what may have been a difficult time in their lives, there are limitations involved in this research. Some of these limitations are: apprehension, where the participants are afraid to respond to questions; and mortality, where participants drop out of the study (O'Connor, 2011). To assist with eliminating some of the limitations, the data collection procedures were thoroughly explained to the participants before receiving consent. Further, the participants were ensured that their responses will be coded as a means of protecting their privacy. Privacy of all involved was the largest ethical concern of the study. Consent was obtained by having participants sign a consent agreement. This ensured to the participants that personal information will not be released to others without consent, and the researcher is held responsible for keeping information confidential.

Other limitations, such as transferability, are important to address with this type of research. Considering that every person is different, which means that every situation is different, transferring the results to other studies may result in some limitations. Also, those situations that are similar may yield different results (Colorado, 2013). This research used rich, thick descriptions as a means to address limitations that may arise. The objective is to provide the readers with a description that will allow them to make an informed decision about whether or not the results can be applied to other situations.

Using rich, thick descriptions involved providing detailed descriptions of the every

aspect of the research; keeping a detailed account of all events with the participants; a

detailed description of the environment and the participant; and any interaction among

the researcher and participants, instruments used, and the methodology (Colorado,

2013).

Providing rich, thick descriptions also holds importance when presenting

research to policymakers about implementing policies relating to at-risked youth, as well

as to those, such as community organizers, non-profit organizations, and all others that

are concerned with contributing and assisting children with incarcerated parents to make

positive life-long decisions and live a healthy lifestyle.

Significance

The significance of the study is that it may lead to positive social change by

ensuring that the programs are properly equipping the youth involved with the necessary

tools that are needed to avoid incarceration and live productive lives. Additionally, the

findings can be shared with the incarcerated parents as an awareness mechanism that

helps to change their lifestyle, whether they are or are not the cause of the deficiencies of

children with incarcerated parents. Also, the findings could inform decision makers and

program developers on evolving the best practices in order to mitigate generational

criminal behaviors.

Summary

The research for this study was a phenomenological research pertaining to those that grew up as children with incarcerated parents and participated in some form of treatment program. Treatment programs for this category of children have been scarce. The participants' experiences with the resources that are available and their insight on how other resources can contribute to children with incarcerated parents were explored.

Children with incarcerated parents experience psychological, emotional, and mental problems as a result of their circumstances. Many of these problems result in the children becoming incarcerated themselves, sometimes as a result of behavior modeling. There has been little research conducted on how policies can change the outcomes of children in this category so this study sought to determine whether there is a need for policy to guide the quality of treatment programs that are created to serve children with incarcerated parents. Furthermore, ways of improving those programs for children with incarcerated parents emerged from the research.

Previous research shows that there are limited resources for children with incarcerated parents. However, there are treatment programs such as Big Brother Big Sister (BBBS) and Families in Crisis that are geared toward assisting children with incarcerated parents. Researchers have found that treatment programs are quite beneficial when the child is enrolled, because they provide empowerment, assistance with self-esteem issues, and assistance with communication and emotional problems (Merestein et al., 2011). The major point of this research was to address what happens to

the children after leaving treatment programs. This was addressed by finding out the longevity of the treatment programs and whether or not the participants remained in contact with the treatment programs as they become adults.

These treatment programs lacked resources, especially funding. This is problematic considering that the number of children with incarcerated parents is growing due to the number parents entering the penal system. In the United States, from 2007-2012, the parental incarceration increased from 1.7 million to 2.7 million, resulting in 4% of children having incarcerated parents. Family members and other caregivers that support children with incarcerated parents are faced with the problems of being in dire need for social services, financial assistance, and other resources considering that they are left with caring and providing for the children.

Although this situation affects all communities, the African American community is the most affected population by this category of children. One out of every 15 African American children has had the experience of having an incarcerated parent, (Genty, 2012). Critical Theory addresses issues where the participants have been constrained by their race which is why it was appropriate for this study (Clark, 2010).Ultimately, the study will be beneficial to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents and increasing the number of self-sufficient adults in society.

In the chapter 2, the demographics, coping mechanisms, and the problems experienced by children with incarcerated parents are discussed. The history of the

previous treatment programs and the success of those programs were also discussed, along with the literature search strategy that explained the steps in ascertaining information for this study. The major section of chapter 2 is the conceptual framework and how Critical Theory supports the conceptual framework.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

When a child enters the category of having an incarcerated parent they encounter various challenges. In addition to these challenges, many children with incarcerated parents experience socio demographic risks where they are likely to live in impoverished single-parent homes and their caregivers are likely to suffer from poor mental and physical health (Poehlmann, 2005a, as cited in Shlafer, Poehlmann, Coffino &Hanneman, 2009). A number of youth with incarcerated parents end up in the penal system themselves.

In this chapter the conceptual framework and how Critical Theory supports the conceptual framework is explained in detail. The conceptual framework is the visionary guideline that is at the core of this study. It is supported by Critical Theory, which discussed in further details within the conceptual framework information.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual frameworks present a visual representation or pattern of how the researcher sees and defines the central concepts under study (Maxwell, 2013). The conceptual framework seeks to inform the research process and demonstrate the variety of connections between the key concepts while maintain the flexibility needed in qualitative research designs. The conceptual framework for this study is presented in Figure 1.With the framework, the research sought to address the gap in the literature presented in the problem statement regarding the lack of current program resources and

the sparse knowledge regarding the long term effects of these programs, and provide

clarity regarding the effectiveness of these programs in reducing the incarceration rate of

children with incarcerated parents and assisting them with living productive lives as

adults.

- Experienced by over 10 million children in the U.S.
- Most prevalent in urban communities
- 6.7% of Black children have incarcerated parents

Children with incarcerated parents

Resiliency, their truest form of protection

3 factors

- Positive individual attributes
- Family environment
- Peers, school system and faith communities

Critical Theory

PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY CWIP

Experience mental and behavioral problems

- Insecurity
- High anxiety
- Depression
- Poor performance in school

- Heavily influenced by Karl Marx's school of thought.
- Focus - social control, authoritarianism, oppression, nationalism, and capitalism
- Philosophers- Max Horkheimer, Jürgen Habermas, Erich Fromm, E.P. Thompson.

How effective are treatment programs?

Literature has not shown:

- if treatment programs help reduce incarceration rates of CWIP; and
- if treatment programs are effective in developing and empowering CWIP.

Earlier Treatment Programs

- Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents (CCIP)
- ChildSpace Project
- Therapeutic Intervention Project (TIP)

SOME CURRENT PROGRAMS

- Big Brother Big Sisters (BBBS)
- Family in Crisis

- Lack resource
- Long term effectiveness is unknown

- These programs are closed.
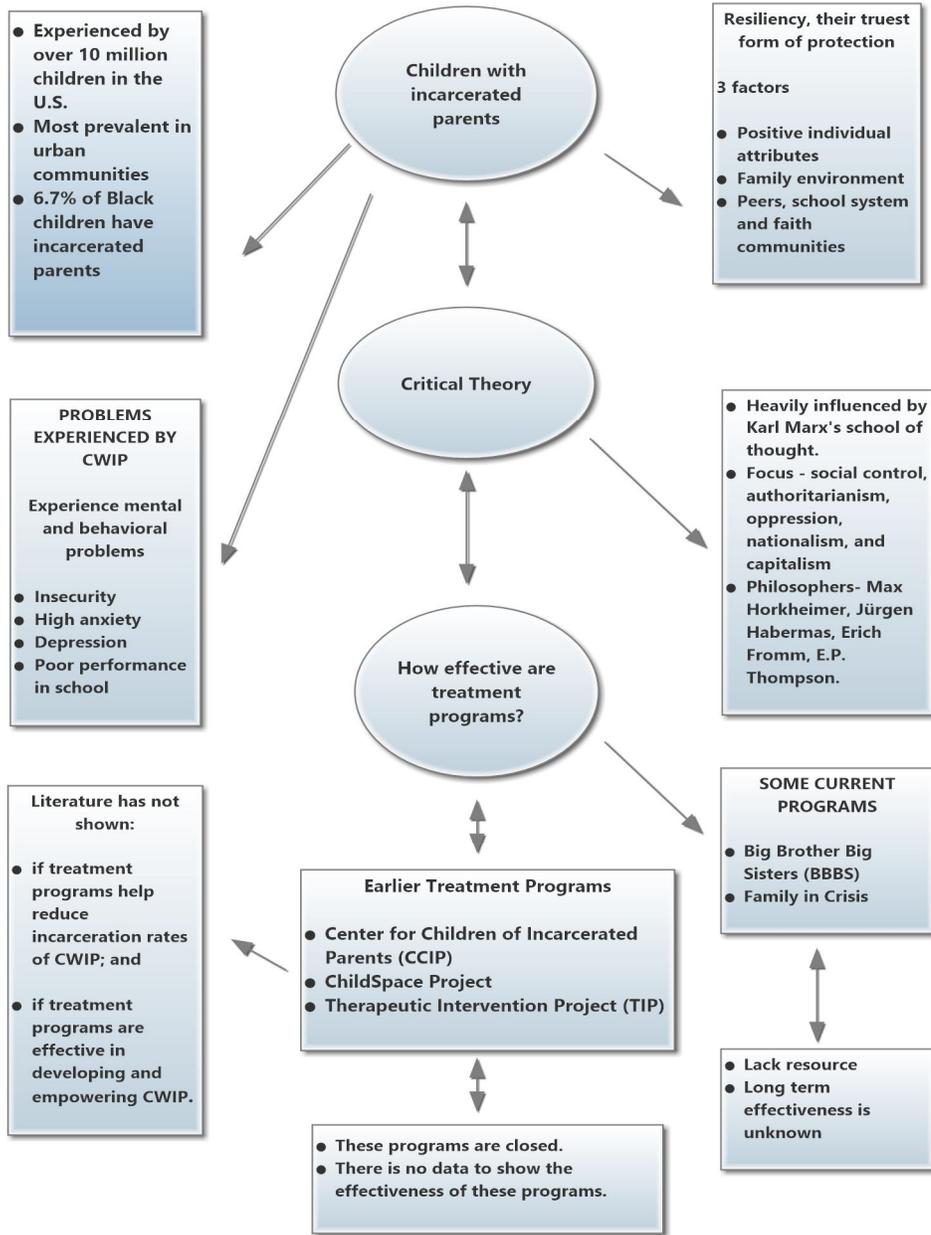- There is no data to show the effectiveness of these programs.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Demographics

Although there is a lack of empirical data, it has been estimated that children with incarcerated parents are six times likely to become incarcerated than other children (Christian, 2009). The most prevalent community with children with incarcerated parents is the urban communities. Research suggests that a large number of children with incarcerated parents live in urban areas and are exposed to community violence, which contributes to distress experienced by the children (Bockneck, Sanderson, &Britner, 2009).

This category of children is increasing with almost three million children affected by a parent being incarcerated (Newell, 2012). Within the few resources that are available to children with incarcerated parents, there are treatment programs to assist them (Moses, 2010). However, the effectiveness of treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents lacks documentation on the children as they have gotten older. The problem is that it is unclear how effective these treatment programs are in reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents.

To define the standard guidelines for most treatment programs around the nation the Amachi Mentoring Program, was created by Goode, (Smith, 2012). These guidelines include linking children with mentors, using positive adult role models and developing plans for extended families to reconnect the children with their incarcerated parents (Smith, 2012).The purpose of this study will be to understand the effectiveness of

treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate for individuals that were children with incarcerated parents.

Problems Experienced by Children with Incarcerated Parents

Children with incarcerated parents are a less explored category than other children that experience behavioral or mental problems as a result of losing parents. Many studies found that children with incarcerated parents demonstrate a higher rate of behavioral problems, psychosocial maladjustment, and cognitive deficits. Some problems are attachment insecurity, high anxiety and depression levels, and poor performance in school (Dallaire &Wilson, 2010). Considering that these children experience a different type of parental loss, complex family issues come along with trauma. For example, many children with incarcerated parents have witnessed their parent partake in criminal activities which brings on trauma. Additional trauma is experienced when the parent is arrested. This leads to many children with incarcerated parents experiencing a lack of support and the ability to cope (Bockneck, Sanderson, &Britner, 2009). Many children with incarcerated parents feel helpless because of being instantly thrust into reality and lacking support. According to Newell (2012), children with incarcerated parents truest form of protection is their resiliency.

Resiliency

When explaining resiliency, there are three sets of factors that seem to protect children with incarcerated parents from the stress and help them to cope and adjust to their situation. The first set is positive individual attributes, which includes high self-

esteem and having the ability to adapt to high stress position (Newell, 2012). The second set is the supportive family environment, which includes support from the other parent or caregivers. The third set of factors consists of peers, school systems, and faith communities that support the children (Newell, 2012).

Boys and men are thought to be behind girls and women when it comes to having resiliency (Newell, 2012). Aaron and Dallaire (2010) found that boys that have incarcerated parents are five times more likely to become incarcerated versus other boys who were separated from their parents for other reasons. Previous research on intergenerational transmission of criminality suggested that boys that grow up with incarcerated fathers are likely to grow up engaging in delinquent or antisocial behavior while growing up or during adulthood (Murray & Farrington, 2008, as cited in Geller, Garfinkel, Cooper, &Mincy, 2009).

Earlier Treatment Programs

The Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents (CCIP) was created in the U.S. to prevent intergenerational incarceration by employing former incarcerated parents and adult children of prisoners. According to the CCIP, over 10 million children in the U.S. have experienced a parent being incarcerated at some point in their lives, with at least 2.3 million children with a parent currently incarcerated (Johnston, 2012). In 2007, an estimation of approximately 744,200 fathers and 65,600 mothers were incarcerated (Glaze &Maruschak, 2008) with 6.7 % of Black children, 2.4% of Latino children and

0.9 % of White children having a parent that was incarcerated either at the state or federal level (Johnston, 2012).

The development and dissemination of high quality documentation on children with incarcerated parents and the development and implementation of high quality services for children with incarcerated parents and their families are the two goals of CCIP. By adopting the following principles for research and practice methods, CCIP make strives to pursue their goals (Johnston, 2012):

- Appropriately addressing children with the conditions of the same developmental outcomes of that led to their parents imprisonment, which include high levels of family stress, parental substance dependency, parental mental illness, and low levels of parental education;

- Increase the developmental resources for children with incarcerated parents and decreasing the developmental insults in their lives by making attempts to improve the way they respond to life's circumstances , i.e. developing pathways that precede delinquency, adult crime and incarcerations;

- Intervention focused completely on the effects that parental incarceration will not improve the developmental outcomes of children with incarceration in any significant way;

- Children of incarcerated parents' lives are shaped by their experiences. "As a result, comprehensive assessment that explores their significant life experiences and their representations of those experiences are essential to all children's

services" (Sroufe, Egeland, Carlson, & Collins, 2005, as cited in Johnston, 2012, p. #);

- The quality of children's significant experiences is improved with the most powerful work. "Therefore, services that address children's early attachment relationships and/or their daily care will have the greatest effects (Sroufe, Egeland, Carlson, & Collins, 2005, as cited in Johnston, 2012, p. 92).

When the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR) created a project called the ChildSpace Project and decided to build a facility that catered to children that visited their incarcerated mothers, the CCIP was involved with the project. The ChildSpace Project provided children up to the age of 12 contact with their incarcerated mother that consisted of separate visiting areas for infants, toddlers and school-aged children. The project's goals were to increase reunification among incarcerated mothers and their children, provide emotional support for children that visit their imprisoned mothers, discover the needs of the mothers and their children, and decrease the levels of stress that children experience from visiting their mothers. After a year of its inception the ChildSpace Project had a 74% reunification rate. Due to the economic recession in California, the project closed after 40 months so sustainability could not be measured (Johnston, 2012).

In 1991, CCIP created a program for children with incarcerated parents that did not have any contact with their imprisoned parent called the Therapeutic Intervention Project (TIP). The project was intended to intervene in the lives of children with

incarcerated parents to reduce behaviors that led to crime, delinquency, and incarceration. The services that TIP provided were therapeutic groups, support groups for children ages K-8 and families, behavioral skills training, mentoring, social activities, and training for teachers (Johnston, 2012). In addition to these services, as a part of the TIP program, the CCIP provided after school services to some elementary schools, which included social-recreational activities, a respite room, peer academic support, study hall, and mentoring. Although the program's evaluation documented that all of its objectives were met, according to Johnston (2012), the measurement of the outcome of this program's comprehensive services were not possible (p.98). The many characteristic differences among the selected children for the mentoring group from the larger group of children made it impossible to measure the outcomes of the mentoring component of the TIP program. CCIP launched other programs that implemented social activities for children with incarcerated parents and/or the incarcerated parents. However, the models for the programs did not publish an outcome, did not produce a measurable outcome, or the participants reported that the programs were moderately useful (Johnston, 2012). The CCIP continues to serve children with incarcerated parents and in the coming years hopes to effectively increase the quality of their lives (Johnston, 2012).

The outcome to the efforts by CCIP makes exploring the outcomes of current treatment programs very important. Exploring all elements of treatment programs will contribute to determining if programs are effective in developing and empowering

children with incarcerated parents. It also assists treatment programs with knowing how effective their programs are by displaying their strengths and weaknesses from the perspectives of the participants. According to Bockneck, Sanderson, and Britner (2009), although the Bureau of Justice collects information on incarcerated parents, there has not been any system for tracking information concerning their children from the correctional officials nor child welfare.

There have been several treatment programs that were created and are emerging to assist children with incarcerated parents. Some treatment programs require the children to interact directly with their parents during visiting the incarceration facility in order to observe the children's behaviors, affects, and interactions, which leads to determining their strengths (Poehlmann, Dallaire, Loper, & Shear, 2010). Some treatment programs promote children with incarcerated parents to interact with their parents through other methods such as letter writing. With the emerging of these programs and more that are geared toward children with incarcerated parents, it is obvious that there is a need for sustainable solutions to assist these children with living healthy lives and growing into healthy adults.

Literature Search Strategy

The following were the databases and search engines that were used from the Walden University Library: Criminal Justice Databases, which included Criminal Periodical- ProQuest Criminal Justice and ProQuest Social Science; Political Science Complete database; Political Science, Sage full-text journals; the legal database, Lexis

Nexis Academics, the Academic Complete database; the psychology database

PsychINFO; and Google Scholar.

The following is a list of key terms and combinations of terms that were used in

this research: Children with incarcerated parents; Children with prison parents;

Incarcerated parents; Prison parents; Prisoners with children; Parents in prison; Children

with parents in prison; Adults that were children with parents in prison; Treatment

programs for children with incarcerated parents; Effective treatment for prisoners'

children; Mentoring programs for children with children with incarcerated parents;

Critical Theory; Max Horkheimer; Max Horkheimer and Critical Theory; Social

Philosophy; Jürgen Habermas; Jürgen Habermas and Critical Theory; Karl Marx;

Marxism; and Erich Fromm.

The iterative search process in this study entailed searching the phrases "children

with incarcerated parents"; "children with parents in prison"; "adults that were children

with parents in prison", "effective treatment for prisoners' children" and "mentoring

programs for children with incarcerated parents".

"Children with incarcerated parents" and "children with parents in prison" were

the most popular search phrases that were used in all of the databases and yielded results

from each database. However, some of the same articles resulted in the search. The

search phrases "adults that were children with parents in prison" were searched in

ProQuest Criminal Justice, Sage full-text journals, and the Academic Complete

database. The phrase "effective treatment for prisoners' children" was searched in the

PsychINFO database, ProQuest Social Science database and Sage full-text journal database. When searching this phrase few useful articles were found. There were some articles that were outdated. However, the current articles that were useful discussed mentoring programs.

Considering that when searching for effective treatment programs yielded articles pertaining to mentoring programs, the next search phrase "mentoring programs for children with incarcerated parents" in the same databases as "effective treatment for prisoners' children". Mentoring programs for children with incarcerated parents resulted with various useful articles that provided information on organizations that have implemented mentoring programs. This was very useful for further research on the programs that were provided. However, there was not any information on effectiveness of the mentoring programs as the children become adults and whether or not participants live productive lives.

The iterative search process also included the terms; Critical Theory and the names Jurgen Horkheimer, Erich Fromm, Karl Marx, and Marxism. The term Critical Theory was searched in the Academic Complete database, the psychology database PsychINFO, and the Google search engine. The Google search engine resulted with information from the University of Stanford website, which yielded a plethora of information on the Critical Theory.

When searching for information pertaining to Jürgen Habermas, the first attempts involved searching his name in the PsychINFO database, which resulted in

many of his works, mostly written in Germany. However, after searching the Academic

Complete database and Google Scholar with his name and the term biography, many

articles and books about his life showed up. Therefore, the Academic Complete database

and Google Scholar were used to search the other theorists' names.

Critical Theory

Critical Theory supports the conceptual framework of this research. Critical

Theory originated in the 20th century. Max Horkheimer, the leader of a group of

philosophers named "Frankfurt School" is credited for creating the Critical Theory

(Berendzen, 2013). Marxism has been known to have a huge influence on the group of

scholars that belong to the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research (Fleming, 2012).

While holding the positions of the Director and Professor of Social Philosophy at

the University of Frankfurk, Horkheimer developed the Critical Theory, in his writings

in the institution's journal named *ZeitschriftfürSozialforschung* (Berendzen, 2013).

Horkheimer did not always refer to the concept as Critical Theory. In the beginning, he

called it materialism. However, Horkheimer shifted to Critical Theory during his essay

titled "Traditional and Critical Theory", where he discussed critical theorizing as being a

human activity that researches and critiques social settings that are affiliated with

suffering from being oppressed (Berendzen, 2013).

During early research, Critical Theory focused only on class oppression relating

to race, gender, or class. However, more modern Critical Theory research also seeks to

confront the injustices of society (Clark, 2010). Researchers that have conducted Critical

Theory research sought to understand economic and political societal structures'
relationship with ideologies that constrained people and changing unjust social systems
(Clark, 2010). Critical theorists' writings mainly cover ideology, power, domination,
emancipation of actors, organization structure, rationality, and interest and
communication (Alvesson & Willmott 1996; Grimes 1992, as cited in Karatas-Özkan &
Murphy, 2010, p. 456).

One of the most modern critical theorists is Jürgen Habermas. Habermas writings
are influenced by his stance on democracy and his critique of capitalism. Habermas'
main critique of capitalism is that capitalism has been diminished by public relations,
politicians, advertisers, and the media (Fleming, 2012).

In his writings "In a democracy", Habermas rejected the idea that political power
is legally derived through natural law. Instead, he argued that a political society must
operate and organize by a collective amount of free and equal persons through the
process of debate. Habermas further stated that in matters pertaining to moral visions of
the world the state should maintain neutrality, and the founding principles of debating,
which is freedom and equality among people should not be shunned (Portier, 2011).

Another critical theorist whose thoughts were similar to Habermas was Erich
Fromm. Fromm was one of the earlier members of the Frankfurt School and is credited
as being one of the best known philosophers of the Critical Theory. However, his radical
thoughts led him to being written out of history of the Franklin Institute. Fromm sought
to understand human beings unconscious behavior by studying their socio-economic

situation (Fleming, 2012). He believed that the psyche was made up of centrality of culture and interpersonal relations. Specifically he believed that social reality strongly influences the mind and personality of our internal world (Fleming, 2012).

Both Fromm and Habermas understood that external social reality is what influenced internal personality and the mind. But, Fromm was more vocal than Habermas. His thinking was heavily influenced by World War I, which led him to critically questioned issues such as nationalism, authoritarianism, and the power of the market to name a few (Fleming, 2012). As it relates to socio-economic structures, Fromm proposed a type of psychoanalysis, which understands the libidinous and the unconscious behavior of people by their socio-economic situation. According to Fromm, the structure of the libidinal is the "medium through which the economy exerts its influence on man's intellectual and mental manifestations" (Fromm, 1973, p. 179, as cited in Fleming, 2012).

Fromm is the author of various works relating to his thoughts on humanism and authoritarianism that were well documented. In the Art of Loving, he explained his concept of love and what is required to be loved. According to Fromm (2011), a vision of the world is "driven by the moral philosophy of humanism, which can uniquely bind individuals in harmony and love without stifling individuality and difference" (Cheliotis, 2011, pp. 338, 339).

Critical Theory was also used by theorist E.P. Thompson, who sought to explain the dichotomies of the social control theory. Thompson beliefs were aligned with social

control theory that laws were used to control the behavior of people. Being heavily influenced by Marxism, Thompson believed that factors related to social class were associated with criminals and criminal activities, which influence the law-making process (Fitzgerald, 2011).

Some of Thompson's works are: The Making of the English Working Class; Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act; and Customs in Common: Studies in Traditional Popular Culture (Fitzgerald, 2011). In Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act, E.P. Thompson talked about the history of the impoverished by using examples of how the propertied (those with property) used capital punishment as a way of social control against the landless (those without property). According to Fitzgerald (2011), Thompson celebrates the small acts committed by the landless in resistance to the Black Act.

Critical Theory theorists share commonalities in the use of various terms to describe their philosophies. The following terms are commonly found in arguments of the Critical Theory: Capitalism, the market system economy that is used in the Western world where most of the means of production is owned by private companies and markets are widely used to distribute income; Oppress, which is restraining mentally or spiritually by abusing authoritative power; Nationalism is displaying loyalty to only one nation by being totally dedicated to this nation by promoting their interests, culture and everything pertaining to the nation; Authoritarianism is being submissive to a government that is not control by the people but by an elite group (Merriam-Webster,

2013). In this conceptual framework, the term authoritarianism is the philosophy of authoritarian; and Humanism is any beliefs, methods, or philosophy that focuses on humans (Merriam-Webster, 2013).

As stated earlier, Critical Theory has been noted as being influenced by the works of Karl Marx. Karl Marx's school of thought, which depicts his social, economic, and political ideas, is called Marxism (Johnson, 2010). Marx beliefs were:

The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and range. The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates. With the increasing value of the world of things proceeds in direct proportion to the devaluation of the world of men. Labour produces not only commodities; it produces itself and the worker as a commodity -- and does so in the proportion in which it produces commodities generally (Johnson, 2010, p 940).

Critical Theory was used by Hodges and Cabinilla (2011) to research the factors relating to social support, spirituality, educational level, and resilience of those battered black women that looked for help. Hodges and Cabinilla studied 75 battered black women that sought help from their violent partners. Considering that the Critical Theory pertains to advocating social change and well-being for humanity for those that have been oppressed by racism and economic situations, the researchers chose this theory to guide the study relating to exploring protective factors association with help-seeking attitudes (Hodges &Cabinilla, 2011).

After assessing that from the point of view of the Critical Theory, domestic violence victims' view of the world is based on external forces, the researchers "human service professionals must understand how sexism, racism, homelessness, low employment rates, violence, and the increasing numbers of the poor require systemic reform" (Hodges &Cabinilla, 2011, p. 124). Therefore, the researchers suggested that outreach programs that work with this group of women should promote programs that utilize diverse help-seeking efforts.

Critical Theory has also been applied in a child welfare case by utilizing four decision-making elements that are primary to the Critical Theory. The elements were: deconstruction and integration; critical thinking; reflection; and critical consciousness (Lietz, 2009). In child welfare cases Critical theory supported gathering data from various sources followed by the process of deconstruction, which is when the all of the information is broken down while searching for hidden meanings and contradictions (Lietz, 2009).

To illustrate how Critical Theory is applied to child welfare matters, Cynthia Lietz told a story about a case that she was assigned while being a child welfare service provider. There was a grandmother that had three teenage daughters that moved in with her. While performing intake procedures the grandmother described the girls as unruly and defiant, stating that the girls did not clean their rooms or the rest of the house. The girls were labeled as at-risked due to failure to adhere to their grandmother's rules (Lietz, 2009).

After making a home visit, she observed the opposite of what was told by the grandmother and that her initial report of the girls was inaccurate. The girls felt as if they could not live up to their grandmother's standards. Therefore, a new plan was developed. Using deconstruction and gathering new information by various sources, Lietz discovered that the initial plan and evaluation was based solely on the information provided by the grandmother. Also, there was a problem with failure to deconstruct the issues while an authority figure was present during the initial intake. In this case, the grandmother was the authority figure and Lietz (2009) stated that the girls did not feel comfortable with making counter statements against the grandmother nor with a child welfare service provider present. Therefore, after assessing the social structure and the issues of the authority figures being present, as identified in the critical theory, a suspension of judgment was made until further observation.

Considering that Critical Theory seeks to understand the relationship between economic and political societal structures and people that are constrained by unjust social systems, this type of conceptual framework is most appropriate for exploring the measures that are being taken to integrate children with incarcerated parents into society. Critical Theory works for making positive social changes by motivating those that have been affected by the social injustices of society by providing hopes of freedom from the restraints that are keeping them oppressed (Berendzen, 2013). Children of incarcerated parents are an example of the category of people that Critical Theory seeks to explore. They are oppressed by their situations, they are less explored than any other category of

children with mental and behavioral issues, and they face several disadvantages, all which affect their ability to maintain stability and live productive lives in society.

Critical theorists believe that when conducting Critical Theory research the researcher has to be interested in finding the answers to constitutive questions. In this research, the question of interest is, are treatment programs effective in assisting children with incarcerated parents? The research questions of this research were: what have been the experiences of youth with incarcerated parents with the current resources that are available, and how could other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents? These questions build upon Critical Theory because the questions sought to hold accountable those that have been placed in a position to assist children with incarcerated parents. Further, it provides information for those that are interested in providing assistance to this category of children by bringing awareness to the areas that they need help with, as well as revealing that issues and problems that are important to them.

Another theory that supports this research is the theory of social control. As explained earlier, social control theorists beliefs are that laws are used to control human behavior. Social control theorists also suggest that the focus of crime control has shifted in its meaning and purpose (Deflem & Chicoine, 2010). For example, David Garland's Culture of Control (2001), Garland suggested that the criminal justice system has lost its core ideologies and culture that has led to changing from a majority moral matter to an economic matter (Deflem & Chicoine, 2010). According to Garland, there has been a

shift in the penal welfarism framework. Crime control policies were based on the advice of the experts and professionals in the criminal justice system. However, the current focus on crime control is around the political process where decisions are based on the electoral process, public opinion, and cost benefits.

Before the shift occurred, institutions such as prisons and jails were seen as problematic and less useful in the goal of corrections or reformation. However, the current system is design to use the penal system as the major solution to social control. To elaborate, the previous system focused on treatment and social reform as solutions to crime control. The current system is focused on enforcing discipline and behavior control as a mean to control society, as well as providing restitution for the victims (Deflem &Chicoine, 2010).

Garland believes that the criminal control field has been saturated with current goals of regularly using measures such as imprisonment, surveillance, and community notification laws in support of the ideals of "the public must be protected" to the extent that the state and criminal justice system is no longer in control (Deflem & Chicoine, 2010). The current ideals have failed the criminal justice system. As a result, the crime rate increased and the number of incarceration continues to rise. Garland's views of crime control are essential to this research because these ideals provide core information that is helpful to creating solutions to restructure the way crime is viewed in the U.S. The stigma that is placed on children with incarcerated parents affects this group of children tremendously. Creating a fair justice system will assist with decreasing the

growing imprisonment and recidivism rate of imprisoned parents and children with incarcerated parents.

DeFina and Hannon (2011) conducted an empirical research to test other researchers' argument that social control often experience institutional shifts and become more troublesome for society in modern times. The researcher examined the connection between southern lynching and housing segregation. They suggested that there is linking between recent levels of segregation in southern metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) and the history of lynching. The researchers argued that social, political, legal and demographic changes in the south allowed lynching to be a control mechanism that has been replaced by today's housing segregation (DeFina and Hannon, 2011, p. 173).

Using data collected in the 1990-2000 Census report of MSA housing segregation and the Historical American Lynching Data Collection Project from 1890-1960, the researchers used a sample size of 254 cases (127 of each type). The black lynching rate, which was the key independent variable, was divided by the average populations of blacks during that period and multiplied by 100,000. Next, MSAs were matched to the black lynching rate of their state. If it was found that the MSAs crossed state lines, an average was used based on the size of black population of the state (DeFina and Hannon, 2011, p. 173).

Previous similar research conducted by Loic Wacquant (2001) and others concluded that although current social control institutions look totally different than

historical social control institutions, the similarities in their fundamentals exist (DeFina and Hannon, 2011). After conducting their research, DeFina and Hannon (2011) found a positive relationship between past lynching and current housing segregation in the south. The historical rate of blacks being lynched is relevant today for explaining segregation in metropolitan statistical areas. Therefore, DeFina's and Hannon's (2011) results are consistent with previous research, which lead them to conclude that if future researchers are concerned with segregation in the south today, it is important to understand the current impact of the history of racial oppression in that region (DeFina and Hannon, 2011).

Previous Research on Children with Incarcerated Parents

The research questions of the study were: What have been the experiences of youth with incarcerated parents with the current resources that are available, and how can other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents? Although the following studies provided some types of the resources that are available to children with incarcerated studies, the effectiveness of these resources in reducing the incarceration rate was unclear.

Research by Poehlmann, Dallaire, Loper, and Shear (2010) was conducted to determine whether or not there were benefits of contact between incarcerated parents and their children and the outcome of alternative methods such as letter writing between incarcerated parents and their children if utilized as opposed to visitation. Poehlmann et al. (2010) used a combination of the Developmental Ecological Model (DEM) and the

Attachment Theory as the Conceptual Framework. The DEM emphasized on the importance of various settings and the contexts which development occurs. The Attachment Theory relates to the interaction among the parents and the children, particularly the quality of the relationship, as well as the significance of separating the child from the parent (Poehlmann et al., 2010).

The researchers searched the following databases to search for information pertaining to children with incarcerated parents: SocINDEX, PsycINFO, ProQuest Research Library, Google Scholar, and Family and Society Studies Worldwide. The methodology that was used was a sampling procedure, which involved ratings, sample sizes, and covariates such as children's age, poverty, and measurement quality. After conducting research, Poehlmann et al. (2010) found that the benefits of contact between the parents and the children are dependent on many interrelated factors. However, those studies that focused on visitation between the parents and the children yield positive outcomes when intervention was involved and negative outcomes if intervention was not involved. The letter writing contact was said to enhance the literary skills of children that used it (Vander-Staay, 2006, as cited in Poehlmann et al., 2010).

The research conducted by Poehlmann et al (2010) provided thorough information regarding the subject of children with incarcerated parents. However, the quantitative results were complex and too difficult for a layman to interpret. Further, the research stated that interventions with children of incarcerated parents and their parents

yielded positive outcome, but a major weakness is the study lacked results from interventions that were held.

Where Poehlmann et al. (2010) did not provide qualitative data this study provided qualitative data that depicted the lived experiences of the participants' that were children with incarcerated parents. The results from the data are easier to interpret and read even for a layman. Also, due to the data being derived directly from the participants, it enables the study to provide information pertaining to whether or not any of the treatment programs made an impact on their lives.

Geller, Garfinkel, Cooper, and Mincy (2009), conducted a study in 20 U.S. urban cities to identify economical, residential, and developmental risks that children with incarcerated parents faced. The name of their study was the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study. The sample was population-based on urban children in the largest U.S. cities where incarceration was the most prevalent. The researchers used reports of parental incarceration history, outcomes of child and family, and demographic background in multivariate regression models (Geller et al., 2009).

In the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, the researchers discovered that 26 % of urban fathers and 5% of urban mothers have had some type of experience with incarceration by the time their child reached the age of three (Geller et al., 2009). Further, the researchers discovered as opposed to their counterparts, children with incarcerated parents experienced more residential and economic instability. Boys with incarcerated fathers encountered more behavioral problems. According to Geller et al.

(2009), the risks faced by children in this category will be better addressed by using some form of intervention or social services during the point of incarceration of their parent.

The strength of the study by Geller et al. (2009) is it provides recommendations for those children with incarcerated parents and the quantitative results of the research are easy to read. However, the weakness of the study is it failed to provide any of the researchers' implications, which is difficult determine whether or not the researchers had any type of positive outcome with this group of children. Further, another weakness of the study conducted by Geller et al. (2009) is it failed to suggest any benefits that may be gained by children with incarcerated parents by their recommendation of interventions and social services. The qualitative results from this study provide beneficial recommendations on treatment programs, social services, and other resources. The study sought to provide information on those resources that have been determined as being effective by the participants that have had experiences with them.

Studies by Newell (2012), were conducted to determine the impact that parent's incarceration had on their children. Several factors were considered in this study that ranged from characteristics of the children to background information of the parents. Factors that were considered were: the age of the children when separation occurred from their incarcerated parent; race; gender; developmental characteristics; attachment and the impact of the loss; risk and protective factors; personality of the parents; parent's

educational background; parent's mental health status, their childhood experience; and the communities of both the parent and children (Newell, 2012).

One of the programs was a school-based program that included support groups for students at two high schools. One of the groups was an all-girls group and the other one was a coed group. Data gathered by giving the students a questionnaire at the beginning of the study; a pre and post measurement on the Benda Resiliency scale; Child Behavior Check List; and observation of both groups in focus groups led by school counselors (Newell, 2012). During the focus groups a technique named Dialogue Journaling was utilized. Dialogue Journaling consisted of the facilitator giving the children a topic to write, usually pertaining to their incarcerated parent and have them to write in a journal. After writing, the facilitator would give feedback to the writer about the substance of their writing (Newell, 2012).

The outcomes were measured using both quantitative and qualitative methods over a six year period. The Benda Resiliency scale did not show any significant difference among the coed group. However, the all-girl group showed possible value among all girls meeting. Further, the all-girl group wanted to remain an all-girl group, which included having other girls that participated in the program from the previous school year influencing new participants to remain an all-girl group (Newell, 2012).

The Dialogue Journaling showed significance difference among genders when asked the question "What do you miss most about your parent in prison" (Newell, 2012, p. 112). The responses were organized in four categories physical, emotional, problem

solving, and protection. Out of the four, there were large differences among the genders in problem solving, with 95% of females associated with this category opposed to 10% of males and protection with 93% of females associated with this category opposed to 6% of males (Newell, 2012).

In the results Newell (2012) stated the obvious that resulted from the research, which was there was a predominance of females in the study over a course of 16 years of child services including in those studies where the amount of females and males were evenly distributed. The recommendations suggested were more gender-based programs for children with incarcerated parents should be designed and more studies should be conducted that compare mentoring programs for boys with parents in prison with mentoring programs for girls with parents in prison (Newell, 2012). The strength of the study conducted by Newell (2012) is it exemplified the differences in the behavior of boys and girls with incarcerated parents. The weakness of the study is due to the large difference in amount of girls than boys in the study the responses from the girls may manipulate the quantitative results, being that one group was a girls- only group and the other one was a coed group. Although this study sought to provide data that were coded into common themes, the qualitative data provided a plethora of details pertaining to the individual's perspectives. Therefore, participant's data are shown in the results instead of being quantitatively grouped.

Children with incarcerated parents and their family members were investigated while participating in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters (BBBS) mentoring program. BBBS is

a nationwide program where children from single parent households between the ages of 5 and 18 are paired with an adult volunteer for mentoring (Shlafer, Poehlmann, Coffino, &Hanneman, 2009). After the investigation of the children with incarcerated parents that participated in the mentoring program, Shlafer, et al. (2009) provided that mentoring programs should be rigorously evaluated and theoretically grounded in order to be effective.

Between the months of March 2005 and November 2007, children with incarcerated parents were participants of Mentoring Connections (MC), which is funded through BBBS by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). MC served children with an incarcerated parent between the ages of 4 and 16 years of age (Shlafer et al., 2009). The research was a mixed method study that included the following research questions:

> What is the rate and context of match termination among children of incarcerated parents participating in a mentoring program; Is termination related to children's relationships with their current caregivers and incarcerated parents or their behavior problems; During the first 6 months of participation in a mentoring program, what activities do matches engage in, how frequent is their contact, and what do participants report about the strengths and challenges of the mentoring relationship; and is the frequency or length of contact between mentors and children related to children's behavior problems during the first 6 months of

program participation? Is program participation related to changes in children's behavior during this time? (Shlafer et al, 2009, para. 9)

The demographics of the participants were: the majority of the mentors were single white females and the majority of the participants were black girls with incarcerated fathers. Fifty-seven matches were made between participants and mentors. Interviews were conducted on a monthly basis for six months with the participants, caregivers, and mentors. Data were analyzed using quantitative analyses. Due to attrition, missing data, match termination, and measurement some quantitative analyses were less than 57 and the groups revealed no significant differences (Shlafer et al., 2009).

In this study the attrition analyses found that there was not a significant difference among the groups that participated for the whole 6 months and the ones that did not participate the entire 6 months. However, the researchers agreed with past researchers that "despite their popularity, however, the efficacy and effectiveness of mentoring programs are not well understood, and research has led to mixed conclusions about their impact" (Tierney et al., 2000; Rhodes & DuBois, 2006, as cited in Shlafer et al., 2009).

Therefore, Shlafer et al. (2009) found that there is a need for mentoring programs for children with incarcerated parents. The authors further provided information pertaining to the theories that emerged during these investigations, such as the

Attachment Theory, which provides an understanding of how adults can have a positive influence on children with incarcerated parents through support.

The strength of the study conducted by Shlafer et al. (2009) is it is very resourceful relating to the steps that can be taken to measure mentoring programs for children with incarcerated parents, as well as providing detailed information on the instruments that were used to evaluate the participants. However, a weakness of the research is there are no concrete outcomes from the study. With the majority of the mentors being one race and the majority of the participants being only one gender the research is sure to be bias. Further, the female participants were only those that had an incarcerated father which may be seen as another weakness to collecting data when research has shown that those with an incarcerated mother encounter more problems. Although the research for this study is relatively focused on the African American community, the collected data from this research will not exclude a particular race or gender of participants. Further, data will be collected from participants that consist of those that have had incarcerated mothers and/or fathers.

Summary and Conclusion

The first major theme that was discussed was the various forms of contact between children and their incarcerated parents. As a result of the information given in the literature, it is evident that some form of contact between children and their incarcerated parent is very beneficial. For example, Poehlmann et al. (2010) researched interventions among incarcerated parents and their children during visitation yield

positive results. Geller et al. (2009) also found that the risks that children with incarcerated parents faced are better handled by the use of social services or some form of intervention. Another form of contact was the letter writing contact where children wrote letters to their incarcerated parents. Poehlmann et al. (2010) found that letter writing yield positive results without intervention by enhancing the literary skills of the children.

A second theme that emerged from the literature is the significance in gender differences among children with incarcerated parents. During the study of the all-girl group and the coed group, Newell (2012) found that the programs that were used in the groups were more successful among the females by a large margin, and that girls with incarcerated parents possessed more resiliency than boys with incarcerated parents. Newell (2012) suggested that more gender-based programs should be established for children with incarcerated parents. After researching intergenerational transmission of criminality, Geller et al. (2009) specified boys with incarcerated fathers are more likely to grow up adopting the same behaviors their fathers.

A third theme that emerged was mentoring programs as a form of treatment program for children with incarcerated parents. Shlafer et al. (2009) gave their recommendations that more mentoring programs are needed as a form of treatment for children with incarcerated parents even though their research from Mentoring Connections led to mixed conclusions. However, mentoring programs were utilized in the research by Newell (2012). Newell (2012) found that mentoring programs brought

value to the all-girl group. He further suggested that more gender-based programs should be designed and more studies should be conducted that will compare all-girls mentoring programs to all-boys mentoring groups. Therefore, researchers have suggested that mentoring programs hold some type of importance to children with incarcerated parents. However, Schlafer et al. (2009) admitted that the effectiveness nor the impact of mentoring programs are not well understood and at this point yield mixed conclusions.

It is difficult to understand how the current research fills at least one gap in the literature because there is a need for more research on the subject. However, what is known about efforts to create effective treatment programs for children with incarcerated parents is in order to be effective some form of contact with the incarcerated parent is necessary. The forms of contact have shown positive results in the research.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The topic of this phenomenological study is: how effective are treatment programs that are geared toward children with incarcerated parents? This study is valuable to understanding those that were children with incarcerated parents. Research is needed to determine solutions for decreasing the harmful effects of parental incarceration on children with incarcerated parents. Exploring the elements of the treatment programs contributed to determining if the programs are effective with assisting this category of at-risk youth with alleviating social ills that they may face such as juvenile delinquency, other types of incarcerations, and recidivism.

Research and Rationale

The research answered the questions, what have been the experiences of the participants with the currently available resources for children with incarcerated parents, and how could other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents? Using the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Investigative Interview Protocol, after the introduction in Section I, the researcher began Section II of the interview protocol titled Rapport Building with the participants. These questions were the ice-breaker questions used to make sure that the participants were comfortable with the researcher and the structure of the interview. Section III, Training in Episodic Memory, consists of questions the researcher asked the participants in order to ascertain background information about the

participant and to gather information pertaining to the participants' experiences of being a child with an incarcerated parent.

Section IV is titled Transition into Substantive Issues. This section presents my data gathering to answer the research questions and address the participants' experiences with the treatment programs. The research question, what have been the experiences of the participants with the current resources that are available for children with incarcerated parents was addressed by questions in this section such as:

- How did you feel about being in the program?

- Can you tell me your activities while being enrolled in the treatment program?

- What did you like most about the program?

- What incidents occurred during your enrollment that you disliked?

Section III of the interview protocol addressed the research question, how could other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents? The following types of questions were used:

- What resources did the treatment program provide to you (i.e. job placement or educational information)?

- What factors helped or hindered your learning while being enrolled in the treatment program?

- What are some things you feel the treatment program was lacking?

- What are some activities that you suggest should be implemented in treatment programs to assist children with incarcerated parents?

Section IV includes the questions asked if the participants wanted to elaborate on any particular incident that occurred while being a participant in the treatment programs. These questions, as well as the closing questions in Section V, were fillers to make sure that the researcher did not missed anything, the participants did not miss any information they would like to contribute, and to assure that all questions were clarified.

Research questions that seek to understand the lived experiences, perceptions, and sense-making strategies of people in the personal context qualified this study to be a qualitative research design. Creswell (2009) stated that a qualitative study allows the researcher to explore those studies and populations that have been less explored. Most quantitative studies consist of large sample sizes. Considering that this subject is less explored, quantitative research cannot provide the natural data from the participants that were needed for this research. Mixed method research was not appropriate as well, because although it consists of qualitative research it also requires quantitative data.

In order to begin researching a phenomenon such as this study, it is essential to begin with the people that affected by the phenomenon. A quantitative study would not allow a researcher to receive a clear understanding of the affects that incarcerated parents have on their children because it does not require the researcher to have the direct contact with the participants to collect data. Also, a quantitative study would not provide the ability to interview the participants and observe their reactions to interview

questions as part of the research process. Sitting down face to face with participants and gathering a detailed understanding of how their parents being incarcerated affected them was most beneficial for this type of study.

Children with incarcerated parents have been found to be a rarely explored population and subject so a phenomenological approach type of qualitative study was essential to this study. Phenomenological research methods guided the research in a manner where the data is based on the participants' experiences of the phenomenon. According to Creswell (2009), "Phenomenological research uses the analysis of significant statements, the generation of meaning units, and the development of what Moustakas (1994) calls an essence description" (p. 184). Phenomenological research was best for this research because it allowed the researcher to generate detailed important information that only those that have participated in a treatment program can provide.

Role of Researcher

One of the researcher's roles in this study was to be the interviewer. The researcher must possess the ability to be authentic, open, and honest while showing a general concern of what the participant is saying. This way the researcher can represent the participant's experience accurately and in a manner that is adequate (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

It is important that the researcher is an observer as well. This allowed the researcher to observe the behavior of the participants when answering the questions and

enabled the researcher to provide a description of the setting in which the interview was conducted. Being both the interviewer and the observer provided the rich, thick descriptions that are required in type of study.

With the researcher serving as the primary research tool and lens through which data was analyzed, the vulnerability of biases increased. In addition to using rich, thick descriptions, biases were addressed by clarifying the biases. As a Paralegal Specialist that specializes in domestic relations cases, the researcher has encountered several children and adults that have had the experience of being a child with an incarcerated parent. Over the 17 years of working in the domestic relations field the researcher has instances where some of these children grow up and become incarcerated themselves. Some of them seemed to be very intelligent but have experienced events in their lives that have led them astray. It has been noticed that many of these children are products of a problematic cycle where they are second and third generation offenders. After being referred to a treatment program, there is seldom a follow-up with the children of incarcerated parents to determine whether or not the treatment programs are effective.

Methodology

Considering the qualitative samples are generally small, it is important to receive a sample size of participants that will provide an adequate amount of rich, thick descriptions. Therefore, a purposive sampling strategy was used. The use of a purposive sampling strategy allowed the researcher to deliberately choose those participants that maximized the diversity in the interviews (Chretien, Goldman, Craven, &Faselis, 2010).

According to Englander (2012), when conducting phenomenological research, the researcher has to answer the question, "Do you have the experience that I am looking for?" when selecting the participants for the study (p. 19). The following criteria for selecting the participants for this research were used:

- 18 years old or older;

- Had the experience of having an incarcerated parent as a child

- Participated in some form of treatment program during their parent(s)' incarceration.

A sample size of 20 participants was appropriate for this study. This sample size needed to be large enough to gather an appropriate amount of data to achieve saturation and have all possible themes can emerge.

The participants were recruited by reaching out to nonprofit organizations in both local communities and communities abroad that are geared toward working with children with incarcerated parents, and soliciting and advertising with other learning institutions. After identifying potential participants and getting their consent, the researcher sent each participant a letter confirming the date and time of their interview, along with a consent agreement for the participant to sign. The letter included the identification of the researcher, the purpose of the research, an explanation of the approximated length of time of the interview, the process of how the information will be documented, and the assurance of the confidentiality of the information obtained. Further, a Walmart gift card in the amount of 15 dollars were used as incentives to

compensate each participant for their time, and the participants were notified of the incentives in the letter, as well.

The initial data were collected by conducting face-to face interviews by the researcher. The interview lasted from 30 to 40 minutes. The researcher conducted the interview by going to a location that the participant chose as the most comfortable for them. If a participant was not local, the researcher traveled to their location or utilized the online application Skype to collect data. . The participants were notified of the interview by sending a letter via U.S. mail or email with the confirmation of the date and time of the interview, detailed instructions, along with a confidentiality agreement. An interview protocol was used that consisted of open-ended questions that allowed the participants to answer the questions freely, as well as to make the participants feel as though they are in control of the manner which they are answering the questions.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Investigative Interview Protocol is the most widely used interview protocol when addressing child development issues by asking risky open-ended questions (NICHD, 2013). The NICHD was developed in 2000, by researchers of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, which was led by Michael Lamb. It has been used in several peer-reviewed journals and by over 40,000 interviews in the U.S., U.K., Israel, and Canada (NICHD, 2013).

The NICHD is divided into phases; a)the introductory phase, where the researcher explains the purpose and the rules for the research; b)a rapport building

phase, where the researcher tries to get to know the participant better; c) transition to substantive issues, where open-ended questions, nonsuggestive verbal prompts are used; and d) closure, which involves clarification (NICHD, 2013).

The NICHD was appropriate for this research because of its emphasis on the development of children and the results of the NICHD are based on children's memory (NICHD, 2013). The interview protocol was modified in order to accommodate the age of the participants, to obtain information about treatment programs, and to remove some questions that do not pertain to this study. The removed questions were replaced with other open-ended structured questions. The additional questions allowed the researcher to obtain information about the participants' experiences with the treatment programs, the benefits that the program provided, how members of program interact with the participants, and the elements that the participants saw as negatives. A sample of the interview protocol is listed in Appendix A.

Once the interview was completed, the participant was given the agreed upon incentive for conducting the interview. The data received from the participants was recorded in written notes, as well as audio recorded. Next, the data was compared and transcribed. After transcribing the data, reliability and validity issues were addressed by member checking. Member checking was conducted by sending the participants a copy of the transcript and scheduling a time to discuss the transcript with the participant to check for any discrepancies and allow the participants to freely elaborate on any

information they feel is important to note. After, the member checking process, the data were coded.

The data were coded using an open coded method. Each emerging theme was color coded and the data were grouped with the applicable theme. The themes were clustered and applied to a spreadsheet. All of the major themes were highlighted on the spreadsheet. To assist with coding, analyzing, and organizing the data the researcher employed the computer software dedoose. Dedoose allowed the researcher to collect and manage data, create spreadsheets, and create tables, which was beneficial when analyzing the results (dedoose, n.d.).

Establishing Credibility

Even though the researcher has a broad conception about the phenomenon understudy, any preconceived notions or assumptions were suspended in order to understand the true meaning of the phenomenon (Englander, 2012). This assisted with ensuring credibility of the research. Internal validity or credibility was also established by reviewing the transcripts to search for any biases and then clarifying any found biases. When clarifying biases the researcher confronted the biases by speaking of the prejudices that may influenced the interpretation of the research and became engaged with the participants by asking the participants questions pertaining to the biases (Creswell, 2009).

Triangulation was used to ensure quality of the research. Triangulation is the most appropriate method because during triangulation the researcher habitually cross-

checks data, methods, and explanations by using multiple sources to study the same phenomenon (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009). Triangulation also resolved issues as to the threats that biases impose.

Thick descriptions established transferability. The use of ample quotes as described in the rich, thick description validation strategy validated the interpretation of the data from the researcher. This strategy is preferable because the researcher is able to detail descriptions that allow the target audience to transfer this information to other settings in order to discover shared characteristics (Creswell, 2009).

Ethical Procedures

Choosing to target the African-American community may be a concern with the participants, those in the communities, and the African-American race. The people that make up the communities and other African-Americans may see the research as being stereotypical or placing a larger stigma over the communities. This was be addressed by making sure that data were well understood by discussing these stats with the participants, so that the participants could see the prevalence of the situation.

Data that were collected from the participants was safely stored on a password protected computer that only the researcher has access to, and the transcripts and recordings were safely locked away in a file cabinet that is in the researcher's possession. The researcher is the only person that has access to the data. All information was protected and the master recordings will be destroyed five years after the dissertation is completed. Because the researcher gained access to participants from

organizations that work with children with incarcerated parents, the research sought

permission by receiving a letter of cooperation from the organization. The researcher

ensured that the letters were in compliance with IRB.

Summary

This research is a qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach.

With the research being a qualitative study, the researcher was the key instrument to this

research. The researcher being the key instrument may be seen as a weakness faced by

qualitative research, because everything going directly through the researcher increases

vulnerability of biases. This means that there are issues pertaining to reliability and

validation. However, being able to properly address these issues and show that the

research is credible render great strengths for qualitative research. In this research

credibility was established by review of the transcripts and clarification of any biases.

To ensure transferability of the research, the use of rich, thick descriptions was used that

included ample quotes from the participants.

The study consisted of a sample size of 20 participants that have had the

experience of being enrolled in a treatment program while being categorized as having

an incarcerated parent. The participants provided data that enabled the researcher to

answer the following research questions: what have been the experiences of the

participants with the current resources that are available for children with incarcerated

parents, and how could other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of

children with incarcerated parents?

As a method for recruiting participants for the study, a purposive sampling method was used. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to deliberately choose those participants (Chretien, Goldman, Craven, & Faselis, 2010). Therefore, the participants were recruited from various community non-profit organizations that work with children with incarcerated parents and solicitation and advertising with other learning institutions.

After identifying the participants, each participant was e-mailed a letter, which included a confidentiality agreement, identifying the researcher, and the purpose of the research. The letter also included detailed information pertaining to the manner in which the interview will be conducted, as agreed upon by the researcher and the participant. Further, information about the incentives that the interview provided was addressed in the letter as well.

The interview protocol used for this research was a modified version of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Investigative Interview Protocol that will consisted of open-ended questions. Appendix "A" is a sample of the interview protocol. The software dedoose was employed to assist with coding, analyzing and organizing the data (dedoose, n.d.). A follow-up session was conducted by the telephone in order to discuss and make any clarifications. The data from the research were stored and locked away where only the researcher has access to it. All data that were collected for this research will be destroyed three years after the dissertation is completed.

The data from this study showed that treatment programs that are geared toward children with incarcerated parents are very effective. It is believe that these treatment programs are necessary because they have a long term effect on children with incarcerated parents by assisting them growing up and living productive lives. The researcher also showed that treatment programs are instrumental in reducing the recidivism rate among children with incarcerated parents.

Chapter 4

Introduction

It is valuable to understand the perspectives and experiences of those that were children with incarcerated parents, and further research is warranted to determine how to decrease the harmful effects of parental incarceration on children. This research also brings awareness to a less explored category to understand the effectiveness of treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate for children with incarcerated parents and alleviate social ills that they may face. Further, the research was conducted to determine if there is a linkage between the treatment programs and children with incarcerated parents growing up and living productive lives.

Chapter 1discussed the risks suffered by children with incarcerated parents and the need for more policies relating to this group of children. As a result of the lack of attention to policy, caregivers lack resources that are needed for children with incarcerated parents. Previous research conducted on programs for children with incarcerated parents and the programs' lack of resources lead to the problem statement for this study. The problem statement is it is unclear how effective these programs are in reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents and assisting them with living productive lives as adults.

The questions that the research sought to answer are fully explained in chapter 1. They are: what have been the experiences of the participants with the current resources that are available for children with incarcerated parents, and how could other resources

contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents? Chapter 1 also explained how Critical Theory guided the conceptual framework and the nature of the study. Critical Theory was appropriate for the research because it seeks to confront the social injustices in society**.** The nature of the study explained the data collection procedure, the description of participants, and the strategy for analyzing date. Data was collected through face to face interviews from participants that were 18 years old or older, that were children with incarcerated parents, and initial (open) coding strategy was used to interpret data**.**

Next, assumptions and the scope and delimitations were described. The many assumptions that are faced by children with incarcerated parents include: they possessed the same characteristics as their incarcerated parent, they have a low developmental levels; and communicating with the incarcerated parent will have an adverse effect on child. The scope and delimitations section explained that the philosophical worldview of the research is an advocacy participatory, which relates to taking a stance on those social issues that constrained people (Creswell, 2009). It was further explained how children with incarcerated parents encounter aspects that advocacy/participatory worldview addresses and their best defense is their own resilience, which includes three protective factors: positive individual attributes, supportive family environment; and people outside of family.

To close chapter 1, the significance of the study, as well as limitations and methods of were explained. The limitations that were anticipated were apprehension and

mortality. The significance of the study involves making sure that children with incarcerated parents are involved in programs that are properly equipped to assist them with avoiding incarceration and living productive lives.

Chapter 2 was a detailed discussion of the literature review. It began with a more in-depth explanation of the conceptual framework and how Critical Theory supports the conceptual framework. Figure1in chapter 2 depicted the conceptual framework, along with how the lack of resources are linked to current programs available, and an explanation of what the current literature has not shown, which is the effectiveness of the treatment programs. Next, the demographics and the problems experienced by children with incarcerated parents were discussed. It has been discovered that the most prevalent community for children with incarcerated parents are urban communities and some of the problems they experience are behavioral problems, psychosocial maladjustment, and cognitive.

Following the discussion of the demographics and the problems experience in chapter 2 was a discussion on the research pertaining to earlier treatment programs and resiliency, along with the three protective factors of resiliency: positive individual attributes, supportive family environment; and people outside of family. Next, in chapter 2 was the literature search strategy. This entailed the databases and search strategies used to find the most current literature on children with incarcerated parents and a list of key terms that were used to find this information, which lead to the literature review of the theorists of Critical Theory and previous research of children with incarcerated

parents. This included studies conducted by previous researchers, databases and methodologies used to conduct their research.

Chapter 3 began with explaining the research and rationale by giving information pertaining to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Investigative Interview Protocol, which is the instrument used to collect data. Information pertaining to the role of the researcher and the methodology was presented. The role of the researcher's responsibilities, the duties of the researcher, as well as the qualifications of the researcher in this study were described. The methodology described the research procedures, which consisted of the sampling strategy, the recruiting process of participants, further information about the NICHD, and the coding procedures. Chapter 3 concluded with an explanation of how credibility was established throughout the research by triangulation and thick description, and the procedures taken to resolve any ethical issues.

Settings

Interviews were conducted in a setting that was chosen by the participants, in order to ensure that the participants were comfortable. The researcher interviewed participants in their homes, local libraries, and community centers. Interviews that could not be completed in person were conducted via Skype. The researcher also traveled out of town to meet some participants. Each interview was conducted in a quiet room with only the researcher and the participant. All participants were fully cooperative. There

were no personal or organizational conditions that may have influenced the participants or their experienced or the interpretation of the data.

Demographics

The majority of the participants grew up in urban areas and experienced having an incarcerated father. There were two participants that grew up in rural areas. One participant had the experience of having an incarcerated mother, and three participants had the experience of having both parents incarcerated. The study consisted of 51% females and 49% males. Forty-three percent of the males were African American, 30% were Hispanic, and 14% were Caucasian. As for the females, 100% of the participants were African American. The percentage and age of the participants was as follows: 22.2% were 18-21 years old; 23.3% were 22-25 years old; 18.2% were 26-29 years old; 18.2% were 38-41 years old, and 18.2 % were 42-45 years old.

Data Collection

Twenty participants were successfully interviewed for the study. The instrument used for the interviews was the NICHD interview protocol. Several participants were interviewed in their homes. However, four interviews were conducted in a private room at a public library, one at the Department of Veteran Affairs in, one in a group home, and one via Skype. The remaining eight interviews were conducted at a community center.

Each interview lasted an average of forty minutes. Participants were interviewed one time and then forward a copy of the transcript of their interview via email for

corrections and clarifications. After participants received a copy of their transcript, 14 participants contacted the researcher within five days for any corrections and six participants took longer than five days to schedule a time to discuss their transcripts. Data were recorded in written notes and audio recorded.

In chapter 3, it was stated that interviews would last for approximately 45 minutes. However there was a variation between the projected time and the actual time. The average time for the interviews was 35 minutes. The longest interview lasted 40 minutes. Although the interviews were shorter than the allotted time, the researcher asked every question that on the NICHD interview protocol and each participant gave a response to every question that was asked by the researcher.

Another variation was that the researcher anticipated conducting out of town interviews via Skype. Considering that some participants that lived out of town did not have Skype capability, the researcher traveled to conduct interviews. Although the researcher assumed that Skype would be available to out of town participants, traveling out of town was considered during the planning process.

During data collection there were few unusual circumstances. One unusual circumstance during data collection was that six participants took longer than five days to schedule a time to discuss the transcripts. To rectify this situation, the researcher gave participants a courtesy call to remind them to take the time to read over the transcripts. After reading over the transcripts participants contacted the researcher to discuss

whether or not there were any discrepancies. The circumstances were resolved, even though it took longer than anticipated.

Another unusual circumstance was when the researcher went to a group home to conduct an interview with a participant. The group home was in a secured location so the researcher had to sign in and present identification in order to pass through the security gate. After entering the location, the researcher had to go through a metal detector and was led to an apartment by an employee of the group home. Although there were channels to enter the location of the participant, the researcher successfully completed the interview.

Data Analysis

The codes for the research were created by constantly reading through data and creating a list of words and phrases that emerged from data. After determining the most frequently used words and phrases, data were coded based on their similarities using an open coded method. Next, a spreadsheet was created with themes that the phrases were grouped with. Four categories derived from data: a) positive attributes of the treatment program, b) negative attributes of the treatment program, c) general information of the participant, and d) general information about the treatment program. A list of themes and codes was generated and associated with each category are listed in charts 1-4.

Table 1 depicts the organization's general information category. The themes that are listed are the most common organizations that were stated by the participants, the most frequent activities the participants were involved in with the organization, and the

way the organizations followed up with the participants after they left. Underneath the themes are codes that emerged from data associated with the themes.

Table1

Treatment Programs' General Information

	Themes				
	Organizations		Activities		Follow up procedures
Codes	Big Brothers Big Sisters		Arts and Crafts		Phone calls
	Boys and Girls Club		Career Day		Letters
	Skip, Inc.		Tutoring		Staff attended participants' events
	Girls, Inc		Sports		Recruited participants as volunteers
	Girls, Scouts		Traveling		
			Workshops		

In Table 2 the participants' general information is provided. Themes that emerged from data are*: hobbies, activities with friends, employment status, enrollment in school status, changes the participants would make to themselves, whom problems are discussed with, and the person that was responsible for their enrollment into the treatment program*. In this table, codes related to the themes, *relationship with family*, and *whom they discussed their problems with*, are important to highlight. None of the codes in the *relationship with family* theme recognized a positive one-on-one relationship with their father, and none of the codes in whom they discussed their problems with recognized the father as being one of the people participants discussed their problems with.

Table 2

Participants' General Information

| | **Themes** | | | | | | | |
	Hobbies	Activities w/friends	Employed	Enrolled in school	Changes you would make	Relationship w/family	Whom problems discussed with	Responsible for enrollment
Codes	Reading	Hanging out	Yes	Yes	Weight	I get along	Mother	Mother
	Basketball	Playing video	No	No	Attitude	w/my mother	Grandmother	School
	Shopping	games			Appearance	I love	Siblings	Aunt
	Cooking	Going to				my parents	Friend	Uncle
	Hanging	the mall				I love	Mentor	
	w/friends	Going to				my siblings	School counselor	
		the movies				No relationship		
		Watching				w/my dad		
		sports				I'm close		
		Partying				to my family		
		Church				I get along		
						w/my parents		

Table 3 depicts the treatment programs' positive attributes. The themes are: *goals,* which are the participants' goals; *major benefits,* which refers to the participants' opinion on the major benefits they received from being involved with the organizations; *feelings about the organization,* which are the participants' feelings about the organization after their experiences; *resources*, which are the resources that the organizations provided the participants; and *great quotes*. Great quotes are the quotes that were heard by participants throughout the interview process. Many participants would make similar statements that they considered to assist them with having a positive aspect on life. These quotes are listed as the codes under great quotes in Table 3.

Table 3

Treatment Programs' Positive Attributes

	Themes				
	Goals	Major benefits	Feelings about the organization	Resources	Great quotes
Codes	Want to be successful	Helped me become	Loved the organization	Educational info	Never give up
	Take care of family	the person I am	Good relationship	Tutoring	You can do anything
	Complete school	Helped build	w/everyone	Employment	that you put your mind to
	Pursue a career	confidence	Liked attending	Workshops	Treat others as you
		Met new people	the organization	Support from	would like to be treated
		and lifelong friends	It was fun going	the staff	You never know
		Assisted with	It was a great		what someone is going through
		homework	experience		
		Learned life skills			
		and lessons			
		Traveled			
		Learned social skills			
		Community Service			

Table 4 is categorized as the treatment programs' negative attributes. The themes are: *resources that were lacking* and *dislikes about the organizations*. This category is noticeably small compared to the organizations' positive attributes. In the *resources that were lacking* category, it is important to note that in addition to common resources such as funds and volunteers, participants felt there was a need for male staff and seminars with someone that has had the experience of being an incarcerated parent.

Table 4

Treatment Programs' Negative Attributes

	Themes		
	Resources that were lacking	Dislikes about the organization	
Codes	Funds	Some of the kids	
	Volunteers	Some of the staff	
	Counselors	When there was	
	One on one counseling	an altercation	
	Community support	Bullying	
	Seminars w/someone that has experience w/incarceration		
	Male staff		

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility was established by purposive sampling. Participants were randomly recruited based on the criteria state earlier. When recruited, participants were not discriminated against based on race or gender. This was to ensure that various participants with diverse backgrounds were considered for the study. Triangulation was used to establish credibility and confirmability. Triangulation was created by cross

checking data, dictation of the audio recordings, and checking the notes while dictating. After transcribing data, transcripts were forward to participants to check to make sure that they were accurate. The participants communicated via email and telephone with the researcher to address any and all clarifications.

Thick descriptions were used when coding data and creating themes. All themes and codes that derived from data came from the participants. The transcripts were constantly reviewed to check for any biases. If there were any preconceived notions, the researcher confronted the notion with the participants. For example, one of the treatment programs that some participants were involved with is a small non-profit organization name SKIP, Inc. It was important for the researcher to ensure that none of the participants were related to any of the staff, board members, or founders of the organization. Therefore, the researcher asked participants if any of them were related to any of the founders, board members, and/or staff of the organization. However, the participants were not affiliated with the organization, other than being a participant.

Transferability is when the researcher goes into connecting their own experience with the elements of the research (Colostate, 2015). In chapter three of this study, the researcher explained the experience of witnessing some children with incarcerated parents being quite intelligent and growing up and becoming incarcerated due to certain life events that led them astray. An example where transferability was applied to this research was during gathering data, the researcher encountered a participant with these particular characteristics name Participant "J".

Participant J was living in a group home where the interview was conducted and had the experience of being incarcerated at an early age. However, Participant J recently completed high school with very good grades and SAT scores. The treatment program which he was involved in was assisting him with pursuing his dreams of going to college. During the time that the interview was conducted, Participant J was waiting for an acceptance letter from the colleges that he applied.

When implementing strategies for dependability, member checking was performed to ensure reliability. Data were checked by participants. During the member checking sessions, the research found that two of the participants wanted to elaborate on some of their answers, resulting in providing valuable information to the research. Although the questions on the NICHD protocol did not delve too much into participants' personal lives, many on them shared information that they felt comfortable with providing to the researcher.

For example, Participant L added more information that she felt compelled to add after reading the transcript. Participant L wanted to make sure that she was clear with her statement that her father was the one that was incarcerated and there was a strain on her relationship with her estranged father. Further, the treatment program that she participated in assisted her with coping with this issue.

Another example, Participant C made a statement that he does not talk with his parents quite often. He further stated that when speaking with his mother it was only good morning or good night. During member checking Participant C felt it was

important to explain that the reason why he and his mother do not talk that often. It was because he only saw her for about twenty minutes a day due to conflicting work schedules, and it was not because he had any issues with his mother.

Results

The first research question sought to understand what have been the experiences of the participants with the current resources that are available for children with incarcerated parents. The research addressed the first research question in the results of the activities that participants stated they were involved in depicted in Figure 2. As shown in the Figure 2, the most popular activity participants experienced was getting help with homework.

Table 3 also depicts participants' experiences with the programs. The participants' experience can be found under the major benefits of the programs section, which were: the programs helped build their confidence; they met lifelong friends; the program assisted with homework, they learned life skills, lessons, and social skills, they have traveled, and participated in community service. Although there were more favorable comments about the programs than dislikes it is important to point out the dislikes stated by participants, shown in Figure 3. The dislikes highlight the areas that these programs can improve.

According to Figure 3, the most common dislikes among participants while participating in the programs are, some of kids, some of the staff, altercations, and bullying. Most participants expressed their dislike of some of the kids. Participants noted

that some of the kids could be mean toward other kids or some of the kids thought they were better than others. Although the participants noted some of the kids can be mean, there is a discrepancy among the results compared to bullying. Some participants found that even though some of the kids were mean, they didn't have a problem with being bullied by them. Particularly, these issues were more commonly found in those organizations that group various categories of kids together. For example, Participant I was a member of Girls, Inc. During her interview, Participant I stated "there were a lot of fights among the girls at Girls, Inc.", which made her dislike some of the kids that always initiated the fights (C. Thornton, personal communication, May 15, 2015). Even though she did not have a problem with being bullied, she did not like to see others bullied.
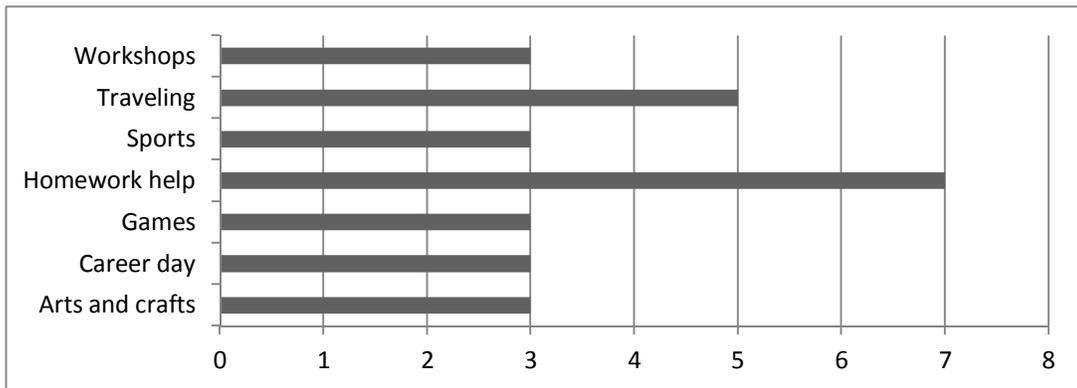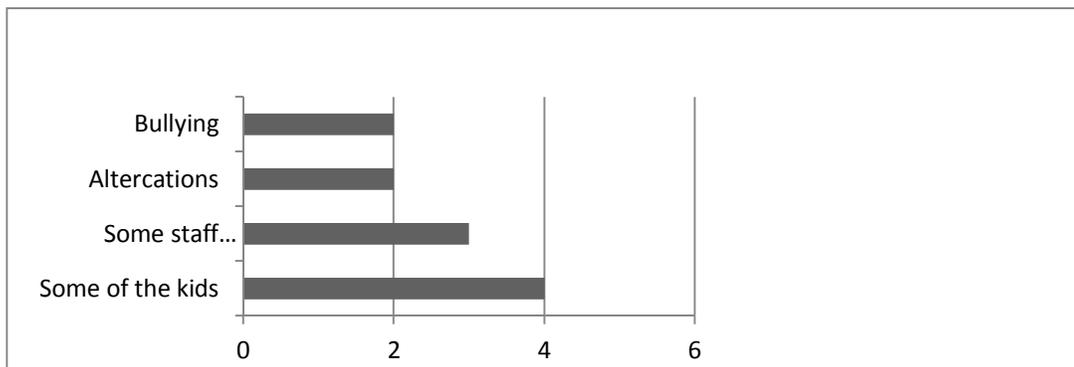
Figure 2 Activities with programs

Figure 3 Dislikes about the program

Resources and Resources lacking results addressed question two, how could other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents?   In Figure 4, the most common resources that are provided by treatment programs are listed. The most notable resources that programs provide are: *educational information, employment information, workshops, tutoring, and support from staff*. It is important to note that educational information and tutoring differ in meaning. Educational information refers to the information pertaining to college enrollment and all other secondary schools. Tutoring refers to the assistance participants were receiving with their homework from school.

Looking at data from resources that treatment programs provide, support from staff is the least provided among the most common. As a result, this provides improvement areas for the programs. For example, taking the results from Figures 4 and 5, it is obvious that every section with the exception of funds relate to people becoming involved with these programs. Out of the most common resources lacking shown in Figure 5, participants believed that conducting seminars with someone that has had the experience of being incarcerated is the most important. Most participants felt that listening and learning from people in this category will prevent children with incarcerated parents from making the same mistakes.

Nevertheless, there were some responses that were not the most common but were important suggestions that can assist treatment programs with reducing with the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents. Participant X stated "critical

thinking and day to day stuff like how to adjust to police officers and legal issues and corporate America, stuff that is not normal day to day in local communities", should be provided by treatment programs (C. Thornton, personal communication, June 8, 2015). Participant I stated "I think that the parents in the home need counseling too, and programs for the parents with the kids are needed too" (C. Thornton, personal communication, May 15, 2015). Participant A stated "counseling for the parents would be good" (C. Thornton, personal communication, April 3, 2015). Therefore, the most important resources that treatment programs can provide for children with incarcerated parents are: seminars with someone that has had the experience of being incarcerated and more counseling for both children and parents.
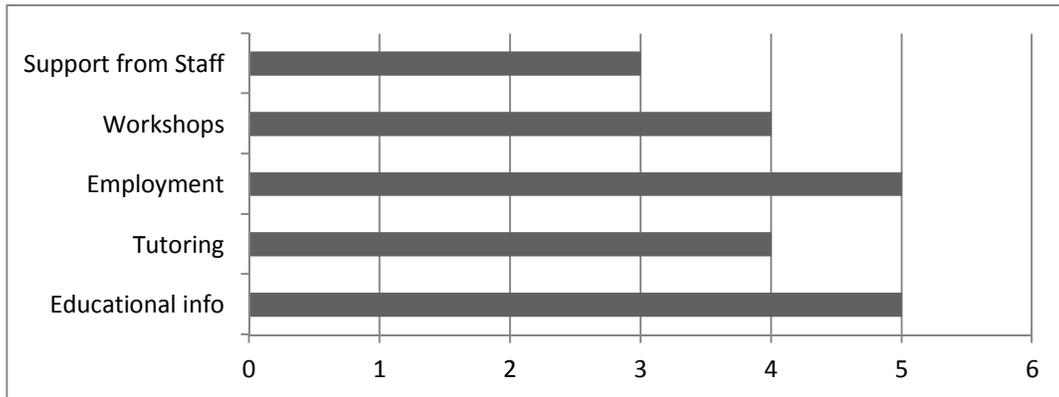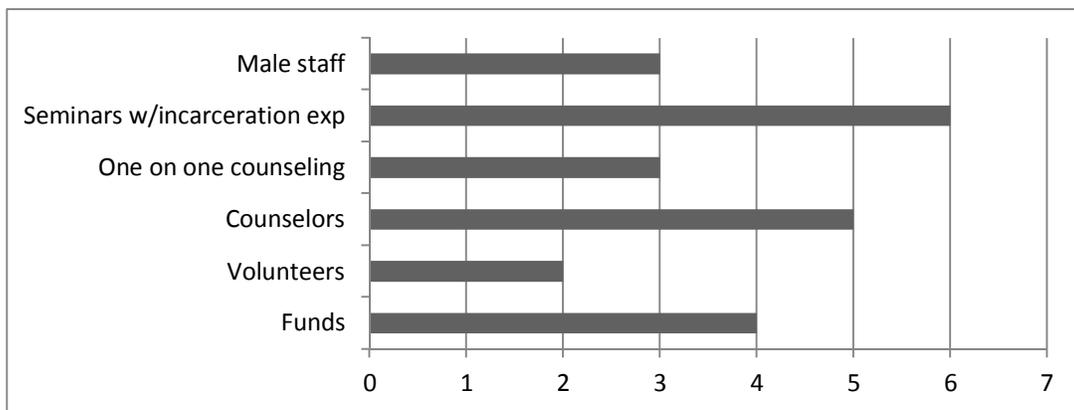
Figure 4 Resources

Figure 5 Resources lacking

Summary

The research questions are: what have been the experiences of the participants with the current resources that are available for children with incarcerated parents; and how could other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents? Many of the participants have been involved with non-profit organizations that are geared toward at-risked youth as a source of being treatment program. The results of the study provide voluminous information addressing the research questions.

Research question one, what have been the experiences of the participants with the current resources that are available for children with incarcerated parents, was addressed by data that was the most common responses of the participants. Therefore, most participants' experiences with treatment programs have been getting help with homework, traveling, community service, and meeting lifelong friends. Additionally, the participants' experiences with the treatment programs include: assistance with building their confidence, and learning life skills, lessons, and social skills.

Research question two, how could other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents, was addressed by data results found in Resources and Resources Lacking. The most notable way that other resources can contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents, is to provide seminars or discussion sessions where children with incarcerated parents can talk with someone that has had the experience of being incarcerated. In addition to this

contribution, it is important to note that other resources that are necessary are more counseling for both children and parents.

Therefore, when it comes to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents, most participants of this study believed that concerned people are the key. In chapter five, further interpretation of findings are given, as well as the ways data compares to the literature. Additionally, limitations, recommendations and implications for positive social change are given.

Chapter 5

Introduction

The study is a qualitative study where data derived from face to face interviews with participants that were 18 years or older that had the experience of having incarcerated parents and being involved with a treatment program. Data received from participants entailed their outlook of the recognized treatment programs. Results of data were compared to the research questions: what were the experiences of the participants with the current resources that are available for children with incarcerated parents, and how could other resources contribute to reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents?

The purpose of this study was to understand the perspectives and point of views of those that were children with incarcerated parents and their experiences with treatment programs. The research brings awareness to a less explored subject and to understand the effectiveness of treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate for children with incarcerated parents. With this study, the researcher was able to determine whether or not if there is a linkage between the treatment programs and children with incarcerated parents growing up and living productive lives.

Many of the participants credited the treatment programs they attended for assisting them with becoming the people they are today. Two participants in particular stressed that the treatment programs assisted them with avoiding incarceration. Participant J was briefly incarcerated, but after being released he entered a treatment

program. Participant J stated that the program changed his life and taught him how to be a better person. According to Participant J, "They'll help you. You just got to be willing to do certain things. Take time off to really put work into getting better, not just in school, but as a person" (C. Thornton, personal communication, May 17, 2015).

Another participant, Participant Q, stressed the importance of his treatment program and its impact on his life. Participant Q stated that if it was not for the program that he was involved in, he would not have made it through school. He stated:

I mean if you look at me now and when I first came to SKIP, what I've become, that's the biggest benefit, you know. It's not about how they did it…well it is about how they did it, that's the biggest benefit that I see that influence me. SKIP influenced me so much. I wouldn't be in school right now if it wasn't for SKIP. SKIP changed me. That's the biggest benefit to me (C. Thornton, personal communication, May 23, 2015).

Interpretation of the Findings

Before this research, the effectiveness of treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents lacked documentation about the children as they have gotten older. The conceptual framework depicted the problem statement. The problem statement noted the lack of information on reducing the incarceration rate of children with incarcerated parents, as well as the lack of information pertaining to the long-term effects of treatment programs and their ability to

assist the children with living productive lives. In this research, one of the key concepts in the conceptual framework was resiliency.

The three factors of resiliency were thoroughly defined while conducting this research. Positive individual attributes, which includes high self-esteem, independent, and intelligent children having the ability to adapt to high stress positions. The participants of this study were intelligent individuals that were able to clearly answer all of the questions from the interview protocol. Participants who were able to participate and complete treatment programs after witnessing a parent be incarcerated and were able to avoid incidents of becoming incarcerated themselves exemplified their ability to adapt to high stress positions.

There were 19 out of the 20 participants that displayed signs of independent thinking and who had not been incarcerated. The one participant, Participant J, which had incarceration experience showed signs of having difficulty with independent thinking. When answering the question pertaining to activities with friends, he responded, "So it's like you basically, you know, it's indifferent, you can't say no and you can't say yes, you just roll with the crowd" (C. Thornton, personal communication May 17, 2015). However, Participant J credited the program for turning his life around.

The second set of resiliency factors included the children having a supportive family environment. When asking participants about who was responsible for their enrollment in the treatment program, the most popular responses to the question were:

mother, aunt, school, and uncle. This proves that participants had support from family and caregivers during the time their parents were incarcerated (See Table 2).

The third set of factors includes peers, school systems, and faith communities that supported the children (Newell, 2012). Information in Table 2 supports the third set of factors when it pertains to the school system as one of the common ways participants became involved in these programs. When asked about the activities with friends, many participants stated that they are involved in faith communities and activities with friends. When Participant Q was asked what activities he and his friends do together, he stated:

Umm go to the movies or any type of Christian activities or if it's dealing with the church, any type of rap, Christian rap concerts, we'll go to those, jog and play basketball together, going downtown walking, just having a good time (C. Thornton, personal communication May 23, 2015).

Participant J answered this question by stating, "Well on Sundays we play football at the church, all the people that we graduated with that played while we at the school, we go up to the field and play football (C. Thornton, personal communication May 17, 2015).

Several participants described their faith community activities when asked about their community service. Participant R stated, "At church we have a youth program I volunteer in and we also have praise dancing I also volunteer to do. At church we have this Belts rally. It's called Belts. We sell tickets for Belts and we raise money for our church" (C. Thornton, personal communication May 23, 2015). Participant M stated, "I

help out with my church. On our mission trips we go out of town, share the gospel about Jesus or vacation bible school. I still help out at the nursery on Sundays" (C. Thornton, personal communication May 22, 2015). Participant L stated, "My praise dance group, we go out and we help the community, and also I'm a "Bud" in the missionary, so we have missionary duties" (C. Thornton, personal communication May 22, 2015). Further, Participant E stated, "I'm a trustee in the church" (C. Thornton, personal communication April 25, 2015).Therefore, the codes that derived from this research support information pertaining to the factors of resiliency.

Previous research has shown that treatment programs, such as the Amachi Mentoring, established guidelines for other treatment programs. The guidelines included linking children with mentors using positive adult role models and developing plans for extended families to reconnect the children with their incarcerated parents (Smith, 2012). The research in this study confirms the effectiveness of the linking children with mentors using positive adult role models.

The majority of the participants had positive comments about their mentors in the programs. Participant Y stated, "I like them because they were very encouraging and try to show girls about the consequences of the decisions they make in life and that they're not alone and you know they just motivate you" (C. Thornton, personal communication June 11, 2015). Participant R also stated positive things about her mentor. She stated, "I enjoyed Miss, I think her name was Miss Goldstein. She was my best…she was the one that I loved. I used to love coming to the part of her classroom so

we could work on the computers and do activities on the computer" (C. Thornton, personal communication May 23, 2015).

According to Participant D, even though he did not have a personal relationship with a mentor in his program, he felt that the experience with the mentor was rewarding. He stated, "Well I wouldn't say that I had a very personal relationship with any of the mentors. But, I did appreciate it and it kind of gave me somebody to look up to (C. Thornton, personal communication April 18, 2015).

As for developing plans for extended families to reconnect the children with their incarcerated parent, this research cannot determine if Amachi Mentoring guidelines will yield positive results. Previous research conducted by Poehlmann et al. (2010), found that there were benefits of contact between the parents and the children. The researchers found that when visitation was held between the parents and the children there were positive outcomes when intervention was involved and negative outcomes if intervention was not involved (Poehlmann et al., 2010). In this study, most of the participants' fathers were no longer incarcerated and there were still a strain on some of the relationships. It is possible that communication with them during incarceration would have assisted with the issues in their relationships but further research would be needed to determine true causality.

In the research conducted by Geller et al. (2009), it was discussed that some form of intervention or social service is a better way to address children with incarcerated parents when their parents are incarcerated. However, the research by Geller et al

(2009), did not confirm any benefits gained by the children with their recommendations. The results from this study answer that question. In the major benefits theme of Table 3,the most common benefits that participants' gained are addressed here, which confirmed that there are major benefits for children with incarcerated parents being involved in some form of intervention or social services.

One of the research questions the study conducted by Shlafer et al (2009), sought to answer was; is program participation related to changes in children's behavior during this time? As a result of their research Shlafer et al (2009), the researchers found that there is a need for mentoring programs for children with incarcerated parents. However, the findings of this research study extended on that research.

Many of the participants admitted to having problems with socializing before participating in any of the treatment programs, but the programs assisted with building their confidence (See Table 3). Participant X stated, "At first I didn't want to attend and did not like it, but I got used to it…I would say it was a good relationship" (C. Thornton, personal communication June 8, 2015). Also, Participant F stated, "I was shy at first, but I got used to it" (C. Thornton, personal communication, April 24, 2015). Further, Participant N stated,

> Being around other children, being exposed to that, I would say, you know
>
> I keep saying that, but that's a really big part of how I developed and who I
>
> am today because I really wasn't comfortable around other children when I was

young, just because I was overly shy and very quiet" (C. Thornton, personal

communication May 23, 2015).

Shlafer et al (2009) further concluded that even though mentoring programs are

popular, their effectiveness are not well understood and there are mixed conclusions

about their impact. This research brought some clarification to their conclusion and the

problem statement depicted in the conceptual framework, providing information that

supports the effectiveness of treatment programs on children with incarcerated parents.

The results found that mentoring programs are very impactful. Based on the results of

the research, many of the participants have transitioned from participants of treatment

programs to living productive lives. Eight of the participants are employed, eleven

enrolled in secondary school, three of those participants work and are enrolled in school,

and one was waiting to be accepted into a college.

Limitations

Earlier in chapter 1, it was stated that there may be possible limitations such as

apprehension and/or mortality. In preparation to encounter apprehension with

participants reliving a difficult time in their lives, the researcher thoroughly explained

the information pertaining to the study, as well as the procedures involved, while

ensuring that their answers to the interview questions are kept confidential. The privacy

procedures were explained during participant recruitment and they were explained again

after each participant agreed to participate. Further, the privacy procedures were

reiterated immediately before the interview.

Before the interview, participants signed a confidential agreement to ensure privacy and all data were coded by giving participants anonymous names. As for mortality, there were no issues as to mortality in this study. All participants continued to participate in the study throughout collecting data and the follow up.

Another limitation that the researcher prepared for was transferability. In chapter 1, the researcher explained that there may be limitations when attempting to transfer results from participants due to the various answers that were given. However, transferability was handled by the use of rich, thick descriptions, where the researcher provided detailed information from the participants to describe different responses to the interview questions.

Recommendations

The Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents (CCIP) created the program Therapeutic Intervention Project (TIP). As explained earlier, through TIP, CCIP provided many services to children with incarcerated parents such as mentoring, after school care, and therapeutic and support groups. One of the therapeutic groups involved social activities among the children and/or their incarcerated parents (Johnston, 2012). Although CCIP continues to service children, the research did not produce a measurable outcome pertaining to the intervention efforts with the children and their incarcerated parents (Johnston, 2012).

Previous research, along with this study, shows that the father is more likely to become incarcerated than the mother. Many participants described their relationship

with their father. Participant L stated that there is still a strain on the relationship with her father, even though he is no longer incarcerated. Participant J stated that his father is trying to build a relationship with him, but he wants to be "buddies" instead of a father. Participant I stated that she wished her father was more of a father figure than a person that she looks at on the same level as her friends. Perhaps this is the reason why many participants suggested that seminars with someone that has been incarcerated would be beneficial.

From Table 2 it can be observed that many of the participants lacked a relationship with their father. This may be a necessary component for future research. As stated earlier, the research conducted by Poehlman et al. (2010), found that most of the participants' fathers were no longer incarcerated and there were still a strain on some of the relationships though there were some benefits when intervention was involved. However, the research did not provide the information on what happens after intervention or whether or not there were any longevity effects of intervention. Therefore, it is critical to conduct future research on the importance of intervention among an incarcerated father and their children and whether or not intervention sustained these relationships.

The future research will provide some guidance to the father when it comes to understanding their children and knowing how to communicate with them. Future research will assist with determining whether or not intervention is an effective technique for building positive relationships with incarcerated fathers and their children.

It will assist these children with several of the issues they encounter, such as anti-social behavior, depression, and developmental regression to name a few.

Implications

This research shows that treatment organizations that serve children with incarcerated parents are very effective in those children living productive lives. The programs in this study have been very impactful in the participants' lives. The results can be applied to larger populations that will yield the same results, which will show that the presence of treatment organizations provide positive social change in our communities. As explained earlier, research on intergenerational transmission of criminality suggested that as a result of growing up with an incarcerated father, boys are likely to grow up engaging in delinquent or antisocial behavior (Murray & Farrington, 2008, as cited in Geller, Garfinkel, Cooper, &Mincy, 2009). However, based on the results of this study, there is high probability that children with incarcerated parents that become involved in treatment organizations will grow up and become productive adults in society.

Also, research has shown that children with incarcerated parents are likely to model the behavior of their incarcerated parents and most likely end up becoming incarcerated. Being involved in treatment organizations implicates positive social changes to the U.S. penal system. Several participants of this study believed that their experiences with the programs that they were involved played a major part with preventing them from becoming incarcerated. Participant Q of this study made a

statement that in his opinion that he would recommend the organization that he

participated in to "…every kid that has a DA charge… or has an incarcerated parent" (C.

Thornton, personal communication, May 23, 2015). Therefore, having children in these

treatment programs is a preventive measure that will assist with decreasing crowded

prison systems in the United States, as well as decreasing the recidivism rate among

children with incarcerated parents.

As for bringing positive social changes among families, having children with

incarcerated parents involved in these organizations provides assistance to the parents

and other caregivers. Families and caregivers of children with incarcerated parents, face

problems of needing social services, financial assistance, and other resources. These

organizations are very necessary, and although many are underfunded, they are quite

effective with assisting children with incarcerated parents. Organizations that serve

children with incarcerated parents provide coping mechanisms, life skills, relationships

with children with similar issues, and positive lines of communication among the

children and parents or caregivers.

Conclusion

Children with incarcerated parents are a category of children that are less

explored. These children are chronically alienated from society due to the feelings of

fear, bewilderment, and other emotional and psychological problems associated with

being in this category. Studying the treatment programs that are geared toward children

with incarcerated parents determines whether or not they were effective with the

children growing up and living productive lives, in addition to bringing awareness to the issues they face.

The efforts to provide support to treatment programs that are geared toward children with incarcerated parents are minimal. Before this study, there was little known information about the outcome of the children as they grow into adulthood. With this study, policymakers and other decision makers have an indication of the benefits that these organizations provide in order to create policies and fund programs that serve children with incarcerated parents. Additionally, the importance of their sustainability is brought to the forefront. Training and equipping children with incarcerated parents with the tools they need to stay out of the penal system, pursue higher education, enter the workforce, and living productive lives through adulthood will change how they are perceived in society, as well as change how they perceive themselves.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol Form

Date _____

Time _____

Location _____

Interviewer _____

Interviewee _____

I.   INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is _____ and I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The information that is used in this interview will be used to fulfill the requirement to complete a dissertation study that is titled: *How effective are treatment programs that are geared toward children with incarcerated parents?*   I am interested in learning from your experience with the treatment program that you were enrolled in, and I believe that your input will be valuable to this research and in helping me complete this study.

As explained in the letter to you the interview will take approximately 45 minutes. The data will be collected by written notes and with your permission video recorded, transcribed, coded and summarized in a narrative form and the information is kept confidential. Before presenting the information, you will have the opportunity to review the transcribed data in a follow-up interview for any corrections and clarification. All

information will be protected and the master recorded will be destroyed three years after the dissertation is completed.

Today is _____ and it is now _____o'clock. I am interviewing _____ at _____.' 'As you can see, we have an audio recorder here to record our conversation so I can remember everything you tell me.

If I ask a question that you don't understand, just say, "I don't understand." Okay?'

If I don't understand what *you* say, I'll ask you to explain.'

If I ask a question, and you don't know the answer, just tell me, "I don't know".'

And if I say things that are wrong, you should tell me. Okay?'

II.   RAPPORT BUILDING

'Now I want to get to know you better.'

1.   Tell me about things you like to do.

2.   Tell me more about your activities [Are you currently enrolled in school? If so, what are your grades; what's your favorite subject; how often do you use the library at school and/or visit the school counselor? What school activities do have you ever participated in? If you are working, where do you work?]

3.   What are your goals in life?

4.   What things are you good at doing?

5.   What community activities do you participate in (volunteer organizations, church, etc)?

6.   If you have a problem, whom do you talk with?

7.   Would you change anything about the way you look? What would you change?

8.   Tell me about your friends? Names? What do you like to do together?

9.   How do you get along with your siblings? What activities do you do together?

10.   How do you get along with your parent(s)?

11.   How do you feel about your parent(s)?

III.   TRANSITION TO SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

  "Now that I know you a little better, I want to talk about why you are here today."

12.   What was the name of the organization that you were enrolled in for treatment?

13.   How did you become enrolled in the treatment program?

14.   How did you feel about being in the program?

15.   Tell me everything that happened on your first visit with the organization.

16.   Can you tell me your activities while being enrolled in the treatment program?

17.   What did you like most about the program?

18.   While being enrolled in the treatment program what incidents occurred that you

dislike?

19.   How was your relationship with the members of the treatment program?

20.   How long were you enrolled in the treatment program?

21.   What was your personal learning process while being enrolled in the treatment

program?

22.	What were some challenges that you faced while being enrolled in the treatment program?

23.	What was a specific incident that allowed you to grow significantly while being enrolled in the treatment program?

24.	How did the treatment program follow-up with you after leaving the program?

25.	What resources did the treatment program provide to you (i.e. job placement or educational information)?

26.	What resources do you feel were lacking from the treatment program that could have been provided?

27.	What are some activities that you suggest should be implemented in treatment programs to assist children with incarcerated parents?

28.	What were the major benefits of participating in a treatment program?

29.	What did you learn while being enrolled in the treatment program that may benefit others?

IV.	CLOSING

"You have told me lots of things today, and I want to thank you for helping me."

30.	Is there anything else you think I should know?

31.	Is there anything you want to tell me?

32.	Are there any questions you want to ask me?

33.	If you want to talk to me again, you can call me at this phone number:

Appendix B: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Chandra V. Thornton, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. The purpose of this study is to understand the effectiveness of treatment programs that are geared toward children with incarcerated parents from the perspective of those that have had an experience with them.

You are invited to take part in a research study of participants that have had the experience of having an incarcerated parent and were actively involved in a treatment program (i.e. mentoring program, intervention, etc.) while their parent(s) was incarcerated. This form is part of a process called "informed consent". The form allows you to understand this study before deciding whether or not you would like to take part.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:
- allow the researcher to meet with you face to face or via calling services such as Skye (if available) for approximately 45 minutes to collect data by asking interview questions and audio recording the interview; and
- read over the transcript of the interview; and
- schedule a time with the researcher to discuss the transcript in order to check for any discrepancies and to make any clarifications.

Here are some sample questions:
- What was the name of the organization that you were enrolled in for treatment?
- How did you become enrolled in the treatment program?
- How did you feel about being in the program?
- What did you like most about the program?
- How long were you enrolled in the treatment program?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you want to be in the study. No one will treat you or your child differently if you decide to not be in the study. If you decide to consent now, you can still change your mind later. If you feel stressed during the study you may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that you might encounter in daily life, such as fatigue, stress or becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.
This study has several benefits:

- It will bring awareness to a less explored subject by developing more resources
- It will assist with influencing policymakers with creating more resources that are geared toward children with incarcerated parents;
- It will also assist program designers, developers, policymakers, and others that are concerned with children with incarcerated parents with knowing how effective their programs are.

Payment:
Your time is very important to the researcher. Therefore, the researcher will give you a fifteen dollar ($15) gift card at the completion of the interview as a thank you gift.

Privacy:
Any information you provides will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use you information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in any reports of the study. The only time the researcher would need to share your information would be if the researcher learns about possible harm to you or someone else. Data will be kept secure by safely storing it on a password protected computer that only the researcher has access to, and the transcripts and recordings will be safely locked away in a file cabinet that is in the researcher's possession. The researcher will be the only person that will have access to the data. Data will be kept for a period of 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 678-360-2208 and chandra.thornton@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University staff member who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210. Walden University's approval number for this study is IRB will enter approval number here and it expires on IRB will enter expiration date.

The researcher will provide an extra copy of this form for you to keep.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement in this optional research project. By signing below or replying via email with the words, "I consent,") I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant _____

Date of consent _____

Participant's Signature _____

Researcher's Signature _____

Appendix C: Letter of Cooperation

Letter of Cooperation from a Community Research Partner

Community Research Partner Name
Contact Information
Date
Dear Chandra Thornton,

This letter shall acknowledge that our organization gives you permission to post an announcement on our advertisement board/announcement board stating the following in order to recruit interested persons that are willing to volunteer as a participant in your study:

> My name is Chandra Thornton and I am a PhD student at Walden University majoring in Law and Public Policy. I am in the process of completing my dissertation titled "A phenomenological study of the impact of treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate for children with incarcerated parents." This study is valuable to policymakers and others that are concerned with providing resources to those programs that assist children with incarcerated parents. I would like to ask for your assistance by participating in a 45 minute interview. The interview will pertain to the importance and effectiveness of these programs from the views of the participants. There will be compensation for successfully completing the research in the form of a $15 gift card that can be used at Walmart for your time.
>
> If you are willing to participate, please simply contact me at 678-360-2208 with a day and time of your availability and I'll do my best to accommodate you. The interview will be conducted via Skype or face to face in person.

We will not be responsible for providing any contact information of any participant to you in violation of any ethical practices. Further, we reserve the right to take the announcement down or withdraw our organization as a community partner at any time if our circumstances change.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the researcher without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

_____
Authorization Official
Contact Information

Appendix D

"Email inviting participants"

Hello _____

Hello my name is Chandra Thornton and I am a PhD student at Walden University majoring in Law and Public Policy. I am in the process of completing my dissertation titled "A phenomenological study of the impact of treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate for children with incarcerated parents." This study is valuable to policymakers and others that are concerned with providing resources to those programs that assist children with incarcerated parents.

I receive your name from _____ and would like to ask for your assistance by participating in a 45 minute interview. The interview will pertain to the importance and effectiveness of these programs from the views of the participants.

There will be compensation for successfully completing the research in the form of a $15 gift card that can be used at Walmart for your time.

If you are willing to participate, please simply email me back with a day and time, that suits you and I'll do my best to accommodate you. The interview will be conducted via Skype or face to face in person.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Appendix E

Letter Confirming Interview

Hello _____(participant),

First, I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in my study titled, "A phenomenological study of the impact of treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate for youth with incarcerated parents."

I have us scheduled for a face to face interview on (date), at (time). The interview that I will conduct will be audio recorded. In addition to audio recording, I will also document your responses by writing them down. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes.

Enclosed herewith, please find the consent form that will be presented for you to sign before the interview and a confidentiality agreement signed by me to ensure your privacy while participating in this study. If there are any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you again and I look forward to speaking to you on _____.

Kind regards,

Chandra V. Thornton

Letter Confirming Interview (Online Communication)

Hello _____ (participant),

First, I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in my study titled, "A phenomenological study of the impact of treatment programs in reducing the incarceration rate for youth with incarcerated parents."

I have us scheduled for an interview via Skype on (date), at (time). The interview that I will conduct will be audio recorded. In addition to audio recording, I will also document your responses by writing them down. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes.

Attached herewith, please find the consent form signed by me to ensure your privacy while participating in this study. If you still agree to be a part of the study, please simply reply to this email with the words "I consent". If there are any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you again and I look forward to speaking to you on _____.

Kind regards,

/s/Chandra V. Thornton